

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 19th August, 1920.

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

QUESTION—STIRLING ESTATE, DRAINAGE.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the washaway in the Stirling drainage scheme? 2, Is he aware that this washaway has taken place in the same situation as last year's? 3, Will he cause immediate examination to be made by an engineer, with a view to (a) making provision for the escape of excess water and (b) providing for admission of flood water into drain near exit?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, It is so stated. 3, Instructions have already been issued to make inspection with a view to seeking a remedy, but until the water subsidies nothing can be done.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, BROWN HILL LOOP.

Mr. LUTEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What amount of revenue was derived from the passenger traffic on the Brown Hill loop line for the months of June and July, 1919? 2, What amount of revenue was derived from the passenger traffic, including workmen's trains, on the Brown Hill loop line for the months of June and July, 1920?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The amount derived from the Boulder-Brown Hill line for the months of June and July, 1919, was £249 19s. 5d. and £184 1s. 3d. respectively. 2, The amount of revenue derived from the passenger traffic, including workmen's trains, on the Boulder-Brown Hill line for the months of June and July, 1920, was £353 5s. 5d. and £426 16s. 6d. respectively. These figures include the Golden Gate and Kamballie shunting neck.

QUESTION—SEWERAGE FILTER BEDS AND STREET VENTILATORS.

Mr. HARDWICK asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the object in planting a belt of trees around the filter-beds at Burswood? 2, At what height will the trees become effective? 3, When is it anticipated

the trees will become effective? 4, Will he have the nuisance of sewer gases from the ventilators in the street abated?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, To improve, from an aesthetic point of view, the appearance of the sewage disposal works and increase the efficiency. 2, Five feet. 3, In about three years' time. 4, No sewer gas has yet been discovered in the sewers in Perth, and there has never been a complaint in regard to sewer gas in ventilators in the street.

QUESTION—HOE PRINTING MACHINE.

Mr. CHESSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What price was paid by the Government for the Hoe rotary machine resumed with the "Sunday Times" building in Forrest Street? 2, Has the machine since been sold, or have tenders been called for its sale? 3, If so, who was the purchaser? 4, What was the price, if any, paid by him? 5, How was the purchasing price arrived at? 6, Were structural alterations necessary to remove the machine; if so, who is bearing the cost of such alterations?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, With the resumption of the "Sunday Times" office in 1912, a Hoe printing machine was taken over at a cost of £5,800. 2, It has been sold. Public tenders were called for its purchase in September, 1912, both locally and in the Eastern States, but no offers were received. Since then repeated efforts have been made to dispose of the machine, both locally and in the Eastern States without success. 3, The machine has been purchased by the "Sunday Times" Publishing Company. 4, £500. 5, This was the best offer obtainable, and the space occupied by the machine was urgently required for office accommodation. 6, No.

QUESTION—MEDICAL FACILITIES IN REMOTE DISTRICTS.

Mr. DURACK asked the Premier: In view of the urgent need for more adequate medical facilities in the isolated regions of this State, also in view of the great possibilities of wireless communication and aerial transport in this connection, will he approach the Federal Government to ascertain how far they are prepared to give encouragement and financial assistance towards this necessity?

The PREMIER replied: Yes.

QUESTION—ROAD TRACTION, MT. BARKER AND YORKRAKINE DISTRICTS.

Mr. GREEN asked the Premier: 1, Is he correctly reported in the "West Australian" of 8th February last, when he promised a road traction service from Mt. Barker to the Forrest Hill settlers? 2, When will he fulfil this promise? 3, As it is the Government's policy to construct the Government railway

from Esperance northwards before any other railway can be constructed, will he meanwhile agree to institute a road traction service for the requirements of settlers in the Yorkkrakine district to link up with the railway to the south? 4, If so, when will the service be made available? 5, When will the road traction service be made available to the Forrest Hill settlers that was promised by him in February last?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes, but the report does not include any promise of a service. 2, When a suitable tractor is found. 3, 4, and 5, See No. 2.

