

we shall be doing well as a Legislative Council, and doing well for the electors of Western Australia, but I would like to say this at the same time, I consider the creation of elective courts is undoubtedly a step in what I think is the wrong direction. If these elective courts are to be found in the Bill as it comes out of Committee, I shall be reluctantly compelled to vote against the third reading.

On motion by Hon. W. Patriek debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Mount Lawley Reserves.

2. Health.

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT COMPILATION.

Bill returned to the Legislative Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 29th November, 1910.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY SERVICE, PINJARRA-MARRINUP.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will the Government make an effort to establish a better train service on the Pinjarra-Marrinup Railway? 2, Is the Minister aware that over a thousand people have recently taken up their residence in this district? 3, Can the Minister state when a daily train service will be introduced?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, when the traffic is sufficient to warrant it. 2, I believe that a large number have recently gone to the district, but am not aware how many. 3, Inquiries will be made as to the trade and population of the district with a view to the providing of such facilities as the increase may warrant.

QUESTION—RABBIT DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has an inspector named Mr. Hogg been appointed in the Rabbit-proof Fence Department? 2, What experience or qualifications had he for the post? 3, Had he served in the department previously, and if so, for how long? 4, In the event of no prior service, was there no employee in the department qualified and competent to fill the position?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Mr. Hogg has been appointed a rabbit inspector, but has nothing to do with the rabbit-proof fence. 2, He has had years of experience with rabbits in the Eastern States. 3, Yes, one month. 4, The Chief Inspector of Rabbits considered him the most suitable man he could obtain for the post.

QUESTION—SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION, COLLIE.

Mr. SCADDAN (for Mr. A. A. Wilson) asked the Minister for Education: 1, Have complaints been made to the Education Department by the Collie State school authorities of the inadequate accommodation supplied to the school

children individually and classes generally? 2, Is the Minister aware that, during the past 12 months, infant classes have been taught their lessons in the school out-sheds? 3, Will the Minister cause an investigation to be made in order that the above conditions may be remedied? 4, Is it the intention of the department to build a new and commodious school at Collie to meet the need of such a growing centre?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, they are being taught in the room which will be used next year for manual training. 3, Plans have already been approved for the addition of a large hall, a class-room, a teacher's room, and cloak-rooms and lavatories. The Public Works Department has been asked to put the work in hand as early as possible, as the additional accommodation is urgently required. 4, Answered by 3.

QUESTION—LAND SELECTION, W. SHEA'S APPLICATIONS.

Mr. SCADDAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Did W. Shea apply for location 15778, and if so, on what date? 2, Was he invited to appear before the land board sitting in Perth on 20th September in support of his application? 3, Is it true that on arrival in Perth Mr. Shea was informed by the department that the location referred to had been granted to a Mr. Phillips some three months previously? 4, Will the Minister compensate Mr. Shea for the expense put to by the apparent blunder of the department? 5, Did Mr. Shea apply for another block in the Nunagin district, and forward an additional sum of £2 10s. to add to the previous amount lodged, namely, £9 18s 6d., to cover his application fee, and if so, why was the latter amount returned?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, on 29th August, 1910. 2, Yes, notice was sent advising him that his application would be considered by the land board on 20th September, but this was cancelled by a further communication dated 15th September informing him that the land had already been

granted to Mr. W. H. Phillips. 3, Yes. 4, Mr. Shea's railway fare has been refunded to him. 5, Yes, and his case was stated to the board, but there were several other applicants for the same block and he was unsuccessful; the amount of his deposit was refunded in the usual manner.

QUESTION—METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE WORKS PROGRESS.

Mr. Jacoby asked the Minister for Works: What progress has been made with the sewerage works in the metropolitan area, and when he expects to commence the service?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The main works in both Perth and Fremantle systems are practically completed, and designs for the Subiaco system are well forward. Several areas of reticulation are complete in Perth, and others are in progress. The first reticulation area at Fremantle will be commenced next week. The service has already been started in Perth in a few instances. The first batch of petty contracts for house connections will be advertised within the next fortnight. The scope of operations will be in East Perth.

QUESTIONS (2) — PUBLIC SERVICES AND DEFENCE FORCES.

School Teachers.

Mr. PRICE asked the Minister for Education: 1, Seeing that junior cadet officers do military work in school time, e.g., battalion parades, etcetera, for which they receive an allowance of from £5 per annum upwards, will the Government undertake to treat them in the same way as they have recently treated selected area officers? If not, why not? 2, Is it true that a member of the teaching staff (Mr. Jackson, Perth Boys' School) has been granted leave of absence, dating from some time this month, in order to attend an examination for cadet officers in Melbourne? 3 (a), Was leave of absence recently granted to the head teacher of Mundaring school to attend the rifle association meeting in the East? (b) How

long was he granted leave, and upon what conditions? 4 (a), Is it a fact that a teacher of the Geraldton school, high up in the service, has resigned rather than submit to the decision of the department *re* area officers? (b), Have any other teachers resigned on the same account? If so, who? 5, By what regulation did the department grant leave of absence on full pay to the head teacher of Thomas-street school to attend the Methodist Conference? 6, In connection with the leave granted to the head teacher of Thomas-street to attend a Methodist Conference, it is not a fact that other teachers have been refused long service leave, or part of their long service leave, on the plea that their time was not due? If so, why?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, No. Because their work deals with the pupils of their own schools, and does not take them away except when in charge of their own pupils. 2, Yes, without pay. 3 (a), Yes, as a member of the team selected to represent Western Australia. (b), Five weeks and four days on full pay, on condition that this time should be deducted from any period of long service leave which might become due in future. 4 (a), An assistant in the Geraldton school resigned because he preferred the military position to his position as teacher. (b), One other, a temporary teacher of a small school at Boogardie. 5, Leave of absence was granted by the Governor-in-Council for one month in anticipation of long service leave which would fall due in the following year. 6, No special record is kept of applications refused. Any application to anticipate the whole would have been refused. The only two applications to anticipate a part that can be found are those mentioned in Answers 3 and 5.

Deduction of Pay.

Mr. PRICE asked the Premier: 1, Did the Premier state *inter alia* during a recent interview in reply to the question of Government servants taking up military duty, that while he raised no objection such servants could not receive Government pay while doing military duty? 2, If so, will the same conditions apply to teachers and other Government

servants occupying the positions of returning officers, poll clerks, etcetera, at State or Federal elections, for which they receive payment from a guinea a day upwards? 3, If they receive payment as returning officers will their Government pay be deducted?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes, in regard to area officers. 2 and 3, No.

QUESTION — EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, INSPECTORS' DUTIES.

Mr. PRICE asked the Minister for Education: 1, What are the duties of the advisory teacher? 2, What position does he hold in relation to the teachers? Does he report on them and their work? 3, In view of the fact that there is provision on the Estimates for the appointment of an additional inspector, will the Minister provide the following information:—(a) What are the duties of the present Chief Inspector? (b) How many schools does Inspector McCollum attend to? (c) How many schools does Inspector Robertson attend to? (d) Are there any schools in Inspector Robertson's district that he has never visited? 4, As it is reported that the inspectors are much behind with their work this year, will the Minister inform the House—(a) By how many schools each inspector is behind? (b) Which inspectors, if any, will complete their work by the end of the year?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, To advise and assist teachers of small schools, and to report upon them and their work. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, (a) Arranges work of inspectors and deals with all their reports and correspondence arising from them. Deals with staffing schools and applications from outside the State for admission to staff. Makes all arrangements in connection with examinations. Arranges all details in connection with manual training and cookery classes. Deals with correspondence relating to details of internal management of schools, and with complaints. Examines orphanages and industrial schools. (b) Twenty-four. He also deals with applications for admission to the service from candidates within the State,

and with the supply of stock to all schools. (c) Forty-three. (Mr. Robertson.) (d) One only. This was opened for the first time at the end of August, 1910. 4, (a) Mr. McCollum: 17 schools visited twice or more; six schools visited once; one school not yet visited (closed during part of year). Mr. Robertson: Three provisional schools have not yet been visited. Eight schools have been visited once only; the remainder twice or more. Mr. Gamble: 45 schools will have been visited twice; 38 schools will have been visited once. Mr. Clubb: 39 schools have been visited twice or more; 36 have been visited once only. Mr. Klein: 61 will have been visited twice or more; 61 will have been visited once. Mr. Wheeler: 48 will have been visited twice or more; 51 will have been visited once; three not visited (one recently opened, two at great distance: of these one is a subsidised, not a Government, school). (b) The regulation states that "A Government school shall, wherever it is possible, be visited at least twice in each year by an inspector." No inspector will have visited every school in his district twice.

QUESTION — ABATTOIRS CONSTRUCTION, NORTH FREMANTLE.

Mr. BOLTON asked the Minister for Agriculture: On what date does the Minister intend to call tenders for the erection of the public abattoirs at North Fremantle?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: Tenders were called in the *Government Gazette* on Friday last.

QUESTION — IMMIGRANTS EMPLOYED IN RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. TAYLOR (for Mr. Troy) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How many immigrants have been engaged or appointed to positions in the Government Railway service during the past three months? 2, What positions do they occupy? 3, What salary are they paid? 4, Under what conditions did they come to the State, whether as assisted, nominated, or voluntary immigrants?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, It is difficult to obtain the information asked for, but as far as can be gathered, 26 immigrants have been engaged or appointed to positions in the Government Railway service during the past three months. 2, Draftsmen, 3; clerks, 4; clerical cadet, 1; shunters, 2; porters, 4; coppersmiths, 2; blacksmiths, 2; boilermaker, 1; turner, 1; wireman, 1; springmaker, 1; labourer, 1; navvies, 3. 3, Two at £150 per annum; one at 15s. per day; one at 11s. 6d. per day; six at 11s. per day; two at 10s. per day; five at 8s. per day; six at 7s. 6d. per day; one at £40 per annum; two at 70s. per week. 4, From what can be gathered, four were assisted immigrants; three were nominated immigrants; seventeen were voluntary immigrants; two were brought out under engagement for the Western Australian Railways—one coppersmith and one springmaker.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, MT. MAGNET-SANDSTONE.

Mr. LAYMAN (for Mr. Brown) asked the Minister for Works: 1, The lowest tenderer under the contract for the Mt. Magnet-Sandstone Railway had to complete the works by March, 1910. The department handed over the works in August, 1910. (a.) What amount of traffic was earned by the construction branch during the additional time they occupied in completing the work? 2, (a.) In the contractor's tender what sum was allowed for sand bottom ballast? (b) What sum for packing to sleepers? (c) What class of ballast was used by the department? 3, Did the department carry out the maintenance? 4, Was any alteration made in the levels of the line that would reduce the cost of the grading? 5, Is it a fact that the department procured the sleepers from the Flora and Fauna Reserve, which was not available to contractors for procuring sleepers when tenders were called? Did not this save the department 4d. to 6d. per sleeper on 184,308 sleepers? If not, what was the saving? 6, What sum was debited to the construction branch for use of plant and rolling stock used in the construction? 7, In the department cost

of £71,876 is the freight on permanent way materials from Geraldton to Mt. Magnet included? What was the sum paid? 8, What was the total amount of wages paid to workmen, and what amount was paid for insurance of workmen? Are not contractors compelled to pay insurance under their contracts?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, (a) The gross earnings for the period stated were £6,000, but as tenders could not have been accepted before the 4th January, 1909, the date for the completion of the contract, according to the specification, would have been 4th April. (b) The gross receipts for this period would not have been more than £5,000. 2, (a) The lowest tenderer's price was £4,612 10s. (b) £5,171 10s. (c) Ironstone gravel and coarse creek sand. 3, The line while under construction was maintained by the department; £829 having been expended. In addition to this the amount provided in the contract, namely, £1,860, for three months' maintenance after completion, has been handed over to the Railway Department. 4, No. 5, No. 6, £2,239. 7, (a) Yes, (b) £8,767 including freight on P.W. material for triangles and duplication. 8, (a) £38,211. (b) None, but compensation to the amount of £299 was paid for injuries to workmen. (c) Yes.

QUESTION — SWEATING, MR. BRENNAN'S STATEMENTS.

Mr. TAYLOR (for Mr. Troy) asked the Premier: 1, Has the Hon. the Premier received a communication from Mr. Jas. Brennan in connection with his allegations regarding the prevalence of sweating in the city of Perth? 2, If not, will the Premier insist upon a reply so that steps may be immediately taken to eradicate the evil complained of?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. Mr. Brennan has been written to on three different occasions, viz., 10th, 17th, and 26th inst., and also reminded by telephone. 2, I am advised that I have not power to insist upon a reply.

QUESTION — CIVIL SERVANTS' LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEME.

Mr. SCADDAN asked the Premier: 1, With reference to the Premier's reply on 5th October, 1909, to a question by Mr. Bath, will all the civil servants who were induced to participate in the Government land settlement scheme by the promised payment of retiring allowances receive such allowances in accordance with the declaration of the Minister for Lands at the public meeting at which he propounded the scheme, which promise was confirmed by the Premier's statement in this House, "that all who were applying to be allowed to retire in order to take advantage of the settlement scheme were being treated alike," in respect to such allowances? 2, Is it proposed to reimburse the reasonable expenses and loss of time incurred by those who by the refusal of the Government to recognise their claims have been compelled to leave their farms and visit Perth in order to seek what they consider justice in this matter?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Following the statements made by myself and the Minister for Railways on the 17th inst., Cabinet has considered the case of the railway officers who retired to join the Civil Servants' Land Settlement Scheme, and in view of the fact that these officers were allowed to participate in the scheme, and are now settled on the land, it has been decided to pay them such retiring allowance as they would have been entitled to had they been retrenched. 2, No.

QUESTION — EDUCATION, ADVISORY TEACHER.

Mr. HEITMANN asked the Minister for Education: 1, In reply to a question put by Mr. Price relating to the appointment of advisory teacher, the Minister stated that the commissioner in making the appointment had accepted the recommendation of the Education Department; but as he also states that this position does not come under the Public Service Act—was in fact withdrawn from it—why was the Public Service Commissioner called upon to make an appoint-

ment, which admittedly does not come under his jurisdiction? 2, Is it a fact that two applicants for position of assistant inspector received a considerable increase in salary after their applications for the position in question had been forwarded to the department; if so, who received these increases, and why were they granted? 3, Will the Minister inform the House what certificates the gentleman appointed to the position of advisory teacher held when he joined the service? 4, Will the Minister inform the House why the gentleman appointed to this position, a teacher holding Class "C" certificate, entitling him to a maximum of £180 per annum, was promoted over the heads of more experienced teachers who held higher certificates, and who are now in receipt of salaries considerably less than £270 per annum, the salary which the advisory teacher now draws?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, The Public Service Commissioner was asked to make the appointment in the first place, not after the alteration was made. He accepted the recommendation of the department as to the officer to be appointed. 2, Yes. Messrs. Hamilton and Milligan, who are acting as nature study organisers and advisory teachers. The nature and responsibilities of their work were held to warrant increases. 3, He joined the service in April, 1901, with certificate as teacher in first division of Class III. in Ireland. Qualified to teach drawing, drill, book-keeping, and other ordinary school subjects. 4, Because he was considered to be the officer with the best qualifications for the particular work in question.

QUESTION—BULLFINCH DISTRICT, FIREWOOD TRAMLINE.

Mr. COLLIER asked the Minister for Lands: Has any application been received for permission to construct a firewood tramline in the Bullfinch district?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: No, but inquiries regarding a timber concession has been made, which cannot be granted.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Scale of trespass and poundage fees passed by Kellerberrin Roads Board. 2, Special by-laws for the registration of camels and camel drivers, agreed to by the Meekatharra Roads Board.

By the Premier: 1, Returns under Section 60 of "The Life Assurance Companies Act, 1889."

By the Minister for Education: 1, Papers relating to the appointment of an assistant inspector of schools.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): For the information of hon. members I beg to announce that the Redistribution of Seats Bill is now being printed, and I hope at the end of this week to give notice of its introduction in order that the second reading speech may be taken, at the latest, on the Wednesday following.

Mr. Underwood: You might as well adjourn till then.

Mr. Heitmann: When do we get the Payment of Members Bill?

The Premier: That is being drafted.

BILL—HEALTH.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Pharmacy and Poisons Act Compilation, *passed.*

2. Mount Lawley Reserves. (Transmitted to the Legislative Council.)

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1910-11.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from 25th November on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the Annual Estimates; Mr. Taylor in the Chair.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): The Treasurer, who has returned to the old position he occupied during several financial years, has received certain encomiums from the Press and from other people as to the prosperous Budget he was able to present to the House. I have taken the opportunity of reading through the speech of the Treasurer carefully—I did not have the opportunity of hearing it—but I failed to find, in what may be termed the practical points of the Budget, any evidence of the fact that the Treasurer, or the Government generally, have availed themselves of those bounties of Nature which were distributed over this State in common with other parts of the Commonwealth during last year. As a matter of fact, although Providence was on our side, the Treasurer evidently was not desirous of enlisting His aid; because we find that instead of the Government availing themselves of the turn in the tide so far as the development of our resources was concerned, and instead of trying to get away from those doubtful methods of finance which, in the opinion of the Treasurer himself, have been essential in order to enable him to carry on the financial administration, we find that the Treasurer is still posing as Micawber, still permitting things to drift, and still waiting for the inevitable turning up of affairs. As a matter of fact an examination of the finances during the past few years will indicate that there is no rule of sound finance laid down by anyone whom we admit as an authority which the present Treasurer has not broken. The question of sound loan expenditure, which is regarded as the first essential of good financial administration, has been repeatedly broken. The necessity for balancing the ledger at the first opportunity seems to have been lost sight of by the present Government, and although we are assured that at the end of the current financial year it is probable the accumulated deficit will be wiped out, and that there will be a very small credit balance remaining, so far as the present financial year has gone there is no evidence that this will be the case. As a matter of fact, taking the financial returns to the end of October, we have

gone back still further since the end of last financial year. And although it is said that the accumulation of the deficit is a part of lean years, we have to remember that last year was a good year, good in every respect. And yet, if we compare the last financial year and the portion which has elapsed in the present financial year with the previous years in which the revenue has been regarded as good and when surpluses remained on the year's transactions, we will find that in none of these years have the Treasurers been able to make up the leeway sufficiently to warrant the prediction that at the end of June, 1911, we will have wiped out the deficit and have a small credit balance remaining. Again the Treasurer assures us that we made up the leeway to the extent of over £208,000, but, as a matter of fact, we did not make up that leeway—not if we analyse the finances from a sound standpoint. I would like to call the Treasurer's attention to the fact that during that time there was an expenditure of £24,117 on roads and bridges, £75,894 on public buildings, and £15,000 on lands and surveys, all from General Loan Fund, which, if we accept the authority of those who are regarded as masters of finance, should have been found from Consolidated Revenue. Then, again, there was an expenditure of £56,000 from the sale of Government Property Trust Account, an expenditure which has been condemned by our own financial authority, that is, the authority directly responsible to Parliament. Further, we have the elimination of the vote of £40,000 for the replacement of obsolete stock on the railway system, and these items added together—and they do not include others which I might mention and which would considerably augment the amount—total £210,000, balancing, as a matter of fact, the £208,000 which the Treasurer declares he made up during the last financial year. Balancing those two items we find that, in spite of the advantageous year we enjoyed, the Treasurer, in fact, made up no leeway except by resorting to what are undoubtedly doubtful methods of finance. I want to refer more particularly to the elimination

of the expenditure from Consolidated Revenue for the replacement of obsolete stock, because, as a matter of fact, it is condemned by the responsible officer controlling our railway system.

