

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th September, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

QUESTION—FIRE BRIGADES BOARD, AUDITORS' REPORT.

Mr. HOLMAN (without notice) asked the Premier: Will he place upon the Table of the House to-morrow the report of the auditor upon the accounts of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board for the year 1917.

The PREMIER replied: I will inquire into the matter and ascertain if the report is available. There is no objection to the report being laid on the Table of the House if it is available.

QUESTION—MINES DEPARTMENT, ANNUAL REPORT.

Hon. P. COLLIER (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: When may we expect the report upon the Mines Department for the year 1917? This report is now about two months behind the usual time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: The report has been prepared and is being revised for the printer.

BILLS (8)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Road Districts.
 - 2, Traffic.
 - 3, Dog Act Amendment.
 - 4, Land Drainage.
- Introduced by the Minister for Works.

- 5, Prisons Act Amendment.
- 6, Criminal Code Act Amendment.
- 7, Forests.

Introduced by the Attorney General.

- 8, Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs.

Introduced by the Honorary Minister (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 5th September.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [4.48]: At the outset of the few remarks I propose to offer, let me congratulate the Government upon having successfully resisted what I feel justified in terming an impudent attempt on the part of the leader writer of the "West Australian" newspaper to usurp the right, which belongs to the people of this State, of making and unmaking Governments. In doing so, I am reluctantly compelled to take some little notice of that newspaper's comments upon a meeting of Government supporters held during last week, at which was discussed the position

created by the action of the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) in forwarding to the Premier notice of intention to move an amendment on the Address-in-reply. The newspaper's comments were sufficiently accurate to make it obvious, at any rate to my mind, that the information must have been supplied by an individual who had been present at the meeting. Let me add that the newspaper's comments would convey to the public of this State an entirely misleading impression of what actually took place at the meeting. Speaking as I am to members of this Assembly, it is not necessary for me to say anything at all regarding the individual guilty of betraying that trust which is accepted by every person attending a meeting of that description.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not your first experience of that?

Mr. MULLANY: No; and probably it will not be the last experience any of us will have who remain in politics.

Hon. P. Collier: But you are not surprised at the betrayal, seeing that you are surrounded by some of those whom you formerly suspected?

Mr. MULLANY: When the leader of the Opposition interjected I was endeavouring to say that I believe not one member of this Assembly, I care not to what party he may belong, would place any further confidence in an individual who had been guilty of such conduct.

Hon. P. Collier: I would never have believed it, but I expect you have found such a member in your party.

Mr. MULLANY: My own personal knowledge of what took place at the meeting enables me to speak with authority, and I say that the newspaper report of the meeting is utterly misleading. Whether the information was given to the newspaper in that form, or whether it was recast into that form, I do not know; but I say once more that the individual who would betray a confidence such as this, and has so little regard for the truth as this individual appears to have, would, if opportunity and inducement offered, undoubtedly not hesitate to commit such acts as, if detected, would qualify him for a term in Fremantle gaol rather than a term of membership in this Assembly.

Hon. P. Collier: Why, the Government had its birth in the betrayal of trust!

Mr. MULLANY: Then, let the hon. member send the Government to Fremantle prison. I had no desire to speak as I have spoken on this phase of the matter, but in view of the comments published I felt that as the first to resume the debate I should be doing merely a public duty in making these remarks. As to the amendment moved by the member for Northam, in my opinion the Government made a mistake in treating the amendment as a motion of want of confidence.

Mr. SPEAKER: The amendment has been disposed of.

Mr. MULLANY: I am aware of that, Sir; and I am not seeking to confine my remarks to that amendment. What I desire to convey is

that the practice of treating an amendment to the Address-in-reply as a motion of want of confidence in the Government for the time being, is one which could well be discontinued. I am of opinion that any member of the Assembly who holds that the Government do not possess the confidence of a majority of members here, or who desires to test the feeling of the House on the question, should adopt the direct and open course of moving a straight out motion of want of confidence in the Government. I believe that the practice, adopted by all Governments in the past, of accepting such an amendment as that of the member for Northam as a motion of want of confidence, does not tend to the prompt despatch of Government and Parliamentary business.

Mr. Willecock: The amendment put you in an awkward position.

Mr. MULLANY: I am quite prepared to get out of any awkward position I may find myself in. Again, to accept such an amendment as a want of confidence motion opens the way to private members who happen to be unscrupulous enough, to select for party purposes, or perhaps—worse—for the purpose of securing Ministerial office, a subject which they know to be popular, and to move in connection with that subject an amendment on the Address-in-reply as a means of bringing about a change of Government. I do not for a moment suggest that any present member of this Assembly would do so. Another feature of the moving of such an amendment is that it gives such great prominence to the mover, and that members might be tempted to take advantage of the opportunity, as indeed they often are, to move such an amendment for the purpose of advertising themselves in their own constituencies. While this amendment was being discussed, it was interesting to listen to various members urging the claims and the possibilities of their own districts for the settlement of returned soldiers.

Hon. P. Collier: That remark cannot apply to the member for Northam.

Mr. MULLANY: I am about to state exactly to whom I apply the remark. We had the member for Albany (Mr. H. Robinson), who was quite satisfied that the returned soldiers would not be settled successfully unless we constructed a railway to Nornalup and went on with land settlement there. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) was perfectly convinced that the only possible thing to do was to send returned soldiers to his district, there to grow bananas.

Mr. Angelo: No. I mentioned Kimberley.

Mr. MULLANY: The hon. member somewhat overreached himself when he got down to details, as regards a certain balance sheet, and informed the House of the wages paid and of the class of labour employed. For my part I have no wish to see returned soldiers go to work under such conditions. Then there were the members for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) and Wagin (Mr. Stubbs), who were quite sure that the returned soldiers could all be placed in their particular districts to pursue agriculture. To wind up the little list I took during the debate, the member for Mt.

Magnet (Mr. Troy) went further, and said that the only possible way of successfully settling returned soldiers was to turn them into pastoralists and wool growers, to which end the Government should throw open more land in the Mt. Magnet district.

Mr. H. Robinson: What would you do yourself?

Mr. MULLANY: I would not try to advertise my constituency, or myself, on the backs of returned soldiers. The "West Australian," in commenting upon the debate on this amendment—if one can dignify the desultory discussion which took place with the term of a debate—stated in a leading article—no less—how members had voted in this House, and remarked that Mr. Foley, Mr. Brown, myself, and others had voted upon the amendment but had not spoken upon it. The "West Australian" said that the members in question would not trust themselves to speak upon it. Let me point out that there is in this House an infinitely more important member, who likewise did not speak on the amendment; and that is the leader of the Opposition.

Hon. P. Collier: The leader of the Opposition had expressed his views fully on the subject of repatriation when speaking on the Address-in-reply.

Mr. MULLANY: That is quite so.

Hon. P. Collier: The members referred to had never expressed an opinion. That is the difference.

Mr. MULLANY: Quite so. I am about to proceed on the very line indicated by the leader of the Opposition. Whilst that hon. gentleman did not speak directly on the amendment, he certainly could not be accused of having cast a silent vote. He sat there throughout the discussion, and there is no question but that a running fire of interjections proceeded from him; of those good-humoured, good-tempered interjections which we all enjoy. Unquestionably, the debate afforded the leader of the Opposition himself a good deal of enjoyment. No one could accuse the hon. gentleman of having cast a silent vote on the amendment; indeed, he spoke on it many, many times. But here, to my mind, is the reason why the leader of the Opposition did not speak on the amendment; and I give him credit for this sentiment. Speaking on the Address-in-reply before the amendment was moved by the member for Northam, the leader of the Opposition made these remarks referring to the question of repatriation—

First of all let me say that this question of adequately dealing with the problem of doing justice to our soldiers who are returning to the State will never be brought down to the level of party politics. I hope that one member or one party will not attempt to play off another member or party on a matter of this kind.

Having expressed sentiments of such a nature, I notice that the leader of the Opposition possesses a conscience which would not allow him to take part in the debate such as that to which we listened on the amendment moved by the member for Northam last week. The "West Australian," which claims to be the leading newspaper of the State, came

out with a leading article built up on information supplied by an individual such as I have had occasion to refer to in my opening remarks. When the leading newspaper of the State stoops so low as to go to such a source for information, it has got to a low level indeed. The leader writer of that journal has the audacity to try to wear the mantle which the late David Syme was credited with having worn years ago by reason of his ability to make and unmake Governments, but let me tell that gentleman that the people and the Parliamentarians of this State will not tolerate it. With regard to the debate on the Address-in-reply so far as it has gone, I have been struck by the great similarity of the present debate to those of previous sessions. Since I have had the honour of occupying a seat on this side of the House we have had three different Government in power. My first recollection of a debate on the Address-in-reply was listening, amongst other speeches, to that of the then leader of the Opposition, Mr. Frank Wilson, in which that gentleman criticised the then Premier, Mr. Scaddan, in connection with the administration of the finances. Mr. Wilson said that there was nothing but ruin before this State if the Scaddan Government were allowed to remain in office. Time moved on and there was a change. For a period of 12 months we had Mr. Frank Wilson as Premier and Mr. Scaddan then occupied the seat now in possession of the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier). Mr. Scaddan then adopted exactly similar methods to those which were pursued by Mr. Wilson, and he said that the finances were drifting even worse under Mr. Wilson's administration.

Mr. Jones: Perfectly true.

Mr. MULLANY: Now we have the present leader of the Opposition criticising the Lefroy Government and pointing out that the condition of the finances is even worse than it has ever been in the history of the State. Every member in this House knows to what this position is due and that it cannot be laid at the door of the present or any other Government. We know well that a set of circumstances exist to-day in Western Australia for which no particular Government can be blamed. We are aware that the discovery of gold first brought Western Australia into prominence, and that the development of the industry lifted the State from the position of being the Cinderella of the Australian States, as she was termed, to the prominent place we now occupy. It was properly recognised by those in charge of the administration of affairs at that time that gold-mining, from the very nature of the industry, was not going to be permanent. The history of gold-mining throughout the world has proved this and efforts were made to develop the agricultural industry. Those who were desirous of severing their connection with gold-mining were given opportunities to settle on the land, while an endeavour was made to attract immigrants from other parts of the world. We are aware of the fact that many miles of railways were constructed, and just at the period when a large number of people had

become settled on the land and brought it to a state of productivity, we struck a time such as Australia or the world has never known. Just when the agricultural industry was getting on its feet the wide-world war broke out, and the finances of every civilised country have ever since been entirely upset. I am not blaming one party more than another, but it is about time that this practice of endeavouring to discredit Ministers because of the existing conditions of the finances should cease. This is a time when the party in power are entitled to every possible help that can be given them from every member sitting in the House. I trust that when the Estimates are brought down, there will be more evidence of economy being practised than was the case last year. If economies are not shown, it will only be fair to ask Ministers, and more particularly the Colonial Secretary, to at this stage admit that much of their criticism of the administration of the Scaddan Government was not justified. We know that the Scaddan Government were turned out of office almost entirely through this cry that they were not competent to administer the finances of the State. The Colonial Secretary was probably the most bitter opponent of the Scaddan Government. I noticed, however, that in the last Estimates there was not a decrease in the Estimates of the Colonial Secretary's Department, and it is certainly due to that gentleman to explain why that was so.

Hon. P. Collier: There was a huge increase.

Mr. MULLANY: If it is that the Scaddan Government cut things so fine that the subsequent administration found that it was impossible to further economise, it is up to the Colonial Secretary to honestly admit the fact. One of the proposals of the Scaddan Government as made public in the early months of the war, was that we should discontinue the payment of the sinking fund, and another was that we should go in for more taxation. There have been no proposals up-to-date more feasible or possible to carry out than those of the Scaddan Government to which I have referred. The Ministers in power to-day were most severe in their criticism of the Scaddan Government because of those proposals, yet to-day we find that they themselves are advocates of them. Whilst I have already stated that the leader of the Opposition to-day is carrying on the same method of criticising the financial policy of his opponents, I have to admit that his criticism has been fair and generous compared with that which he himself was subjected to during the long period that he occupied Ministerial office. While speaking the other night, he said that he would be no party to making the subject of repatriation of soldiers a party or an individual question. Still, as leader of the Opposition, when it came to a vote he felt that he would be called upon to vote in the direction of putting the present Government out. My interpretation of the action of the leader of the Opposition is that being in opposition it is his duty to put the Government out if it is possible to do

so. The position he occupies is very similar to that of the city sportsman who goes out armed into the bush. He feels that he must kill something no matter what it may be, and even if it be only a little dicky-bird, as he is out to shoot something he must kill it. When the time came to vote on the amendment moved by the member for Northam, the leader of the Opposition felt that he had to vote to put the present Government out of office, although he knew that action would be of no use to him from a party point of view, because it was doubtful whether a better team could be appointed.

Mr. Munsie: Heaven help that side of the House if they could not get a better team.

Mr. MULLANY: The hon. member may well appeal for help from Heaven. When hon. members on the Opposition side were asked to assist in the formation of a truly national form of Government they refused to have anything to do with it.

Mr. Munsie: And always will refuse. We will never sacrifice our principles to get over there.

Mr. MULLANY: It was amusing indeed, even though the subject was serious, to listen to the leader of the Opposition castigating present Ministers and particularly the Honorary Ministers for having toed the mark, as he put it, at the Farmers and Settlers' Conference, where they had to explain details of their administration. The leader of the Opposition took exception to responsible Ministers doing anything such as that.

Hon. P. Collier: No, my protest was because these people profess to be free and independent. I have never professed independence of conferences.

Mr. MULLANY: I agree with the leader of the Opposition that it is a wrong thing for any Minister to go to an outside organisation to defend his Administration. Here, on the floor of the House, is the place to do that. And being wrong in the present Ministers, honorary or otherwise, it was equally wrong when the leader of the Opposition, as a Minister of the Crown, was called upon to attend meetings of miners' unions and political conferences in order to defend details of his administration.

Hon. P. Collier: On a point of order. The hon. member is making a mis-statement. I was never once called upon to go to a meeting of a miners' union to explain my administrative acts. I ask that the statement be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: It must be withdrawn.

Mr. MULLANY: I withdraw. I still say the hon. member, as Minister, went to a meeting of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Miners' Union. I do not say he was called upon to go there. If the hon. member takes exception to my remarks I will withdraw.

Hon. P. Collier: I only took exception to the statement because it was not in accordance with facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has withdrawn.

Hon. P. Collier: But he is repeating the statement and amplifying it.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. The hon. member first charged the leader of the Opposition with having been taken there; afterwards the state-

ment was that the hon. member had gone there.

Hon. P. Collier: But if the hon. member withdraws and then says the same thing in other words, it is not a withdrawal in accordance with the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Menzies first said that the member for Boulder has been called upon to attend a meeting and explain his administrative acts. To that the member for Boulder took exception, and consequently I asked the member for Menzies to withdraw. The member for Menzies did withdraw. Now the member for Menzies says that the member for Boulder was not taken to the meeting, but that the member for Boulder attended the meeting, which is quite a different thing. There is no necessity for a withdrawal of that statement.