QUESTION—STATE BRICKWORKS, OUTPUT.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that a number of buildings in the metropolitan area are held up because of the failure of workmen to secure supplies? 2, What is the number of bricks under order at the State brickworks? 3, In order to help to remove this shortage and in pursuance of his avowed policy to ensure the success of State trading concerns already established, by increasing their output, will he take steps to double the output at the State works by erecting another Hoffman kiln without delay? 4, Would this step not have the further effect of making the works a greater success by considerably increasing the output on a slightly increased capital cost?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, £1,500,000. 3, It is not considered necessary to enlarge the State brickworks, as it is thought that now the War Service Homes have acquired large stocks, the existing brickyards can cope with orders offering. 4, Due consideration will be given to the proposition.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [4.36]: The Governor's Speech seems to afford little if any, solution of the problems we have to face in the condition of the State's finances. Undoubtedly this is the most pressing problem the Government have before them, and although no policy is outlined to the House as to what steps will be taken to remedy that position, it is the duty of every member to draw attention to it. Surely it is not possible for this financial position to continue without some supreme effort being made to deal properly with it. In investigating this position, the first important step is to endeavour to find out the causes. Many have pointed to the war, to the numerous strikes, to the increased cost of living, and to all sorts of different propositions. Half the deficit for last year is accounted for by the Railways, which alone lost £400,000 in 12 months. The reason given for the deficit in

the railway figures is increased wages. But we should have expected increased wages. With increased cost of living, wages must go up, and we should have been ready for that contingency. This being so, why is it that our railway system cannot pay? There is only one answer, namely, the exceptional mileage in proportion to our small population. We have 3,600 miles of track and 333,000 people or one mile to every 93 persons in the State. Has any other country ever endeavoured to make a railway system pay under these conditions? Any commercial undertaking, whatever its nature, must pay, or it cannot be continued. The Commissioner of Railways from time to time has stressed the burden of railways running in sparsely populated districts. If we are going in for a policy of immigration, surely it will be better to consider whether we cannot fill up the spaces served by railways, rather than build extra miles of track and add them to the burdens of the existing system. If we can do anything to increase the population along our existing railways, surely we shall be advancing a step in the right direction. It is admitted that the lands already served by railways can produce fourfold and fivefold what they are producing to-day. The first pound has been disbursed in the capital expenditure of the railways, money has been expended in the construction of roads and in the erection of fences, and in partial clearing. We now want the extra pound spent to make that undertaking profitable.

The Minister for Mines: I have always said that.

Mr. MONEY: They have all said it, but what have they done to remedy it? That has been the trouble all through. They have all said it, but done nothing. For years past it has been stressed in this House and at every conference held in the South-West that agriculture would be considerably benefited by the drainage of the South-West. At present, as is well known, the lands, for want of proper drainage, are simply useless for three or four months in the year, notwithstanding that they are supplied with railways and in some districts with roads. The expenditure in drainage would be the last pound of capital expenditure. This is a subject not to be trifled with or belittled, but one to be grappled with thoroughly and actively if any great success is to be achieved. Up to the present the efforts at drainage in Western Australia have been like the efforts of the child who tried to empty the sea with a teaspoon. One has only to travel from Perth southwards to see the lands there simply inundated and sodden and useless, because of the want of drainage. Insufficient efforts have been made in the past in this important direction. Had the lands been drained, and been made capable of cultivation for ten months in the year, instead of three as now, much good would have been done. For a period of three months in the year the agriculturists in these