The Premier : You are overlooking £33,500 which we provided.

Mr. BATH : Yes ; at Midland Junction. And I am overlooking other items of expenditure apart from this £40,000, which should have come from revenue and which have been taken from loan fund. But we can include these and still have £40,000 which the Treasurer has conveniently dropped in order to make it appear that the finances have improved when, in reality, they have not improved.

The Premier : You are including survey fees, which are repaid.

Mr. BATH : We have this statement from the Commissioner of Railways in his report for the year 1909—

While from the State or Treasury standpoint such a position may no doubt be sound, I feel it is necessary that the Department, as a trading or commercial undertaking, should charge against its working expenses the replacement in value of all "equipment" demolished or extinguished. In the building of a new station, for instance, the old station house may be demolished. Unless the value of this old building be made up from working expenses, capital will be charged with the value both of the old and the new buildings, while the latter only will be available to represent the value of both.

Now that is sound reason. He goes on to say—

A record, therefore, has been kept of all "equipment" so demolished or extinguished, and any excess of same over the value of "betterments," or works of improvement charged to working expenses, will be debited against profit and loss in the balance sheet. With reference to the replacement of obsolete rolling stock, the policy of providing for the replacement of locomotives after a life of twenty-five years in active service has been discontinued. the view that the sinking fund should

be sufficient having been applied also in this case. I regret that this view has been adopted, and consider that provision should be made for charging working expenditure with amounts for depreciation of locomotives, and crediting such amounts to a replacement fund until such time as it becomes necessary to replace them. In the course of general up-keep of rolling stock the original capital value of the asset is not only maintained but improved. The carrying capacity of wagons, for example, has been improved in recent years, and the draw-gear has been strengthened to the extent rendered necessary by the introduction of heavier engines and larger train loads. Such work had been gradual and has not appreciably affected the ordinary annual expenditure of the Department in any marked degree. The case will be very different, however, when large numbers of locomotives become obsolete within a comparatively short period of each other, and have to be replaced at heavy cost. Special provision should, I contend, be made year by year to meet such expenditure when it becomes necessary—as it inevitably will—in sums which will exceed the current financial resources of the Department or even of the State.

Then he goes on to quote practical figures.

The Premier : Every locomotive that is running to-day is in proper working order ; therefore they are not obsolete.

Mr. BATH : The Treasurer cannot contend that they represent the same value.

The Premier : They are in good running order.

Mr. BATH : The difficulty which confronts the department in regard to rolling stock, and which they propose to overcome by utilising loan fund for the construction of rolling stock, would have been, to a considerable extent, obviated by the continuation of that very wise policy of setting apart a certain sum each year for the replacement of rolling stock.

The Premier : If rolling stock has been maintained why do you want to replace it?

Mr. BATH: What I object to is using loan funds where we should use revenue. Undoubtedly the Treasurer will find that the main complaint which assuredly will be heard, and which will be uttered with considerable vigour during the current season, in regard to the scarcity of rolling stock, and the limitations placed on the mining and agricultural producers and consumers, will be largely attributable to this policy which has been adopted in order to obviate the necessity of the Treasurer casting about to raise revenue in order to balance his finances in a fair and square manner.

The Premier: That is not logical at all.

Mr. BATH: Then, again, the Treasurer repeated the statement which was made by his predecessor that the net loan indebtedness per head of the population, as set forth in the statistics supplied by the Statistical Department, is not to be accepted as accurate, simply because the unexpended loan balance has not been taken into account in estimating that net indebtedness. The Treasurer went on to point out that at the end of the last financial year we had an unexpended balance to the credit of General Loan Fund of over £1,900,000, but he did not say that by the time he delivered his Budget Speech that unexpended loan balance had been reduced by half a million pounds, so that the figures he gave were certainly not accurate.

The Premier: Yes; up to the end of the financial year.

Mr. BATH: The fact that it was reduced by half a million pounds only emphasises the argument I have urged against that being accepted as a fair method of comparison, because of the fact that so much of that money had been hypothecated for works that were under construction. As a matter of fact, the remaining balance has also been hypothecated for works which are under construction now. A fair comparison is on the basis of our indebtedness less the amount of sinking fund we have accumulated; because we have borrowed money and are paying interest on that money, and if we are calculating our indebtedness it should

be on the basis of the amount we owe. This basis of computation per head of population as a means of ascertaining whether our loan indebtedness is within a safe limit is a misleading and unreliable one, simply because the unit of population as we have it at the present time is not as productive as the unit of population was five years ago, and less productive than it was 10 years ago, for the reason that there has been an increase in the number of women and children compared with what I might term the producing males. When we have accurate figures, as we will after the census which will be taken in April of next year, we will then be able to estimate to what extent we have been misled by this argument as to the percentage per head of population. We will see that this comparison is a very misleading one indeed, and if on the other hand, we make a comparison on the basis of the producing males we will find that the position is not so sound and not so acceptable as the Treasurer would like us to believe. There is another and much more reliable method of calculation and one which, in my opinion, clearly indicates that since 1905 the Government's policy of loan expenditure is not so acceptable as in previous years. Comparing the percentage which the fund for interest and sinking fund bear to the revenue which we derive, we find it has been a constantly increasing amount. Of course, the Treasurer assures us that as we are receiving a much less sum from the Commonwealth than in previous years the comparison is not a reliable one, but I will eliminate the amount which is received from the Commonwealth. I will take purely State revenue derived within the boundaries of Western Australia, and still we find that the interest and sinking fund is adding more and more in greater proportion to the revenue which we derive, without taking into consideration the Commonwealth balance returned to us. As a matter of fact, in 1902 the proportion was 28 per cent. That percentage was stationary until 1905, and in 1906 we had the Government coming down with the policy of utilising general loan funds for expenditure on

public buildings, roads and bridges, and doubtful items under the heading of Development of Agriculture, and Development of Mining.

Mr. Underwood: And "Miscellaneous."

Mr. BATH: And as a result of that policy we find the percentage increased in five years from 28 to 32 per cent. That is a position which should give hon. members pause and make them inquire as to whether this policy of loan expenditure on non-reproductive works is one that we can follow in future, and whether the Treasurer, instead of clinging to this policy and saying that it is rendered essential by the financial position, should not devise other means of raising revenue and getting back to the old policy of confining our loan expenditure to purely reproductive works.

The Premier: When did you do that in Western Australia?

Mr. BATH: Up to 1905.

The Premier: You did not.

Mr. BATH: The fact that the payments for interest and sinking fund are an increasing percentage of our purely State revenue at once dissipates the argument which we have so often heard urged from the Government side that even if these are not reproductive works, that is public buildings and roads and bridges to which I have referred, that this expenditure of loan funds has its indirect influence in increasing the revenue. As a matter of fact these figures which I have brought forward show it has even had an indirect influence, and has perhaps had a retarding influence in connection with the revenue we derive from within the borders of Western Australia. Then again we have another policy pursued to which exception has been taken in this House, and to which the Government adhere, and we have had a complete change of front from the Government with regard to this matter, that is the reduction of the sinking fund. I remember in 1906, Sir Newton Moore, who was then Premier, scouted the idea indignantly that there was any intention on the part of the Government to make a reduction in the amount of the sinking fund on our loans, and then later on we had the

Treasurer declaring it was necessary, and finally in the Bill which was passed earlier in the session we had a reduction in the amount of the sinking fund to half per cent. carried in the measure then submitted to the House—The Inscribed Stock Act. I want to quote some remarks of the colleague of the Premier, the present Minister for Works, in regard to this question of the sinking fund. This is what the Minister for Works said in 1907, when he was in what might be termed an independent position, and when he declared the remarks were uttered out of no hostility to the Government, but out of the obligation he felt to place the position before the people of this State. He then remarked—

To me the establishment of a solid sinking fund is our only justification for borrowing money. All the time of our prosperity we have been praising the wise statesmanship that induced the leaders of political thought in Western Australia at the outset to establish a substantial sinking fund in connection with every one of the State's loans; we have been boasting of the fact that we were so much in front of the other Australian States in our financial affairs, in our financial knowledge and in our application of that knowledge, as was evidenced by the establishment of our sinking fund and our maintenance of it. Now, at the first breath of adversity, after advertising ourselves all over the world as far as we possibly could as a people who were determined to give evidence of our bona fides in borrowing, of our bona fide determination not only to pay back, but to pay back by a return of pounds sterling from the State to the borrower, instead of paying back by a redemption loan, in other words paying back one lender by borrowing from another; after advertising ourselves all over the financial world as a State that was determined to provide with every loan a sinking fund to redeem that loan, and to redeem it as near as possible at maturity—already there has been one or two loans redeemed, small loans it is true, by the operation of the sinking fund, and we

have not been slow either to advertise that fact in our Budget statements and in other ways, and we have rightly taken a large degree of pride in the fact that we were prepared to make certain sacrifices in order that our loans might be redeemed at maturity, or that the bulk of them might at all events be redeemed when they did mature—but now, I repeat, at the first breath of adversity. I hope the Government are not going to change that policy which has been established in Western Australia. It is only by means of the contributions to the sinking fund that Western Australia has of recent years, even with its increase of population, kept down its indebtedness within reasonable limits; and undoubtedly if any interference with the sinking fund took place it would be necessary that a corresponding reduction in our expenditure of borrowed money should take place at the same time. Otherwise it would mean keeping on our present expenditure, and year by year the loan indebtedness of the State per head would be going up to a considerable extent. The advantage of our sinking fund is that while we have borrowed and have been spending our borrowed money, we have managed by the operation of that fund to keep down so far, in fact to reduce for the last few years our total indebtedness per head instead of increasing it by our added loan expenditure.

This is the criticism which was urged by the Premier's present colleague against any proposal to reduce the sinking fund. And what did the same gentleman have to say with regard to the expenditure of loan funds on non-reproductive works. He alluded to what he termed an imaginary reduction of the expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue—

It is a reduction, however, which represents a delay in meeting public wants in some instances, and which represents in other instances a transfer from Consolidated Revenue to loan account. Here again, so far from a saving being effected by that transfer, there is a distinct State loss involved

in the action. We will take as an example that a building or work of a non-productive character has to be erected at a cost of £10,000, and that it has been customary we will say in erecting such a building, whether it be a printing office or a museum or half a dozen State schools, to meet the expenditure from Consolidated Revenue; but it is decided, in order to relieve the Consolidated Revenue, to spend the money from loan account. The effect of that is that we pay first of all £10,000 for the erection of the building or buildings, and then as the one per cent. of our sinking fund will take 46 years to repay the loan, we shall be paying during the 46 years the interest on the £10,000. Ultimately, before the loan is redeemed, we shall have spent for that building in the shape of interest £17,250—computing the interest at $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.—in addition to the £10,000 cost and value of the building. In other words, that one building constructed from loan account costs the country altogether before the loan is redeemed £27,250, instead of £10,000 represented by its value. That is the effect of transferring expenditure of a non-productive character from Consolidated Revenue account to loan account. This is the criticism which the Minister for Works urged against the policy which is pursued by the present Treasurer without a blush, and yet we hear not a word of criticism from the Minister for Works in regard to this policy at the present time. As a matter of fact by his inclusion in the Cabinet he condones the policy which he previously declared as inimical to the interests of the State. But we go further and we find that much of the revenue which is derived by the present Government is secured from the sale of Crown lands and the application of the funds therefrom to Consolidated Revenue. The Minister for Works in past years, and I will give him credit for it, has opposed the payment of these funds into Consolidated Revenue, and I agree with him there. They should be applied in any policy based on sound financial methods to a fund which would really be a capital

fund, and from the interest only would be applied the annual requirements. In the course of his remarks the present Minister for Works at that time said with regard to the use of these moneys—

The fund should be a loan from the State to the State; in other words the asset should be made a perpetually-existing asset that should for all time benefit the population of this State. And I believe that in course of time, if the fund were so treated, it would, it must, become so substantial that it would in time absolutely dispense with the need for our going for money to a foreign creditor; it would enable us to provide our own loan fund, and to develop the country at our own expense, without introducing any heavy burden at all, even temporarily, on our own taxpayers.

We find the policy of the Treasurer condemned by his present colleague, the Minister for Works. As a matter of fact the Minister for Works had absolute knowledge, and sound knowledge, of the lines upon which the finances of the State should be administered, and yet he is prepared to abrogate that policy, as a colleague of the present Treasurer and acquiesce in direct defiance of it, simply in order to retain a portfolio in the present Government. It is methods such as these; it is this disregard of the responsibility to the taxpayers of the State, that is directly responsible for the policy of drift; this disregard of sound methods which have been continually pursued by the present continuous Government since they have been in power. Further, we have had much self-adulation not only from the Treasurer, but also the Minister for Lands, with regard to what they term their development policy. One would imagine from the way in which it is spoken of that this was entirely due to the present Government. I have protested on previous occasions against any attempt on the part of the present Administration to take credit for the introduction of a policy of agricultural development and of opening up the lands of this State. As a matter of fact that policy was in force in this State long before the present

Minister for Lands came into Parliament, long before he was ever heard of as a candidate for Parliament. It was the policy advocated by one or two members that I see on the Government side of the House; it was a policy which was pursued by the late Hon. G. Throssell; it was a policy which was continued by his successor; it was a policy pursued by Mr. Drew, a member of the Labour Government, and which the present Government found in force when they came into office. As a matter of fact whatever policy the Government possess was borrowed from their predecessors. We find the Minister for Lands at the time he was passing some rude remarks about the claim of the present Premier to the position when he was ousted by Sir Newton Moore, declared—

It is no very difficult matter to put forward a policy, but I attach greater importance to the administration of the various departments. A policy may be borrowed or commandeered, whereas a vigorous administration can only emanate from a strong Government, encouraged by the unswerving sympathy of its supporters.

Then, rightly or wrongly, when he joined the Government and had as his colleague the man he had condemned, he evidently set to work to show his colleagues how they could borrow, or commandeer a policy, and evidently not having that power of initiative which is necessary in those charged with administrative duties, they coolly proceeded to borrow a policy from their predecessors *holus bolus*. That policy which previously they had roundly condemned, they appropriated line for line, and then within a short period gave members an evidence that they were not able to administer it. The man who was foremost in predicting that species of cleverness in commandeering a policy gave proof of his failure to conduct the office of Minister for Lands, and there was also the failure of his colleagues to administer the various offices over which they had control, and I say the neglect of the Ministry is due in a great measure to the apathy of their own supporters. Criti-

cism and watchfulness of the work of Ministers should not come wholly from members on this side of the House, and that is a point I want to emphasise on Ministerial members. They owe a duty to the people, as well as members who sit in Opposition, to watch Ministers and see that they control their administration and carry out their duties in a satisfactory manner. But, what do we find? We find that Ministerial members, and at the present time I cannot name an exception, are prepared to acquiesce in this absolute neglectfulness of their administrative work by the present Ministers of the Crown, until we have reached the stage that those Ministers have absolutely got beyond the idea that they are responsible to Parliament, directly responsible to Parliament, and that they are placed in those positions to administer the departments placed under their control. How is that evidenced? First, it is evidenced in the disinclination to meet Parliament. Why that disinclination? If Ministers were regardful of their duty they would be desirous of meeting Parliament, ready to place before members the work which they had accomplished. If Ministers looked after their administration, they would have a record of work to place before the House. But lack of administration—regard rather for political positions, or rather party position, causes this neglect of administration, and this disinclination to meet Parliament until the last possible date. And that has its accompanying evil in the time placed at our disposal. There is no proper time for the criticism of measures, or of the Government administrative work, and we find, having first committed the evil of avoiding Parliament, Ministers continue that evil in failing to answer criticism which is levelled against them. It is to that I attribute the maladministration which is continually being complained of. We have this complaint, not only by members in this Parliament, but voiced by thousands of citizens throughout the community, yet we can get no reply to this criticism. We can get no explanation of the acknowledged er-

rors which have been committed, and we had the spectacle of the Minister for Lands the other night speaking for upwards of an hour supposedly in reply to criticism brought against him in the House, and yet clearly neglecting to reply to any one of them, as if his duty as Minister placed him above any reply to criticism.

Mr. HUDSON: That was because he could not.