Mr. MULLANY: If the leader of the Opposition takes exception to my remarks in their latest form, I will again withdraw. But I repeat that the leader of the Opposition, when Minister for Mines, did attend a meeting of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Miners' Union and defended certain of his administrative acts. At the time I gave him credit for it. But I say it is not conducive to good administration for any Minister to go to an outside organisation and there defend his administrative acts. Again, at the Fremantle Congress, held in 1913, as will be seen by the Press reports, and also from the published minutes of that conference, the leader of the Opposition, then Minister for Railways, defended his administration of that department. And I admired his defence. Once more, at the Kalgoorlie conference of 1916 a motion, which eventually led to the final settlement of the McLeod case, was moved disagreeing with certain actions of the Minister for Railways, the present leader of the Opposition, and the then Minister defended before that conference the action complained of. I believe it would be more conducive to good administration if all Ministers refused to go to such gatherings to defend their administration. The attitude of a Minister of the Crown should be "if I have done wrong, I will defend myself on the floor of the House." In the "Westralian Worker," only a fortnight ago, appeared a paragraph stating that the verdict of the Royal Commission which inquired into the McLeod case would make a certain ex-Minister feel very uncomfortable. This could only refer to the present leader of the Opposition. So even the "Westralian Worker" is still pursuing this line of thought. Let me say that I trust the leader of the Opposition is not taking these remarks of mine in any personal sense. My parliamentary experience has led me to believe that it would be far better if Ministers declined to attend meetings of outside organisations to defend their administrative acts, if they adopted the attitude that they are responsible only to the country for their administration. The leader of the Opposition also stated, and I believe correctly, that the President of the Farmers and Settlers' Association had taken certain members of Parliament severely to task on the score that they had not been doing the right thing by

the Association, and had gone on to say that the Association was shaken to its very foundations through the actions of those members of Parliament. I fancy the idea expressed by that outside official must come familiarly to members of the Opposition, probably every one of whom since being elected to Parliament has been accused by leaders of outside organisations of having utterly failed to put into operation the planks of their platform. It is a common cry in outside circles that since being elevated to Parliament by the votes of the workers, Labour members have lost touch with and are not doing their duty to those who sent them to Parliament. What a striking similarity between the two organisations! The President of the Farmers and Settlers' Association was probably right when he said that the Association was being shaken to its foundation. But what is the reason for the disturbance? To my mind it is due to the arrogance and intolerance of men who set themselves up as leaders of political parties outside of Parliament and refuse to allow members of Parliament any independence of thought, any initiative whatever. We have a good illustration in the more recent history of an organisation in Australia which was stronger than the Farmers and Settlers' Association ever aspired to be. That organisation undoubtedly has been shaken to its foundation by the same force. We have also had the pleasure of listening to one of those characteristically admirable speeches by the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), artistically delivered and, I believe, grammatically correct, but, unfortunately, like every other speech by that hon. member, absolutely devoid of a new idea. He informed the House that the deficit was steadily increasing. Unfortunately, we all know that. He likened the Treasurer to a wounded hare, squealing for members to come to his assistance in the trouble in which he, as Treasurer, finds himself to-day. Judging by the utterances of the member for Perth to date, the Treasurer will have to squeal a mighty long time before he gets a helpful suggestion from the member for Perth. In fact, the attitude of the member for Perth when he likens others to animals, puts me in mind of a disgruntled bear rushing out of his lair with the roar, "What about this deficit?" The hon. member looked ferocious enough to gobble up the unfortunate Treasurer and his colleagues. However, I do not know that this attitude on the part of the member for Perth is going to assist the Treasurer and the State out of their difficulty. If the hon. member desires to pose in this Chamber as an authority on finance, if he wishes to play a leading part in politics in this State, he must do something more than simply point out that the finances are in a very bad position. He said the country is waiting for a lead from a member of the Government, but that the Premier and his colleagues have practically admitted that they have no lead to offer. Let me suggest that if the hon. member himself has a lead to give he should climb down from the lofty position which he occupies and give to the State any valu-

able ideas he may have. We should then have from him helpful criticism; but to continue in his customary strain, pointing out the unfortunate position of the finances, is not going to help in the slightest degree. He spoke most disrespectfully of the attempts being made by the Minister for Industries to foster local manufacturing, and he said that the industries contemplated by the Minister were tuppenny-halfpenny little affairs. The hon. member does not want that sort of thing. What he wants is to convert all our young people and all the immigrants we can get into wool kings and beef barons. "Go on with our primary productions" he would say, "and secondary industries will come when some lordly jam manufacturer from the other States thinks it will pay him to set up his factories here." While I agree that we require to encourage the primary producers, I hold also that we shall never have a prosperous State until we learn to manufacture more of the commodities which we use. It is not surprising that the member for Perth should speak disrespectfully of these "tuppenny-halfpenny" industries which we are endeavouring to start. The Perth Chamber of Commerce say the very same thing.

Hon. P. Collier: What, Nathan, too!

Mr. MULLANY: I have here a speech by the President of the Perth Chamber of Commerce which was published in the "West Australian" only one day before the member for Perth last spoke in the House, a speech in which the President of the Chamber of Commerce gave to the public almost every idea that the member for Perth enunciated in this Chamber. As a matter of fact, in all essential points the speech of the member for Perth was almost identically the same as that delivered by the President of the Perth Chamber of Commerce. The President, in the course of his remarks on secondary industries said—

We cannot for many years expect this to be a manufacturing State. Our small population forbids it and all our efforts should be to encourage immigration for the land. I do not think this point can be stressed too much or too often for the good of the State, as unless it is fully realised there is a great danger of attracting the wrong class of immigrant.

That is what the President of the Perth Chamber of Commerce said.

Hon. P. Collier: How does the hon. member account for the fact that it was endorsed by Mr. Lovekin, who supports the Government?

Mr. MULLANY: Mr. Lovekin can probably explain that. The member for Perth on every possible occasion advocates the policy put forward by the Chamber of Commerce. Can we expect that gentleman to speak in any way but disrespectfully of our local manufactures? We might almost say of him, "Pilkington, Perth's advocate of profiteering," and to go on with the alliteration we might say that he has no time for the present Premier. The members of the Perth Chamber of Commerce are composed of shipping agents, and representatives of big firms in

the Eastern States and other parts of the world who are not in favour of secondary industries. Just imagine, say in this State, waiting for the Chamber of Commerce to say when the time should arrive for us to start manufacturing something! Just imagine the members of the Perth Chamber of Commerce sitting as a committee of examination of suitable or unsuitable immigrants for this State? Imagine a man coming along, and being asked, "Well, where do you come from?" and the reply may be "England." "What were you there?" "A farmer, or agricultural labourer." "My good man, go to the Government; they will give you a block of land for nothing. You will want tools, boots, clothes; we can supply them to you and make a profit out of them." Another man comes along, he wants to go sheep farming. "Very well, go to the Government, they will fix you up; they will give you a block of land in the pastoral area where you can go and produce wool. You will want saddles and bridles, sheep-shearing machines. You will want food, boots. We can supply them to you and make a profit out of them." But we must not think of manufacturing anything in this State. "You can go and grow wool and we will import everything for you to enable you to do it. You can send your wool to us and we will send it to another part of the world to be manufactured and we will get a profit out of selling it for you." Again, a timber worker comes along. Yes, he can go to the timber areas in the South-West and cut timber. He must not cut it too small; cut it in bigunks so that it can be sent somewhere else to be manufactured, so that the members of the Chamber of Commerce can get a profit out of it. Another man comes along. He is asked, "My good man, what are you?" "I am an expert jam maker and a maker of preserves." "Good God, you are no good to us; you must go to Tasmania; I represent Jones in this State. We do not want to manufacture jam in this country." We must not expect these people, the members of the Chamber of Commerce, to attempt to encourage industries being started in this country. Another man will come along. "What are you?" "I am an expert bacon curer." "Oh, you must go to the East. Hutton, over in the East, is my employer." Again, I want to say we are not going to have prosperity in this State until we manufacture something for ourselves. If we are not to manufacture anything, if we are to be a nation or community of navvies, simply producing the raw material, then we cannot become a successful country. The members of the Chamber of Commerce think that there is no place for Perth in the scheme of things. Perth is doing nothing now; she is manufacturing nothing. We are a sort of robbers' nest sitting here as middlemen and dealing in various products, assisting the other States and other countries.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Did you not support Federation?

Mr. MULLANY: I am not speaking about Federation just now. Did you?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I voted against it.

Mr. MULLANY: The hon. member wants to get out of Federation to-day. Unless we

can manufacture something here there is no place for Perth in the scheme of things. Perth is not required at all. The out-ports can do all that Perth is doing to-day. It is an incubus on the face of the world. We can do without Perth and do without the member for Perth, as a matter of fact. We must become a manufacturing community, and unless we do so we shall not become a prosperous State. In conclusion, I wish to refer to one item in the Governor's Speech relating to mining. It says that gold production is satisfactory. I entirely disagree with that. I say that the gold production of the State is not satisfactory and that the conditions under which gold-mining is carried on in the State is not satisfactory. There is no industry amongst the whole of the industries that has been so severely hurt and knocked back and crippled by the war as the gold-mining industry. All the other mining industries, particularly those of baser metals, have enjoyed through the war vastly increased prices for their products. But this does not apply to gold-mining, and whilst the cost of the production of gold has gone up quite out of proportion to that of any other mining product, there is a standard value of gold fixed and no one can alter it. There has been a conference sitting in England recently, or a committee of some sort, discussing a proposition to give a bonus of 10s. or a pound, or a fixed sum per ounce, for all gold that is produced.

Mr. Green: There is reference to it in the newspaper to-day.

Mr. MULLANY: I believe there are great difficulties in the way of doing anything of the sort. I do not pose as a financial expert, so as to give an opinion as to how a bonus, or an increase in the price of gold should be brought about; that would affect the price of gold as a medium of exchange. Many people say that it is impossible to give a bonus for gold production. But assistance can be given to the mining industry in a different direction. An attempt might be made, and could be made, to decrease the cost of supplies and requisites used in the production of gold in this State and in other parts of the world. I have here, as showing what the gold-mining industry is suffering under, a list of prices of a few requisites used more particularly in the gold-mining industry, showing the prices to-day as quoted in Perth and the prices at which the materials were sold four years ago. Oils (average), pre-war price, 2s. gal., present price, 4s. gal.; kerosene, pre-war price, 10d. gal., present price 2s. 3d. gal.; petrol, pre-war price, 1s. 5d. gal., present price, 2s. 11d. gal.; cyanide, pre-war price, £91 per ton, present price, £135 ton; zinc shavings, pre-war price, £40 ton, present price £110 per ton; borax, pre-war price 43s. 6d. cwt., present price 77s. cwt.; borax glass, pre-war price 42s. cwt., present price 120s. cwt.; soda bicarb., pre-war price 9s. 6d. cwt., present price 28s. cwt., steel (mild), pre-war price £22 ton, present price £32 ton; iron, pre-war price £12 ton, present price £32 ton; G.C. iron (average), pre-war price £17 ton, present price £32 10s. ton; candles, pre-war price 8d. lb., present price 10½d. lb.; crucibles G, pre-war price 39s. gross, present price 140s. gross; crucibles, plum-

bago No. 100, pre-war price 26s. each, present price 54s. each; quicksilver, pre-war price £8 8s. per flask, present price £30 per flask; battery screening, pre-war price 6d. foot, present price 1s. 8d. foot; shoes and dies, pre-war price 14s. 6d. cwt., present price 40s. cwt. (imported), 25s. cwt. (Kalgoorlie make). These materials are used almost exclusively in gold-mining. There are one or two items the quotations for which I have mislaid, particularly explosives, fuses and detonators, but the increase in the price of these commodities is quite on a par with those I have quoted. All these commodities, combined with the shortage of labour, has made the position of the gold-mining industry a particularly parlous one indeed. We are told, and continually, that it is necessary to keep up the production of gold to allow the British Empire to finance the war as she has been doing. Seeing that there are grave difficulties in the way of giving a bonus for gold production, I believe the Government might well communicate with the Imperial authorities and ask them if it is not possible to step in and assist the industry, which is doing so much for the Empire to-day. The Imperial authorities at an early stage of the war found it necessary to successfully fight our enemies to take away the supply of machinery which would assist in the manufacture of munitions. The materials used in gold-mining and the machinery used in gold-mining are being used for the manufacture of war munitions, and I believe it is quite within the province of the Government to get in communication with the Imperial authorities and point out the condition in which the gold-mining industry stands to-day and to find out if some steps could be taken to prevent the extortionate prices being charged for all necessities used in gold-mining and which are so vital for the production of gold throughout the Empire, particularly in Western Australia. No industry since war broke out has been so neglected as the gold-mining industry. I do not blame any particular Government for this position, but would point out that it cannot continue for any length of time. Unless some relief is given many more of our mines are going to be put out of action. Another phase of the beneficial effect of some of the schemes I have outlined is this: that whilst the bonus would be of advantage to those who are at present engaged in producing gold and trying to have reduced the price of the commodities used in the industry, it would also be a great relief and a benefit to those who are endeavouring to obtain gold from the ground but have not yet been successful in doing so. The bonus would also be of benefit to prospecting parties, and indeed to all those people who are feeling the strain consequent upon the large increase in the cost of necessary materials and commodities. I urge upon the Government to get into touch with the Imperial authorities, and to do their best to afford some measure of relief to an industry which is going through such a trying time, and which in the past has done so much for Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.46]: I did not intend to speak upon the Address-in-reply, but after hearing the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullaney) I thought it advisable that something should be said from this side of the House. It is surprising to see the change that comes over some hon. members. It is an easy matter to throw accusations about, and to say that a member cannot speak as he desires. We recently had an exhibition showing that members cannot always vote as they desire. Members are sometimes tied up in such a way that they would at times give almost anything if they could be unloosed. There is no doubt that there are no more free members in the House than on this side of it.

Mr. Davies: Oh!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Did the hon member say "Rot"?

Mr. Davies: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I trust that during the time the hon. member is in Parliament he will be able to exercise that amount of freedom which I have always exercised since I have been a member of this party.

Mr. Munsie: You cannot quote one instance in which we have not spoken our minds.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Menzies thought that the time had arrived when members sitting in opposition should not criticise the Government in regard to their finances. He pointed out that the present position in that respect could not be laid at the door of any Government. I was under the impression from the statements which have been made, not two or three years ago, but made in the House and in the public Press during the past two or three days, that the financial position of the State could be laid at the door of the late Labour Government. In another place a member of Cabinet made that statement clearly and distinctly only a few days ago. Not only did the Minister concerned make that statement in another place, but he made it in the Press, and the effect of it was that the whole of the financial troubles of the present Government were due to the fact that the late Labour Government were extravagant during the time that they held office. I said last year, and I say again to-night, that the present Government should have endeavoured to keep their expenditure down in time of war to that extravagant year of the late Labour Government, namely, 1916.

Hon. P. Collier: They talk about our extravagance, but they are exceeding our expenditure.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is so. They realised when they came into office that the revenue was falling off to a considerable extent. Have they made any attempt to keep their expenditure within their revenue, or within the bounds of what it was in 1915-16? We have been told repeatedly that the increased expenditure is brought about owing to the large increase in sinking fund and interest, which had to meet the loans raised by the Labour Government. Anyone who analyses the figures will find that after paying the increase in expenditure and the

increase in loan and sinking fund, the Government this year have spent about £100,000 more than was spent by the Labour Government in 1915-16. Wherein does the reason lie for the member for Menzies criticising those on this side of the House because they sometimes deal with the financial policy of the Government? I say to-day, as I have said before, I am confident that if the Scaddan Government and this party had been controlling the finances of the State this increase in expenditure would never have taken place. It was our endeavour at all times, as far as possible, to decrease the expenditure with a view to bringing the finances into a more satisfactory position.

The Minister for Works: In what direction is there increased expenditure?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have not had an opportunity of analysing the items. If the Minister for Works will look through the financial statements which have appeared in the Press he will find there is nothing down against revenue for the conduct of the Agricultural Bank, the carrying out of the workers' homes scheme, or the management of the Savings Bank. Other items will also show that the expenditure which has taken place regarding them has not been charged to Consolidated Revenue this year. The Government have altered their statements to such an extent that it is almost impossible to make any comparison between them. The total expenditure, less trading concerns, which now appear under another head, was in 1916 £5,091,721, and in 1918 it was £5,328,278. The increase under Loan Acts only amounted to £211,000. This indicates that the whole of the increased expenditure has not been brought about, as has been said on many occasions, through the large interest and sinking fund bill which had to be met.

The Minister for Works: That is a factor in the position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that.

Hon. P. Collier: It only accounts for about half the increase.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: My chief reason for rising is to point out what I consider has been a breach of confidence on the part of the Government in respect to the conference which was called by the Governor General at the close of last session. Personally, I had bright hopes of good results coming from that conference, and believed that, under present conditions, it was a right thing to do to call that conference together. I also expected that the agreement which was arrived at there, and which those present promised to endeavour to have carried into effect, would at all events have been carried out by the Western Australian Government, even if the other States had failed to do so. The agreement into which the Government entered at that conference was entered into on behalf of the people of this State. I regret to say that the Government have not carried out their compact. Just after the report of that conference was issued I had the pleasure of meeting the Premier in regard to the matter. He assured me that so far as the Government were concerned they would keep

the promise made at that conference. In company with the secretary of the Australian Labour Federation I also interviewed the Colonial Secretary, who gave us a definite promise that if the Labour party at their meeting agreed to uphold their actions, the Government would carry out the promise made at the conference. What has happened? It is true that one or two fines which were made have been remitted. It is also true that after the wheat had been stacked at Spencer's Brook and Midland Junction, or a great portion of it, the Government said they would waive the position with regard to the men. The greatest difficulty which existed at that time was at Fremantle. I say without fear of contradiction that neither the Government nor the private employers carried out the agreement which they made at the Governor General's conference in connection with this matter.