localities practically cannot cultivate an inch of the soil, because the land is absolutely full of water. With the object of bringing this matter forcibly before the Government I feel I cannot stress the question of drainage in the South-West too strongly. This means drainage on a huge scale. We hear to-day of possible railway communication being run along the coast through the chain of swamps between Perth and the South-West. I think we should be better off if we ran a drain through the swamps, and thus secured a proper system of drainage in those localities. It may not be only a matter of a properly constructed drain, but it may also be a means of communication as well, for water communication is one of the cheapest forms of communication possible. I do not know what efforts have been made in the direction of implements or machinery for drain construction. I have had sent to me from Scotland recently a description of the Rivolt excavator, also a description of the experiments carried out. The Rivolt patent dredge excavator offers a complete revolution to the drainage problem. It costs £50 and is simplicity itself, consequently it has high efficiency and pays for itself. I do not vouch for the accuracy of this description, and am only giving it as it was sent to me. It is the result of experiments carried out in Scotland. The description states that it pays for itself in five days, which makes it valuable to the farmer, even the small holder. It is indisputably the best investment the farmer can make. By using this machine it is possible to increase the production of food in that country by at least 25 per cent. It is of incalculable benefit both to the individual farmer and the nation. It is drawn by a tractor, and will complete a drain 3ft. deep at the rate of 150 to 200 feet per hour. If all this is only half true it is of immense benefit in the direction of draining the land, when the land has once been supplied with a proper outfall for the water. The want of roads in the agricultural districts south of Perth is also, to my mind, a detractor to the proper production from those lands already served by railways. For months in the year it is utterly impossible to traverse those roads, either to deliver cream to the railways or any other form of produce. It is known to many that in consequence of the character of those roads people have given up growing potatoes at one period of the year because they cannot deliver them to the various stations. Further, some have gone out of the dairying because it is impossible to deliver the cream to the stations. It is hardly necessary for me to stress the importance of so vital a matter as roads. It ought to be known and appreciated that railways without roads are useless. Although our railways have been constructed all these years they have not had adequate road communication leading to them. Is that not another good reason why the railways have not been paying properly?

Had this been done the railways would have had more customers and more constant customers, but as things are they have not been supplied with the necessary road feeders. I am sure the Minister will agree that both are necessary to the progress of the State. It was some years ago that the importance of supplying road material in those districts far removed from gravel pits was brought under the notice of the railway authorities. I am pleased to think that the present Commissioner of Railways is in accord with the necessity for this, but in the past, although it has been known to Ministers for Works, obstacles have been placed by the Commissioner of Railways in the way of assistance being given to road boards in this direction. If the railways would only deliver to road boards road material at cost, the venture would not only be profitable to the road boards in question but equally profitable to the railways. Had that road material been supplied by the railways during the past ten years at cost, it would have been a great contributor towards the improvement of roads in the State, meant more prosperity to the people, and been more profitable to the railways. I suggest that, in addition, if the railways would only supply road material to those people who are willing to help themselves and cart the material when they get it, it would also pay the railways handsomely to carry that material free. It would certainly be of great benefit to the State. If this were brought into operation it would be of more benefit in the way of road construction than 20 years of legislation. What is the good of road legislation without road construction? We have Road Board Acts and Traffic Acts and other Acts, but our roads are still in a deplorable condition. What we want is proper road construction and less road legislation.

Hon. P. Collier: And a more energetic Minister in charge of the roads.

Mr. MONEY: All these matters I have mentioned are of importance to the railways. They will mean more settlement along the railways. If we are to have immigration here on a large scale those who come here to assist in colonising the country will stand a much better chance of success, if they go to districts served by adequate facilities in all respects. If we put on these finishing touches in the way of improvements in drainage, provision of lime free, good roads, and settlement alongside the railways, it would be of very great assistance to the State, and to the people concerned. It would also be the means of encouraging a larger population to settle on the lands already served by a railway. In mentioning these matters I take it for granted that the same system of farming would be adopted as has been adopted in the past. Having arrived at that stage with good roads, good drainage, and general facilities, a farmer will be able to farm his land as it should be farmed. Under present conditions, generally