Mr. BATH: I want to point out, on the authority of those who regard the British Constitution, on which ours is supposed to be modelled, that there is something to be observed, and not to be disregarded; that the attitude of Ministers is in direct defiance of all British precedent. Todd in his work on *Parliamentary Government in England* in referring to the appointing of commissions states—

But it would be unconstitutional to refer to a royal commission "subjects which are connected with the elementary duties of the Executive Government and with its relations to Parliament"; or to investigate a grievance which arises out of a peculiar decision of Parliament, on a given question; or to appoint a commission with a view to evade the responsibility of Ministers in any matter; or to do the work of existing Departments of State, which possess all needful facilities for obtaining information upon questions of detail, and which are directly responsible to Parliament; or to inquire into acts of misconduct which may have been committed by a judge, or a Minister of State, which should be investigated by the House of Commons, or into the conduct of persons charged with criminal offences, except they be officers of the Crown, and the right of inquiry into their conduct by commission is expressly derived from an Act of Parliament. Neither should a commission be appointed unless the Government are prepared to give definite instructions to the commissioners.

This is the opinion of one whom the Attorney General will admit is a leading authority, if not the leading authority, on

the British Constitution, and yet we have Ministers acting in direct defiance of this.

The Attorney General: Even constitutional practice is not absolutely to be accepted.

Mr. BATH: The hon. gentleman will not deny that so long as Ministers occupy their positions they ought to be accountable to members for their acts of administration or neglect of administration. If the Attorney General denies this—

The Attorney General: This is a commission to inquire into corruption.

Mr. BATH: I am not talking about one special commission, but the general neglect of administrative work, and the continual refusal of Ministers to reply to criticism. I am not referring to that one particular instance, but to the general neglect of Ministers in answering criticism of their administration as if they were not accountable to this House. So long as they persist in this conduct, so necessary for safeguarding the principle that a Minister of the Crown shall be a member of Parliament—and the Attorney General knows very well that it is in defiance of the British Constitution for a Minister to act as if he was not responsible for his administrative work—

The Attorney General: I do not think any Minister does act so.

Mr. BATH: The Attorney General does for one. Repeatedly the Attorney General has been criticised for his administration, and he has refused, or refrained from replying. I will take a clear instance in what is known as the Berteaux case in which the Attorney General has refused to give to Parliament any account of his administration.

The Attorney General: No.

Mr. BATH: A debtor has been proved undoubtedly to have defrauded the State, and has been left to go unpunished, yet in this House the Attorney General has refused to reply and no member of the Cabinet will answer the criticism of members.

The Attorney General: I have explained it, and I have the papers here ready to place on the Table any time you like to move for them. I have given the fullest information.

Mr. BATH: The Attorney General has had many opportunities, and has refrained, or refused, from answering his critics.

The Attorney General: I have explained in a few words, if you will look up *Hansard*.

Mr. BATH: That is in keeping with the conduct of Ministers, in keeping with the conduct of the Minister for Lands. The hon. gentleman assures me that this is a commission inquiring into other charges, and not into lack of administration, and the hon. gentleman the other night was pleased to say that I was responsible for making what was mere criticism of administration, charges of corruption, and I want at this point to deny that. I do not want Ministers to evade their responsibility, to get out of the necessity of replying to repeated criticism of maladministration of this House by any attempt to construe my remarks into charges of corruption. What I grew indignant about that night was this: because a Minister was trying to evade replying to criticism and the Government were backing him up. On that occasion the member for East Fremantle moved the adjournment of the debate so that the Minister could reply to the charge of maladministration, not corruption, and yet that adjournment was refused. The Government insisted on a division, and later on having found the terrible blunder which they had committed they tried to stave off the trouble by saying these were charges of corruption. I repeat again they were charges against the administration of that Minister, similar to charges which had been hurled against other Ministers in regard to their constant neglect of administrative work. And until, not only from this side of the House, but from the other side we have members who are so very regardless of their duties as members as to demand that Ministers should account for their work, so long will neglect of administration continue. It is that policy to which I take strong exception. I have already said that whatever there is in the programme of the present Government that can be dignified by the name

of policy has been appropriated from the Government which was led by the present Minister for Works. But that policy was a well-ordered and well-considered one. As it were, it mapped out the State. It was a policy which was designed to develop our agricultural industry by a system of railways which were not advanced on political considerations but were reported on and submitted by a responsible board. It was a policy also which sought to apply the advantages which accrued from that developmental policy to the people generally and not to a limited few. The Government have borrowed the policy, but, as a matter of fact, only a few have reaped any advantage from it. We find that railways have been built, but there has been no conception in the minds of the Government as to how these railways could be built without merely encouraging a few speculators at the expense of what might be termed the general public. We find throughout the administration of the Lands Department in this so-called developmental policy, settling the people on the land, that the speculative element have been encouraged, and that they have been enabled to reap a rich harvest, while on the other hand those who are genuinely interested in developing their holdings are retarded at every step. There is not one railway hon. members can mention but what may be termed the St. George's-terrace type of farmers have been able to reap a rich harvest from it. One has only to turn up the daily newspapers every day to find the same thing occurring, to find holdings advertised for sale without a tittle of improvements on them, and to find the assistance rendered by the Agricultural Bank used as an advertising inducement to get people to purchase. If we are to get people to settle on the land, we do not want the speculator as an intermediate; we want to get right to the people who want to go on the land and use it; and can the Minister for Lands, or any of his colleagues, tell me that they cannot stem this policy, that they cannot devise means by which they can open up our lands without the speculator reaping a rich harvest from them? I say if there is not a keen, honest desire to establish such a

principle or to find means of circumventing the speculator, it can be found in a short time; but in spite of all the criticisms of the House, in spite of repeated protests, in spite of actual instances given, we find the same old policy pursued. Sir Newton Moore, at the time I drew his attention by questions to the doubtful methods being pursued by speculators in regard to lands north of Wangan Hills, promised that the Lands Department would go into the matter; and the present Minister for Lands has made the same promise; but we have only to turn up to-day's newspaper to find the same thing going on merrily and no attempt on the part of the Government to stop it. It means that men who are desirous of developing our land, who look forward to going on it to build up homes and clear and cultivate it, are unable to get land from the State in many instances; but by paying £100 or £200 or £300, as the case may be, they can go to these people who have done no development work and get the land; but they have to use money, which would come in very handy to develop the land, for the purpose of the preliminary process of going on to it in its natural state. That should not be part of the policy of any Government who appear to be genuinely desirous of opening up lands, and what I ask is that the Government should give some honest evidence of their desire to prevent it in the future. We have not had that evidence in the past, and we must have it in the future if we are not to discourage settlement instead of encourage it. The present Treasurer when he talks about the policy for the people has in his mind a very circumscribed number of people indeed. In fact, when he talks of the people he has in his mind people not many times more numerous than the Seven Tailors of Tooley-street, who addressed the King as "We, the people of England."

Mr. Underwood: And the shareholders of St. George's-terrace!

Mr. BATH: Yes; they are not many times more numerous. It is time the term "people" should be a wider and more embracing one, and that it should take in the whole of the people of the State. My protest is against the fact that, although

we have had a good season, although there is a prospect of encouraging development in the future, only a few are reaping the advantage, while the great bulk of the people go unregarded. Even in the policy of railway construction we have the Treasurer in effect making a gift of £10,000 so far as regards those railways included in the return laid on the Table, a clear gift of £10,000 to a set of contractors for nothing, a sum of £10,000 in excess of what our well organised Public Works Construction Department would have constructed the railways for—and, I guarantee, made a better job of it. Now, the Treasurer would not have done anything more objectionable or more evil if he had gone to these people and said, "I am in favour of private enterprise. Come along, I am going to encourage you. Here is £10,000 out of the Treasury." The Treasurer can declare and enjoy as much as he likes his preference for private enterprise, but I do strongly protest against the Treasurer, as a Minister responsible to Parliament and to the people, using the people's money, as it were, to gratify what, after all, are his private inclinations. When he takes a position as Premier, or as a Minister, he is there to watch over and guard the interests of the public; he is there, if necessary, to sacrifice his own private inclinations in the interests of that public; and we have not enough in the minds of our Ministers of that policy, of that deep-seated devotion to the interests of the public at large. It is not only in this instance of the extra payment to contractors over and above what the Public Works Department would have constructed the railway for, but it is in other directions. Turn to the *Public Accounts* for the last financial year. Looking over the items under the heading of "Development of Agriculture" we find items which have never been explained to members of the House. I protest against it. I say that members on both sides of the House should hold Ministers accountable to Parliament for expenditure of this kind. I will just read a few of the items. Here is Return 26 on page 91. We have the Denmark estate. In that instance a gentle-

man was paid £8 a week or £11 a week, I do not know which it was, to go all the way to New Zealand to gather grass seed which could have been secured by a cable message, and the New Zealand Government would have been only too glad as an act of courtesy to assist us. We have never had an account given to Parliament of the expenditure on the Denmark estate, as to the results, and as to how it balances. Again, in regard to special settlements. We have had no account to Parliament as to the results. The amount was voted from loan funds and there has been no account as to the result. Again, in regard to the vote for the purchase of stock for settlers. When was there ever an account given to Parliament as to what amounts have been repaid? There is no explanation in the *Public Accounts*, nor has there been any explanation or elucidation by Ministers so that members may know how the policy panned out. The same can be said of other items, such as "purchase of stud stock," "phosphatic deposits." A year or two ago we heard of the magnificent deposits opened up on the north coast west of Moora, and about the magnificent advantage they would be to the agriculturists of Western Australia, and as to how these phosphatic manures were to be placed on the market at about half the rate now charged to farmers. We have the item, "phosphatic deposits, £2,043," but that is all we know. We do not know whether there has been any development or what the Government are going to do in order to make these available to farmers at a fair rate. The Government simply apply the money and say, "Hang Parliament; there is no further need to worry about the matter." These are the things I object to, and the things which should be brought before Parliament and for which Ministers should be accountable. These are the acts of maladministration or evidences of lack of administration which hon. members complain about.

The Attorney General: You do not mean that we should go before a judge on these complaints?

Mr. BATH: Ministers are never tired of telling us of what they are going to

do in regard to railways, but we do not find that Ministers are rising above parochial considerations and giving regard to the interests of the State as a whole. Take, for instance, the delay in giving an answer or having an investigation into the proposal for the construction of a railway from Esperance. We are told the Government are desirous of opening up the land in that district, where on the authority of one of their inspectors we have some of the finest agricultural land in Western Australia, land that will produce 20 bushels of wheat to the acre. On the other hand, we have settlers who are anxious to get land, and people coming from outside complain of the difficulties they meet in securing land for settlement and send complaints to important newspapers like the *Bradford Observer* in the old country, complaints which undoubtedly do us a great deal of harm, complaints which, in my opinion, have hastened the resignation of the Acting Agent General in London because he had not the material with which to reply to them and had to state to the *Bradford Observer* that he would "make no further replies to the complaints." We have those anxious for land complaining that they cannot get it, and yet we have the Government hesitating and halting over the question of deciding whether this railway north from Esperance shall be constructed or not. I say they owe a duty to the State; and even if parochial considerations do work the other way, Ministers should rise above that and should have an investigation, and a prompt investigation, into the capabilities of that district; and if the Government regard the railway as warranted, the line should be constructed in defiance of all the parochialists who may utter their warnings in the ears of the Government. Now, in regard to mining, I hope at the present juncture the Government will take advantage of the fact that attention has been drawn towards Western Australia, that interest is being renewed in our mining in the great investing centre of London, that demands are coming from the Eastern centres of population in the Commonwealth and that there are a num-

ber of people on the lookout for mining propositions; and I hope they will utilise the opportunity for increasing the development of our mining resources. In the past, of course, there has been neglect. In the past the fair demands of those who have been working for many years in what may be termed a slack time in developing have been to some extent disregarded; but I say there is time to retrieve our error, and that at the present time we should give that encouragement to prospectors to open up shows for which later on we may have the opportunity of securing capital. We ought to seize the trend at the right time. We ought to take it at the flood time and utilise this opportunity not only for a sectional but for a general advance in the development of our mining industries throughout Western Australia. I have always regarded, for instance, that part of the country extending right from the Yilgarn railway to Black Range as a tract well worth prospecting, in which there is a possibility of opening up considerable areas of payable country; and with the encouragement given at the right time new fields would thereby be opened up, equal, if not superior, to Sandstone and Youanme. I hope attention will not be concentrated on the Bullfinch area but that regard will be paid to those other districts where men have been struggling for years past and have been sticking to the districts with the hope that their efforts would in the future be rewarded. These districts are worthy of encouragement just as much as is the Bullfinch area, and I hope that encouragement will be given by the present Minister. I also hope, and I do not know whether my hope will be realised, but I believe there should be made an earnest effort to apply the labour covenants on our mining leases. We have too long neglected to do this in the fear, to my mind imaginative, that it is going to retard the investment of capital or cause capitalists to take umbrage at the action of the Government. I believe that to-morrow, on fields like Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, we could largely increase the population, the number of those who are securing a living

from mining, if many of these areas were opened up to those who at the present time can only secure tributes thereon on the most exorbitant and unsatisfactory terms. Kanowna is another place. I am naming a few with which I am familiar, but they are only a few, where the tributer can only get uncertain or short tenure, and where the tribute is an exorbitant one. The tributer is absolutely handicapped and unable to carry on work in a legitimate fashion. If instead of having to pay tribute to shepherds he were placed in a position to work the claim for himself we would have many payable and long lived mining propositions opened up on the goldfields throughout the State. I do not propose to extend my remarks any further except to say I believe that if we are to reap the full advantage of the present advance in mining, if we are to reap the full advantage of these prosperous years which we are at present enjoying, and which I hope we will continue to enjoy in our mining, in our agricultural and in our pastoral industries, we must remember that these resources are not placed at our disposal for the benefit of the few but for the benefit of the many. The policy of the Government has not to be a policy framed in the interests of the favoured few; it has not to be one framed in the interests of those who dignify themselves by the term of private enterprise, but it must be a policy framed in the interests of the great bulk of the community. With our miners we have to give them opportunities for developing their properties without having to pay exorbitant tribute, without having to encounter severe disadvantages in carrying out their work. With the farmers, those who are desirous of farming the land and not farming the farmers, we have to give them ready access to the land without their having to pay toll to the go-between. We have to extend our efforts in regard to the agricultural bank; we will have to liberalise its provisions. We will have to do something in the matter of our farmers securing cheaper agricultural machinery, cheaper requisites for carrying on their work. In regard to the timber industry we will have to take more note of those warn-

ings repeatedly urged by the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen). We will have to recognise that the policy which has been forced upon the Governments of other countries in regard to the conservation of their timber resources is one which we also will have to adopt or we will find our timber resources at an end within a comparatively short period. We will have to go in for a policy of scientific conservation. I recognise that it is worth expending money on at the present time, not only in our own interests, but in the interests also of posterity, and I hope the Minister for Lands and his colleagues will awaken from their apathy on the matter and give earnest attention to this question of forest conservation. We will also have to recognise that if the pastoral industry is to be as beneficial to the State as it is to those engaged in it at the present time there must be a change of policy in connection with it; that there must be smaller areas; that we must have a greater population utilising our pastoral areas than at the present time. I remember when first I came into Parliament, before I had much personal knowledge of the agricultural and pastoral areas of Western Australia, I said the policy we ought to pursue in regard to this land in what I might term the doubtful rainfall was to adopt a system of grazing leases such as they have in New Zealand; not the conditional purchase leases which we call grazing leases here, but an actual lease. Then we could settle people on these areas in the Eastern country of, say, 10,000 or 20,000 acres, while in other districts they could be of, say, 50,000 or 60,000 acres instead of half a million as at the present time. By that means we would have a larger population drawing sustenance from our pastoral resources than under existing conditions. We would have a line of defence against the rabbits, because with these smaller areas it would be profitable to wire net the leases. Then, later on, when we found that by improved agronomical methods we could use this land for agricultural purposes, we would not have to pay exorbitant sums to buy the leaseholders out; because the land would be held on lease, and, always sup-

posing proper compensation for disturbance and resumption, we could resume the leases when agricultural science had made such strides as to warrant that course being taken. This is the policy to be pursued by the Government if we are to secure full development of our resources and to build up in Western Australia a happy and contented people.

Mr. HOLMAN: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes	15
Noes	21

Majority against .. 6

AYES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. Swan
Mr. Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Horan	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. McDowall	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Layman
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Dagllah	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Harper	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Jacoby	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): Before speaking on the vote for His Excellency, I would just like to make a most emphatic protest against the position taken up by the Premier in regard to the introduction of the Redistribution of Seats Bill. He has stated that while members on the one side of the House know what is in that Bill, members on the other do not.

The Premier: What has that got to do with the Estimates?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It has nothing to do with the Estimates, but when a number of people are suffering an in-

justice they have a right to discuss that injustice on the Estimates and to prevent the passing of supplies until satisfaction is received. That, I learn from the member for Kamowna, is a privilege that has come down to us from practically the first Parliaments in Britain.

The Premier: That is not right.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It may not be right, but I want to say that I am as good as any man in this Parliament, and I have as much right to information as any man in it. I say moreover that when that information is withheld from me it is an insult to me, and to the people I represent.