Mr. Munsie: They have absolutely ignored it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The private employers said that the employers of the waterside workers were not represented at that conference. They made it clear that as this was the case they could not be called upon to carry out any arrangement made thereat. I certainly thought that the private employers, having had for their mouthpieces at the conference Messrs Fairbairn, Leslie, and Neil McNeil, who, after consultation in Melbourne and drawing up certain conditions, said they were agreeable to abide by them, would not have immediately taken such action as would render null and void the agreement arrived at. Only one or two things were asked for, and these could quite readily have been granted. What was asked for was that the employers should do away with the old convict system which had been in vogue at Fremantle, that the ticket and badge system should be removed, so that every man could have a name instead of a number, that all men should be put on an equality, and that there should be absolute freedom of action. That is all that the workers at Fremantle ask for. But the employers of the waterside workers refused to agree to that. In view of this position I thought that the Government of the day, who were the largest employers of labour through the medium of the Harbour Trust, a semi-Government institution, would at any rate carry out their compact. After having given us a definite statement that they would abide by the decision arrived at in conference, they then said that as a certain conference had been held in Perth in connection with the Labour party with which they did not agree, and seeing that certain resolutions were carried at that conference, they refused to fulfil their promise in connection with the Fremantle waterside workers, which promise had been given at the Governor General's conference. That was the excuse they gave. In my opinion those who arrived at that agreement—they were the representatives of the Governments of Australia at that time—had no intention whatever of carrying it out. Their subsequent action proves that to me conclusively. They

were surprised that the representatives of the Labour party whom they brought to that conference were agreeable to work in harmony with them; and at the first opportunity which presented itself they sought to break the arrangement made at the conference. Just before the conference was held, I stated in this Chamber that a large number of alien subjects were being employed on the wharf at Fremantle. Hon. members here said, "No, it is not true; it cannot be true." Some members said that if such was the case it constituted a shame and a disgrace. Has my statement been contradicted? Has any person yet been able to contradict it? A metropolitan newspaper said it was time my statement was either contradicted or admitted. Up to date however, no one has been able to offer a contradiction. The Military authorities have thought it necessary to question me on the subject, and to seek information as to whether my statement was well founded or not. They were called on to report. In reply to a request from the Military authorities, I waited on them, and the result was that they said, "We are not going to deny your statements, but the alien subjects are not there now; they are gone." That was two months after I made my statement here; in the interim the alien subjects had been removed. This country has had to pay dearly for the position which has obtained and still obtains at Fremantle. Last year the conditions at Fremantle involved a payment of over £2,000 for additional police—a wilful and wicked waste of money, for Fremantle has been as orderly throughout the trouble as ever it was. The extra police there to-day are quite unnecessary. Let me add that the position at Fremantle has involved the whole State in an extra expense of 4d. per ton for handling cargo. The cost of handling cargo last year was greater by 4d. per ton than in previous years.

Hon. P. Collier: A criminal waste of public money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This is Nationalism.

Hon. P. Collier: This is for the scabs.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is for the purpose of crushing unionism. It is done as a punishment to men who made a mistake, and who have honestly admitted making a mistake and have done their best to rectify the error. But punishment has had to go on all this time, because, as the Government stated definitely and distinctly, certain other persons not in any way concerned in the trouble passed a certain resolution. I consider the Government should have removed the difficulties existing at Fremantle—and this applies to the Governments of Australia, because the same position has obtained in New South Wales. The difficulties could have been removed through the medium of the resolutions passed by the Governor General's conference, which resolutions offered the finest expedient that ever presented itself towards the harmonious working of all parties together. However, the Governments failed to keep the promise made at the conference. In this State, the Government have done nothing but embitter the Fremantle workers against those in authority. The workers have seen their children want bread, and not a hand has been lifted by the

Western Australian Government towards the end of remedying an injustice which has existed for months. In this connection I have been keenly disappointed. I thought that the matter was being handled with a view to bringing about among our people that unanimity which has been preached from every platform of this State, that unanimity which we were told was essential in these times. Not long ago, when walking in the street, I met two soldiers who had returned from the Front. I asked them whether they were working, and, one of them replying yes, I asked, "Are you following your old job?" The reply, which, if I may, I will give in the returned soldier's own words, was as follows, "It's damned hard to come back from the Front and find other men, with the consent of the Government of this State, holding our positions."

The Minister for Works: Were these returned soldiers lumpers?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They had been working for the Harbour Trust previously. I can give the Minister their names if he so desires. I quote the incident in order to illustrate the feeling which has been created at Fremantle.

Hon. P. Collier: In order to find those returned soldiers employment, the Government would have to put the hangman off, and that would not be fair.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was in hopes that as the result of an expression of opinion of this House last session, something would have been done to remove the trouble.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Anyhow, that was the impression conveyed to us.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. I had been in hopes that the Government of the day would carry out the agreement reached at the Governor General's conference. But, unfortunately for the men, the employers of water-side workers at Fremantle, of whom the Fremantle Harbour Trust, a semi-Government institution, are the largest, thought it unwise that the agreement should be carried out. The only excuse put forward, and a lame excuse I call it, was that at a certain meeting of the Labour party, held in Perth and not attended by any of those men, a certain resolution had been carried. Is that a fair excuse, a just excuse?

Mr. Munsie: Certainly not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I repeat what I have said here on a previous occasion in this connection, that many of the men affected have sons at the Front fighting our battles to-day; that others of these men, unfortunately, have sons who remained on the battlefield; that yet others have sons who are returned wounded soldiers. The Government are to-day crushing a union of whose membership over 400 have taken or are taking their part in fighting, on the battlefield, for the liberties of the Australian people. The Government of the day have not treated the union fairly and justly. They have not realised the position. They have not tried to go as far as they should have gone in the direction of forcing the hands of the employers, so that that justice which was promised to these men should be rendered to them. I

regret the necessity for bringing this matter up to-day. I thought the matter had previously been placed before the Government with such clearness that they would make every endeavour to remove any discontent amongst our people. With my colleagues I believe that we ought all to work in harmony, and that we ought to endeavour to ensure that our people should be as contented as possible. But when one tries to intensify the prevailing bitterness, a bitterness which has prevailed for nearly 12 months, that is not in the best interests of the State or of the people.

The Minister for Works: Who is trying to intensify the bitterness?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A semi-Government institution, the Fremantle Harbour Trust. They have not been asked to remedy the position.

The Premier: Yes, they have. The matter has been put to them over and over again.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Though glad to have that assurance of the Premier, I regret that no endeavour has been made to force the Fremantle Harbour Trust to do the right thing. The bitterness existing in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, to-day, is due to the failure of the employers to carry out the honourable understanding arranged at the Governor General's conference. I looked forward to a settlement of the difficulty in this State, and had every confidence in the Government on that point. But, unfortunately, I was leaning on a rotten stick. The position at Fremantle to-day is as bad as ever it was. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Piesse), when the leader of the Opposition was dealing with the rabbit question, said that members on this side of the House, and particularly the leader of the Opposition himself, were responsible for the present position of the rabbit pest. The hon. member said that action should have been taken prior to the change of Government, that the time for action was prior to the Labour Administration going out of office.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before tea I was dealing with the remarks made by the member for Toodyay by way of interjection on the subject of the rabbit question. He pointed out that the Labour Government were responsible for the position which exists to-day. I would like to quote for his benefit, and I am sorry he is not here, some statements which were made by the Honorary Minister (Mr. Baxter) in the Legislative Council when he was introducing the Vermin Boards Act Amendment Bill on the 20th February, 1918.

Mr. Maley: He said the Labour Government were partly responsible.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The interjections implied that if action had been taken at once the position would not be as bad as we find it to-day. The Honorary Minister in introducing the Bill said—

There have been a lot of extravagant statements made in regard to the invasion

by rabbits, and these statements are causing alarm among settlers in the State. Not only are they doing that, but at the same time they will go a long way towards affecting the security of holdings. I do not say that the rabbit pest is not serious; it is very serious indeed, but I will say it has not reached the stage for such loud clamouring as to cause alarm not only to the settlers, but to the heads of financial institutions upon whom the farmers are dependent to carry them through hard seasons. It is said that the Rabbit Department have done practically nothing during the past few years to cope with the pest. That statement is incorrect and misleading. . . . For the past 14 years the Rabbit Department have urged settlers to fence in their holdings. Of course the present price of netting is ridiculous. Twelve months after the outbreak of war there was plenty of netting available. Farmers had an opportunity of getting it from the Government and having 20 years at a low rate of interest in which to pay for it. There was no excuse then for farmers not to fence in their holdings. The Act provided for it and the Government found the netting.

Apparently there was plenty of netting in stock at that time, but the farmers did not avail themselves of it.

The great majority of settlers in the State are of opinion that rabbits would not become a pest. It is only now at the eleventh hour that they wake up and shriek out "Why do not the Government do this or that." The Government are here to carry out the Act, and it is for the settlers themselves to exterminate the rabbits.

At a later stage the Honorary Minister said—

A few words now regarding what the occupiers of land could and should have done. There were very few rabbits in the Mt. Marshall district three or four years ago. . . . The occupiers were not forced by the Department to do anything. The position was put before them clearly. The expense then would have been very slight indeed. But, no. The occupiers waited until the eleventh hour when they are overrun with rabbits. The absurd idea was that the rabbit could not live in a country like this. Why, the rabbit will live where nothing else could live. Another idea was that our poison plants would keep the rabbits down, but people who believe that have a very poor conception of the prolific nature of the rabbit. The rabbits would clear this country of poison, and after that they would still keep on going. Two gentlemen interviewed me on this matter recently, and asked me what the Government were going to do. I asked them, "What have you done?" They said they had laid poison. I asked how. They replied that they had laid down poison a couple of times at the beginning of the season. Fancy their saying that when they ought to have been laying poison three

days a week continuously, carrying the thing right through. We are only playing with the rabbits by putting down poison occasionally.

That is the opinion of the Minister in charge of this department so far as the settlers are concerned. A little later on he said—

Another feature of the case is that settlers, practically without exception, almost ridicule the officers of the department. The settlers have never taken the rabbit question seriously. It is only now, when they are over-run with rabbits, that they do take it seriously. Even now, however, they do not take it upon themselves, but ask what are the Government going to do? It is just about time that people became more self-reliant. They cannot lean on the Government for everything. The settlers must take their share of the burden of exterminating the rabbits. If there were a large amount of money to be expended by the department in exterminating the rabbits, we might still go on in the old way; but if such an amount were put on the Estimates it would never be passed by this Chamber. Certain people have gone a little further in leaving gates open. In some cases they have actually sneaked out after dark for the purpose of opening rabbit-proof gates and propping them open.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Who is the author of all that rubbish?

Hon. P. Collier: Mr. Baxter, your colleague.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Mr. Baxter went on to say—

A watch has been kept, but strange to say while the watchman was there the gates were not left open. Immediately he was withdrawn, however, the gates were left open again. There are people who know the circumstances of these cases, and say they have a good idea of who is responsible, but they will not even give the Department a hint as to who it is. What chance have the Department of combating that sort of thing along such a length of fence?

The Honorary Minister went on to point out that there were very few rabbits in any of those areas in 1916, and it was by the action of the farmers themselves that the rabbits spread through the agricultural districts. In fact, the Honorary Minister went on to say, the rabbits have been encouraged to come inside the fence. I want to remind my friends opposite that during last session when we were dealing with the Rabbit Bill, we endeavoured to frame the Bill so that the Government would attend to their reserves adjoining settlements, and in that way assist the settlers to destroy the rabbits. But, with one or two exceptions, hon. members were against us. The member for Toodyay who criticised us said we were responsible for the existing conditions. The position to-day is that the rabbits exist in such numbers that it will be compulsory for the Government to protect the settlers to the extent of attending to the destruction of the pest on Government reserves. I am pleased to see, according to the report of a deputation which waited on the Premier from the Farmers and Settlers' Association, that the Premier promised to do every-

thing he can to bring about the destruction of rabbits. It is better late than never. Two years have elapsed since this matter was brought under the notice of the Government, but very little has been done. The Minister for Works has been lively in making preparation for the destruction of the vermin.

The Minister for Works: We sold over 200 carts, and they were good carts, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I intend to say only a few words on the subject of immigration. I am one of those who for many years in this Chamber advocated immigration, but since the war has broken out I think it will be madness for us to attempt any system of immigration to Western Australia.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): During the war.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. So far as able-bodied men are concerned, if there are any available in the old Country, they will be required there. There is not the least doubt to my mind that as soon as peace is proclaimed, Great Britain will require all the men she can get. The industries will have to be built up again and efforts will have to be made to again capture the markets which have been lost on account of the war. Great Britain will be short of men on account of the big losses and there will therefore be some difficulty in getting immigrants to come to Australia. I am afraid—although I hope it will not be so—that the demand for men in the older countries will be greater than in Australia for some years to come. I was surprised the other day at the publication of the announcement with regard to the 20,000 immigrants who would be required for this State after the termination of the war. In looking up the records I find that the Premier was a member of the committee who submitted this recommendation to Cabinet, and I find also that Cabinet endorsed it and sent a cable to the Secretary of State pointing out what Western Australia could do in that direction. I do not think the officer of the State who is away in England at the present time, and who is unable to speak for himself, should have it stated of him that he was doing something without authority. The authority was actually given by the Government of the day and the officer was carrying out instructions. What is wanted here is population. Where it is to come from in the future I do not know. Because, as I have previously said, in 1912-13, when we were bringing out immigrants in large numbers, an agitation arose in England against the loss of English manhood. So strong was the agitation that Sir Joseph Cook, who became Prime Minister of the Commonwealth at the end of 1913, sent an officer to Germany for the purpose of ascertaining whether he could not get immigrants from that country. The report that came to Western Australia suggested that it ought to be possible to people Australia from Northern Germany. At that time the Governments of Victoria and of New South Wales joined forces in respect of immigration and paid for thousands of berths in Australian bound ships, berths which, however, remained empty because immigrants could not be found to fill them. Hundreds of berths were secured

by the Western Australian Government. Sir Joseph Cook provided £200,000 to assist immigration, making it conditional that the number of immigrants should exceed the average that had been received by each State during the preceding three years. As I have said, the outcome was the sending of an ambassador to Germany and other countries for immigrants. The Minister for Industries informed us the other night that a laboratory to deal with forest products was to be erected in Western Australia. The Minister said he had feared that endeavours would be made to have the laboratory established in one of the Eastern States, but that owing to the superior timber resources in Western Australia, the Commonwealth Government had decided to place it here. Since the Minister's announcement Dr. Gellately, speaking at the Million Club—where he told us that if we doubled our population our indebtedness per head would be decreased by one-half—declared that the State Government were contributing £5,000 towards the establishment of the laboratory. I hope that, later on, the Minister for Industries will tell us what we stand to gain from the expenditure of this sum. Surely, if the laboratory is regarded by the Commonwealth as being necessary, the Commonwealth is better able to bear the cost than is the State. I hope the sum referred to is not being contributed simply to induce the Commonwealth to come to this State. If Western Australia is better endowed with forests than is any of the other States, that, and that alone, should be the inducement for the placing of the laboratory here. We should impress upon members of the Commonwealth Government, some of whom seem to think that Western Australia is part of another country altogether, that if this laboratory is necessary to the industries of Australia, Western Australia is part of Australia and should be treated just as favourably as are the other States. I was pleased to learn that the Government are going to bring down a Roads Bill and a Traffic Bill. I hope that in the Traffic Bill justice will be done to the lesser local bodies, that not the whole of the license fees, particularly those collected in the metropolitan area, will go to one or two of the local authorities, while others have to maintain the roads.