speaking, there is no farming done in Western Australia, at all events not on the proper scale. The methods are not up to date, and we are not producing what we should produce. For many years it has been said that it is impossible to grow lucerna in Western Australia. I have here a photograph showing the possibilities of the Darling Range in the South-West from this point of view, even that portion which unfortunately was to a certain extent damned in this House 13 months ago. This photograph shows lucerne being cut in the month of January, having had no rain since the previous October and no irrigation. It is only by knowledge and better methods of agriculture that we can increase production, not tenfold but twentyfold. If this can be done in the Darling Ranges, what can be done with the thousands of acres of land between the Darling Ranges and the sea? With proper drainage land that at the present is useless can be made productive. Only last season some of the land I have in mind produced the best crop of summer potatoes that was grown in the State, even including the Bengier swamp, the crack summer potato land in Western Australia. I am referring to the cursed Waterloo Plains. It is only last season that a sample of that land produced this fine crop of summer potatoes.

Hon. T. Walker: Who cursed them?

Mr. MONEY: Perhaps the Minister for Lands will explain that. What I desire to bring before the House is the great possibility of these improved methods of agriculture and drainage, together with co-ordination of Government departments and the natural assistance which the districts deserve. It is possible to increase our population four or five fold in those districts if the finishing touches are put upon them, and if the last pound is expended so that we may reap the benefit of the total capital expenditure. No doubt New Zealand is a fine example for Western Australia to follow. No country, I think, has given greater facilities for production than has New Zealand. Lime is carried there free, harbours are given wherever they are wanted, and there is every facility afforded for refrigerating works or any other works that may be desired.

Mr. Duff: Nature has been kind to New Zealand.

Mr. MONEY: I notice from a paper a discussion as to the wonderful success of the last shipment of apples and fruit to the Old Country during the past season. I wonder how many people know what it costs to ship apples to the market in England? As a matter of fact, to ship apples from this State costs no less than two-thirds of the gross return to get the fruit on the market. On top of that the producer has to grow the apples, to find the capital to clear the land and plant the land, he has to wait seven years before he gets any return, he has to manure the land and cultivate it, he has to pick the fruit and pack it, he has to spray his orchards and do every other work in connection with fruit-growing. Is there any other industry in the

world that is so handicapped before it can meet with prosperity? After placing his fruit on the London market the orchardist is only left one-third of the total value.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. MONEY: I accept the challenge. I have here the figures of a shipment of apples sent away by the "Beltana." This was a shipment made under similar conditions to other shipments. There were in all 202 cases of apples. The freight on these cases amounted to £30 14s. 8d., the insurance to £5 9s. 5d., the wharfage and handling £1 17s. 11d., commission £2 10s. 6d., railrage £3 4s. 8d., haulage £1 1s. 1d. The total of the charges is £94 18s. 3d. But on the top of that total there are the London charges of five per cent. commission, £10 5s. 3d., and dock dues, railages, etc., £7 11s. 6d., or an addition of £17 16s. 9d., making a grand total of £112 15s. That is the amount, £112 15s., which it costs to put 202 cases of apples on the London market. Is it possible for any industry to continue to prosper, or even to live, under such conditions?

The Minister for Mines: You have not proved your case yet. What did the apples bring on the London market?

Mr. MONEY: They brought the regulation price, which, as everybody knows, is £1 0s. 10d. per case. It costs two-thirds of that £1 0s. 10d. to place the fruit on the market, and all the costs of production have to be met out of the other third. The cases I refer to are 40lb. cases. There is about 6s. 8d. per case left, although on the London market the fruit brings £1 0s. 10d. Out of the £1 0s. 10d. the Western Australian grower receives 6s. 8d. All the figures of the fruit growers coincide proportionately with these which I have given. Thousands of cases of fruit have been sent from Western Australia to London with similar results. Apparently this is knowledge to our Ministers. In view of the handicap on the growers, they should be afforded every facility here. One shilling per case, which means 10 or 15 per cent., could be saved to the growers if the last pound were spent in furnishing them with facilities for export. The Mount Barker fruitgrowers complained during last season of damage occasioned to their fruit in being sent to Fremantle. Similarly the Bridgetown fruitgrowers have complained of being compelled to send their fruit an extra 100 miles to Fremantle for shipment.