The Premier: You will get it at the proper time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We will get it at the proper time, but I am expressing my emphatic protest against this information being given to one side and withheld from the other. In these suspicious circumstances one might be justified in coming to the conclusion that the Bill is one of which the Premier is ashamed. In regard to the question of the finances, it has been well said by various writers quoted by the leader of the Opposition that finance is really the art of politics. With that sentiment I thoroughly agree, and further I am of opinion that one of the most important branches of finance is that in regard to the loan policy. After all no very great art of finance is required when we are paying our way. Any ordinary woodyard proprietor, or farmer, or miner, or other person can finance on those lines, and I am of opinion that wherever possible they are the safest and best lines to go upon. But, it has been found on occasions that loans are necessary, and sometimes it has been found by past Governments that in times of urgency loans should be floated for non-productive works; but it has been laid down by all men who are given credit for a knowledge of politics that it should be the duty of the Government of the day to pay their way as they go along in regard to ordinary expenditure. Therefore the construction of recurring works from loan money by the present Government cannot be too strongly condemned. We are told that after all pos-

terity has nothing to fear, that we have a perfect right to enter into undertakings and to build up a huge debt. In fact, some citizens seem to be of the opinion that it is a very clever thing to do, and there is much specious argument used in support of that policy. For instance the *Daily News* in dealing with the recent discussion on the object of the loan proposals laid it down that after all we are conferring a blessing on posterity, we are handing them down a splendid asset, and even if the asset is not paid for they will still have the asset. I just want to mention what some of these assets are. Amongst them is the asset of immigration, and judging by the considerable number of immigrants who have appeared at the police court and some of whom are down at Fremantle, posterity is not likely to find in them a very profitable asset, considering that posterity will also be left with the bill for their passages out here. Another asset that will be left to posterity is the telegraph lines. Some millions of pounds of loan money are being spent in Australia on telegraph lines, but it is easily within the bounds of possibility that in less than a score of years we will have wireless telegraphy, and then what sort of an asset will we have left posterity for the debt on the construction of the telegraph lines? We have in our own State up to date expended something like twelve million pounds upon railways. These railways are constructed on what is known as the narrow-gauge system. It has been, I believe, guaranteed by some past Government of this State that if the Federal Government will construct a railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie this State will be prepared to make the gauge uniform from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle. That being so, it must be apparent to everyone who has considered the question that it will be absolutely necessary in the course of a few years after the construction of that trans-continental railway to build a wide-gauge line from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle. When we build that line we will also have to alter the gauge of practically all the other lines in Western Australia, for after all we must bear in mind that this is a main

trunk line, and the other lines running on to it will have to be converted to the same gauge, or we will have rolling stock locked up in little bits of loop-lines all over the South-Western portion of the State. To reconstruct the lines, alter the platforms, and get new rolling stock will cost millions of pounds; in fact, of the twelve million pounds already spent on railways and rolling stock a very small amount indeed will remain when we have altered the gauge of our lines, and then we will have not only the debt on the construction of the narrow-gauge lines but also the debt on the construction of the wide-gauge lines, but we will still have only the one asset to hand down to posterity. Further than that, it is quite within the range of possibility that within a score of years the mono-rail, or some other improved method of locomotion will be introduced, and all the assets represented by practically the whole of our railways will disappear. But we will still have our debts; in fact, it seems to me that the only thing that is certain is the debt. That, like the brook, according to some financiers is likely to go on for ever, and we and our children are to continue for ever paying interest to the children and the children's children of the money-lenders of to-day. That is a system of finance I have protested against, and will continue to protest against. Most of the items I have mentioned are really what are termed productive works. Then again we have the non-productive works, and they are practically recurring works. For instance there is this Parliament building. I believe there will be a proposal on the Loan Estimates this year for the expenditure of £10,000 or £15,000 for the extension of this building.

Mr. Collier: We will oppose that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We will oppose it, but I am afraid our opposition will be unavailing. I trust, however, that some day there will be an Opposition strong enough to prevent this kind of finance. In my opinion long before that loan has run its course this building will have fallen down, at least the portion which we occupy to-day. I feel confident that there are many people alive to-day who will live to see this House

in ruins, which possibly will be before many of the members of to-day have gone to "another place."

The Premier: Is there going to be an earthquake?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No; but this building was put up on the jerry contract system, and the contractor made so much money out of it that he has not taken a contract since. It does not require a practised eye to see the places where it is already falling down, and those places demonstrate to even the veriest layman in building matters that this House is not going to last until the sinking fund has paid off the debt on its construction. Again, we have the public buildings. I ask any hon. member of this Parliament if he is of opinion that these public buildings are of any practical use to-day? The Government offices—the Lands and Surveys, and the buildings behind the Post Office I am speaking of—we recognise now are becoming totally useless, and the officers of the Lands Department find it is almost impossible to run the department in such peculiarly and badly constructed premises. These premises will have to be pulled down and rebuilt, and the places that we shall build will be left for posterity; a splendid asset, according to a writer in the *Daily News*. Again, we have the rabbit-proof fence, to which I have alluded a lot of times. The rabbit-proof fence, it is highly probable, will wholly fail to effect the purpose for which it was constructed. Further than that I, as well as many others, am of opinion that there was nothing to erect it for, for the rabbits would not live in that country. Only yesterday we noticed a report in the newspaper from the Chief Rabbit Inspector, Mr. Crawford, stating that the rabbits are now inside the second fence. They have been inside the first fence, as I said the other night, for a great number of years, and now we are told they are inside the second fence. I am convinced, and I have experience to back me up, that even if we had 50 fences the rabbits would eventually get inside all; therefore, there is no justification or warrant for constructing such a work as that out of loan fund, and what is certainly of a far more serious nature is

the fact that the work is being maintained out of loan. One would think that it would have been sufficient to construct it out of loan money and then at least keep it in a fair state of repair out of revenue, and if the revenue cannot do that, it is a poor old country that is not worth a fence. As a matter of fact, the only use the fence is to prevent rabbits getting into what might be termed the pastoral country. Rabbits will never remain in agricultural country if it is properly settled. Most of our pastoral lands pay rent to the State, and there is a huge revenue received from this source from the middle, western, and north-western portion of the State, and surely out of those land rents we could find sufficient money to pay for the upkeep and maintenance of the rabbit-proof fence. Then, again, we come to another splendid asset, the dinner at the Palace hotel, which was paid for out of loan money. When speaking on this the other night the member for Fremantle suggested that possibly I opposed this item from loan expenditure because I was not invited to the dinner. I will tell the hon. member for fear he does not know it, that I have put into the waste paper basket since I have been in this House more invitations to dinners, luncheons, and free feeds than any other hon. member in this Parliament, and it is quite possible that I will continue to do so, and take no particular credit for virtue with regard to the matter. As a result of that dinner all that posterity will have will be the old menu and the bill. Another item we find on the Estimates (that same paragraph the member for Brown Hill referred to) is No. 26, Eastern journalists visit, £181. This is an asset to hand down to posterity, and those who are to hand it down to posterity certainly should not endeavour to take any credit for it. I trust that the time will come when Western Australia will return men to this Parliament who will find means for paying for such things as visits of Eastern States' pressmen, dinners for distinguished visitors, rabbit-proof fences, and all that kind of stuff out of revenue, and I trust further that they will also endeavour to find money

to construct some of our reproductive works as well as non-productive works out of revenue. In speaking the other night I said I was opposed to loan funds for reproductive works when it is possible to construct them out of revenue, and I am still, notwithstanding the rush some members made to get away from that, in favour of constructing all the works we can out of revenue. It has been stated that this is not the Labour policy. Perhaps it is not, but I want to say clearly it is my policy, and it is the policy that I put before my electors before I came to this House and when I was returned on the second occasion. But with regard to the Labour party's policy, the Labour party's objection is to the securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by collective ownership of industrial and economic functions of State and municipality. If collective ownership means paying out of revenue, I am at a loss to know the meaning of those words. They do not appear to me to mean that we shall be collective mortgagees and that the real owners shall be some money-lenders, most probably in another part of the world. I would point out, in my opinion, the workers and producers can never get the full benefit of their labours while we have to pay a toll for the money. We know to-day that many of our railway men are not receiving wages that men should be receiving for the work they are doing in a State like this. In the Midland workshops we have any amount of men, and men who have been there a considerable time, good men, working for 8s. a day, and we have some who are getting 8s. 6d. There are many occupations in connection with those works for which 8s. 6d. is the top wage being paid and the highest wage which the men can possibly get. All our fitters, permanent way men, and interlocking men get 8s. a day, and that is the highest they can earn. I say that such a wage is not one that should be paid to any man in Western Australia, and the State should certainly endeavour to pay a considerably higher wage to the whole of these employees. I contend that men should be able to work up to at least 10s. a day in a State like this. Why cannot they do that? We

find we have to pare, cut, trim, and economise in our railways and scheme to pay interest. The greatest expense in connection with our railways is the interest upon them.

Mr. Jacoby: They would not be there at all if it had not been for the money we borrowed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Still I am of opinion, and I shall show it before I sit down, that it is possible to construct railways without having loans, and we will find, I think, that the Federal Parliament will construct some railways without loan money. We heard in connection with the recent tramway strike—I use the word strike and charge the expression up to Mr. Justice McMillan—we were told that the company which was making huge progress could not pay decent wages because of the interest which was being taken from the company by the bond holders. The bond holders, they stated, were getting five per cent. and the shareholders 1½ per cent., and the men who were driving the trams and doing the work were getting a bare living wage and were working under conditions which were quite unfit for Australians, and the plea was that they could not pay better wages because of the London bond holder. We are told on every occasion that the London bond holder is preventing the workers of Western Australia from getting what I consider to be a fair and decent return for the work they do. We were met with the same proposition in the Arbitration Court with regard to the timber industry.

Mr. Jacoby: How much does protection take out of the worker's pocket?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I cannot exactly say. I have not reckoned the amount up yet, but I hope to inform the hon. member before the Redistribution of Seats Bill is introduced. We were struck with the proposition in the Arbitration Court that the timber combine could not pay wages because the bond holders and capitalists did not get their pound of flesh, and until they had their pound of flesh the workers must take anything that was left over. Again, take this position. We say it is the policy of the country to build State works with the view of allowing the producers to get a fair return and to abolish the pro-

fit of the middleman, and we put up this position, that we will not allow the middleman to get a profit out of a flour mill but we will build a State flour mill, and instead of giving the profit to the middleman who is almost always in Western Australia, we will pay it in the shape of interest to the money-lender in London. I want to say with regard to this matter that I am not convinced by any means at all that Australia cannot get out of the pawnshop; I am convinced that Australia can. I want to say that I know as well as any other man that it would be impossible to introduce immediately a policy of total non-borrowing. There are many works of urgent necessity the money for which cannot be obtained from the people without causing great inconvenience and, possibly, distress, and, therefore, to tide them over for some time we float a loan but the position is, it is only fair and bare honesty to pay for our general expenditure out of revenue. The first thing to be done in my opinion in Western Australia is to pay for all non-reproductive works out of revenue, and to put aside a sum of money for a fund for the construction of the reproductive works out of revenue. The member for Brown Hill has suggested, and I have heard the suggestion before, that we should devote some, or all of the revenue from land sales for the construction of public works, and with this proposal I thoroughly agree. I hold, in fact, that it is the absolute duty of the present generation, the people of the present time, to return to the land that which they take from it or an equivalent to it. If we part with the fee simple of the land the least we can do is to place the money to a fund for the construction of works to serve the land, and, as I say, it is necessary in the first place to pay our ordinary expenditure, and then to set aside a small sum, to begin with, for the construction of works out of revenue. By the adoption of this system it would not be long before we would be in a position to considerably increase the amount set aside for the construction of works out of revenue, and each year as we go on constructing, the total abolition of borrowing would be nearer and made easier of attainment. It has been said we cannot

build our railways out of revenue. I know we cannot build them all at the present time. The world was not built in a day, but a start must have been made on some day, and it seems to me it should be the desire of Australians to get out of the clutches of the money lender. If we are going to do that the sooner we start the better. There was a certain day when the world started to be built, therefore we should have a day when we start to get away from the curse of borrowing. I repeat I cannot see how it is possible for the people of this country to get the full benefit of their labour while we are paying toll to the money lender. The policy of endeavouring to return full value for labor under the loan policy is something like a woman trying to win a race in a hobble skirt. It has been stated here several times that the Australians will not provide revenue for the construction of railways, and the member for Swan just interjected that if it was not for the loan policy we should have no railways. I am of the opinion that the people of Western Australia are quite prepared to do a lot of things if they only get the chance of doing them. It is a pretty general opinion that there is no real patriotism in the Australians. We have had recently in Australia a German scientist by the name of Manes, and he came practically to the same conclusion. He said—

Nowhere has the citizen more extensive rights and fewer obligations. . . . Australasians are admirers of their own countries, yet lack true patriotism; for patriotism must be judged by the sacrifice one is prepared to make for the fatherland.

The learned professor could easily, without being in any way dense, arrive at that conclusion. I am confident that the reason Australians have not made a sacrifice is because they have not been asked to make a sacrifice yet. The only time the Australian electors had a fair clear run at a non-borrowing policy was at the last federal election. It was clearly laid down there that if the Labour party were returned they intended to repeal the loan authorisation Bills of the Fusion Government, and the response of the Australian electors on that occasion has passed into

history, and it will be a prominent mark in history for a long time to come. I want to say further that the most popular measure that has been passed in the Australian Parliament during the session just closed was the Bill repealing the loan authorisations of their predecessors. Even the great Sir John Forrest could not get up and say a word against it, and the *West Australian* and the *Daily News* both struggled and never mentioned the fact that the Labour Government had repealed the Bill to borrow three million pounds for defence purposes, because they knew that the people of Australia thoroughly agreed with it. There were a few remarks made the other night, statements by way of interjection, that the Federal Labour party intended to build the Trans-Australian railway out of loan money. I do not think anybody, I am sure I am not, is empowered to speak on behalf of the Federal Government. It is quite possible that the Government will build that railway out of loan money. On the other hand I am convinced of this, that if they can find revenue they will build the railway out of revenue. They will only build it out of loan money if they cannot find it possible to build it by any other means. That is the policy I am advocating. I have yet to be convinced that it is absolutely necessary to build that railway from loan money. I feel pretty confident that a fair portion of the cost of that railway will be borne from the Consolidated Revenue. I want to say in conclusion, on the question of borrowing, that whether I am out of step or not I am still opposed to borrowing, and hold this, that we can never get that prosperity in Australia that we are entitled to unless and until we have decided that we will get out of the pawn shop. I have no doubt whatever as to the opinion of the people of Western Australia, and I am confident that if given a vote on this question they will return a very large majority in favour not only of the construction of all non-reproductive works out of revenue, but a portion also of the reproductive works from the same source. I do not think it is necessary to go through the other parts of the financial

statement, as several other speakers have already been through them to some extent. There is one question which I think is deserving of a few remarks and that is in regard to immigration. I do not know that I have much to say on the question. The member for Cue reminds me that what I have said before on the matter is worth while saying again. I desire to point out the utter futility of spending money in this connection. The fact that we are advertising and to a very great extent paying men to put up a case that is not according to fact is not going to improve the position of Western Australia by one immigrant. I have just come across a cutting from the "Sunday Classic." I think that is the name of the paper.

Mr. Troy: What is classic?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Well it knows something about Latin I take it. At any rate it is the *Sunday Times*. I look upon this paper as a classic because it deplored the fact that I did not know anything of Latin. I may say in passing that previously I did not know the *Sunday Times* was a Latin paper. I should have thought French was its strong point, French learned in Brookman Street. This cutting says—

The London papers are devoting some attention to the Bullfinch find, but are not giving it one-twentieth of the space that they lavished on the Bitter Creek "blue duck"—the finding of a few colours in British Columbia.

This is the point I wish to impress on members—

But then Canada runs an alert Press agency in London, whereas W.A. rubs along with a typist and a stamp-licker and a travelling lantern lecturer, and similar futilities.

The position is this. What we are asked to do is to appoint more Press agents who take twenty times as much space in dealing with a "blue duck" or a few colours as has been devoted to the Bullfinch mine, and this is what the Government tell us will do such a large amount of good for Western Australia, and provide us with such a number of immigrants. It says that the Bullfinch has not received

one-twentieth of the space which a "blue duck" swindling mine in Canada has received. You have still to bear in mind notwithstanding the very little space we received in the London papers we were able to float, and by the market to sell a mine, practically only a pothole for a million and a-half of money. And if we can do that without these Press agents I am convinced we do not want Press agents there. I am convinced by the share market and the sale of other properties in the vicinity of Bullfinch that have taken place in London that we have been sufficiently advertised there, and if we were to have more than that it would be liable to do us more harm than good. I have explained the position before as to the Press. They, of course, advocate advertising. It is quite right that they should, because they get money for it. It would be rather foolish not to advocate advertising, but I certainly think that they should pay somebody to write a few paragraphs to put a little bit more logic in the paper. They deplore the fact that Western Australia has not paid pressmen to lie about matters and swindle the people of London with bogus gold mines. I trust the Parliament will never pass money to swindle the people of London or anywhere else. While we have got a genuine mine or genuine agricultural land I have not the slightest fear we cannot sell them when we want to do so, and the fact that we sold the Bullfinch as I said just now for such a phenomenally high price for the work done on it, indicates clearly that if we put only a stamp likeer in London he is sufficient to advertise the good things done in Western Australia. I have mentioned before the somewhat specious method adopted by Sir Newton Moore in this connection when he read the telegram in regard to farmers' wives. The statement handed out to the women of England that our farmers wanted wives, led them to believe that all they had to do was to land in Western Australia and they would have husbands already provided for them. I do not mind the case being clearly stated if it is necessary to state it at all; and if we state the question fairly to the women of England, what can we tell them? We can tell them

that there is employment in Western Australia for domestic servants, and that there is room for a few barmaids and tea-shop girls, but that when it comes to a question of finding husbands they have to compete in a well-stocked market against some of the finest women in the world. In my opinion—and I am somewhat of a judge—there is no part of Australia, at any rate, where there are better women and finer potential mothers than are to be seen any day in the week, and on Sundays, in Perth. The marvel is to me that any man can remain single. He must be a poor sort of a farmer indeed that cannot get a wife in Western Australia. I guarantee that he could pick up an odd one or two—I could do it some years ago—at Bunbury. I believe that he would even get one or two in Sussex. That is one thing we are very well provided with, and all first-class too. As I have said before, I hold it is not necessary to advertise. If we have a good thing, if we are able to offer good wages and constant work, the people of other parts of the world will find it out for themselves, just as I found it out for myself when there was not only no advertising but the whole of the Press of the Eastern States was doing its utmost to prevent people from coming to Western Australia, and telling them that Western Australia was not a good place to come to. We came in spite of that, and we have another instance of it occurring at the present moment. For many years past the tendency has been in November and December for a very large number of people to leave Western Australia for a trip East; there has always been an excess of departures over arrivals in these two months; but at the present time we find, now we have the Bullfinch boom and other mines producing fairly good gold, and new goldfields districts being opened up, and the agricultural industry a success, for the first time we have a surplus of immigrants from the Eastern States during these two months, and I have been informed that the boats coming from the East have all their space taken up right up to the end of this year. Of course this is due to the fact that we have some new gold mines, and that there is work here and reasonably good wages for

the people when they come. We have had an office in Melbourne for four or five years, and have spent thousands of pounds on it, yet one good gold mine will do more in six months than that office could do in six years—I go further and say in six hundred years; in fact the office would never bring in any. If there is nothing here to come for, they will leave when they get here. If there is anything worth coming for they will find it out for themselves. That is better than having a little shop window in Collins-street, Melbourne. I am reminded that it is only a few years ago that, without having any agents in Western Australia, or without spending a penny in advertising for immigrants, New South Wales, and to a lesser extent Victoria, received a large number of people from Western Australia. It will ever occur that if we have a good country for them to come to the immigrants will come to it. I am confident that in the next few years, and I believe continuing for a great many years, there will be a great deal of progress apparent in the whole of Australia, not only in Western Australia. We find that practically throughout the whole of the continent there are no unemployed, and that wages are rising; and looking ahead, there are some very large and important works to be carried out; and before they are carried out wages will be considerably higher. We must bear in mind that we have two long transcontinental railways to build, and I have every confidence in the Labour Government will build both of them. We have the revival of mining in this State; we have also the assurance of a large increase in agricultural produce; and if we get anything like good land legislation, there will be enormous agricultural progress in this State. We have to bear in mind also that the Labour Government in New South Wales have decided to open up iron mines at Lithgow in conjunction, of course, with a coal mine; and we will then be in the position of requiring mechanics to construct railway material; also all descriptions of miners and iron foundry men. We will also require a large number of navvies, and an increase of gold miners for this