The Minister for Works: You will help me if I bring that forward?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Certainly, if it is framed in an equitable manner. The Traffic Bill has been introduced on several occasions and it should have become law long ago. Legislation in regard to vehicle licenses has pressed unjustly on smaller districts for many years past. The Roads Bill may give rise to a little controversy, but I hope the Minister will endeavour to frame the Bill in such a way as to relieve it of controversial matter wherever possible. The Minister for Industries should be encouraged in his endeavours to build up industries in this State. Let me here remind the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) that Western Australia was induced to enter Federation principally on ac-

count of the tariff which then existed between the States. The whole of the people of the State, and particularly of the goldfields were strongly of opinion that the goods being sent into Western Australia from the other States should come in duty free. A free breakfast was dangled before our eyes, and this was largely responsible for inducing the State to enter Federation. The difficulties we now encounter in building up industries in this State are based largely on the fact that we have no power to impose a Customs or Excise tariff against the products of the industries already established in the Eastern States, industries which were built up under a protective tariff. But there are ways other than Customs or Excise duties by which we might assist our young industries, and I would remind the member for Menzies that my interjection this afternoon referred, not to the tariff, but to those other expedients. The Minister for Industries told us the other night that bacon has been put on the third priority list. We know what that means. It means that in all probability the importation of bacon into Western Australia will cease. The price of bacon is already going up. That is one way of building up our industries. Not long ago a gentleman told me that the putting of bacon on the third priority list meant a thousand pounds to him. It shows that, when we build up our industries in this way, we do it at the expense of the consumer, and that the increase in price goes directly into the pockets of private individuals. We should try to avoid that. If we can build up industries to stand on their own foundation, then I will give the Minister my support, but we should be very wary about building up industries at the cost of increasing the price of the people's food.

Mr. Mullany: But if we do not make an attempt they will never be built up.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that, but when it is made impossible for the manufacturers to ship their goods here, the consumer has to pay an increased price, and the benefit goes, not into the coffers of the State, but into the pockets of the manufacturers. To that extent the system is worse than the Customs. The member for Menzies was on the goldfields at the time, and he knows why Western Australia entered Federation.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): It was for the purpose of defence.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Nonsense! Defence had not then been thought of. It was on the score of a free breakfast. We did not get the free breakfast, but Western Australian industries have suffered ever since. In conclusion, I trust that hon. members will believe that any criticism from this side is proffered honestly. If at any time members on this side consider the Government deserving of criticism, that criticism shall be forthcoming. At the present time our greatest difficulty lies in finding something for which to praise the Government, for the finances are steadily getting worse and worse. It takes my mind back to boyhood days. A man in our village used to run a small battery. He was not doing too well, and

as the stamps went up and down he set the motion to words. One day a neighbour asked, "Well, John, how are the stamps going?" "Worse, worse, worse, worse," was his reply. So with us; we are going backwards, and the time has arrived when some attempt should be made to reduce the cost of administration. In my opinion, there has been no justification for increasing the expenditure out of revenue since the 30th June, 1916. Yet there has been a considerable increase, both last year and this year, over the previous figures.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [7.58]: The hon. member referred to the expenditure of last year and of 1916-17. If he means the House to understand that there has been more money expended on administration, and also in regard to the volume of work, he may have some grounds for his belief, so far as the latter is concerned. But I hope to be able to convince members that there has been a considerable reduction in the cost of administration. The hon. member referred to the coming of the Roads Bill and the Traffic Bill. I was pleased with his remarks. When those Bills come before the House I shall rely on the hon. member to give me every assistance in carrying them through. The hon. member spoke of justice to the smaller local bodies. I do not wish to anticipate anything I may have to say in regard to those Bills when the time comes, but there is certainly a great deal more behind the hon. member's remarks than would appear on the surface. Let me give one instance: In connection with the maintenance of the Perth-Fremantle road, it became necessary for me to allocate to the different bodies, whose territory ran along it, what I considered would be a fair charge against their subsidies. In order to ascertain what that charge should be, I caused a census to be taken on the road for a full fortnight. We traced every vehicle from its source to the end of its journey, and got together a most elaborate and instructive report. I found, taking a unit of 100 per cent., that the city of Perth was the source of traffic of 45 per cent. of vehicles using the Perth-Fremantle road. Fremantle, so far as I can remember, was responsible for about 23 per cent. of the traffic. The two municipalities I have mentioned account therefore for 68 per cent. out of the 100 per cent., and the remaining districts took up the balance. Along one portion of this road there are two miles of territory controlled by the Claremont roads board. This local authority does not provide one per cent. of the total traffic, and yet two miles of the road would in the ordinary way have been considered a fair charge against it. If hon. members will think over the figures they will see that the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) was quite warranted in putting forward, as a matter for consideration in the new Traffic Bill with regard to fees, the question of doing justice to the smaller bodies.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I hope you will increase the fees in connection with the large motors trading along this road.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS. The hon. member made some remarks about the Minister for Industries in connection with the laboratory. I should have been very pleased if the £5,000 to which he referred had been provided by the Commonwealth Government, and if there are any means by which this money can be so provided, so much the better. I am convinced, however, that if the laboratory costs this State more than £5,000, and we can get it established in the State and it will do that work which we can reasonably expect it should do, it will be one of the best things that has ever happened to Western Australia. I do not think any of us fully realise the resources of this great State. I rejoice in the fact that I have a colleague whose mind is broad enough and whose pluck is good enough to cause researches to be made with the object of determining what the resources of this State really are. I understand that the Commonwealth will undertake the maintenance of the laboratory, and pay all the salaries and expenses in connection with it. Even if Western Australia had to pay the lot, if times were better and we could find the money, I should say that the Government would be justified in incurring the expense. I feel certain that we have within our borders untold wealth, apart altogether from our wool, timber, or gold, and that we have resources which could be exploited and should be exploited for the purpose of developing to the utmost extent this good old country of ours. The member for North-East Fremantle made some reference to the immigration proposals. I should like to inform hon. members that it was idle to expect to receive from Germany during the four years preceding the war anything like an influx of population into Australia. A book has recently been published by a French professor dealing with Germany's economic rise. Members will find in that book some idea, which they have not been able to get from our newspapers, of the way that Germany has set about her work. Whereas in 1903 emigration from Germany was proceeding in rather a large way, running into, I believe in one year, 300,000, for the two or three years antecedent to the war Germany's emigration was only 20,000. Germany, by means of her economic penetration of the markets of the world, and the dumping of her surplus products, was able to absorb within her own borders all those people who otherwise would have been likely to have left her. The hon. member made a few remarks about rabbits. Hon. members will know that when I had the pleasure and profit of running the Black Swan Foundry I never missed an opportunity of introducing the Black Swan Foundry into the debates in the House. So long as I am the head of the State trading concerns, and have to deal with the State Implement Works—though I would sooner see them as a private enterprise—members are going to hear about the State Implement Works at breakfast, dinner, lunch, and tea. So far as the rabbit poison carts are concerned, I had the pleasure of hearing to-night from the manager of the Implement Works that some of the farmers from Merredin and Kellerberrin, who were paying a visit to the works the other day, had

nothing but words of commendation for the carts which had been made there. One farmer said, "I have had no trouble with rabbits since I got my cart to work. I bought my cart and have worked it, and if my neighbours would do the same they would have crops as good as mine. I am not afraid of the rabbits." The hon. member also made some reference to the Fremantle lumpers and the national workers. If there is any body of men in Western Australia genuinely regretful that there should have been any trouble in connection with the work at Fremantle, it is the body of men who make up the present Government. When that trouble came about the Government only did what any Government must do, and what the Labour Government would have done had they been in power. We circularised the people of the State to assist us in carrying on the business, and in preventing anyone, no matter how influential he might be or whether he was an employer or an employee, from sticking up the business of the State or interfering with it. The Government played their part, and it is a matter for regret if there is any bitterness now amongst those who are engaged in the work. The member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) made an admirable speech, which I enjoyed reading when lying sick in bed, and enjoyed hearing about from a friend of mine, who told me some of the little bits of sparkling comedy in which the hon. member engaged. The leader of the Opposition said that the Government had drifted into a state of chaos during the last twelve months. To some men the power of vision is given, and to others, perhaps, it is well that Providence has denied that power of vision. I assure hon. members that so far as the Government are concerned we do not know wherein the chaos lies. In fact, we say we are ignorant of the matter. I do not think, if we were engaged in a spelling bee, we would know whether the word was spelt with a "k" or began with a "ch." The hon. member also said that Ministers were going down like a Chinese procession to the Farmers and Settlers' Association. I did not go to the Farmers and Settlers' Association.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say to the Farmers and Settlers' Association. I referred to the meeting of the Western Australian Farmers.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will come to that directly. I did not go to the meeting of the Farmers and Settlers' Association. Had I belonged to that party I see no reason why I should not have gone there, but I do not know if I should have allowed them to call me to account if I had gone. Perhaps they would not have dared to do that with me. If I had belonged to their party why should I not have attended the conference for the purpose of learning what the people, who represent a big portion of the State, have to say? These men did not come to Perth for a picnic, but to exchange views upon what was wanted to assist them in their particular avocation. I do not see any wrong in any member of the Country party, whether a Minister or otherwise, going down to learn at first hand what these people, who represent a considerable portion of the State,

want in their own interests. Now about the Chinese procession.

Hon. P. Collier: You were in that.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and I would be there to-morrow. I went down with the Premier. He was not ashamed of me, and I certainly was not ashamed of him. We went down there, what for?

Mr. Jones: "Whaffor!"

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We were invited to attend the meeting of the Western Australian Farmers. I went down there because my chief was there, and so that I should be there if anything occurred at the meeting. I attended the meeting more particularly because I am, in effect, the general manager of the State Implement Works. I went there to have a heart to heart talk with those people over whom I am boss.

Hon. P. Collier: The report says that you invited them to lunch.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The results paid for the lunch which the Implement Works provided. As I am head of the State Implement Works, the Western Australian Farmers are my agents, and those people who are their agents in the country are, what may be called, my sub-agents. I went there to tell them what we could manufacture at the State Implement Works in the way of harvesters, ploughs, drills, poison carts, and the like. I asked them down to have lunch at the State Implement Works. Sixty of them accepted the invitation, and the orders that we booked then and which came in during the following week were really worth having. If I could get orders for the works by going down there again I am prepared to do so on every day in the week, even if I have to work till midnight in order to keep my office going. The hon. member also said, "Cabinet was the graveyard of the hopes and aspirations of the country." I do not know from what source he got this idea. Do we look like a graveyard?

Mr. Munsie: It is your actions which represent a graveyard.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not the actions. Actions spring from the spirit, and the spirit of the Government is behind their actions in doing their best to place Western Australia in a better position than she has been in for some time past.

Mr. Munsie: You are making a pretty poor job of it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member also said that the Government were tinkering with the question, and were putting men with wives and children out of a job in order to give work to returned soldiers. The hon. member was then asked by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale), "Has this been done?" and the hon. member replied, "Yes, it has been done all over the place by the Government." I challenge the hon. member to furnish proof of that statement. I have no doubt he has been told this, just as I know that certain statements have been made in regard to the lunatic asylum at Claremont. Two incidents have been given to the Press as if they had happened quite recently. In reality one in-

accident happened 18 years ago, and the other happened five years ago. If the hon. gentleman will obtain from his informant the statements supporting the allegation, the Government will look right into the matter, and if anything of the sort has occurred it will be put right. Apart from politics, the leader of the Opposition is as good a man as any in this State; and he knows perfectly well that neither in his mind does he credit the allegation nor in his heart does he know it to be true.

Hon. P. Collier: I know it to be true in some instances.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. gentleman has been misinformed. Regarding the Harvey irrigation settlement, I am sorry some members appear to think that because I happen to represent the district in which Harvey is situated I have a bias in the matter. The Government of which the leader of the Opposition was a shining light undertook that a complete scheme should be constructed at Harvey for £34,000.

Hon. P. Collier: And we built it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was also agreed that the acreage to be taken into the scheme should be 3,300. But I found that something like £5,000 worth of work which should have been included in the £34,000 expenditure had never been done; and therefore the only honest thing was to reduce the capitalisation of the scheme by that amount of £5,000. Moreover, the acreage had been cut down from 3,300 to 2,600, and the Harvey people would not have it, and I could not uphold it. By reducing the capitalisation from £34,000 to £29,000, and giving the proper divisor, the rate which can be legitimately levied on the Harvey people is 14s. per acre; and this they are willing to pay. When the £5,000 has been spent, if ever it is spent, the rate will be raised.

Hon. P. Collier: Will an amending Bill be needed for that purpose?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not quite sure; but if a Bill is required I know hon. members' sense of justice will support it. Had the minutes placed on the files of the Water Supply Department by the leader of the Opposition when in office been carried out, this Harvey trouble would not have occurred. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) has had a wide experience in his own particular profession, but in politics is, I think, somewhat more of a theorist than any other member of this House. The hon. member applauded the leader of the Opposition for having made "a vigorous, and on the whole justifiable, attack on the Government." If the members of this House, and his constituents, and the people generally, are to attach to his utterances the weight which he would like to be attached to them, the hon. member should have shown wherein the justifiable nature of the attack lay.

Hon. P. Collier: It was obvious.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the member for Perth takes up the attitude of candid friend of the Government, his expressions of candour should carry with them something more than the fault. If he is to be a

useful member of this Chamber and a useful citizen of this country, he needs to assist the Government to get the country into a better position; and to that end he must be constructive as well as destructive. Some of the hon. gentleman's figures of speech were unquestionably excellent. He made a reference to the Colonial Treasurer. I do not always agree with the Treasurer, but there is about my colleague this—in the matter of trying to get his funds into something like decent order, he is absolutely single-minded and sincere.

Hon. P. Collier: The trouble is with the team, not with the Treasurer.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Perth talked about the Treasurer "screaming like a wounded hare." In some quarters, I suppose, that sort of talk goes for humour; as would also the expression about the "wilted flower." I should have thought that the member for Perth, from that lofty elevation of his which the man in the street cannot even approach, would have risen a little higher than he did in his similes, and possibly might have recognised that honesty of purpose calls for admiration and not for contempt. The member for Perth further spoke of a statement that there was a possibility of the finances being straightened without retrenchment or additional taxation. It simply shows that whoever did the "devilling" for the hon. member as regards getting up the matter for his speeches had not given sufficient research to the subject, or else had been furnished by nature with a blind intellect instead of an enlightened one. The Government say that retrenchment and taxation alone cannot remedy the situation. Retrenchment in its way, and taxation in its way, are each of them well enough if fairly and sympathetically administered; but, beyond those two matters, there are others in which we must try, for the sake of the people, to balance the finances. If simply taxation on the one hand and retrenchment on the other are to be relied on for bringing about a satisfactory state of the finances, they will simply intensify the disease. The member for Perth further remarked "The State was now burdened with an interest account every year which made it impossible, under existing conditions, to make the finances sound; and the only possible remedy that could be suggested was that the expenditure upon the civil service should be cut down, not by lowering salaries, but by amending the Public Service Act to enable sacking to be possible." Has the hon. member ever thought it worth while to make inquiry, either of the Premier or the Treasurer, or even of the lesser fry of Ministers, whether there has been reduction in expenditure? Before finishing, I hope to convince the hon. member that he was too hasty in making that statement. The Education Vote, he declares, could be and ought to be cut down. He having said that, of course we have our orders and must carry them out. But why did not the hon. gentleman show how the cutting down was to be done? What does he wish to attack? The primary system of education in this State? If so, he has no chance. Our

secondary education? He has Buckley's show. If he wishes to attack the university, the reply is that he, as a university man himself, should be ashamed to make the attempt. But why does not the hon. member tell us what he wants done? If he is to remain in Parliament, he will learn that the House expects from him not merely destructive criticism, but also criticism helpful to the Government of the day, whoever they may be. He said that while the leader of the Opposition had expressed himself as unwilling to sneer at industries which were being promoted by the Minister for Industries, he, the member for Perth, wished to speak of them with the utmost disrespect; and he went on to refer to grindstones and jams. While the member for Perth told us that gold, timber, and wool, and I think he also included pearl-shelling, were our main industries, a little amplification might be desirable. We cannot put all our sons into gold-mining or wood-chopping or wool-growing. If as fathers we have any sense of responsibility, we will try to obtain for our sons such openings as will afford them an opportunity. Let us create opportunities for our sons to obtain their future livelihood. We can make good grindstones in Western Australia—there are many politicians who have axes to grind—and good jam. We have good fruits; Mr. Jones of Hobart admitted that our fruit was superior to that of his own State. What is there wrong in a Minister's honestly trying to develop industries here so that we may offer more avenues of employment? If the Minister for Industries has sufficient energy and pluck and self-denial to try and foster new industries, it cannot, at all events, hurt the country.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for Northam was blamed by you for doing things.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let me tell the member for Perth that in my trade of engineer we try to have no illusions. In connection with the hon. member's profession it is usually considered, at any rate by the clients, that lawyers make sure of their facts.