The Minister for Mines: That is not our fault.

Mr. MONEY: The fruit should be exported at the nearest port of export. I am not complaining of any Government or any party. These matters are too serious for that. We must reorganise conditions in this State, otherwise our industries will cease. It is impossible for the producers of this country to exist if it costs them two-thirds of the value of their produce to get it to market. I am informed that the ocean freight has gone up still further; and, in addition, fruit cases have risen by 4s. per dozen, I under-

stand. We will not see our industries crippled and knocked out of existence without putting up a fight. The whole of our people must fight to remove these anomalies.

The Minister for Works: What about wages? They have gone up, too, have they not?

Mr. MONEY: One must expect wages to go up if the cost of living goes up.

Mr. O'Loughlin: The increases in wages are only a trifle compared with the other increases.

Mr. MONEY: The wages are not two-thirds so far as the fruitgrowers are concerned. To them wages mean only pruning and picking and packing.

The Minister for Works: It is a matter of wages as regards the price of fruit cases, anyhow.

Mr. MONEY: That may be. But wages will be a matter of indifference to the fruit-grower if he is going to be handicapped out of existence. Unquestionably it is only increased production that can make our railway system successful. It is increased production that is going to enhance the national assets of this State. But there are other ways of improving the position. I am pleased to see in the Governor's Speech a reference to the duplicating of departments, Federal and State.

Hon. W. O. Angwin: The cry about duplication of departments is a means of bringing about unification without the knowledge of the people.

Mr. MONEY: That reference to duplication was made in this House three years ago, and probably very much longer ago than that. I wonder what our people have lost through the extra expenditure in departments, and also through time and energy spent in preparing the various assessments and returns for income tax, State and Federal. That duplication is an anomaly and a wrong, and no sufficient effort has been made to remedy the position. When the question was raised in this House two years ago, the answer given me was that the matter of duplication of departments was receiving attention. That is two years ago, and nothing has been done. If these matters cannot be remedied by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government, then it is time for the people to rise in a body and insist on the removal of these anomalies. There is another matter which undoubtedly has not received attention. We have in Western Australia one of the most important coal deposits in the world, though I admit that the coal may not be of the best quality. It is, however, in quantity without limit. There is a scarcity of coal now in Victoria and also in New South Wales; and I believe coal has been exported from Newcastle, New South Wales, to Norway and sold there for £10 and £11 per ton. The coal from our coal bed has been used on our railways, and the trains have run with the same punctuality as when using Newcastle coal. Moreover, for years past our coal has been used successfully on

the small steamers which call at Western Australian ports. Notwithstanding these facts, we have not spent that final pound which is necessary in order to give proper facilities and depth of water for the bunkering of coal at any time, so that Western Australia may reap the benefit of that trade. I think a million and a half has been expended in completing a breakwater. Money has been expended on the jetty to facilitate the export of timber, which we were always able to export before. But facilities have not been afforded to enable us to do that export trade in coal to which our industry is entitled. If proper attention is paid to screening and to picking out the powder from our coal, it will export just the same as any other coal. A cargo of it which was sent to Mauritius arrived there in good order and condition. We are not adequately valuing the assets that we have; we are not making the most of them. The same thing applies to the export of coal, the export of fruit, and the export of wheat, as applies to agriculture. We must expend the last pound in giving adequate facilities before we can reap the eventual great benefit. I feel it is up to us to consider whether our present system of government is the right machinery when despatch is required. I do not know whether to suggest a form of local administration, but it would be a good thing for this House to resolve itself into a finance committee—call it what you will—to discuss for a fortnight or a month the best methods of getting out of our present difficulties. Failing that, and failing advance in the right direction, I shall be one to agree to the appointment of five or seven commissioners to govern the State of Western Australia until such time as these various matters have been provided for.