State. This is the state of affairs that is most likely, after all, to secure the incoming of a large number of immigrants. When we go to the old country, to England, as we mostly do, looking for immigrants, we must perforce get practically town people. It is impossible to get any bushmen. There are no ring-barkers in England; there are no roughriders there except on tram cars and 'buses; there are no fences there; in fact there is no bush there. It is absurd to expect it, and we will never find it, except in a very few instances, that we can go to London and obtain men who will be suitable for bush work. Our immigrants obtained in London, or in any part of England or Europe, will, therefore, not be men to go upon the land straight away and open up that land successfully; but they will be able to go as navvies and as miners to a lesser extent; and the opening up of these avenues of employment will fit them to go upon the land after they have served some time in other occupations in Australia. It is absolutely necessary for almost every ordinary labourer coming from England to get used to Australia before he can hope to be successful as an Australian farmer. This being the case, I am convinced that there is no necessity whatever to rush to London to get farm labourers; because after all there are very few of them there, and we will only get town bred men and women, and these are people who will come to Australia of their own accord if there is work for them to do and if the wages are here; and the better class of men will come when they have to pay their own passages. So there is no necessity to make such an awful rush to get people to occupy our lands. We are selling something like two million acres a year. We sold two million acres last year, and we have sold, so far, something like seventeen million acres. After all, we have only seventy million acres within the rainfall belt altogether, and there is not half of it cultivable land.

Mr. Scaddan: It is reckoned at one-third.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That would be about twenty-five million acres. We have already sold seventeen million or eighteen

million acres, and we are selling two millions each year. If we run on at that rate, in six years time it will not be a question of requiring settlers for our land, it will be a question of requiring land to put our settlers on. There will be no difficulty in selling the good wheat land possessed by Western Australia. The fact that all the people of Western Australia are now rushing to get a cut into this land is proof that it is not necessary to send out of Western Australia to be able to sell every acre of first-class wheat land we possess; and as soon as it is possible to get that land surveyed I am confident we will find applicants for it. The only thing I am afraid of is that we will not get applicants—we may get the applicants, but they will not be from men who intend to put that land to its proper use, that is, cultivation. And the question that comes to my mind, the very great danger that appears to me, is that in a very few years we will have sold all our land and will have no land to offer either to settlers coming into the State or those already here. And yet our lands will not have been put to those uses to which they must be put if the country is to progress as it should do and as we expect it to. This brings me to the question of the land policy. I have no desire to enter into the discussion that took place on the no-confidence motion. Still I may be excused, perhaps, if I make a slight passing reference to some matters that were touched upon on that occasion. The most prominent thing, according to the Press, was the crushing and annihilating reply of the Premier to his critics. If you were to take out of the leading articles of the local papers "the crushing reply," "the annihilating reply," "the scathing reply"—if you remove these phrases from the leading articles the residue would not half fill the space usually devoted to leading articles. But it is to me peculiar that after making such a crushing and annihilating reply to his critics, after having proved beyond all shadow of doubt to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of his Press har-rackers that there was nothing whatever in the charges made by the Opposition—that after all that the Premier should have

appointed a judge to see if there was anything in those charges. However, I am quite prepared to listen to some more crushing replies; and if the criticisms of the Opposition are not more crushed before the next general election than they have been so far I am pretty certain that in the next Parliament I shall be speaking from that (Ministerial) side of the House.

Mr. Scaddan: You will be giving some crushing replies.

The Minister for Mines: You will be crushed yourself.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It will not trouble me, for I may win Menzies yet. There are one or two other matters I wish to touch upon. For instance, in regard to that letter which appeared in the *Sunday Times*, there has been no crushing reply to that yet. The statement was very clear and distinct, and the letter was an original one. It has not yet been proved a forgery nor has there been any attempt to question the correctness of it, or not to any extent. I contend that notwithstanding the annihilating and crushing replies of the Premier that letter still remains unanswered. It is up to the Government to answer it. It is, in my opinion, somewhat futile to carry on a debate which is replied to by files from the department attacked. We have here, for instance, files brought down in connection with land taken up under conditional purchase by Mr. W. N. Hedges; and the file proves that the statement was absolutely wrong. It had been said that Mr. Hedges held 20,000 acres South of Doodlakine, but the file proves beyond all shadow of doubt that Mr. Hedges has only 2,000 acres. What the files does not prove, what the Minister and I, and probably every other member knows, is that Mr. Hedges does control 20,000 acres there. There are only 2,000 acres in his name, 2,000 acres in his wife's name, 2,000 acres in his son's name, 2,000 acres in his aunt's name. Then, when he has run through his own family he comes on his partner's name, until Mr. Hedges has 2,000 acres, and nine others have 2,000 acres, and it is all in one block and worked as one block under the control of Mr. Hedges. And there is no shadow of

doubt, notwithstanding the file, that Mr. Hedges brought 70 Italians, a truck load of them, down to clear this land. Imagine 70 Italians, woodcutters, on 2,000 acres ringbarking! Why, they would kick the bark off it, they would eat it off if they were hungry, in less time than they were there. The position is that, although the file will never show it, Mr. Hedges has 20,000 acres of land South of Doodlakine, and, according to the maps, the Wickiepin-Dowerin railway is being bent in so as to come very near to that block of land. I do not know why it is bent in; all I have been told is that there is an elbow in that line, and that elbow comes in close to where Mr. Hedges' 2,000 acres are.

Mr. Seaddan: That is to miss a sandplain.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, no doubt. I am only mentioning this case as one of many, for Mr. Hedges is not the only one accumulating large estates in this country; in fact, there are only a few men of any means who are not doing it. It is not necessary to go out of the House to find men who, of course, make no bones about it and do not feel ashamed of it, of the fact that they are accumulating large estates. But this is the position in regard to Mr. Hedges' land: Mr. Hedges gets 20,000 acres at 10s. an acre, and under the system he has adopted he can clear that land easily for £1 an acre. That is £20,000 which, in addition to the £10,000 he has paid for the land, totals £30,000. This land is among the very best wheat land in the State. Mr. Hedges' land is far better for wheat-growing than that of the Avondale estate at Beverley and will produce better crops than the wheat land at Beverley. We have recently paid £5 5s. an acre for land at Beverley, and will produce better crops when cleared will be worth £100,000; he pays £10,000 to the Government for it, he clears it for £20,000 and, therefore, can show a clear profit of £60,000 or £70,000 on the deal. It seems to me the position is worth looking into, and is one that should not evoke amusement and mirth when one is discussing it. The figures are absolutely unanswerable. The Gov-

ernment have bought the land at Beverley; Mr. Hedges' land is better land and can be cleared at £1 an acre.

The Minister for Lands: What about the cost of fencing and putting down dams?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is of no use the Minister's trying to bluff on this subject. As a matter of fact, the fencing on the Avondale estate will not come to anything very great, and it is highly probable it will not be suitable when the estate is cut up into small holdings. In regard to buildings and other improvements which have been put on the Avondale estate, they will be of little use to the small farmers. I said five guineas per acre was paid, but, as a matter of fact, £5 10s. per acre was paid for the Avondale estate. I am allowing that the Avondale estate is equal, perhaps, to this of Mr. Hedges' or that it is very nearly as good as Mr. Hedges'. I am told the Avondale estate is not all first-class land; but that is quite another question and one upon which I intend to make a few remarks later on. I just want to say I certainly disagree with the weighing out of the land in the manner in which it is being weighed out to Mr. Hedges and hundreds of others in the State. It is, in my opinion, absolutely robbing the people of the State of what should justly be their inheritance. And if we are looking for a means of getting money to construct works out of revenue, then there is no possible doubt we can do some thing in the way of clearing this land and selling it as cleared land instead of buying Avondale estates. I may say the member for Mt. Magnet amused me a few days ago with the story of the great Dane who came here and got himself interviewed. I never thought there was a great deal in it, because, after all, any bounder can always take down the person looking for bounders, and the Press will always give him an interview and point out his modesty. When Jack Johnson arrived here he was met by Pressmen, and the great outstanding feature the Pressmen saw in him was his modesty. No wonder they admired the big Dane. Now, in regard to this same

Avondale estate the position is as I have put it. The Government decided they would buy an estate in Beverley for something like five guineas an acre, and I have just shown that they could have gone on their own land; they have millions of acres of it, and could have cleared and improved that land equal to the improvements on the Avondale estate for something like 25s. per acre. With that £55,000 they could have cleared and improved equal to the improvements on the Avondale estate 50,000 acres. They tell us they are looking for land which is improved so that the settler may go upon it. They paid £50,000 for 10,000 acres when they could have cleared 50,000 acres for the same money and, instead of putting 10 families on the land, they could have put 50 families on it for the same cost. A Government that goes in for this kind of transaction are certainly open to serious criticism. I noticed recently that in New Zealand a land Commission has been sitting; and it was found that although members of Parliament acted as agents they did not by this actually break the law. But the Commission brought in a report that in their opinion it would have been better if those members had not acted as agents. I am of opinion that it would have been better if this estate had not been purchased from a member of Parliament, and had not been introduced to the Government by another member of Parliament who, I daresay, received a commission. Now I just wish to say that in regard to the administration of a big department there are sure to be many mistakes made, and I am not to-night, at any rate, going to find fault with the general administration of the department. What I protest against is the vogue that has been allowed to grow up in connection with our lands system which permits of dummying with the greatest possible ease. We are working under a Land Act that practically makes no attempt whatever to suppress or prevent the dummying of land; and naturally it has the support of Ministers and Ministerial followers, for the reason, as I have pointed out, that they believe in large estates. There is no shadow of

doubt the Minister for Lands himself is building up a large estate. The Speaker also is an accumulator of broad acres; in fact, as I have said, almost all the members on the other side of the House who have any money at all are accumulating agricultural land as fast as they can put acre on to acre.

Mr. Piesse: What do you call large estates?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Anything over 1,000 acres.

Mr. Walker: How much have you?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Seven hundred acres. Of course, as I said, they thoroughly agree with this policy because they adopt it and they are using it themselves. Therefore we have them pretending to attempt to prevent the accumulation of large holdings. But the attempt is mere hypocrisy. It has been carefully provided in certain clauses of the Act that a man cannot hold more than 1,000 acres, but there are several other clauses which nullify that provision. As a matter of fact there are several means by which a man can hold 100,000 acres of Western Australian land if he has the money and can pass the Land Board. He can acquire 1,000 acres under residential conditions and another 1,000 acres under non-residential conditions, and he can transfer it after two years. Consequently there is nothing to prevent him lending money to lots of people to take up land and then have the land transferred to him after two years' time. That is being done. Then again there is another clause under which a man can take up land and pay for it outright in twelve months. If that can be done there is nothing to prevent a man taking up as much land as he likes for himself, his children, his wife, and his mother; and yet we have the Government pretending that they are making an attempt to prevent the accumulation of large estates in this country. The Press, of course, also support the Government and tell us that "the Premier in his usual effective style made a crushing reply." Why is this? Because Dr. Hackett is also an accumulator of land. Mr. Lovekin of the *Daily News* is a fairly large holder of agricultural land, and a couple

of shareholders that I know of in the *Sunday Times* are also large holders. In fact I am not too sure that the same Mr. Hedges is not a big shareholder in the *Sunday Times*, and that would account for that journal's enthusiasm about the Premier's crushing replies. I do not want to take up the time of the Committee; in fact, I always try to be as brief as I possibly can, but I cannot help referring to an article which I read a short time ago in the *North American Review*. It pointed out very clearly the great evil that occurred and is now operating in the United States in connection with this same accumulation of large estates. It called attention to several districts which had previously been held for years, and in some cases hundreds of years, by small holders. Eventually the land had been commercialised and converted into large holdings. Machinery had been introduced and the land was worked on a system such as is still adopted in the factories, or in other parts it had been let to tenant farmers on the share system. The result had been that town after town had lost its population. The churches had become vacant and had fallen to pieces for lack of use. Schools had become unoccupied, and all the rural prosperity and happiness that had been prominent in those districts before had disappeared. The old holders had sold out and gone to live in the city, the commercial man had come along, and the land was being tilled with a nomadic form of labour, because there are only certain seasons of the year when agricultural labour is necessary. The class of man who had replaced that best type that any country can have, the yeomanry, consisted of some of the poorest and worst men, intellectually and morally, in the United States. That was what occurred in the United States. It has occurred in many other countries, and has happened very much nearer home, in Victoria, and to a lesser extent in New South Wales. Yet we have the Government and their supporters, because they are getting a few acres for themselves, prepared to see this country go anywhere and to anybody, so long as they can accumulate

large estates, which later on they will be able to sell at a considerable profit, or let out to the tenant-farmer slave on the share system. There is just one other matter in regard to land settlement that I wish to refer to, and that is the absurdity—if I was in a declamatory mood I would say assinnity—of giving land away under the free homestead block system. This is an idea no doubt invented for the meretricious advertiser. Possibly it looks well on a poster, and no doubt the limelight lecturer, who is not intelligent enough to think of other interesting matter, can pad in a few minutes by talking on the fact that we are giving away 160 acres. As a matter of fact 160 acres is not sufficient for a man to get a living on, and no man would take 160 acres unless he takes more and alongside it, except he intends to sell it. No man that knows anything at all about the business starts a farm on 160 acres of our wheat-growing land. Then why put up the position that we are giving away 160 acres? Either we are giving away what is of no use or we are giving away something to a man out of which he is going to make a huge profit. I know dozens of men who have taken up free homestead farms in this State simply for the purpose of selling them to the adjoining holders. That is done repeatedly. It is held that you cannot sell the land for a certain number of years, but I have just been explaining how you can get through the Act, not with a coach and four but with a Nor'-West wagon and sixteen, and they are selling these homestead blocks all over the State. A man takes up a block of land, and beside it is a little vacant area. A rouseabout applies for that area as a homestead lease. It costs him about £4 all told, and if it is anything like land he is able to sell it to the adjoining holder at about £1 per acre, leaving him a profit of over £150. Then again the Government have laid it down that one thousand acres is the smallest area on which a man can earn a living. Therefore what is the use of 160 acres? They go further and charge a man what they think the land is worth, and then they cut out of his block the 160 acres for a homestead lease and charge to the re-

maining 800 acres the area which they have given away, and the only result is the cost of two surveys and the fact that the holder has two deeds instead of one. If you are giving 160 acres away as a homestead lease why sell the selector 1,000 acres on the system of cutting out the homestead lease and putting the genuine selector to the expense of a survey just for the simple reason of being able to say we are giving away 160 acres, at the same time telling the people that 160 acres is of no use, or giving some loafer an opportunity of making £150 or so without giving any return for the money? In regard to this question of compelling people to take up 1,000 acres, I hold that 500 acres of first-class land is ample for any man to get a living on. I would be quite prepared myself to go on 500 acres and would have every confidence of making a very comfortable living on it. The Minister for Lands will argue that it cannot be done. But at the same time we have this position: During the first twenty years of his agreement, the man has to pay off the price of the land, which would be 1,000 acres at say 30s., equal to £1,500; he has to clear and fence it and find water, all of which costs probably another £1,500. He has to buy his stock and machinery and build a house, and that involves another £1,000. He has got to do all that in twenty years, and has to make say £250 a year for a living. His land of course is not cleared when he starts and he does not get any crop for a couple of years. If he can comply with these conditions on 1,000 acres he can do very well with 500 acres and get a much better living than members of Parliament at any rate. I want to say something in regard to the rabbits and the system adopted by the Vermin Board. My land is in between the two fences; the rabbits too are locked in between the fences and there is some satisfaction in the fact that they cannot get out. The inspector of the district travels around occasionally and finds some traces of rabbits. I believe undoubtedly there are a few rabbits in the district, and the settler gets a notice to this effect: "Traces of rabbits have been found on your holding.