Hon. P. Collier: Make sure of their fees.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am sure the hon. member will pardon my stating to the House that a little time ago he led a deputation to me, which included also the member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick), and the acting Mayor of Perth, and the City Treasurer, and I do not know how many other officials. The speech of the member for Perth on that occasion made me feel practically as if I was a criminal. I sat there meekly in my chair while the hon. member towered over me with his tremendous height and looked at me with his great, piercing eyes, and tackled me about the Perth-Fremantle road. After a few minutes, I in my humble and lowly fashion suggested to the hon. member that possibly his facts were not quite correct. And with all the indignation of a lofty spirit and enlightened pitying mind he wished to know if I really thought he would waste his time and occupy mine if he were not sure of his facts. He made me feel quite cast down and as though I were being tried for my life and had just to say

my prayers and be ready for the rope. I asked him a second time if he was sure of his facts.

Mr. Pilkington: I read a statement which was not mine; it is quite untrue that I professed to provide you with any facts.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not suggest that the hon. member was stating anything to be a fact which he knew was not a fact.

Mr. Pilkington: I read a statement which you knew was not my statement.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Before the hon. member left the office he was quite satisfied that what had been given to him as facts and which he represented to me as facts—of course quite honestly—were not facts. I admit I had from him a gentlemanly expression of regret, but so far as the acting mayor was concerned he apologised. Over what took place after they left my office and when they met the unfortunate officials of the City Council outside I must draw a veil. I would ask the member for Perth what has become of the economic principles he advocated in the "West Australian" recently. The hon. member attempted to show that the Premier of this State was a very amiable gentleman. We know that, and we rejoice at the fact, but I do not think that the member for Perth came out of that controversy very well. The hon. member declares with regard to the finances, "Cut down the expenses, cut down education, cut the Civil Service, cut the Government, cut every blooming thing." I would like to say to him again that it is up to him to indicate how this country should be governed. His words have been destructive, but he must now come out of that armour of his and show us that he can construct as well as destroy. I am alluding to the holy trinity of politicians. I have just disposed of the one in this Chamber. There is another in the other Chamber; I cannot refer to him as a member of Parliament, but this is what he said—

What I am concerned about, however, is not so much having the Estimates ready as to having reductions brought about . . . The Government came into office 12 months ago and promised economies, but have they lived up to that promise?

Then the other shining light who is also in another place, and who completes my trinity, said, "They have not even tried to live up to it." So far as the figures which were dealt with are concerned, they are not worth going into here as the Colonial Secretary has already done that, but with regard to the statement which was made that two-thirds of the Governor's Speech was bird-lime and the other third piffle. I would say that that hon. member's speech was two-thirds ignorance and the other third rot. That hon. member not only made a statement in another place, but he got a note published in the Press that Ministers were sitting on this bench in the Assembly merely for the salaries which they were receiving. It may be considered smartness on the part of a certain class of people to talk like that, but such a statement is an insult to the whole of this party and it is an insult to hon. members opposite. What is the salary received by Ministers? I am supposed to be getting £1,000 per annum, whereas

as a Minister I do not make £500. By the time payments are made for Honorary Ministers, whips, and other expenses, £500 is all that is left.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And the whip is looking for a rise too.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I only mention these things to show that it is all very well to go blathering and talking, but if people really believe what they are saying about the State being in a parlous way, why do they not come forward and make sensible and practical suggestions which will assist the Government. This statement was made by a candidate for the Claremont seat the other night. He said that there were nine Ministers and 91 members of Parliament and that the cost to the State was £36,800.

Hon. P. Collier: He was a National candidate too.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That original statement was made deliberately in another place, and the man who made it is posing as a financial expert in this State. As a matter of fact the salaries paid to members total £24,000 while the sum of £6,200 is paid to Ministers, making a total of £30,200.

Hon. P. Collier: Who was the candidate?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member knows who it was. But coming back to the hon. member in another place, who spoke of the Governor's Speech as bird lime and piffle, that gentleman wrecked the railways of this State in 1901. He sacked John Davies, suspended J. T. Short and others on the word of nothing else but a drunken pimp, a clerk in the office who had been proved to be in a very unseemly and indecent condition at the Claremont station, one who was nothing but a drunkard and a low liver, and on the word of such an individual the hon. member in another place caused the whole of the railway system in the State to be upset. John Davies was thrown out of his position, and J. T. Short and others were suspended, and it afterwards took me five solid years of hard work to get the railways into something like decent shape. That man has now the cheek to come here and try to wreck others. The same gentleman a few years ago posed in Fremantle as a man who could straighten the finances of that municipality in a few days. He was elected mayor but he quitted ten days later. Then as a cattle and sheep man he became an exploiter, and exploiting the cattle and sheep trade in connection with the State Steamship Service he made a lot of money out of it to show the country and the Government how they were being done, but he pocketed the gain. This quitter and exploiter now attacks the Government. Every member of this House has a right to refute statements of that sort. A good deal has been said with regard to retrenchment. I have a statement which has been prepared by the Public Service Commissioner showing the number of officers who have been compulsorily retired or whose positions have been abolished between 1st May, 1917, and 31st August, 1918. The total is 77 officers whose salaries total £25,526. Of these the Public Works Department and Water Supply account

for 16 permanent officers whose salaries represent £4,496 and other departments account for 61 officers whose salaries total £20,538. With regard to temporary employees, during the year ended 30th June, 1917, there were 436 in the service of the State and the salaries received by them totalled £70,315. On 30th June, 1918, the number was reduced to 36 with an expenditure of £59,865, or a total reduction of 70 temporary employees and saving in salaries of £10,450. This is the work of the Government who it is said have done nothing to stop the financial drift. In the period referred to we have got rid of fewer than 147 officers and effected a total saving of £35,976. In the Public Works Department during the year ended 30th June 1918, 52 officers have left the Service.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is that not on account of loan work?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some from revenue.

Mr. Holman: You are spending a million or two less now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not trying to take any personal credit for the reductions.

Hon. P. Collier: But you are quoting loan reductions.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: During the period stated 25 officers retired, resigned, died and the saving effected in salaries totalled £9,676. We have re-instated some of the soldiers who have returned, and we have had to make other appointments which have cost £1,570. Therefore our net reduction has been 38 men and £8,106. With regard to the Water Supply Department, on the 1st July 1917, there were employed there 235 officers. Twelve months later the number was reduced to 185, and a further 12 transferred to the Stores Department. Those who left the department numbered 79 and the saving effected in salaries was £11,900. We put on 26 others, whose salaries amounted to £8,457, so that there was a net reduction of 53 officers and a net saving of £7,044. Twelve officers were transferred to Stores: their salaries ran to £2,000. There were thus 65 officers less on the 1st July, 1918, and the saving was £9,044. The reduction in the expenditure in the Public Service, apart from the Works Department, in the 12 months has been over £22,000. We cannot go much further than that. I have no doubt that members opposite would have done as well but my reply to the gentleman who talks to us about tinkering with matters and that we must have retrenchment is that they were talking in ignorance. Now that they know the facts it is for them to criticise if they like. I do not know that I need say much more in connection with this matter. If I have shown a little heat, members will have to pardon me. I am not too well just now and if I have hurt anybody's feelings, I hope they will bear that in mind. In conclusion let me say that, so far as I am able to judge, what the people want at this critical juncture is that Ministers shall carry out their duties. If they take on the work they should put their shoulders into it. They require to be able to pull in the sand, not spasmodical

but steadily. Ministers are doing their best. If their best can be bettered, let hon. members better it. We have the right to ask members to help us.

Hon. T. Walker: What! to construct?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. It is the hon. member's duty even to help us to construct. If he sees that the country is going to the devil, and if he can stop it, what sort of a man would he be if he did not help? The country requires that every man in both Houses should pull his pound when he is on the load, and God knows the load in Western Australia is heavy enough just now. If every man does not pull his pound, this country in time will not be worth living in, and will be but a poor heritage to leave to the children who come after us.

Mr. JONES (Fremantle) [8.48]: I am somewhat diffident in following the brilliant logic and grandiloquent rhetoric which we have had from the Minister for Works, and because of that I feel hardly capable of replying to him. I am not even going to attempt the defence of the member for Perth, for I realise that he is quite capable of undertaking that little matter himself. Mere words would be inadequate to express the feeling of bitter disappointment and disgust at the failure of the Government, as shown in the Speech presented to the House, to put forward anything like a concrete proposal, anything like a definite scheme that will help to save this unfortunate State; therefore I am not going to attempt the inadequate. I hope that, in my brevity, I shall conform to even the Teesdale time limit. The member for Boulder has administered to the Government chastigation from which they are still smarting, and I do not wish to add to that chastigation. It is true the leader of the Opposition did not deal with all the sins of omission and commission of the Government. Had he done so he would have been still speaking. But he said sufficient to show up the deeds of this business-acumen Government in all their naked nothingness. He described the Speech as being without substance. It is a true description—without substance: misty, spectral, ghostlike. It is nothing but a shadow, a long shadow thrown across this august assembly. Perhaps the shadow is particularly long because it is cast by the setting sun of the present Administration. For we must realise that the sun of our National Government, born in intrigue, as already passed its zenith, a very wintry with, and is rapidly declining towards the west. And evidence is wanting of a political phœnix, who can come forward and stay that in its course. We find that this collection of colloquialisms, these airy allusions to various subjects, to finance, to repatriation, come with very little weight to those of us who are expected more from the Government. And when we remember that the Government came into power because they said they were able to straighten the finances, because they had the necessary business acumen, the disappointment is all the keener, and the outlook all the more dreary. What, brief English, do the financial proposals

of the Government imply? In the first place nothing but dismissal and retrenchment—and I am saying this after the wonderful defence the Minister for Works has put up on behalf of his colleagues—the dismissal and retrenchment of the lower paid men only, with scrupulous care for the higher paid officials, to whose ranks new appointments have even been made. Secondly, the complete cessation of all public works. I am not blaming the Minister for that, but we must remember that this cessation of work is a financial action of the Government which affects the worker by causing unemployment. On the other hand, we find lavish expenditure without question where the interests of their masters, the financiers and profiteers, demand and compel such expenditure. I propose to deal very briefly with the second part of that indictment before I sit down. We find that while such valuable public works as the Esperance railway and many other railways which should have been carried out, the sewerage works in the suburban areas, while the Government on account of financial stringency have been compelled to close down those works, money can always be found for Royal Commissions, whether on agriculture, or merely to find out if the village constable exactly suits the religious views of a lot of sly grog-selling wowsers.

Mr. Teesdale: You yourself have asked for a Royal Commission.

Mr. JONES: For the public good. The Royal Commission I ask for is to save the lives of the patients in the Claremont Asylum for the Insane, patients liable, on account of the mismanagement of that institution, to be brutally done to death. We find that money can be provided for the prosecution and the placing in goal of Percy Brunton. Possibly the Government hope to recoup themselves with the £25 they will receive from him if he loses his deposit.

Hon. P. Collier: I think he is likely to win the seat and strengthen the Government.

Mr. JONES: That is probably the only point on which I can congratulate the Government, namely, that they have induced a man like Brunton to come forward as an out and out supporter of their Administration. The Government are prepared to lavishly expend money on anything demanded by the interests of the big financial institutions. We look back briefly and consider what has been the cost to the taxpayers of the dry nursing of the National workers on the Fremantle wharf. Hon. members will remember that the initial expenditure, irrespective of the salaries of the highly placed Government officials who were sent to see that the salt was in the soup and that the asparagus was served hot to those National workers, the initial cost was something like £2,500. And now we are informed by the Premier that, an additional £1,920 1s. 2d. has been paid for extra police services on the wharf during the 13 months ended 31st July. The long-suffering public paid that increased expenditure. The addi-

tional police services on the wharf have been found necessary in spite of the fact that the wharf itself, like the bridges, is barricaded, and in spite of the fact that a large and elaborate naval guard, and a large and elaborate military guard are kept there to prevent the weevils walking over and biting the National volunteers! We find that the majority of those friends of the employers, the National workers, pampered up in the interests of the shipping community, were faced with the difficulty of bringing away the wages they had earned at Fremantle, and it became necessary for the Government to do something. I can compliment the Government on the fact that they were able to provide for the convenience of those men without having to put on the Ministerial car. A meat train which leaves Fremantle, and on which previously not for love or money could the average passenger have got a lift up to Perth, has been placed at the services of the National workers. Coaches have been added and daily that train waits the convenience of those men to proceed to Perth. All this has been done in the interests of the ship owners at Fremantle, in the interests, the Government will tell you, of economy. Money is lavishly spent where the financial masters of the present Administration demand that it shall be spent. Similarly we proceed to look at some of the departments administered by the Colonial Secretary. Take the Police Department, with which perhaps I shall be able to deal at a later date. The leader of the Opposition has already touched upon this. It seems to me that throughout the length and breadth of Australia—and Western Australia is falling well into line—an attempt is being made to Australianise American and Russian police methods. It is time that a democratic voice was raised against that procedure. Let me say I have no fault to find with the uniformed constables, those gentlemen in uniform who stand on the street corners and behave with civility and respect to the general public.

Hon. P. Collier: Gentleman John.

Mr. JONES: Yes, in many ways he might be described as Gentleman John, and that in spite of the fact that initially he is forced to become a pimp before he can enter the force. These uniformed men are being starved officially—I am not now alluding to starvation in the sense in which the Government endeavoured to starve women and children at Fremantle—in order that the plain-clothes men may be raised in status, may flourish and wax fat. As the member for Boulder has pointed out, there were two inspectors already in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department and the men who constitute the rank and file of that force have already been raised to the rank and pay of sergeant. They have been placed in a position similar to men who have stood the brunt of the police work in the State for 30 and 40 years, and who have earned their stripes. I throw out a suggestion to the Government to raise all the C.I.D. men

to the level of commissioners, so that we can strike some mean at which the plain clothes men can stop in their rise over men who serve the promotion. Here we find again charge which I laid against the Government being borne out, for they are retrenching dismissing the lower paid men and allowing the higher paid men to flourish unmolested.

Mr. Teesdale: The Minister did not say

Mr. JONES: He did not say so, but I am trying to prove it is so to the satisfaction of hon. member. We find that the Government in their efforts to retrench the men over years of age are starting with the constables and sergeants and leaving small stations at Northam, Albany, and Bunbury with inspectors who are already over the age limit, and evidently to be carried on until the Commission has some favourite C.I.D. plain clothes men take their places. But the matter of the police will come up for discussion when some of the cases which have been dealt with are brought forward on some future notice of motion. From the police we naturally come to the prison, and I speak with feeling with regard to the prison. I live next door. During the few years that the prison has been under the present superintendent no less than seven successful escapes have taken place. When I realise that the superintendent himself stated that he would not be surprised at finding on one morning and finding the prison doors open and all the prisoners escaped, wonder what manner of administration is being carried out in our Fremantle gaol. Perhaps we shall have an opportunity of dealing with this matter on the Gaol estimates in the course of a few months. When we consider the need for economy and its relation to the Fremantle Gaol, we find that the only retrenchment that is being carried out is being effected in every instance among the lower paid men. It has been found necessary for the men at the bottom of the gaol ladder to be forced to stand inside the gaol every seventh or eighth night to be on what is known as reserve duty. It is an endeavour to effect economy many of the experiments of the superintendent of the gaol are being carried out. With the object of saving the services of one man various wardens have to be on duty all night. I would suggest for the attention of the Government that with a matter of only 100 or 112 prisoners to look after, the curtailment of the expenses of the Fremantle prison might be better started at the top. I shall have more to say on this subject at a later date, when we arrive at the Estimates. Another department under the control of the Colonial Secretary is the asylum, and that too could be better dealt with under the notice of motion which stands in my name. Here again, in violent contrast to the wasteful expenditure in the police service on the Fremantle wharf, we find conditions of over-crowding at the asylum. This institution is under-staffed to the absolute danger of the public and the staff themselves. The health inspectors would not tolerate the conditions prevailing, amongst the men and women who are mentally deranged, in a common lodging house. The Government are absolutely courting disaster. Let them turn some of the men with which they are assisting

the interests of their St. George's-terrace friends and their shipping friends to the benefit of the mentally afflicted of the State. While I have made the charge that the Claremont Hospital for the Insane is under-staffed, that would not seem to apply to all institutions under the control of the Colonial Secretary. Turning to the "West Australian" of the 2nd September, I find an advertisement "Fremantle Public Hospital, wanted two kitchenmaids." Further back, on the 29th August, "Wanted, two kitchenmaids." Again, on the 27th August, "Wanted, two kitchenmaids." On August 17, "Two kitchenmaids wanted." On August 13, "Fremantle Public Hospital, wanted capable kitchenmaid." On August 9th, "Fremantle Public Hospital, capable kitchenmaid wanted"; August 4th, six days previously, "Fremantle Public Hospital, wanted capable housemaids and kitchenmaids." July 31st, "Wanted, capable housemaids and kitchenmaids." July 27th, "Capable housemaids and kitchenmaids."