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [5.14]: So far as the Address-in-reply is concerned, apart from its acting as a safety valve, I think that for all practical purposes it would be just as well if we crumpled it up in our hands and threw it in the waste paper basket. I think the majority of members would then say that we had found for the Address a fitting burial place. I am rather diffident in speaking in this Chamber at present, and that for two reasons. One is that as regards the finances of the State I am utterly out of accord with the laissez-faire policy which seems to be acceptable to the House. I happen to be one of those men who do not like to subscribe to the policy of "let alone" and "let it go its own way." I do not think that is a wise policy to subscribe to where the State is concerned. At the end of this session, I am going out of political life. I am quite convinced that I have outlived any parliamentary assistance I can give, and I think the country will soon begin to ask whether a lot more have not outlived that, and whether it is not nearly time they had a fresh deal. When one looks at the serious financial position of this State—loving as I do every grain of sand of it—I do hope that

what I say in a spirit of regret will not be unhelpful. In order to get right down to facts, let us see where we are. The year's income exceeded the Treasurer's estimate, calculated at the time he delivered his Budget, by the mere pittance of £560,600. A mere pittance! I do not know of any Treasurer, until late years, who was so fortunate as to have such a pittance come to him. His estimate exceeded that of the previous year by £357,900, so that his actual revenue over that of the previous year was £918,650. Yet he not only spent that £918,650, but he spent £16,000 more. Is not that serious enough to lead us to ask what we are going to do about it? I have thought of suggesting to the Minister for Education that he should give his schoolboys this sum: in simple proportion, and see what their answers will be: "If, with an extra revenue of £918,000, the State goes to the bad £16,000, what actual revenue would be required to meet the annual deficit of £650,000?" That is the problem we are up against. If we are going to do what is right, we must seriously consider that problem. This House knows it, and I do not care twopence who occupies the Treasury benches, that is the problem facing us most acutely to-day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You attempted to solve it, and did not get the co-operation.

Mr. GARDINER: I got my gruel and took it. Any remarks I make are not made with the slightest atom of bile. What I say is said with a desire to help the State. When I cease to make remarks in that spirit, I do not wish to be heard in this Chamber.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Would they help anyone else who tackled it?

Mr. GARDINER: I do not know, but it is said that a fool is born every minute. In the meantime, is it not fair, is it not just to this State that we should get a definite statement from the Premier? He has already spoken on the Address-in-reply and, probably during the currency of this debate, we shall be unable to get this information, but is it not fair and just to the country, and to his supporters in this House, that he should take them into his fullest confidence and tell them, not in those genial general terms which make him lovable—when he says, "It is all right, old chap, don't worry, I am here; Mitchell's in Heaven, and all's well with the world"—not in those terms, but in the brutal, calm, scientific, business terms of to-day, how it is that it was not possible to save something out of this big amount of extra revenue; and, having proven that it was not possible to save something out of an extra revenue of practically a million pounds, tell them what method and what means he is going to employ to raise a revenue that will enable us to make the revenue meet our expenditure. I advise the Premier that there is a quotation, I think from Horace, which runs, "Now and then the mob sees what is right." It is the mob who are our shareholders. It is the mob that return us to Parliament. It is the mob from

whom we have to get taxation to rectify the present position. A little humorous recollection floats through my memory at the mention of the word "taxation." I received a deputation on one occasion and one of the deputationists said, "Are not we taxpayers? I should like to know." My reply was, "Yes." The next question was, "Have not taxpayers a right to say how their money shall be spent?" I replied, "Yes, that is equally right." "Well," said the man, "these 13 taxpayers want their's spent in beer." That story is a little out of the way, but I want to say this—

Mr. Underwood: How did you get on?

Mr. GARDINER: I am afraid the deputation were not satisfied. The position is that the taxpayer is going to say, "I gave you very much more money from direct taxation than you ever had before; what have you done with it, on what have you spent it?" Is not that a logical position for taxpayers to take up? Contrast the position with the position the Ministry would occupy in a keen business concern with keen business shareholders. Would they like to put before their shareholders the statement which is before the shareholders of this State? What do they think would be the reply?

Mr. Lutey: They would be chucked out.