You are hereby instructed to destroy them immediately or proceedings will be taken and you will be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law." And there are all sorts of pains and penalties threatened. The whole thing is an absurdity, because the settler cannot destroy these rabbits. It is impossible to get through the uncleared bush with the poison. To poison rabbits successfully an open place is necessary where one can take a cart containing the poisoned or phosphorised wheat. The cart has a long spear coming down behind, turning over the ground something like a seed drill does, and the poisoned food drops into the groove made by this furrow-maker. It is impossible to take a cart through bush which has not been cleared, yet we are told that we have to destroy these rabbits and destroy traces of them. It does not worry the settlers on the land. They are pretty hardy up that way, and they are not very much troubled about the inspector's requests in this regard, but the position I wish to complain of is that in agricultural land where the land is held in small holdings the rabbits will never become a nuisance. As a matter of fact, on my area of 700 acres I do not care how many rabbits there are; I would not care if they were as thick as they are in any part of Australia; it would not trouble me because I could fence them in and kill them off in my own ground; I could put up a rabbit-proof fence all around and the rabbits would not worry me. On the other hand one or two occasionally made into broth might help to reduce the butcher's bill, particularly in the early stages of farming. Fresh rabbit is considerably better, in the opinion of some people, than tinned dog. Whom can the rabbits hurt or injure? They can only injure those people whose holdings are so large that they cannot fence them in, or who, if they do fence them in, cannot kill the rabbits off in them. The rabbits will only injure the man who has been injuring the whole of Australia all his life. I speak of the large land holder. But it is the same old thing. The small man is brought into requisition, and small holders are supposed to kill the rabbits off to

their own disadvantage for the sole benefit of large estate holders. In agricultural country the rabbits will not injure us when the land is in small holdings; and where the land is not in small holdings I would like to see the rabbits, because, in my experience, the rabbits are far less a nuisance than large landholders. If we have plenty of rabbits there may be a possible chance of reducing the areas held by people in this State. I am opposed to the small holders being requested to kill rabbits. Now I have a few remarks to make on the question of public health, particularly on the question of medical officers. I hold the question is of considerable importance to the State and one deserving of the best attention of the Minister controlling the department; but, as I have said before, the Minister controlling health, not only has the largest number of departments of any Minister of the State to control, but it has been made the rule that the poorest, the most dundrheaded Minister of the whole half-dozen, is put in control of this department. These are a few of the departments under the control of the Colonial Secretary: police, lunacy—a suitable one—medical, charities, fisheries and game, harbours and rivers, gaols, friendly societies, aborigines, immigration, observatory, and several others; and not only has the system grown up of putting the poorest Minister in control of these departments, but the system has also grown up of putting the poorest under secretaries or heads of departments under this particularly poor Minister. Therefore, we have the jobbest of job lots; we have an impossible Minister with impossible officers trying to control the most important departments in the State. Hence we get continued complaints in regard to the management of these departments, particularly the Medical Department. But when we come to think of it, it is no wonder that we have so many complaints with regard to the Medical Department, when we come to consider that the Minister has such a number of departments to control, and when we come to consider the officers that he has as the heads of his departments. Other members have read various paragraphs in the re-

port of the Chief Medical Officer, whose remarks about vaccination and agitators were particularly edifying, and bespoke a man who, I think, is certainly unfit to control the department. I will just call attention to another paragraph in his remarkable document. In my opinion he must have put in most of his time compiling it. So far as I can make out he did little else. Dealing with the birth rate he says—

The lack of appreciation amongst the better-favoured classes of their moral duty to themselves and the State causes a retrograde movement in the quality of the increase of population, leaving those less prosperous and less morally, mentally, and physically fit to bear the greater burden of procreation.

Now when we have a doctor, a medical man, who is supposed to have studied matters, making a statement that these two penny-ha'penny lawyers, bank clerks, and heads of departments, are the superior people, and miners and shearers and other are inferior, we cannot expect much in the way of administration. By the way, it might be as well to read the opinion of Bernard Shaw on this question when he speaks of the elimination of the mere voluptuary through the evolutionary process. He says—

The modern devices for combining pleasure with sterility, now universally known and accessible, enable these persons to weed themselves out of the race, a process already vigorously at work, and the consequent survival of the intelligently fertile means the survival of the partisans of the superman.

I agree with Bernard Shaw, and I am not at all apprehensive about the disaster that is going to strike the State because the better class, or what are the better class in the opinion of Dr. Hope, are weeding themselves out. It would certainly be better in my mind if some of the heads of departments would weed themselves out. After all, there is something in the question of the survival of the fittest, and, as Bernard Shaw shows, those who are mere voluptuaries will weed themselves out, and we will have a better race of people. My chief complaint in regard to the Medical Department is in reference

to the medical officers. I may remind hon. members that some time ago I mentioned a case that occurred at Marble Bar. We have a medical officer there who receives between £300 and £400 a year for what most people thought was attending to indigent patients and people who required his services. There was a case brought into Marble Bar by the police at the direction of the warden. It was a man suffering from a very advanced stage of ill-health. The doctor immediately said that he could not treat the man because he was an indigent patient, because he would not be able to pay. The magistrate demanded that the doctor should treat the man, and the doctor refused the demand of the magistrate to give any medical relief to the sufferer. Then the people of Marble Bar wired to Dr. Hope, the Principal Medical Officer, and after some delay, Dr. Hope wired back and said that he thought it was a hospital case and should be treated. But the doctor at Marble Bar wired back to Dr. Hope, and eventually Dr. Hope wired up and stated that the doctor would be compelled to treat the patient. What naturally occurred after this? The wires took five days altogether, and on the sixth day the man was dead. I have spoken previously about cases not as bad as that, but somewhat similar, occurring at Port Hedland; and I have spoken of the fact that men in the Nullagine district have been injured, miners particularly, by falls of earth, and have had broken ribs and legs, and injured backs, and how the residents of Nullagine have on several occasions been compelled to put up £50 before a doctor would leave Marble Bar to come out to set a broken leg. I hold that these cases certainly should receive consideration from the Medical Department, and that the Principal Medical Officer should certainly do something to endeavour to relieve cases of that sort. I have some extracts from letters I have received from Port Hedland with regard to another medical officer, who, I might say, still holds his position. My correspondent says—

The R.M. here (he is also R.M.O.) gets £50 a month from the Government, and he has boasted that he is making

another £100 per month at private practice. For what he is paid no man knows, excepting it is a subsidy to enable him to charge the suffering public high medical fees. There are many instances of fearful charges up this way. The other day a man received a few wounds in the leg (afterwards declared by the doctor in court to be superficial scars), and yet he charged £2 2s. for putting two stitches in. He is supposed to do Treasury cashier's work, yet the clerk of courts does all that work, and even writes the minutes for "drunk" police court cases. By the by, the clerk gets £60 a year only. As for law, the R.M. doesn't know enough of it to deal properly with a "drunk." In Brown's time a man was charged £32 for doctor's attendance in an easy case of confinement of his wife. No cases of this kind are charged less than £10 10s., even if it is all over before the doctor gets there. How do you expect to encourage women to have children here when the Government subsidise medical men in order to, apparently, assist them to penalise the people with prohibitive charges? No child is born here under a cost (with doctor's fees, medicine, etcetera) of between £50 and £100.

(*Mr. Brown took the Chair.*)

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Another correspondent writes—

Re the Nor'-West R.M.s (doctors). Last week a man named McAlister was painfully ill at the Esplanade Hotel, Hedland, and Mr. Knight, local manager for Dalgety & Co., went at 12 noon and asked the local doctor to "come at once" to a poor man who was apparently dying. At 5 o'clock the doctor had not appeared, and Mr. Knight again went for him and brought him to McAlister, who died next day and was buried by subscription collected in town. The deceased was not long out from Scotland; a nice reception to give immigrants, etc. Again, the same doctor sent in a bill to Richardsons (Pippingara) for 100 guineas for two trips to attend young E. Richard-

son with dengue, and two trips to his wife having a child (all being over when he got there): he was taken in station vehicles each way to and from the railway at the 12-mile free. In addition to this he charged old Mrs. Richardson £10 10s. for one attendance on an infant for cold, the child being taken to his house. Richardson refused to pay, and the doctor knocked off thirty guineas. This was paid and Dr. Hope informed. The latter wired to the local doctor, who was advised by the local solicitor, and replied that what he charged as a professional man had nothing to do with the department. Yet he is paid £600 a year of public money—for what.

What for? It seems to me that my correspondent has certainly fair grounds for that question. What are these medical officers paid for? There are other cases, and I might as well read them all before I comment on them. There is another medical officer at Karridale I wish to refer to. In this case a man was killed as the result of an accident, and the widow, who was in Perth, required the death certificate in order to obtain a small amount of money from the insurance company in which the deceased happened to have been insured. She wrote to Dr. Moloney, who, by the by, receives £180 a year for doing absolutely nothing, asking him to forward a certificate of death. Dr. Moloney, whose only duty it was to enter in a book certain particulars of the death, wrote back to say—

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your communication, and also a previous one re a medical certificate. My reason for not replying before this, is that I am waiting for you to forward the usual fee of £1 1s. for the certificate. On receipt of this amount I shall be glad to send along the certificate. Yours faithfully, G. Moloney.

Here is another person who wants to know what Dr. Moloney gets £180 a year for. Just fancy a Government servant, and not only a Government servant but a man who is subsidised also by men in the district through a sick fund, keeping a poor widow waiting in Perth because she did

not send him one guinea. I will speak further on Dr. Moloney later, but I contend that the sooner we get a thorough understanding with the Doctor Moloneys, the Doctor Browns and others the better it will be for everyone concerned. If we cannot get better treatment from the doctors the best possible thing we can do is to knock off medical officers altogether. I would just as soon take my chance in the back country without attendance as I would by being attended by cormorants of this description.

Mr. Collier: They ought to be in slaughter yards.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They ought to be bushrangers. I have another communication here from an old friend of mine on the Murchison, which reads—

I, Samuel Webster, of Day Dawn, declare that I visited Dr. Stanley Taylor, the district medical officer of Cue, on Friday, 17th June, with a view of getting a certificate that I was unable to work, it being my intention to apply for an old-age pension. Dr. Taylor had attended me when I met with an accident, the result of which cost me my right arm. I visited the doctor at his residence, and asked him for a certificate stating that I was not able to work, and that I was applying for an old-age pension. He complained that I had made statements which had injured his professional practice, and said that he would give me a certificate if I gave him 50 guineas. The statement referred to by Dr. Taylor is as follows:—“When I left the Cue Hospital, I went to the Perth Hospital, and some members of the staff said to me that my arm was in a filthy state, and they could hardly believe I had come from a hospital. These remarks I repeated to some of my friends in Day Dawn, and they got back to the doctor's knowledge. I make this sworn declaration by virtue of Section 106 of the Evidence Act, 1906. (Signed) S. Webster.

Another instance of a resident medical officer! These gentlemen are civil servants, and highly paid civil servants, and this is the way in which they treat the people

of Western Australia, both rich and poor. I may say that the people at Pipingara are the well-known Richardsons, the station owners. It seems to be that if a man has nothing to pay he gets no treatment, and if he has a reasonable amount then they take all he has. One would ask what are the duties of a resident medical officer? I asked that question at the Medical Department, and I was told that there were certain regulations in force. I asked for a copy of them, and I was told that there was only one copy in existence, and that they could not give me that, and therefore I had to secure a copy of the *Government Gazette* for Wednesday, the 1st November, 1899.

Mr. Collier: They are up to date.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They are as up to date as medical departments generally; in fact I believe this medical department is in the vanguard. I have looked through these regulations to get a reply to my correspondent's questions as to what these medical men are paid for. Regulation 5 states that district medical officers are responsible for the proper performance of their medical duties within their districts, together with the general superintendence of the hospitals under their charge, etcetera. In Regulation 7 we find that it states that officers who entered the civil service of the colony prior to 8th July, 1886, and their families, are entitled to free medical attendance and medicine. Then further down we find that the members of the police force throughout the colony are entitled to free attendance and medicine from the resident medical officer, but not their wives and families unless such officers entered the service prior to July, 1886. Going further down we find that officers on the goldfields, or in the tropical parts of the colony, are entitled to medical attendance and medicine, and in No. 11 we find that Government officers traveling beyond their districts on duty are entitled to the gratuitous services of district medical officers, who, however, will be enabled to charge the Government with the actual cost of medicines supplied. Regulation 14 is remarkable. The effect of it is that Government officers whose

salaries are under £400 per annum when requiring medical attendance for themselves or their families may be required when able to do so to attend personally at the residence or hospital of the district medical officer of their respective districts. If an officer is getting over £400 a year the doctor will go to his house and attend to him there, but apparently if he is getting under £400 a year he must go to the doctor's house. I must admit that the doctors know how to draw up regulations for their own benefit. Again we find that district medical officers are exempt from attendance in cases of confinement, and provision is made to get the last dollar out of the poor people who do attempt to bring a few children into the world. Dr. Hope does well to deplore the decrease in the birth rate, and every time he gets a chance he takes particular care to provide for the payment of confinement fees for the doctors, and he allows doctors to receive a high salary and to charge extortionate fees for their services. Then we come to the question of hospitals. In regulation 28 we find that a pregnant female is not to be admitted for the purpose of confinement, and among the other cases not to be admitted are persons suffering from an incurable disease, and any person who can be treated as an out-patient. Then there is a most extraordinary regulation, No. 31, which provides that patients are not to be admitted into a hospital except in cases of emergency until it has been ascertained in which class they are to be placed. If in the first, they will be required to sign an agreement pledging themselves to pay the regular charge, namely, 3s. per day in country hospitals, and 6s. in goldfields hospitals, which will cover all expenses of living attendance and treatment, and the medical officer will if he considers it necessary require a patient to obtain in addition a guarantee for its payment from some responsible person known to him. Regulation 32 reads—

Patients whose circumstances enable them to pay medical attendance should not necessarily be admitted to the hospital on the above terms; but in special circumstances where it may appear to

the medical officer that it would be advantageous to a patient, and he is desirous that his case should be treated in hospital, this officer will be at liberty to admit such patient, where he will be charged such sum per diem as may be determined beforehand. . . .

Or in other words, the doctor has full power to charge six shillings a day, or indeed as much as he likes, and full power to admit or reject the patient. I have a case in point which occurred in Peak Hill. The doctor was Dr. Leger Erson. The hospital was kept going by local contributions and by a medical fund to which all men working in the mines in the district paid 1s. per week, while the Government subsidised the amount so collected pound for pound, the local committee managing the whole concern. A man came in from one of the stations in a fairly bad condition and was staying at the hotel under the doctor's attendance. After attending him for some time Dr. Leger Erson informed him he had better go to the hospital, stating that the charge would be eight guineas per week. When the patient asked why the charge was so high the doctor said it was three guineas for the committee and five guineas for his (the doctor's) attendance. And we were paying Dr. Leger Erson £400 a year to look after the hospital for us. The result was that the man would not be robbed; he was one of that hardy sort who preferred to die, and he reckoned that in any case he was taking a risk, so he refused to go into the hospital. And after all, a man who would attempt to enforce such an exorbitant fee is not to be trusted. I would have done what the patient did, namely, stopped out. As a matter of fact he got better more quickly than he would have done in the hospital. My complaint is, why should we pay a man a high salary as we were paying Dr. Leger Erson, namely, £400 a year with food, and allow him to have a private practice? And why, when a patient comes to him, should such doctor be allowed to frighten him away with a demand for five guineas a week for his personal services? The question of private practice I will touch upon later on.

This doctor followed the practice of extorting the last possible penny he could from anybody so unfortunate as to come under his treatment. "No money no treatment" was the policy of Dr. Leger Erson. And notwithstanding the fact that he had the medicine provided by the committee, to my knowledge he turned away three or four men without attempting to do anything at all for them; and, as I say, those patients would have been made welcome to at least the medicine by the men who had paid for it. There are one or two other points that are perhaps worthy of mention. Thus in Regulation 34 it is laid down—

Persons admitted as out-patients will receive advice and medicine gratuitously at the hospitals at 10 a.m. daily. As a rule no persons other than paupers are to be treated as out-patients, and if the district medical officer is in doubt in regard to the financial position of any person so seeking treatment, he may, for the purpose, obtain the services of the police in procuring the information desired.

Clearly we want a new department. There is only one other point that I think is worth mentioning. In Regulation 91 it is provided that the doctor shall enter in the certificate of death book the particulars of any death that has taken place in his district. That is the point in regard to the case of Dr. Moloney, who is paid £180 a year to go to Karridale. There is no hospital there so he, like all other medical officers in districts where there are no hospitals, has no duties to perform except to attend to the civil servants and the police. There are no civil servants down there and, therefore, the only man the doctor is compelled to attend according to these regulations is the policeman, who happens down there about once a fortnight; and it is highly probable that he would be too tired to attend to the policeman if anything did happen. So we pay £180 a year to Dr. Moloney for doing absolutely nothing. There is nothing we can compel him to do. We pay him £180 a year to go there and attend to the people of the district. and he does it by charging a

poor widow, who has just lost her husband, one guinea for copying out one entry in his book and forwarding it to her. I say the conduct of Dr. Moloney stamps him as a person unfitted to treat patients or to have a position in the Government service of Western Australia. Now we find that these cases do not only come from these places I have mentioned. I have had complaints from practically all over the Northern part of the State. Only the other day a shearer came to me and informed me that the doctor at Carnarvon had refused him admission to the hospital when suffering excruciating pain, and had ordered him off and had threatened to call the police to put him off, merely because he had no money. I have given you instances of the treatment received at Marble Bar and Port Hedland. The Attorney General no doubt is well aware there is not perfect satisfaction with the medical officer at Roebourne. I say it is time the Medical Department took a stand in connection with these officers. It is time they knocked off this system of paying large salaries to doctors and then allowing them to take private practices. As a matter of fact there are no other civil servants in Western Australia, or any other part of Australia, who are receiving anything like the salary of Dr. Shelmerdine at Port Hedland, namely £600 a year, and who are at the same time allowed private practice. As a matter of fact, Dr. Shelmerdine is drawing as much for looking after the police and the civil servants in the district as the Under Secretary for Lands receives for running the entire Lands Department. Yet he is allowed to have a private practice and allowed to charge the most extortionate fees ever heard of in any country. If we are going to have these medical officers it is certainly our duty to endeavour to control them. I contend the better plan in smaller towns such as Roebourne, Marble Bar, Port Hedland, Carnarvon and Onslow, and many other goldfield towns of similar size, where there is a hospital and a small population—I say the only proper method to adopt would be to appoint a medical officer,

pay him a reasonably good salary and stop private practice altogether. Lay it down that he is to attend everybody in the district, and then we will get something of a return for our money. The present system has proved to be a total failure. In regard to the question of treating everybody in the district, I am confident that with a very small amount of intelligence on the part of the department it would be easy to find the money in the district. It would be easy in my opinion to find a few hundred pounds, in, say, Port Hedland or any of the places I have mentioned, if the doctor would treat all cases; and we would not then have this just cry that it is almost impossible to bring children into the world in the outback parts of the State. This is a question deserving of very serious consideration, not only on the part of the Colonial Secretary but of the Government of the State, and I trust it will receive it. However, I am not too hopeful. All I can say is that if the Colonial Secretary attends to this it will be about the first matter he ever did attend to. No doubt the Attorney General will carry my complaint to his colleagues, and the Ministerial members who are present are duly impressed with my remarks.