Mr. Mullan: Are all these in the "West Australian"?

Mr. JONES: They are. I do not know what rate per inch the Government are paying for the advertisements. Again, on July 23rd, "Fremantle Public Hospital, wanted capable housemaids and kitchenmaids."

Mr. Teesdale: Where do you live?

Mr. JONES: A considerable distance from the Fremantle hospital. It would seem to me that this institution requires 18 kitchenmaids in the short space of five or six weeks. Eighteen kitchenmaids required at one institution, and all advertised for under the name of H. Arliss Robinson! These advertisements are for kitchenmaids for one institution. Whether the institution is paying for the advertisements at the rate of 25s. an inch as is done in the case of Nationalist advertisements for the war loan, I do not know. It seems to me that if a hospital capable of employing 18 kitchenmaids they must have a lot of washing up to do, and while one department is under-staffed another department is absolutely staffed up with kitchenmaids. I would suggest to the Colonial Secretary or the Minister in charge of the department that it might be advisable to transfer some of the kitchenmaids, who cannot all be needed—there is not enough crockery in Fremantle for them to wash up—to some of the other institutions that need help so badly. It has been said by some members this afternoon that the subject of repatriation was a popular one, and was being used by members in order to sweeten their electors. I do not propose to deal at any length with the subject, but I am pleased that the member for Northam introduced his amendment, since it has at least had the beneficial effect of hustling the Government to introduce their Bill at a fairly early date. I notice that in the Speech the Government are pleased with the fact that 34 prospectors are being sent out, and I would suggest to the Government—it is not my own suggestion; it was given me by a returned soldier who has been a very capable mining manager in his day—that in case these returned men who are out prospecting merely discover poorly paying proposition that would hardly

pay to place a large battery on, it may be to the advantage of the State and the men concerned if the Government could establish a State mine with all its details in the particular district. Whilst the question of repatriation is being considered, I would also suggest to the Government that it would be of advantage if a committee of returned soldiers was appointed to advise the Government on any schemes they might adopt. I suggest this in view of what is happening in regard to the vocational committee that the Federal Government have established, in order to place returned soldiers in occupations when they are fit to take them up. I do not want to see the Government commit the injustices which the Federal Government are doing in this respect. It would seem to me that the logical conclusion one must come to from the work of that committee, is that the men who have been away to the Front and have come back to resume their civil occupations, simply do so that the employers who are philanthropic enough to take them on may benefit thereby. It means that if a man who returns is getting 30s. a week pension—putting it at a maximum—the Federal committee will allow him to take employment at the ruling rate less the 30s. that he is being paid as his pension. The position that arises is, that the employer is able to get cheap labour at the expense of the blood of the men who have fought in France, and of the taxpayers who are paying for the maintenance of that pension. Nothing as yet has been said upon the question of the discovery of oil in this State, although much controversy has been going on. I hope that the Government will be prepared to make a statement to the House as to what the position is. It seems to me that the financial position of the Government may easily be remedied by means of the rich deposits of oil which are said to exist in this State, provided they are used for the benefit of the State instead of being made over to some private company. I ask the Government to inform the House as to whether any concession has been made to, or agreement has been made with, any company outside Australia, or within the boundary of Australia, because we would eventually find that even a company formed within the bounds of Australia was a branch of the Standard Oil Trust. There is another matter which I would like to bring under the notice of Ministers, and that is the necessity for provision being made for a fishing harbour at Fremantle. There are about 70 fishing boats plying their calling in the vicinity of Fremantle, which have no spot at which to anchor. They are forced to come in at the risk of being dashed to pieces against the rocks or against the fishing jetty, or the fisherman have to take their chance inside the harbour, where they have no standing. In the event of any accident occurring there they have no chance of getting any compensation. The suggestion is—I think it would be a fairly cheap proposition for the Government—that a small breakwater should be run out between the present long jetty and the fish market. This would serve not only to establish a fishing harbour, but at the same time protect the markets themselves and a considerable portion of the railway line, which at present

is exposed to wintry weather and is expensive to maintain because of the damage by storms. Such a breakwater would also afford some protection to the Commonwealth boatshed, which happens to be handy to the position mentioned. If the Government find that finances are such that they cannot take up this matter, I think that the fishermen themselves would be prepared to stand a higher license fee, and to say that the money which they pay to the Government in this way for the right to run into Fremantle should go towards the cost of this work. This would also be an advantage not only to the fishermen at Fremantle but to Fremantle itself, because at present many boats are unable to find accommodation there, and are forced to go to other ports along the coast. It would be a factor, too, in providing the metropolitan area with a larger, cheaper, and more hygienic fish supply. I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Works and the Minister for Railways to the necessity for a uniform standard with regard to the treatment of apprentices who are compelled to undergo military duty. At present a boy who is serving his apprenticeship, particularly in State works, whether in the Railway Department or those departments controlled by the Minister for Works, upon being called upon to perform military duty is forced to make up the time he loses in the carrying out of that duty. I would suggest to the Ministers concerned that in such event there is a chance of a boy under the present system being apprenticed until he reaches the age of 60 or 70. It would, therefore, be advisable to have a uniform allowance as to the amount of time which a boy who is indentured or apprenticed should have to make up because of his absence on military duty. I congratulate the Government upon their announced intention of standing up for the principles of co-operation. I hope they mean what they say, and that this is not one of those empty sentiments which indicate that the effects of the Chinese procession, to which the member for Boulder referred, and the various other visits of Ministers to the Westralian farmers, are making themselves apparent in His Excellency's Speech. I trust that the Government will support wherever possible the principle of co-operation, the co-operative manufacture and distribution of produce, and the handling not merely of wheat, but of all cargoes on the Fremantle wharf. I trust, too, it means that the support of the Administration will be given to any endeavour to promote a co-operative spirit amongst the people of the State. I realise that the Government have a hard road to travel. I want to see them take that road in a spirit of humanity. I realise, and the Government evidently realise by the way they assisted in promoting industrial trouble in Fremantle, the existence of a class war, and although I do not think there can be any interest between the worker and the man who makes a profit out of his labour while the present system prevails, I can see that there is a higher standard than that of class warfare. There is a standard of humanity,

and it is possible for men in both classes to come together and assist in doing what they can to make the world a good place not for the few, but for the general community. The Prime Minister of England recently informed the Labour conference in Great Britain that the world was in the melting pot, and that the future would be stamped with the audacity which the workers cared to stamp it with. Realising this, and knowing that the future of the world spells a great change in administration and in the system that we have been living under, I hope that the Government will endeavour to adopt, as far as they can, a humanitarian standard, and are prepared in the measures which they may bring forward to effect a change that will be for the benefit of all. I am particularly concerned about this, as I trust that the Government will not leave to the Administration which will replace theirs in the course of a few months, too hard a row to hoe in its endeavour to undo the mistakes they have committed.

Mr. BROUN (Beverley) [9.25]: I have no desire to prolong the debate on the Address—in reply to any great length, or to touch upon any of the subjects already dealt with by previous speakers. I regret that the financial position of the State is not as bright as we would like it to be. Like many other hon. members of this Chamber I realise that we are going through a trying time. I do think that the Government as a whole are doing their utmost to cope with the difficulties arising out of that position. More especially do I say this of the Colonial Treasurer. Perhaps his colleagues might make a special effort and give him more assistance to square the finances, or at least prevent the drift that is going on. I notice that during August last the deficit was £107,959. Although the revenue had increased by £7,024, the expenditure had increased by £14,553. No mention of this has been made by any of the Ministers, and no explanation has been offered as to why this extra expenditure has been incurred, over and above that incurred for August of last year.

The Colonial Treasurer: July and August this year show a depreciation of £16,000 as compared with the same months of last year.

Mr. BROUN: I noticed with gratification, when the Minister for Works was speaking, that a certain amount of retrenchment has taken place, and that a saving has been made. Notwithstanding this, the Government still show practically the same deficit as was shown for the previous year.

Hon. P. Collier: The figures quoted by the Minister have no bearing on the subject, because they are almost entirely loan expenditure.

The Colonial Treasurer: What nonsense.

Hon. P. Collier: The expenditure was made from loan.

Mr. BROUN: No doubt the Colonial Treasurer will place the financial position more fully before the House later on. With regard to the

question of education, it seems that there are further increases under this head, which I hope hon. members will stop by voting against them when the Estimates come before the House. I have said before that the Education Department is centralised to a great extent. Although education in our primary schools in the metropolitan area only runs into a per capita cost of about £2, in some places in the country—and a great many of them—the per capita expenditure is £20. That is perhaps only natural. Apart from this, I am of opinion now, as before, that, when we go beyond primary education, those who are able to pay for their children to go to the higher schools should be made to do so, especially in view of our present financial difficulty. Why should a rich man be able to send his son to the university at no cost to himself when he can well afford to pay for his education? If any of us in the country have a boy who is capable of taking a degree at the university, or has enough ability to go to a high school, we have to pay for that boy's board and lodging in the city in addition to any other expenses. Another point is, that in the country schools it is the rule to place only the lower grades of teachers, whereas the higher grades are kept in the towns. In hundreds of out back places we have practically only girls of 16 or 17 years teaching the children. There is no comparison in the matter of education between the country districts and the metropolitan districts. I trust that when the Annual Estimates come down, the House will be firm in refusing any increase in the Education Vote. The Premier has from time to time said in this House and on the platform that in order to square the finances and prevent taxation it is necessary to produce, produce, produce. To-night I shall speak only on production, and shall not deal with other subjects referred to by various hon. members. In the matter of production I take it to be necessary that the Government should give the producer some encouragement. The stability of the State, we know, rests entirely upon the production in our primary industries, such as wheat, wool, minerals, timber and so forth. Unless encouragement and protection are extended to these industries by the Government, the production desired by the Premier cannot take place. I notice, with many others that some time ago the London Wheat Board advised the Australian Central Wheat Board to curtail the production of wheat in this Commonwealth as far as possible, and instead to go in for stock raising. I should like to know why publicity was not given to this advice by our Government, why those who are able to produce stock in place of wheat were not let know of it. Had the advice been made public, many of us would have considerably curtailed our wheat growing in favour of stock production, with the result that the present difficulty of handling wheat would not have existed, and that the Government would not have been called upon to find such large amounts of money for that purpose.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Some of your colleagues doubt the accuracy of that announcement. Is it true?

The Premier: It has not been put in the right light.

Mr. BROWN: The advice is contained in the following minute of the Australian Central Wheat Board:—

In view of the advice received from the London Committee on the question of reducing our wheat areas in favour of stock and pig raising, it was decided that the matter be left to the Governments of the individual States to give such advice as they think fit.

That was in November last, and we have heard of the advice only recently. I have here a cutting from the "West Australian" of the 29th August, which I should like to read—

England's home food supply. Immense increase. London, August 29. The British Board of Agriculture has issued the following report of the area under cultivation. There are 12,398,780 acres under crops in England and Wales, which is the largest area for 20 years past. There are 7,481,000 under corn pulse, the largest for 40 years; 2,556,740 acres under wheat, the largest area for 34 years; and 1,778,960 acres under oats. Also 633,840 acres are under potatoes, the largest area yet recorded. Agricultural experts predict that the present will be the largest harvest garnered for 50 years.

This does not include Scotland or Ireland. In Great Britain alone they are growing practically as much wheat as they consume; and the result of this will be that we shall have here considerable quantities of wheat not required by Great Britain. I do not wish to be conservative regarding our wheat production, because I recognise wheat growing to be one of the staple industries necessary to the stability of the State. Further, it is essential that wheat growing should be encouraged in out-back areas where stock raising is impracticable. As regards such districts, the Government must come to the assistance of settlers by purchasing whatever wheat they grow. But 11 months ago I said to a member of the Cabinet that if I were the Government I would make some arrangement to purchase wheat only from those compelled to grow it in large quantities, while agriculturists able to produce stock would be given to understand by the Government that they must produce stock. The war will not last for ever; I hope it will end soon; and then we shall have an opportunity of sending large quantities of our wheat to the European States to be sold in open competition with other parts of the world. In such circumstances I feel sure there will be no difficulty in disposing of whatever quantity of wheat may be grown in this State. I have touched on the wheat question to this extent, refraining from dealing with other aspects of it just now, because I wish to point out the seriousness of the producers' present position, and wish to draw attention to the lack of foresight and of business acumen displayed by the Government in not having erected freezing work or canning works at Fremantle. Stock raisers some considerable time ago requested that the Government should state definitely whether they would construct these freezing works, and, if they would not, whether they would let the graziers know it definitely. Had

the Government then stated that they were unable to find the money for the works, an endeavour would have been made by the stock raisers to have at least canning works at Fremantle.

Mr. Willcock: About how long ago was this?

Mr. BROWN: About four months ago. The cost of canning works alone would not be very considerable—about £9,000. Very few of the stock raisers would have refrained from putting £10 into the shares of such a company. During last year our flocks have increased very considerably, and we shall have great difficulty in disposing of our surplus meat. Unless we can dispose of it, it will have to be sacrificed. Even at present there is practically no competition in our markets. The butchers visit the markets in order to purchase a certain number of head, and they have a practical monopoly. If there is a fine lot of stock yarded, one butcher buys it up, and distributes it amongst his colleagues. During last week mutton sold at 3½d. per lb.; and, in addition, there is the fifth quarter, which in itself represents a handsome profit. But what is the consumer paying for mutton to-day? Freezing works at Fremantle will enable stock raisers to ask a certain price of the butchers, and if the butchers will not pay that price the stock raisers will send their stock to the freezers for export. The market can be regulated only by freezing works, as it was regulated in New Zealand, where there are now 43 of these establishments, with the result that the New Zealand stock raiser is on velvet. When the establishment of freezing works was proposed in New Zealand, the cry was raised that the consumer would have to pay; but the event has proved that the New Zealand consumer gets his meat cheaper, while the New Zealand stock raiser also benefits very considerably. I am aware that the Government has an engineering expert here to pick a site for the freezing works, but that expert is taking a lifetime to do it. Shearing is going on, and the farmers cannot hold their surplus stock through the summer months. At least canning works should have been established, in order that there might be an outlet for our surplus stock. Great Britain is anxious to obtain all the frozen meat we can produce, and she will make substantial advances against any tinned meat we can supply. Again, we are importing tinned meat for our own consumption from the Eastern States. Is that business? In the country districts to-day tinned meat costs 1s. 8d. per lb., while mutton rules at 3½d. per lb. in the Perth and Fremantle yards. If the Government are unable to erect freezing works at Fremantle, I repeat, let them say so, and let them leave the graziers to erect such works for themselves. We prefer not to do it ourselves, but, if the Government cannot, we shall be compelled to do it. The works are needed, moreover, as a receiving dépôt for the frozen meat that is to come down from Wyndham. While on the subject of production, let me mention that the Government need to do something to assist the production of bacon and ham in this State.

Mr. Mullany: The Chamber of Commerce object to that.