Mr. GARDINER: The shareholders would say, "What sort of a game are you having? What are you doing? You have gone to leeward practically £934,000 during the year. How did you do it?" When one is a director, he cannot sit with his fingers in his mouth and say, "I do not know; you will have to be satisfied." A director has to say why, and when he has said why, and is asking his shareholders to put up other money to carry him through, it is just likely that the shareholders will say, "Look, your methods are jolly good. We have a great appreciation for them, but they are too slow in getting results." It is of no use telling such people "It is all right; a good time will come." The verdict of the shareholders would promptly be—"Give us a new board of directors." Are not we rapidly getting down to the stage when the country has a right to say to everyone of us, "What sort of a director have you been in this concern to which we elected you? What effort have you made, and what assistance have you given the Government?" The responsibility is ours. Not only does the responsibility lie with the Ministry as the board of directors, but it rests equally on every one of us.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not equally.

Mr. GARDINER: The hon. member is quite right. In order that there shall be equality of responsibility, there must be equality of voice and action.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We do not get an opportunity.

Mr. GARDINER: Where we can fool the people of this State every time, we cannot fool the shareholders in a business concern, and, after all, we have a right to say—those of us who have had business training—that this business training shall be devoted to the

benefit of the State. There is an old Latin proverb which, translated, runs—"Economy in itself is a great income." We might well write that proverb over the door of this Legislative Assembly. If we recognised that, and made the revenue meet the expenditure instead of letting the expenditure eat the revenue, then last year's financial operations would have given us that spirit of hope which slipped out of Pandora's box, and would help us to solve our financial worries. Let us analyse the position and see where we are. The governmental revenue which members will recollect consists of land tax, income tax, dividend, totalisator, stamp duties and so forth, was anticipated to reach £1,610,000, or £105,000 more than in the previous year. It not only did that but brought in £291,000 more. If we had been checking the position, and if we had been insisting right through upon a general economy in administration, the outlook would have been very cheerful. The land tax was estimated to bring in £50,000, but it brought in only £46,425. The income tax was expected to yield £260,000, and it brought in £271,000. The dividend duty was expected to produce £135,000, and it actually returned £144,000. The totalisator tax was estimated at £45,000, and it brought in about £100 more than that amount. The stamp duty, which was estimated at £115,000, actually yielded £173,000. Probate duty was estimated to bring in £45,000, and it yielded £121,961. Licenses were about right.

Mr. O'Loughlin: And there was practically no increased expenditure on those items.

Mr. GARDINER: So far as I can gather the cost of collecting this increased revenue came to about £5,000. I, like the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) am in a quandary over this. Land and timber brought in £7,200 more. The law courts were responsible for £3,000 more. The Royal Mint figures were £9,700 more. Then there was £2,800 more from the Commonwealth. Here is an item that I can hardly make out—reimbursements in aid. They were estimated to return £497,528 or £16,000 more than the previous year, but the actual return was £611,965 or £114,000 more. I took the trouble to make some inquiries, and I found that in almost every department specified here, the revenue increased. I think the material factor was the Agricultural Bank. About £291,000 more was received in direct taxation than the Treasurer's estimate, which estimate was £103,000 more than the previous year. Had there been no drift of the outgoings there must have been a very substantial reduction of our deficit. We are not unreasonable in saying that where there was such a big increase in the return from direct taxation, at least some portion of that ought to have remained in the Treasurer's hands to pay something off our overdraft. Coming to the business undertakings, it was estimated that the revenue from these would be £277,000 more than the previous year. That estimate was nearly

double. The total increased revenue from these sources was £545,000. Whilst we feel anxious about the present position, how appalling would have been the position if the Treasurer's estimates only had been realised! If the Treasurer's estimates had been within cooee of what he anticipated he would have found himself probably with a deficit of £1,230,000. Bad as things are now, we are spared the position that we would have been in if the Premier's estimates had only just been realised. With this gift of the Gods showered into his lap the best the Treasurer can do is to show that he was £20,000 under his original estimate of the deficit. The railways were expected to realise an increase of £221,000. They actually returned £396,000 more than the revenue of the previous year, but it took £437,000 to raise that. What in the name of all that is good is there in constantly saying that the deficit is going to be rectified by production? If the railways are going to earn £400,000 a year more and if it is going to cost £450,000 to earn that money, how are we going to remedy the position?