Mr. Heitmann: There are four of them present.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: For fear the Attorney General has not yet finished his slumbers, and that the stopping of my voice would have a similar effect to the stopping of a battery, it might be as well to make a few remarks on the education question. I have very little complaint to make against the Education Department, but I wish to point out the danger of a system our teachers are inclined to adopt, and which is termed discipline; the endeavouring to control children as though they were poor miserable kids that always wanted somebody to look after them and should not be allowed out of sight to indulge in pleasures dear to the hearts of boys. Under this system they are in fact to be moulded and disciplined and brought up just exactly an echo of their particular teacher. I have here—and this is what occurs practically every day in regard to

this question—a lecture given by Frank Tate of Victoria; he is speaking on this question and he goes on to say—

The years between 13 and 18 were the most vital in the formation of character, and no people could allow these years to be neglected, yet it was just those golden formative years that Victorians made worse than nothing of. Let them consider the mischief arising out of want of discipline, unwillingness to follow steady employment, fondness for street lounging, and its attendant evils of excessive smoking, intemperance, over-emphasis of sport, and so on.

That is a strain we hear very often and it is a strain that can be over worked. As a matter of fact, boys from 13 to 18 will be boys, and should be allowed to be, and they will be better men for it. It is no doubt relieving to people to be able to hurl junks of advice in regard to things which they did not do themselves when they were boys. There is also a tendency, he says, to over-emphasis of sport. I disagree with that altogether. It has yet to be proved to me that the Australian has suffered up to date through that over-emphasis.

Mr. Keenan: Does he make any reference to "Deadwood Dicks"?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will come to "Deadwood Dicks" directly. I have plenty of time to make lots of remarks before the Redistribution of Seats Bill comes on. He also refers to the evils of excessive smoking. Now, I suppose about 90 per cent. of the school teachers of Australia smoke, and yet they want the boys to do what they do not do themselves. On another point this lecturer goes on to say—

Under their faulty conditions a boy of 14 years was to-day disciplined in a well-conducted school, and to-morrow he was an independent employee receiving probably a fairly high commencing wage, especially in the many demoralising "blind alley" occupations. His employer had none of the responsibility for him which the master had for his apprentice, and the boy did not regard himself as in *statu pu pillcri*.

He had been saddened and disheartened many a time by recognising in royster-ing street loungers, given over apparently to cigarette smoking and sport, boys whom he had known in schools as magnificent material for training into fine men and fine workmen.

In regard to this blind alley employment I would like to say a word or two. No doubt the teacher would think that he was on the main line of employment if he put a boy into a bank, yet I have no hesitation in saying that there is no blind alley or other employment so mean as employment in a bank or with any firm which refuses permission to a man to marry. You cannot get a blinder alley than that. That is the blindest alley that any Australian workman is compelled to enter, and I trust that when Tate is lecturing again he will point out what these blind alleys are and whether he approves of the grasping, greedy conduct of the bank directors in clutching at their profits and yet refusing their employees the right of the meanest citizen, the right to marry. There would be few children to teach if all the men were bank clerks. With regard to this same question of discipline the "Sunday Classic" has something to say. In alluding to Australian defence and the new gun boats it went on to say—

And Australia's plan of conscription will be attended with benefits other than those contemplated by the framers of the scheme—

It is most extraordinary that the Press always assume to know what the framers of the scheme intended.

Mr. Troy: They assume to know everything in heaven and on earth.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The article continues—

—benefits social as well as military, and individual as well as national.

That is perfectly true. I believe that we will make better men of the Australians if we drill them. To continue—

The Australian youth will be all the better for discipline. In the stern atmosphere of the barrack-room his impressionable mind will be cleared of that unlovely disposition to irreverence

and levity which too often breaks out in larrikinism and buffoonery. Under the iron laws of regiment and battalion he will learn to despise the inglorious notion that the light-weight jockey and the professional cricketer are the "heirs of all the ages, in the foremost files of time."

That was not original. Tate spoke several months before that and it certainly sounds very much like Tate, but no doubt somebody spoke it before Tate did. We are told that the Australian is likely to give way to levity and buffoonery and larrikinism, but in the same paper, on the same day, and on the same page I find this—

The Australian handy man, as seen on the Yarra and Parramatta, is a decidedly different type from his British analogue. He is taller, wirier, and spryer-looking generally, sharper of feature, and browner of pelt. Withal he seems more alert and intelligent than the Britisher, and when ashore is not in such utter subjection to the frivolous side of life. When Australia possesses a fleet in being, instead of a mere embryo of one, the quick-witted, resourceful sailormen of the Southland will do us proud.

The writer tells us in the first paragraph that when he has been disciplined he will lose that unlovely disposition for irreverence and levity, and in the same paper we are told that the Australian who has been brought up under these conditions, compared with the man who had been disciplined, is spryer, smarter, and more alert, and, above all things, is not so much possessed with that desire for the frivolous side of life. The very thing that is going to be drilled into us those who have been drilled have lost, and those who have not been drilled have gained. The explanation is quite simple. If one were to think before writing on these matters he would come to the conclusion that the boy who is allowed to enjoy his youth and run about the streets, and to have his pleasures, will make a better man than the boy who has been disciplined all his life, whose nature has never been allowed to have play and who, when he

gets ashore, will naturally look to the frivolous side of life. It is certainly quite natural that the system in Australia should produce a handy man, alert, and with initiative, and a man who has not been all his life guided by somebody else.

Mr. Heitmann called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am sorry indeed to disturb the slumbers of my friends opposite, but I suppose it must be done because it is a most important question I am discussing. I was just saying that there is a danger in this attempt to discipline boys and to mould them that we will mould a good deal of the natural man out of them and create men without initiative and accustomed to rely on the judgment of somebody else instead of being self-reliant. The *Sunday Times* points out that the Australian sailors are likely to be better handy men than those drilled in England, and Kitchener, who ought to be a pretty good judge, gave the Australian soldiers who went to South Africa the credit of being some of the best men he had there. He said he was sorry that he had not more Australians with him. That is what we have done without discipline, and if we have attained that it is time to be somewhat cautious in that direction. I remember hearing a gentleman on one occasion advocate the use of the cane in the school, and also forcing the children to learn that which they did not care about learning. And he explained that at one time he was in India and he saw the Ganges River; and as he looked upon that mighty river, he remembered three old pages of Macaulay. He stated this to show what a benefit discipline was, that these three pages of Macaulay had been flogged into him, and he remembered those pages when he saw the river Ganges. It struck me that if he had not had Macaulay flogged into him we would have had an original thought on the matter. We should always leave room in our children for original thought. The member for Mount Magnet asked some questions in regard to the selection of our literature. I remember

reading a lecture by the chief of the Education Department at Kalgoorlie. He was lecturing on the question of literature, and he stated that by the efforts of the society he was lecturing before they had induced the children to take to classic reading and that the children had come to like it and were not reading Deadwood Dicks. After all, who appointed this gentleman a literary judge in any case? And, further, what is a classic? According to one definition a classic is a book that has lived, a book that was written some time ago and is still in print, and still fairly well read; and if this gentleman sets himself up to pick the books out now there cannot be any classics; the only classics will be those he thinks classic, and the general public will have no means of choosing. I enjoy Deadwood Dicks. Further than that I am not the only member of this Assembly who reads a Deadwood Dick occasionally and finds enjoyment in it. I prefer Deadwood Dicks to reading the *Producers' Review*. They are altogether superior to some of the leading articles inflicted on us by the Liberal party. This lecturer must have forgotten that some of the most beautiful of Shakespeare's writings were founded on the trashiest of Deadwood Dicks in his time, and if Deadwood Dicks did not hurt Shakespeare they will not hurt our boys. Perhaps the Premier will remind his colleague on this point—it is very important—that is, the system of allowing State school children to take out cards collecting for hospitals. The whole City is smothered with little kids with cards begging. The system seems to be that they are endeavouring to build up a nation of cadgers. I say that if the children's hospital cannot be maintained without sending out school children to cadge for it the children's hospital must go. It would be better to have a few sick children suffering than to have the whole of the children of Western Australia made a lot of cadgers. It can have no other effect on them, this system of continual begging. When we come to talk about rearing children and founding self-reliant men, we are going the wrong way about it by this system of cadging. We should

certainly teach the children that a hospital is their right, and that they are not to beg in any case for it. We should teach them rather to demand it than to beg for it. I trust that the order will be issued at the earliest possible date to stop the system of cadging by our State school children. Returning again to the question of sport; I said just now that I am not at all convinced that sport has in any way deteriorated Australians—not over-love of sport; and I have yet to be convinced that it has injured any people. We know that in remote times, when the Roman Empire was at its meridian, it was a great sporting nation. Sport was one of the chief diversions of the Roman Empire, and it was the greatest empire we have had in history. The Greeks also were great athletes; and the fact that Australians are great athletes, as they undoubtedly are, augurs well for the future of Australia. There are others besides those who are of the wowsery inclination in our midst. Manes, a German scientist, has an explanation of what he terms the excessive love of sport in Australia. He says—

National enthusiasm is only manifested in things concerning sport. The climate, permitting an open-air life throughout the year, makes them a sport-loving people. In the conflict between climate and inherited characteristics the latter will go under.

I am certain that is correct. Notwithstanding how much our school teachers may endeavour to prevent the love of sport, or to fence-in our children and prevent them getting as much of God's fresh air as they can, that is the opinion of this German scientist, and it is backed up by the *London Times*, which says—

The supreme consideration of which historians will judge the effect is not heredity but climate. One constant and pervading influence is stronger than all others—the light and warmth of southern sun. As a people, they warm “both hands before the fire of life,” with an unflinching pleasure in its light and glow. Nowhere do women nail the colours of happiness more gaily to the mast, or yet contribute more to the

steady drive of character which makes for national advance. Whatever lies beneath the exterior, in women or in men, the laughing spirit, the summer mood, the touch of carnival is everywhere an infection in the land.

I again agree with this statement, and I claim that in a land like Australia, with a climate like we have, we want different methods to those which have been in force in entirely different countries. I trust that the Attorney General, as Minister for Education, will endeavour to suppress this abnormal desire on the part of our State school and other teachers for disciplining and moulding boys; and I hope the Australian boy will be given a chance, for I am confident he will turn out as good a man as any who have been turned out with all the discipline the world knows. I say in conclusion, as I started, that I feel that very little of these Estimates will be passed before the introduction of the Redistribution of Seats Bill. I trust the Premier will introduce that Bill, as I am sure it will facilitate the passing of these Estimates.

(Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.)

Mr. WALKER: Will the Premier report progress?

The Minister for Mines: Not at this hour.

Mr. WALKER: I think if the Government are determined to keep the debate going it is their absolute duty to keep a House. It is one of the evidences of the degeneration of politics in this State that the most important matters that can be discussed in the whole year are discussed with two or three members sitting upon the Government side of the House during the whole of the discussion—

The Minister for Mines: It is not fair to say that now.

Mr. WALKER: With one Minister, and, apparently, that Minister reading a book or simulating sleep, if not actually sleeping, when the discussion of the Estimates is on.

Mr. Jacoby: Happy Minister!

Mr. WALKER: I do not know whether the hon. member by his interjection wants

to approve of the conduct of Ministers in that respect. Is not the debate the most important of the whole year, that upon the Estimates? Is it not worth while Government supporters being in their places, or Ministers attending them?

Mr. Osborn: Certainly not to listen to the last speech.

Mr. WALKER: It sometimes happens in the course of politics that electorates commit freaks and send abnormalities into this Chamber as a standing monument of their neglect, and the hon. member is one. I advise the hon. member to take supper. He wants something more upon his chest than that wind he is allowing to escape. But leaving the hon. member aside as not being worthy of notice, I say that it is a disgrace to us that at this time of the year we are discussing the Estimates and Ministers are showing a profound contempt for the discussion and a profound contempt for members on the Opposition.

Mr. Jacoby: Speak for yourself.

Mr. WALKER: The hon. member must realise that if he were on the Treasury bench he would at least deem it his duty, if only from the standpoint of courtesy, to ministerially take notice of the arguments that are used by the leader of the Opposition and the ex-leader of the Opposition. We have had these speeches made and no reply from any Minister. What is the object of it? The object of it is to appear to the country as so superior that they can pose as treating with utter and complete disrespect the whole position.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Only for a few months.

Mr. WALKER: It is true only for a few months; but surely it is for us to protest against this treatment. Are we not to be answered? Is this Government running by sheer brute force of its majority, or is it running by show or pretence of reason to justify its position? If it is going on purely by its mere strength to beat the Opposition, a conquest of strength which is made up by one vote, if that everlasting one vote is to be the answer to all the charges and criticisms, then there is an end to Parlia-

ment. It is not Parliament; it is tyranny and nothing more; it is not government, it is no longer a deliberative assembly, but an enormous vital penny in the slot machine where, when the penny of the Ministers is put in, all the body troop in to vote down the argument. That is the position. The Minister for Mines shakes his head. Is it not a fact that arguments are being used, and no answer is forthcoming from the Ministerial side of the House? Is it not a fact that every Minister has treated with disdain and contempt the arguments used by this side of the House?

The Minister for Mines: If you agree to the same procedure as that adopted by the Federal Parliament we could make this a general debate, and have no general debate on each department.

Mr. WALKER: This is not an isolated case. When the no-confidence debate was in progress, that surely was general enough, yet how many Ministers spoke? They stayed there and allowed this side to bring argument after argument, and speaker after speaker, and they treated everyone with contempt, and they are treating this side with the same contempt now. It is unprecedented in the history of Parliament. I do not know of any Parliament in the whole of Australia where there has been such flagrant discourtesy shown to the leader of the Opposition, and, in fact, to the whole Opposition as has been shown by this Government. That is not government of the people. The people expect more than that. Whatever Ministers may think of individual members on this side of the Chamber it remains a constitutional fact that part of the Government of this State is His Majesty's Opposition, and they cannot be ignored legitimately and honourably. The ordinary instincts of gentlemen, let alone the high phases of political action, should be responsible for the giving of some consideration to the statements and the utterances that have been made from this side of the Chamber. Here we are within a few weeks of Christmas, and the Estimates are now for the first time being seriously discussed. What has ever been the object of Parliament? That of

granting supplies. And what is the tradition associated with the granting of supplies? The redress of grievances. The long battles that have been fought in the building up of the English Constitution have waged around that point, redress before supplies. What redress can we have? What a farce it makes of the whole machinery of Government and Parliament when at the close, and when we are ready to shut the doors, Supply is introduced to us. There is no excuse, no justification except in that which presumes that they have the power, that they cannot be ousted, and that they are determined to do as they like. There is no other interpretation; it amounts to saying, 'We will have our own way; you may do as you please.'

Mr. Gordon: You are talking your own side out.

Mr. WALKER: There would not have been any House at all if it had not been for this side. The hon. member has just come in; I expect he wants to hear something, but I may tell him I am not going to have what I intend to say interrupted by him. I intend to say what I mean to say, and that is to protest against this method of Government and the contempt that has been shown for the whole Opposition and for the body of electors represented by the Opposition, who constitute more than a majority in this House. We on this side of the House represent more people than are represented by the whole of the Government side, and they are a section who are not covered by the term, privileged class. That is the body we represent, and an insult to their representatives is an insult to them, and when the opportunity comes, and it will not be long before it does come, the people will show their resentment and will vindicate the course this side has taken, and will inflict upon those who have treated with such contumely the people's representatives, the penalty they deserve. It is all of a piece, pure Government by drift, Government by accidental majority, not a Government with intelligence, certainly not a Government with courtesy but a Government made up by assumed superiority and contemptuous arrogance. They

have left to the end of the session a most important measure affecting the life of this Assembly in the future. The other day we had the Premier stating that he had ready a Bill called the Redistribution of Seats Bill, and he confessed that not only was the Bill ready but that every member on his side of the House knew the contents of that Bill. He declined to say when he would bring it down, and only to-night declared that he would bring it down on next Wednesday week.

The Premier: What has that to do with the Estimates?

Mr. WALKER: It is one of the grievances we have to complain about before we get Supply. Does not the hon. member know in his everlasting assumption of omniscience that it is part of our duty to criticise the Government?

The Premier: And to block the work of the country.

Mr. WALKER: Who is going to help Ministers to do work if they treat us with this unseemly conduct? Hon. members suggested long ago that the Redistribution of Seats Bill should be brought down. We asked long ago that the Premier should take the House into his confidence.

The Premier: The Bill is not in print yet.

Mr. WALKER: But its character is known to representatives on that side of the House. Three weeks ago the Premier stated that he would bring it down as soon as he was sure he could get a majority for it. He said that he could bring it down next day if necessary. I submit that the Bill has been shown to people outside the House.

The Premier: Not to my knowledge.

Mr. WALKER: It is within his knowledge as members here know.

The Premier: The Bill is not yet in print.

Mr. WALKER: Will the Premier go back on his words of three weeks ago when he said it was ready, and when he said he had taken his side of the House into his confidence on the matter, that they were aware of its contents, and that he told this side of the House he would bring it down when it was ready, when he liked, in fact, and in the meantime he

would not take this side of the House into his confidence. When the measure is in that stage that it can be communicated to members upon that side of the House, it is direct discourtesy to this side of the House not to be taken into the confidence of the Government.