Mr. BROWN: I do not recognise the Chamber of Commerce in that matter.

Hon. P. Collier: You will have Mr. Lovekin after you.

Mr. BROWN: It is time that we were producing these commodities locally in sufficient quantity for our own need. Why not produce in the South-West? Ten years ago, in 1911 I mentioned in this House the need for a bulk handling system. I spoke to the then Premier, Mr. Scaddan, on the subject, and tried to induce him to inaugurate the bulk handling system. Had it been started in 1911, our wheat-handling proposition to-day would have been very different from what it is, and a considerable proportion of our wheat would have been much safer than it is. Are we to wait seven years more for the Government to discover the need for freezing works? I ask the Government to make a special effort in this connection. The Minister for Industries is to be congratulated for his efforts in the matter of secondary industries. Although at present they may be, as the member for Perth says, tidily winking concerns, yet they are of some importance, and I hope to see them grow to magnitude. But I wish to see the Minister for Industries go further and touch on greater undertakings, such as freezing works, and the production of the commodities consumed within our own borders. The "Statistical Abstract" for June 1918 shows that we are importing bacon, hams, tongues, butter, cheese, etc., to the extent of £766,000 and a little lower down we find that we are importing wheat, flour, oats, oat meal, bran, pollard, potatoes, and onions to the value of £121,477. Why is it that we have been talking for 20 years past about producing these things within our own borders and we have not done so yet? We are still importing nearly a million pounds worth of these commodities, when they should be produced locally. There must be something radically wrong and it is a condition of things which should be looked into. I hope the Government will make some endeavour to assist in the direction of producing these articles. I desire to touch briefly on the railway question. It is stated in the Governor's Speech that it is proposed to appoint three commissioners. I am of the opinion that we shall not be any better off if three commissioners are appointed. I think that two would be quite sufficient. One is not sufficient but two would be ample, and the advisableness of appointing two in the place of three should receive some consideration. I might draw attention to the disastrous manner in which the railways are being run at the present time, more especially in regard to the arrival of trains at our stock markets. For some time past stock has been reaching the stock yards four, five, and six hours late, with the result that the producers, who are consigning stock to the yards, get all behind, and the sales are often started before the stock arrives. The result is that butchers have no time to see the stock; they give a fair price for some and after the stock arrives prices continue on the same basis. Only last week

a stock train left Beverley at a quarter past one and arrived at Midland Junction, a distance of 80 odd miles, exactly 12 hours later. Is that the way to treat producers? How is it possible for them to carry on operations if the Government treat them in that way? Why should it take a train 12 hours to do such a short journey? And that is not an isolated case, either. That kind of thing happens frequently. I asked the Minister for Railways several questions this afternoon on this subject, and I hope he will be able to give me a favourable reply to-morrow and that I will get an assurance that the trains will arrive at the saleyards on time. As things are, considerable inconvenience is caused not only to the auctioneers but also to the sellers and buyers as well, and frequently there is a loss of 2s. a head on the stock when it arrives late at the market. I want also to impress on the Government the necessity for hurrying along with the Rabbit Bill. We spent the whole of last session dealing with this question and, as it is an urgent matter, no further time should be lost in placing the Bill on the statute-book so that we might get to work and deal with the pest. The measure is urgently required because rabbits are becoming numerous even around Beverley at the present time, and power is required to compel people to eradicate the pest or prevent its spread. I also hope that the Government will lose no time in connection with the preparation of the wheat marketing agreement so that there may not be any delay in handling the approaching harvest. The sheds should be in readiness and we should not have a repetition of the scenes which occurred last year. There is nothing to prevent the construction of the sheds now to hold the wheat, so that when it arrives it may be protected from the weather. I noticed in the "Primary Producer" a statement to the effect that a few days ago Mr. Baxter said that 400 tons of galvanised iron had been ordered from America and that the Commonwealth and the Agent General had been urged to make strong recommendations to the London Shipping Board to secure its early transport.

The Minister for Works: We have 250 tons on hand.

Mr. BROWN: That will not be nearly sufficient.

Mr. Green: There are hundreds of tons of second-hand iron being sent East.

Mr. BROWN: Here we are negotiating for iron at this time of the year. Where shall we be when the wheat is arriving?

The Minister for Works: I am informed that the balance will be here as soon as we are ready for it. I have already said we have 250 tons.

Mr. BROWN: I am glad to have that assurance from the Minister, and I sincerely hope that we shall not have a repetition of what took place last year.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.53]: The last speaker has mentioned something in connection with the freezing works, and before I deal with other subjects I would like to have something to say about those works while the matter is warm. It will be remembered that

the people of Geraldton and Carnarvon were the first to talk seriously about establishing freezing works in this State, and experts were employed by them to come from the Eastern States and other places to report on the project. The Government then became so seriously impressed with the importance of the matter that they decided that freezing works would be a good thing for the State. Various people in the metropolitan area realised that something was happening in the country and that it would be against their particular interests. They therefore decided that they would begin an agitation in favour of erecting freezing works at Fremantle. We find that four or five months ago one of the Ministers went to Northam and addressed a meeting there in favour of freezing works being started at Fremantle. That was the first intimation anyone had of the serious intention on the part of the Government to establish works at Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: Plans were started as far back as 15 months ago.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If that is so, it is a surprising thing that no mention has been made of them in the policy speech or in any Governor's Speech. So far as the metropolitan area is concerned, we know that the surplus supply from the Murchison has been sufficient to keep this part of the State going, and if freezing works at Geraldton and Carnarvon were established there would not be the over surplus of meat in the central districts which is feared; that is, if the surplus from the Murchison is diverted to the works at Geraldton and Carnarvon. The metropolitan area will provide a sufficient market to absorb all the stock produced in and around the Central district for the next two or three years. With regard to the finances, everyone agrees that they constitute the most important matter to receive consideration at the present time. I shall have an opportunity on the Estimates to discuss one or two features. We have had various explanations given as to the serious position in which we find ourselves. We have been told that the cause has been Federation and also that the Labour Government have been responsible. Of course, we know that if a Labour Government were in power just now there would be a chorus from the Opposition benches with reference to the want of business acumen displayed, and there would be sneering remarks about the members of the Labour Ministry knowing nothing about finance, and not being able to carry on the affairs of the country. My opinion is that the financial policy of the Government, during the past 10 years, has been bound up in the agricultural industry. It is said that if the agricultural industry had been a success, the State would be in a satisfactory financial position. I have travelled throughout the country and have visited the wheat areas, and I have heard it stated by farmers' and settlers' representatives that wheat growing does not pay under existing conditions. The money which has been invested in the industry has not given that return which was expected. We have invested between 10 and 15 millions in the agricultural industry and no return has been forthcoming,

because the success which was expected from wheat growing has not eventuated. That, to a great extent, has been responsible for our financial difficulty. With regard to the financial statement the Treasurer made last year, in the course of which he said, he expected a deficit of £900,000, we find that the actual deficit was £705,000, and on that account he expects bouquets to be thrown at him from various quarters. The Treasurer may again estimate that the deficit will be pretty high, but I hope he will not estimate it higher than he need do, so that he may be able at the end of the financial year to show a reduction in the expenditure. There is one matter that we have not heard anything about, and it is the question of the abolition of the office of State Governor. Representations in this respect have been made by the various Australian States. I asked the Premier last session whether he would make any representations at the Premiers' conference and he said he was prepared to discuss the question. We have not, however, heard anything of the matter of the abolition of this, what I may term without any disrespect, almost useless office. The Federal Government are endeavouring to make arrangements under which much of their business with the Imperial Government will be done direct. Mr. Hughes said in England the other day that more direct communication between the two Governments was desirable, and he practically admitted that even the office of Governor General, as a link between the two Governments, was scarcely necessary. I agree with the member for Perth that something might be done through the sheep-growing industry to lift the State out of the mire. The member for Mt. Magnet advised the Government to make some provision for the settlement of soldiers on pastoral areas of, say, 25,000 acres. Of course, if the Government go to some of their pastoral friends for advice on this matter they will be told that it is impossible for a man to make a living on so small an area. The fact remains that in the Murchison district at least half a dozen pastoralists are doing well on small areas. If the whole of that country within 25 miles of the railway were to be subdivided into 25,000 or 30,000-acre blocks, the result would be some 200 blocks, the settlement on which would represent, not only an increased population, but an increase of 300 or 400 per cent. in the produce.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): What about droughts?

Mr. WILLCOCK: In that respect forunately water is procurable anywhere on the Murchison at a depth of from 50 to 60 feet; and, if we had freezing works in Geraldton, at the coming of a drought the pastoralists would be able to rapidly reduce their stocks without loss. In regard to the proposed freezing works, we have not asked the Government to do much, but we expect some little assistance. When first the project was spoken of there was no mention of any similar works at Fremantle; the only proposal for Fremantle was in respect of a cool storage chamber to deal with the stuff com-

ing down from Wyndham. We have the report from Mr. Barton, the manager of the Wimmera Freezing Works in Victoria, in reference to Geraldton. Mr. Barton says that Geraldton is the place for stock to be slaughtered and frozen, and that the prospects there are very good. He expresses surprise at the works not having been established a considerable time ago, and he says that if they cannot be established by the people at present in the district he would be able to get the necessary money from people in Victoria, because the venture would be so great a success. He adds that the future for meat and wool is so good that he can see nothing but prosperity for the Geraldton project. Of course, the success of the freezing works at Geraldton will depend to a great extent on the water supply. Fortunately the Government have decided to go on with that supply almost immediately. When it is an accomplished fact and the works are erected, we shall require some provision in connection with the harbour. Mr. Barton alluded to this, and emphasised the fact that the harbour accommodation at Geraldton ought to be extended and perfected, so that when the meat is ready for export there should be no extra expense for railage. In connection with the agricultural industry, we have it in the Governor's Speech that 500,000 acres of land have been taken up during the last twelve months. That is not much upon which to congratulate the Government, for during the same period almost as large an acreage was abandoned by disappointed settlers. The policy of the Government should be to keep those people on the land, instead of allowing them to drift away. Another aspect of the projected increase in land settlement—for it is not yet a legitimate increase, it only means that the land has been taken up—to be considered is that under the latest conditions no rent is to be paid for the first four or five years. No doubt when the rentless period elapses it will be found that much of the increase has been due to speculators who have taken up the land in the hope of selling out at a profit.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): How are they going to get transfers?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Of course the department will not allow any transfer during the time no rent is being paid, and I hope that some provision will be made whereby, even when rent is being paid under conditional purchase regulations, no transfer will be allowed for at least five years. The Wheat Marketing Scheme is being inquired into by Royal Commission, and so I do not wish to say much about that at present. For my part I do not see the necessity for acquiring agents at all. The need for them has never been satisfactorily explained. In pre-war times, all that the acquiring agent did was to go round the farmers, ask how much they had to sell, and arrange for delivery at port. Now the stacking and all incidental work at the depots is done by the Scheme, and I cannot see the justification for the expendi-

ture in regard to the acquiring agents. Could not the Wheat Marketing Scheme be extended a little so to embrace the acquiring of the wheat? As a matter of fact there is no necessity to acquire it at all, for the Government have already acquired it, in that the Government will not allow the farmers to sell it except through the scheme. It was generally stated that the wheat stacks at Geraldton were in the worst condition of all. However, the Royal Commission, the general manager of the scheme, and others interested have been to Geraldton and have visited other depôts also, and their conclusions are that the conditions at Geraldton are not nearly so bad as they were painted, in fact are better than at other stacking centres. A little while ago it was proposed that no more wheat should be stacked at Geraldton—notwithstanding the fact that we have there a shed in which 100,000 bags could be received—because of the alleged inferior condition of the stacks already there. I have referred to the centralisation in regard to freezing works. We have another instance of it in the wool appraisement. I brought up this question in the House seven or eight months ago and the Treasurer then promised that he would do what he could to retain the appraisement at Geraldton. Unfortunately, it seems that the Federal Government are bent upon destroying the trade of that port, and so are determined to have all the appraising done in Fremantle. It is said the Imperial Government have given it out as a direct policy that the appraisement shall be concentrated as much as possible in one particular place. However, this does not apply in New Zealand, where the appraisement is done at some 40 different centres, some of which have only 1,000 bales to appraise, whereas at Geraldton the last appraisement dealt with three-quarters of a million pounds worth of wool. I am sorry the Minister for Mines is not present just now, for he has been through the Geraldine-Northampton district, as has also the Premier and other members from both sides of the House. Those members have been able to estimate the wonderful possibilities of that district. The Fremantle Trading Company have had a strange hold on the lead-mining industry. About two years ago the Government, by guaranteeing the company's overdraft, arranged that the rate should be £4 per ton. Recently that rate has been increased by £2 per ton. This compares very unfavourably with the treatment meted out to the smelting works at Ravensthorpe. Whereas the people of Geraldine and Northampton have to submit to a 50 per cent. increase in smelting charges, when it comes to the electorate of the Minister for Mines the increase amounts to only 10 per cent. I think the Minister might well go into this matter, and if there seems to be no hope of effecting any reduction something should be done in reference to the establishment of smelting works at Geraldton so that the industry in that district might be served and the people who have put in time and money in developing the district might be afforded an opportunity

of getting their product treated at reasonable cost. I had intended to say something as to the utterances of the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) on the question of political economy. As, however, he is absent from the Chamber and the Minister for Works has already sufficiently castigated him, I do not think any further remarks are required in connection with the false ideas of that hon. member with regard to political economy. There is one thing, however, that the hon. member should know, and that is that a State which depends chiefly upon primary productions is always a poor State.

Mr. Green: That has been the matter with Ireland.

Mr. WILLCOCK: And it is the matter with Western Australia at present. I trust that the efforts made by the Minister for Industries with regard to the establishment of secondary industries will be successful. I hope, too, that he will look a little further ahead than Fremantle, and study the interests of the outlying portions of the State.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [10.15]: I see by the Governor's Speech that there is at last some chance of something being done to amalgamate the State and Commonwealth Taxation Departments. This matter was discussed at the Treasurers' Conference, and the Treasurers of New South Wales and Queensland were appointed to draw up a scheme. I hope this scheme will be presented to us before the end of the session, and that it will find a place in the Statute-book. Such amalgamation will mean a big saving both to the State and the Commonwealth, and do away with a great deal of vexation which is at present caused to the taxpayer in the filling up of the necessary income tax forms. I trust the time is not far distant when there will also be an amalgamation of the State and Federal electoral departments. A big saving could also be effected in this direction. It is useless expenditure to keep two departments going that are doing practically the same work. We have the same people in Western Australia voting at the Federal and State elections. The Governor's Speech also mentions the State Repatriation Board, and the appointment of repatriation committees at the principal centres. We are all in accord with the formation of those committees, and with the idea of giving our returned soldiers vocational training when they are incapacitated from following their old-time callings. If a man has been a miner and is put on the land he should be trained before being allowed to take up land. With regard to the question of re-purchased estates, I may say that I was once over the Yandanooka estate. There is some splendid land there, and I am pleased to see that the Government have at last decided to put this land to some practical use, and intend to carry out the promise they made to our men when they left these shores, that they should be given an opportunity to go upon the land. I hope that matters will be so arranged that our soldier settlers will have at least a sporting chance of being successful.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): That is being done.

Mr. CHESSON: There is a lot of land on the Yandanooka estate upon which our returned men should be able to make good. The Government will need to exercise every precaution with regard to the repurchase of land alongside our railways. As soon as it becomes known that the Government intend to repurchase land the price will go up. That is only human nature, because every man who is a land owner will try to get the most he can for it. The Government should either bring in a Bill on much the same lines as that brought in by the New Zealand Government, namely to provide for the repurchase of estates at the valuation which owners place upon them for taxation purposes, with 10 per cent. added, or else place a tax upon unimproved land. If a tax is placed upon unimproved land, people holding it for speculative purposes will be only too glad to get rid of it, or else put it to some productive use. The Premier tells us that 709 men out of 6,000 returned have made application for land, that 156 have been placed on the land, that 190 already hold land and have had money advanced to them for the purpose of improving their holdings, that 60 have since withdrawn their names, and that only 160 are qualified to go on the land. The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) referred to the land alongside the Murchison railway line. There is land there upon which I am satisfied our returned men could make good, running from Pindar to Meekatharra. If this pastoral land was cut up into blocks of about 25,000 acres and sub-divided, with windmills erected upon it, and about 500 sheep given for each block, I feel sure they would do well upon it. The hon. member also made a comparison between the cost of settling pastoral land and agricultural land. He has been settled on agricultural land for some time past and is in a position to go into this question. I can bear out what he said. I know of men alongside the Murchison line with 25,000 acres. One of these assured me that he was clearing £1,000 a year from his pastoral land. With the money that is allowed by the Repatriation Board, I have no doubt that our returned men could make good upon land of this description if the Government would repurchase it and allot it to them. The Speech referred to what the Mines Department has done in the way of assisting returned men in mining centres. What has been done by the department for returned men has been done for any miner who is qualified, who can be recommended by the warden, the Inspector of Mines, or the member of the district, who can be certified to be a qualified miner, and who is also a man of repute and one who will look after the turn-out. In addition to this the department is also affording these men facilities for gaining knowledge with regard to minerals. That is a good idea. Every man who goes out prospecting should have some knowledge of minerals. Going out from Yalgoo one will come across such classes of minerals as molybdenite, wolfram, copper, silver, etc.

The Minister for Mines: This class of education has been given voluntarily by men of standing and repute.

Mr. CHESSON: Goldmining in the Murchison is at a low ebb just now on account of the increased demands made upon the industry since the war. There have also been increases in the railway freights, amounting to 20 per cent. The cost of living has gone up about 30 per cent. In one week alone some articles have gone up 17 per cent. As a result of this the worker has also made increased demands in the matter of wages. Mining requisites were referred to by the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany), who mentioned quick silver and mercury. Previous to the war mercury cost £7 10s. per bottle, and it is now £32. Acids have gone up practically 400 to 500 per cent. Everything in connection with treatment plants has gone up. Cyanide and explosives have gone up some 200 to 300 per cent. The result is that the goldmining industry has been hit harder than any other industry in the Commonwealth as the result of the war. Gold is of a standard value, whereas metals have increased in value as a result of the war. Low grade shows cannot profitably be worked unless there are public batteries in the vicinity. If a miner has to send his ore to a private battery, there is very little chance of his making good with a low grade proposition. At Culculli there is a proposition which goes an ounce to the ton. The ore has to be carted 25 miles, and as there are no crushing facilities in the vicinity there is no chance of making the show pay. There are some fairly rich shows around there. These small shows can send their stone to Tuckanarra to be treated and are doing well, but propositions containing ounce stone have no chance. There is a big district running from Culculli to Reeds, and there are some good shows in the district. If crushing facilities were provided, many of these shows would be working to-day. Another matter that hits the mining industry hard is taxation. The main shaft, the winzes, and everything connected with the development is taxed.

The Colonial Treasurer: We have altered that.

Mr. CHESSON: Is there not differentiation between companies and small shows?

The Colonial Treasurer: That has been amended.

Mr. CHESSON: I am pleased to hear it.

Hon. P. Collier: Only the effect has not been felt yet.

Mr. CHESSON: Something should be done by the Government to carry the prospector in the interim between the finding of a show and the time when it is developed sufficiently to warrant the erection of a mill. Many prospectors have been working at distances of 20 to 25 miles from a mill, and so a trial crushing is impossible, and the prospector has no chance at all of making good. Something in the same way as is done with copper should be done—advances made, a Government sampler appointed to sample all stone taken from the surface, and payment granted up to 50 per cent. of the value. Under such conditions the prospector would have an opportunity to develop his show sufficiently to warrant the erection of a Government mill. As things are now, the prospector has to hand over his show to a speculator under option, without receiv-

ing any cash—this possibly after battling all his life and finding only one show. A further matter in need of attention is small companies or parties applying for exemption. Applications for exemption should be subject to sufficient notice to allow the mining inspector to examine the workings and to observe the length of drive and the size of the reef, and to take samples. The samples and the information should be retained in the Mining Registrar's office, so that in the event of an abandonment authentic data will be available for miners coming after. At present such miners are apt to be utterly misled as to size of reef and ore value. Cue is one of the best poor men's fields ever known in Western Australia. At one time, nearly 300 head of stamps were going there. The Cue field has been mostly developed by the prospectors with the assistance of the business men. At present Cue has no crushing facilities. Some time ago it had a 20-head mill, but there was not sufficient stone to keep the mill going, and it has gone out of repair. There is now no possible chance for the Cue prospector to get his stone crushed. The business people and the miners of the field have formed themselves into a prospecting association, and are putting up so much per week for the purpose of sampling abandoned shows, in the hope that as the result of the forthcoming visit of the Minister for Mines they may be granted crushing facilities. Cue so far has stood entirely on its own bottom, and is therefore especially entitled to consideration from the Government. The Minister has promised to visit Cue as soon as he can possibly arrange, and the people are looking forward to that visit, and the Minister can rest assured he will be made welcome. The Big Bell proposition is one of the biggest propositions in Western Australia, but its present difficulty is want of water. The mine has a plant capable of treating 2,000 tons per month, but want of water prevents the treatment of more than 1,300 tons monthly at the most. Endeavours are being made to get Government assistance towards a water supply. The Big Bell lode is worked on the open cut, and is 120 feet across and 1,000 feet long. Twenty thousand tons treated have shown a value of 16s. per ton. The present cost of working is 12s. 9d. per ton. With a treatment of 2,000 tons monthly, the working cost could be reduced to between 8s. and 9s. This would mean the employment of 100 men instead of the 25 at present working there. The mine has plenty of power to drive a 25-head mill. A water supply there would probably mean the springing up of a small town. It is the biggest proposition in the West, and the Government might well give a little assistance. The Great Fingal mine is at present closed down, after having paid £1,750,000 in dividends. Patterson and party are now prospecting the mine. They are working from the surface to 100ft. From the first crushing the gold was worth £305, of which the company took £190 and the men divided £105. Of a crushing just completed at Boogardie, worth £500, the company received £130 and the men £120, while the other £250 was mopped up by cartage, explosives, and so forth. The company

did practically nothing for the £130. Now the mine is filling up with water. There was enough stone broken to keep a ten head mill going for two years. The sum of £700 was put up by the Day Dawn business people and the miners to finance the erection of a ten-head mill and they expected assistance from the Government, if they could make terms to get the two leases. Unfortunately, there was no chance of coming to terms with the company. The company were not prepared to do any business. The tributary party at the present time are still going on and the company are taking nearly everything. If the inspector of mines many years ago had insisted on another shaft being sunk, there would not have been to-day so many widows and orphans in that district. The mine was paying dividends at that time and it would not have been a difficult matter for the company to have spent some money on another shaft. There was only one shaft on the property below the 1,300ft. level, and it is an impossibility to ventilate any mine without an upcast and a downcast shaft. The sinking of another shaft would also have reduced the handling charges very considerably. Instead of spending money in that direction the company wasted £100,000 on a wild cat in West Africa. There is a big chute of gold giving big values in the bottom level, and if it could have been got at with the aid of another shaft, there would have been enough stone available to keep the mine going 20 years longer. The shrinkage system was also a big factor in closing down the mine, and when the stone broke they found they had a bad hanging wall and that there was no chance of getting the stone out. I also desire to say a few words on the subject of base metals. The member for Greenough referred to lead at Baddera, Narra Tarra and Geraldine. Lead is worth £30 a ton at the present time, but the cost of handling mops up all but a balance of £12. It would be a good thing if a smelter were erected at Geraldton. It would certainly be a big factor in keeping those mines going. There are also copper and silver shows out from Cue even to the other side of Peak Hill, and at the present time copper has to be sent to the Eastern States to be treated, whereas if there were a smelter at Geraldton it could be dealt with there. It costs £8 a ton to take copper from Peak Hill to Meekatharra, and to that have to be added the charges for taking it to the Eastern States. The district I represent is also concerned in the metals molybdenite, scheelite, and wolfram, the prices for which in Australia compare very unfavourably with those which are being paid for these metals in America and Canada. I have an extract from an American newspaper which I would like to read to hon. members. It deals with the Australian and the American prices for these metals and says:—

There is an institution known by the high-sounding title of "The Thermo Electric Ore Production Company of England." This is one of the corporations which brandishes the flag of "Capturing German industries." This corporation now has complete Imperial control of the manufac-

ture of tungsten powder and ferro-tungsten commodities, which are very largely used, and are, in fact, indispensable to the army contractors who are manufacturing steel and munitions of war for the British Government and the Allied nations. This interesting corporation owns and operates wolfram and scheelite mines in Burma, Portugal, and Cornwall, and has an absolute close monopoly of the output of this particular class of raw material produced from those localities. Under an Imperial edict some time ago the entire output of the wolfram and scheelite mines of Australia was commandeered, at considerably less than half the world's market price for this class of raw material. The exact market quotations are as follows: Scheelite in Australia, at Imperial fixed price, 50s. per unit; New York market rate, 121s. 4d. per unit. Wolfram: Australian fixed price, 50s. per unit; New York market rate, 112s. per unit. Under the Imperial edict referred to the entire Australian output of these minerals had to be sold to one firm of commission agents, who were duly nominated by the Imperial authority. At the same time the price of molybdenite, which was worth £1,160 per ton in New York, was fixed at £500 in Australia, and the same firm of commission agents were also appointed sole buyers of this mineral. Under this beneficent system of Imperial aid to commission agents the profits of the particular firm in question last year broke all previous records, reaching the noble sum of £860,000. The wolfram, scheelite, and molybdenite mining industries of Australia are mostly carried on by small parties of miners, working on the co-operative principle, the limited company era in this particular class of industry not having yet got into working order. Owing to the widely scattered nature of these deposits, the present method seems by far the best way of carrying on the industry. The Australian miners were naturally somewhat surprised at getting less than half the market value of their product, but they thought that they were "doing their bit" by turning out cheap raw material for the war munitions required by England and their Allies, and for a time accepted the situation. Now the astonishing fact has leaked out that this cheaply-produced Australian raw material does not go direct to the Imperial Government, but is purchased at the Australian price, plus freight, by "The Thermo Electric Ore Reduction Company of England," and is re-sold by that company, together with their own products from Burma, Portugal, and Cornwall, at world market rates to Imperial army contractors, who pass the product along in the shape of tungsten steel with their own particular share of war profits added, to the Imperial Government.

That is an extract from the "Scientific American," and it is borne out by other authorities. It shows what the Prime Minister has done in all the agreements he has made on behalf of the people of Australia when

the people in Canada can get double the price for the rare metals which we have in Australia! Any man who goes out prospecting for rare metals is entitled to the whole product of his labour. I think that in the making of such a deal the people in the industry should be considered. I wish to compliment the Minister for Industries on his efforts to establish new industries here. Primary industries and secondary industries should go hand in hand, and I am sure that money spent in research work is well spent. I am satisfied that if once we get a start we shall be able to turn out commodities equal in quality to those produced in other parts of Australia. If more money had been spent on research work in Australia we should not have had our primary products going to Germany to be treated. Broken Hill turns out one-fifth of the world's production of lead and the whole of the spelter has to be sent away for treatment. Look at the by-products we could have if we treated it ourselves! In connection with tin plates for canning, what is required is zinc, iron, tin, and manganese, all of which we have in Australia. Notwithstanding this we are not in a position to supply the necessary treatment. Then take the woollen industry. It is over 40 years since the first woollen mills in the Commonwealth were established in Launceston, and to-day Western Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth which has no woollen mills. Yet here in Western Australia we have wool equal to anything produced in the Commonwealth. Again, if we had started ship building at the beginning of the war we should have had some chance now of shifting the surplus wheat lying here at the mercy of mice and weevil. There are immense possibilities for the ship-building industry, and we have to-day a golden opportunity. It will be found that at the end of the first six months the industry will have repaid the whole cost of its establishment. Most readily do I confess that I am always prepared to support any Minister endeavouring to foster secondary industries in this State. Coming to the criticisms of the member for Perth in regard to the jam industry, I really thought at the time that he must have had power of attorney and been acting on behalf of Jones & Co., who naturally wanted to see our young industries crippled. We grow fruit equal to anything produced in the Commonwealth, and surely to goodness we can manufacture it into jam! It is said that Jones is over here and intends to buy up the existing works and reduce his fruit to pulp in order to send it to the other States. The real handicap on jam making in this State is the distance from the sugar refineries. I am told on reliable authority that in the Kimberley we have land equal to the best in Queensland for the production of sugar cane. If that is so that land ought to be cut up into small holdings with the view to cane-growing, and a Government refinery ought to be established up there for the production of sugar. There are big possibilities for the establishment of the sugar industry in the Kimberleys. I have been all through the sugar industry in Queen-

land, and I am thoroughly familiar with the Queensland sugar country. I have not been in our North-West, but from reliable information received I believe we have up there all the conditions necessary to the successful growing of the sugar cane. If we are to start a jam factory in this State it will be necessary that we should have the sugar industry also. The member for Forrest said that the reason why we could not achieve success in the jam industry was the cheap female labour obtainable in Tasmania. That constitutes the best argument I have heard in favour of our industrial arbitration being placed under the Commonwealth, so that we might have uniform laws. I remember an arbitration case in the boot trade in Sydney a year or so ago. The judge in dealing with the evidence admitted that the men were receiving nothing more than a living wage, but explained that he was compelled to reduce their wages owing to the competition from Victoria, where the wages were even lower. He was compelled to reduce the wages of the employees because there is no uniformity on the wages question in the various States. The sooner the Federal Arbitration Court fixes the rates of wages the better for all concerned. We have no hope of competing with Tasmania with the cheap female labour there. There is one matter I wish to refer to. That is in regard to the wheat question, but I shall have plenty of opportunity when the report of the Royal Commission that is now sitting dealing with the wheat question comes before the House. I trust, however, every assistance will be given to the farming industry. The mining industry is referred to in the Governor's Speech. The industry on the Murchison has received little assistance. It appears that those who cry out most get most. We on the Murchison have kept very silent and we have not criticised the Government and have suffered in consequence. I trust when the Minister goes to the Murchison he will see our requirements and that we shall get justice.

On motion by Mr. Maley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th September, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT — WHEAT GROWING AND STOCK RAISING.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.42]: In view of some of the remarks made by the member for Beverley (Mr. Brown) last night, with regard to the question of wheat growing in Western Australia, I should like to make a brief statement to the House. There appears to be a general misunderstanding in regard to certain advice given from London on this matter. The member for Beverley asked why the advice of the London Wheat Committee to the Australian Wheat Board, to curtail the growing of wheat and engage in stock raising, had not been publicly announced. I desire to state exactly what occurred. The question of the relative merits of wheat growing and stock raising was put forward by the Australian Wheat Board in the following cable which was sent to the London Wheat Committee in January of this year—

Owing to the probable shortage of tonnage for some years, question of reducing our wheat areas in favour of stock and pig raising is in our mind.

That is to say, in the mind of the Australian Wheat Board.

When present crop delivered there will be $5\frac{1}{2}$ million tons export wheat in Australia. If scarcity of tonnage likely to continue for another two years, stock will increase and big deterioration take place. We desire to know if tonnage is likely to improve in view of all circumstances. Any information you can ascertain on this question will be immense benefit to Australia. Suggest that you consult Wheat Committee and other authorities on whole matter.

The following reply was received from London by the Australian Wheat Board:—

As long as war continues Commission—That is, the British Wheat Commission.

see no prospect improvement tonnage Australia. They consider at conclusion war wheat will be more valuable, even allowing for deterioration, than stock; also more readily negotiable and movable.

After discussion at the Australian Wheat Board conference on the 16th January last, it was decided that the matter of advising farmers be left to the Governments of the individual States, to give whatever advice they might think fit. On the return of this State's representative from Melbourne, the subject was carefully discussed by the Government, and a decision was arrived at that there was no cause for alarm on the part of the growers, in view of the opinion of the London Committee which I have just read to the House, in view of the opinions expressed by Mr. Love, the British Government Wheat Commissioner for Australia, and lastly, in view of the opinions expressed by Professor Lefroy. Further, Mr. Love and Professor Lefroy gave it as their opinion that wheat would be more readily saleable at a profitable figure after the war than it is at the present time. That opinion was expressed to me, and also to this State's representative at the conference. Under that advice the Government did not consider it wise, and I certainly did not consider it my duty,