The Premier: Not at all.

Mr. WALKER: The hon. member would not say that if he were on this side of the House. The hon. member would be the first to accuse the Ministry of absolute discourtesy and disrespect in its worst form to keep the Opposition side of the House in absolute ignorance in regard to a measure affecting the whole country.

The Premier: The Federal caucus discusses every measure before it submits it to the House.

Mr. WALKER: Is there not a difference between a discussion as to the fitness of a measure and keeping it secret? The hon. member has had this measure ready for three weeks.

The Premier: Turn up *Hansard* and show me where I said so.

Mr. WALKER: I am not allowed to read *Hansard*. I am pointing out that this Bill has been ready for three weeks, and I am saying that the only reason for keeping it secret is because the one aim of the Government before it goes out of office is to kill the Labour party. Their instrument is the Bill they propose to introduce. It is that, and members on that side of the House have been allowed to take a part in shaping it. Now I ask, is this honourable Government? Is this upright, frank conduct? Is it the course that should be taken by a Minister who is the leader, not of a party alone but of the whole House? It is a duty he owes to us; but, again, this is only in accord with the general conduct. I ask your permission, Mr. Chairman, to read from *Hansard* what the Premier said with regard to the bringing down of the Bill.

Mr. Gordon: On what date?

Mr. WALKER: On November 16th. The report reads as follows—

The Premier (Hon. Frank Wilson): The hon. member is quite aware that I intend to bring a Redistribution of Seats Bill down at the very earliest

opportunity. He is also aware, because I have discussed the matter with him and told him, and he has explained to-day, that we must have a statutory majority.

Mr. Scaddan: To pass the second reading only.

The Premier: We must have an absolute majority of the House to pass the second and third readings of the measure. I thank the hon. member very much for his offered assistance, but I would remind him it is not customary for any Government to rely upon the Opposition in the passing of measures of this description.

Mr. Johnson: It should be so on a Redistribution of Seats Bill.

The Premier: If the hon. member will guarantee me the statutory majority I do not mind bringing down the measure at once for the second reading.

Mr. Holman: That shows it is ready.

The Premier: If you guarantee me the majority I will bring it down at once.

Mr. Holman: If you guarantee it is a fair and reasonable redistribution you will get all the support necessary.

The Premier: I guarantee it is a fair and reasonable measure, but I am not assured I will get the hon. member's support.

Mr. Scaddan: You are not bound to have the second reading at once.

The Premier: I must be prepared to have the second reading immediately I produce the measure. The second reading and the introduction must be made so that people will understand what the measure is.

Several Opposition members interjected.

Mr. Speaker: Order. One member at a time. Members must not interject like this.

The Premier: I must be prepared for the second reading division as soon as I introduce the measure—there is no question about that—and I am not going to leave myself in the position of being at the tender mercies of the Opposition.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: You do not want us to buy a pig in a poke, do you?

The Premier: It is no use members asking me to put myself in the hands of the Opposition. I shall not do it.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you not think courtesy demands that we should know the contents of the Bill?

The Premier: The custom is that you should not know the contents of the Bill until it is presented to Parliament, and courtesy demands that the explanation of the Bill should be given when the Government have their members at command to carry the second reading. I propose to bring the measure down as soon as I possibly can. I have stated that I hope to bring it down within a fortnight, when I trust the member for Wellington will be well enough to be in his place. As soon as I know that I have his presence assured I will be prepared to submit the measure. It will not take hon. members long to grasp it.

And afterwards, in answer to an interjection by Mr. Scaddan, who asked why the members sitting behind the Government were aware of the contents of the Bill, the Premier said—

Why should they not be aware of the contents of the measure; why should they not be consulted about the legislation the Government intend to introduce?

Well I thought the Government took the responsibility of leading, and the responsibility of their measures; but we discover now that the measures of the Government are compromises, are patch-ups between the recalcitrant or swerving members and the rest. We discover there is no originality, no sense of responsibility, no standing or falling alone; but it is "What would you like boys, and we will give you a Bill to suit you." That is the way the Government are running their business, and the seats on that side are fixed up and arranged while the sword of Damocles hangs over the Opposition.

Mr. Scaddan: And they go outside as well.

Mr. WALKER: And it is the same all through; they are governing the public

service in precisely the same way. There are men in the public service who have been for two and a half years on the temporary staff in every department of the State; but look at these Estimates and you will find that every head of a department has had a rise. What does it mean? "Keep them quiet and we will handle these little dogs all the better; make these big fellows contented, do not let them growl, and you can keep from growling those who have only a few shillings a week on which to sustain their families." It is the same all the way through: "help the rich, grease the fatted calf; but the miserable, the unhappy and unfortunate—kick them." That is the course that has been taken by the Government all the way through. To take only one instance of their lack of sense of justice and proportion, the taking out of the reach of the common electors of the State the electoral office and putting it down in the Supreme Court building. Why in the name of common sense did the Judges permit of it? What was the object and purpose of it? A place associated with the criminal dock, right beneath the criminal court. They have taken the electoral offices right out of the reach of the citizens. Anyone who wants to get his name on the roll now has to crawl down to the mysteries of the inner depths of the courts of justice. But he cannot find it, for it is shifted out of the track of democracy, out of the region of daily work, down there underneath the criminal court.

Mr. Bolton: There is a purpose in it all.

Mr. WALKER: Of course there is. What an association! The electoral matters of the State are to be conducted in the basement of the old criminal court. The criminal court dock taken down and a lot of alterations made in that respect—all to stick in that cold recess the officers of the Electoral Department. I suppose the next thing we shall hear of will be the Government running a jam factory at the other end of the courts or associating some other unseemly and unsympathetic business or department with the administration of justice. We cannot keep even our temples clear from the depraving

hands of an irresponsible Government. Well, I am not going to detain the Committee long; I have said enough to show the trend of spirit that animates the Government and enough to show my absolute disgust of this method of dealing with the Estimates close up to Christmas. With other measures on the Notice Paper and other measures to be brought down we hear the suggestion that we are to close before Christmas. Are we to close before Christmas; is that the purpose? I ask now, and it can be answered by interjection, is it really the serious intention of the Government to close before Christmas?

The Premier: Does the hon. member desire to close before Christmas?

Mr. WALKER: Yes; if it can be done without injustice.

The Premier: And I will be glad to close also.

Mr. WALKER: Yes; we will all be glad.

The Premier: The hon. member is helping to close now, is he not?

Mr. WALKER: What does the Premier want in the form of government? To be able to say, "Pass this without debate, swallow everything?" Must there be no criticism? As a matter of fact, what obstruction have the Government met with? We have given them an extra day by agreeing to sit on Fridays and yet to-day we are menaced with having to come back after Christmas, and we have Bills being brought down to crowd the Notice Paper at the last moment. We can rely on nothing. We are to be treated like children and to be coerced into passing any measures that the Government introduce. I say it is the duty of the Premier in ordinary courtesy to treat more fairly members on this side of the House. If we are to be coerced into passing blindly a measure called the Redistribution of Seats Bill, then the Premier cannot expect that we will help him to pass other measures; but, treat us as men expect to be treated, treat us as a part of this Parliament, treat us as His Majesty's Opposition, and then we are prepared to meet him on equal lines and to give him all the assistance we can, consistent with the deliberation necessary to the perfecting of all measures. If we

have that, we are ready to help him, but we are not ready to be forced into submission, we are not ready to be treated with absolute contempt, we are not ready to be ignored on matters of the utmost importance, and we are not ready to be treated as a negligible quantity in connection with the business of this House. If the Government persist in conduct of this character they may expect that there will not be any precipitous rush to help them to complete the business before Christmas.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): I beg to move—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	19
Noes	21

Majority against	..	2
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AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Swan
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Johnson	

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Layman
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Draper	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Harper	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Jacoby	

(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): Before the question is put, and after members sitting here all night and seeing a worse exhibition than I have ever seen before of members acting like a mob of dumb driven cattle, I want to make a few remarks. I contend that it is usual for Minister to at least reply when an important matter like the Estimates is being dealt with. It is usually expected. But

here they have a body of men behind them who will not speak, or even listen to other members speaking, and when charges are made against their administration they will not give explanations which any self-respecting man would give; and then when it comes to ten minutes to 11 we find the whole of the Government members voting against an adjournment. We have been sitting here from 4.30 o'clock until 11 o'clock at night, and it is only fair that we should adjourn, but it appears to me that they are going to bludgeon the Estimates through the Committee at all costs. I am not prepared to see business carried on in this manner. It is usual for Ministers to have some little courtesy and to make an explanation, or put up some of their dummies to show that, at least, they are not frightened of expressing their opinions. I have never seen a more contemptible—I may not be allowed to use an expression like that, perhaps, because it is not parliamentary—but I have never seen worse actions in my life than persons sitting here and not talking, or being out in the corridor when most important matters are being dealt with. It was not my intention to speak on the Budget had the business been conducted in a fair and reasonable manner, and had members been given the opportunity of expressing their opinions at a reasonable time. I am satisfied that the only desire of the Government is to force measures through the Assembly without giving members the opportunity of going into them or speaking on them, practically bludgeoning things to see the business put through that they desire.

The Premier: They are satisfied.

Mr. HOLMAN: They are not satisfied; and when members of the Opposition desire an adjournment at a late hour I am satisfied the adjournment should be given. No business of the country can be carried on in a reasonable manner when bludgeoning is used like this. No Government has been treated with more consideration than the present Government, and no Government has taken greater advantage of the incapability of its followers.

The Premier: What about the Budget?

Mr. HOLMAN: So far as the Budget is concerned I intend to deal pretty fully with it; and after I have made my explanations, I think it will be seen that the Budget requires a little more consideration than members on the Government side give it. We have had a conspiracy, I may call it, of silence on the Government side on the discussion of the Budget. Members on that side think we are going to sit down and allow the people of the country to swallow the words of the Premier as gospel; and when absolutely strong charges should be replied to, and on which explanations should be made, there is not one word of defence. Seeing that is the case, it will be necessary to go fully into the Budget to show exactly the position, and to show what sort of Ministers we have administering the affairs of the State. As long as they can get into recess, as long as they can get up a conspiracy to rob the people of the country of legitimate rights in recording a vote, as long as they can hold over the business of the country and at the last moment jerrymander a Redistribution of Seats Bill through the House, which will in some measure do a great deal of injustice to a large portion of the community, that is all they desire; and I say that as long as we have a class of people like that in office, the sooner we get rid of them the better, and the sooner we explain to the people of the country that the Government are kept in office by a body of men who have neither ears to hear, nor tongues to talk, nor brains to think, the better it will be. They think they are going to carry on just as they like. We hear the caucus of the Labour party criticised. We have a so-called jibe in the Press, the same Press the Ministers are allowed to use day by day and week by week. We see that the only complaint they have against the Federal Labour Government is the fact that they carried out the policy they said they would when they went to the country. We hear complaints that we are bound by caucus. I did not attend to caucus of the Ministerial party when they dealt with the Budget, but I am satisfied the Government did everything possible to gag their members, and that every endeavour was to be made to bludgeon this side of the

House. I do not think the Estimates of 1910-11 are going to be put through the House in such a haphazard manner. It will, therefore, be necessary to deal fully with the whole of the phases of the questions, and also to show that the present Government are not a fit and proper Government to administer the affairs of the State, and to show that their administration in the past has not been satisfactory, and that if we give them an opportunity of bringing about the Redistribution of Seats Bill which may alter the administration of affairs in the country, and allow them to get into recess afterwards, the welfare of the State will not be in safe hands. It will be necessary for us to continue this session for some considerable length to see that the recess will be short. The elections are only eight or nine months ahead, and I consider that with the same administration at the head of affairs the welfare of Western Australia will not be left in safe hands during a long recess. Had we Ministers able to get up and defend their administration, had we men on the Treasury bench who would explain the administration of their departments, had we men there who were not sacrificing the best interests of the country for their own personal gain, in some instances, and for the gain of their friends in others—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in saying that against the Ministers.

Mr. HOLMAN: If they object I withdraw.

Mr. Gordon: Do not withdraw, nobody takes notice of you.

Mr. HOLMAN: The member for Canning is nobody; he cannot take notice of anything at all; he has gone beyond taking notice and we all sympathise with him because we know he cannot help it. So far as the administration of the Government is concerned, it is not in the best interests of Western Australia, nor of the people of the State. The administration of those in power tends more to benefit a few individuals who use the whole of their ends for their own purpose in the administration of affairs in Western Australia.

Mr. Jacoby: That is a charge of corruption, you know.

Mr. HOLMAN: If the hon. member takes it that way of course I cannot help it. What I said is absolutely true, that the way affairs are administered in Western Australia does more to allow a class of people to benefit personally than it is in the best interests of the State. If that is a charge of corruption I will stand or fall by the charge I made. I only need to mention an instance that occurred within the last week or two, where a few private individuals and some of the Ministers were interested in certain mines at Bullfinch. They were able to bludgeon a Railway Bill through the House in the quickest time on record of any railway Bill in Western Australia, or in any other State.

Mr. Draper: Which every member on your side of the House was in favour of.

Mr. HOLMAN: That is immaterial to me. I do not question it. They are perfectly at liberty to exercise their opinions on any question outside our platform, and it is more than members on the Government side of the House are able to say. They are not able to speak on many important matters.

Mr. Jacoby: Words are not everything.

Mr. HOLMAN: The hon. member is inclined to think that apples are better than words. Words are necessary at times to prevent business being carried on in a haphazard manner. Had fair and reasonable time been given to discuss matters more favourable consideration would have been given to them.

Mr. Jacoby: Why do you stonewall?

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not know that there has been one stonewalling speech on this side of the House during the present session?

Mr. Draper: We have had stonewalling for over a month.

Mr. HOLMAN: I would rather see a man stonewall than see him bound down like tongueless tools.

Mr. Jacoby: Rubbish.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. Hon. members will have an opportunity of addressing the Committee at a later stage.

Mr. HOLMAN: When these unseemly interruptions cease I shall continue with

my speech. We have had placed before us the Estimates for 1910-11. We have been criticised in the past and, to a great extent, for our work in the year 1904-5, when the Labour Government were in power, and for the manner in which that Government administered the affairs of the State. There is no doubt when we compare the figures for 1904-5 with the figures of last year, or any year since that period, we find that the example set by the Labour Government, which was ahead of what we have at the present time, has never since been followed, and members are continually raving against that Government and endeavouring to show the disadvantage the country suffered under when the Labour Government was in power. Only a little while ago we heard through almost every newspaper that the depression which existed in the country was owing to the fact that the Labour Government were in office. After the Labour Government went out this depression continued and the blame was attributed to Federation. Then afterwards, when an improvement set in, instead of blaming Federation or the Labour party it was stated that the returning prosperity was due to the then Administration; at the same time the people were not told that the alteration in the revenue of the State was brought about by expenditure of moneys from loan instead of from revenue. During the year the Labour Government were in office public works, railways, and roads and bridges were built out of revenue, and we find that in the subsequent year all that expenditure came from loan funds. I intend to compare the figures of the year 1904-5 with the figures of other years, and make a comparison to show the manner in which the recent Administration have spent money from loan on works which in 1904-5 were constructed out of revenue. Now we are told that the prosperity of Western Australia is improving and that this is bound to come about in spite of those who are administering the country at the present time. Several charges of maladministration have been made against the Minister for Lands and have been gone into fully, and one would have thought

that the Minister would have defended his department. Then charges of maladministration were made against the Attorney General's Department and also against the Mines Department, but no replies have been forthcoming from either of the Ministers in charge of those departments. With regard to the Treasurer, we know that when the present Premier was Treasurer he was criticised even by his own colleagues, and month after month and year after year, in spite of the fact that a great deal of money has been expended from loan funds instead of out of revenue, we find that he has come out at the end of each year with a deficit. It is only within the last few months that things have begun to right themselves and the present position is much better, but that has been brought about even in spite of the present Ministers themselves. We find that as usual this Government are sacrificing the back country and the goldfields districts in favour of more populous centres. We find that places which are worthy of the expenditure of money are neglected and favoured centres are receiving every consideration; places like Wiluna, Lawlers, Ora Banda, and scores of other mining centres, instead of being looked after are quite neglected, but we find that where the wealth is, there the attention of the Administration is given.

The Premier: Meekatharra.

Mr. HOLMAN: That place has justified everything it has had. The wealth there is held, to a very large extent, by the prospectors who have worked themselves up from using the pick. It took about three years to get a railway constructed to Meekatharra and it has turned out more gold than the Bullfinch and has required mining timber and firewood, while it has only taken three weeks to get the railway to Bullfinch. The Premier practically misled the House when he said that no expenditure would be incurred in connection with the Bullfinch railway until the loan authorisation was passed. Will the Premier deny that truck loads of sleepers and rails were consigned to Bullfinch before he gave that promise to the House?

The Premier: I have no knowledge of it.

Mr. HOLMAN: Did you not receive a telegram from the Nangeenan Progress Association, protesting against it?

The Premier: No, I have never received any such telegram.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, a telegram was sent objecting to this.

The Premier: Addressed to me?

Mr. HOLMAN: Yes; perhaps the permanent Premier received it and neglected to hand it over to the Premier.

The Premier: Who is the permanent Premier?

Mr. HOLMAN: You know well enough who the permanent Premier is; the man who transacts all the business in the Premier's office, and has done so for years past and will continue to do so. I was prepared to give a long address in connection with various matters, but as these can be dealt with on the items I do not propose to delay the Committee tonight. I think it is reasonable, after sitting here till eleven o'clock at night, that we should allow members to catch their trains, and I expect now that I have entered my protest the Premier will adjourn at a reasonable time in future and give members an opportunity of getting home. I am satisfied that better business can be done in the House during reasonable hours, and without endeavouring to force members' hands and compel them to carry measures without debate.

General debate concluded.

Vote—*His Excellency the Governor*, £2,297—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—SOUTHERN CROSS-BULLFINCH RAILWAY.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 11.14 p.m.