The Minister for Railways: That is not a fair statement to make, because it is not the correct position. We had additional expenditure in the first half of the year.

Mr. GARDINER: The Minister for Railways knows that we must take the average. It does not matter whether it is the first half or the second half of the year. The railway figures, I am hoping, are going to be much better, because we are going to have practically six months of increased freights. Although we are to face arbitration awards, extra pay, and everything else, does it not suggest that things have got a bit out of hand? The member for Bunbury (Mr. Money) is quite right when he says that a good deal of our railway trouble arises from our sparse population. The blame cannot always be on the Government that was always putting railway Bills through the House. But speaking quite candidly it seems to me that there is opportunity for a sweeping reduction of our annual deficit. This is the history of the deficits of a few years past: In 1917 it was £700,000.

The Minister for Railways: My deficit I suppose was not worth quoting.

Mr. GARDINER: The hon. member was more entitled to have a deficit than others, but we will come down to where the deficits got into the seven hundred thousand. In 1918 the deficit was £706,000. Only £45,000 more revenue was collected, so that was not very bad. In 1919 we had a deficit of £652,000. That was £54,000 less. We had a revenue of £300,000 more that year. That was principally railway revenue. In 1920 it was £668,000, with £918,000 more revenue. That kind of thing cannot go on. I am offering these remarks in a spirit of the fairest criticism. I do not think there is one member of the Ministry who will resent my drawing attention to these matters be-

cause they know I am doing so in good faith. We cannot go on piling up deficits and borrowing money at 6½ per cent. interminably, to pay them off. This is a country in which we have to spend loan moneys even to give effect to some of the works that we have done. If every year we have to find £600,000 or £700,000 with which to pay off the deficits, so far as one can see the money market will be so tight that it will give us trouble to borrow even a million. The public works which may be necessary to bring to full fruition those already constructed will have to stand still while we pay our debts. Victoria went through exactly the same experience that we are going through. In the eighties she borrowed and spent, and borrowed and spent until she came to a full stop. I do not wish to go through anything more drastic than that full stop was in Victoria. The result in that State has been that ever since then, Victoria has been well financed and is now doing all her own conversions within the State. What I do suggest in all honesty is this: members will have to face the country almost immediately. Let them go from here as messengers with a determined policy. If the Premier says it is necessary to bring in certain taxation, let that verdict go to the country with the endorsement of this House. Do not leave it until after the House is adjourned and then raise the freights. There are supporters to be considered.

The Minister for Railways: The House adjourned on the 5th December and the freights were gazetted on the 11th.

Mr. GARDINER: I am not playing with dates; I am playing with works. The Premier and his Government are entitled to say, "We are coming down with a financial statement; here is what I may want you to help me to get through." So far as I am concerned he will have my support in any measure he adopts which will have the effect of bringing this State out of its difficulties and which will enable us as honest citizens to see that we pay our way. I did intend to offer some constructive criticism with a desire to help the Government, but I am just about puffed out.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [5.45]: There are many problems waiting to be dealt with in all parts of the world to-day. At the back of those problems, at their base, lies the question of finance. That question lies at the base of the problems which beset us, and it appears to me to be the duty of the House to face the question of finance and deal with it. I was glad to hear the hon. member who has just sat down deal with this matter in the way he did, because it is of vital importance and must be dealt with sooner or later. It is surprising to find that it is dealt with in the Governor's Speech merely by a casual sentence stating that proposals, which are not defined, are to be submitted with a view to bringing revenue and expenditure into closer accord. I would ask hon. members to look back over the period of the last three

years, a period which almost synchronises with the life of this Parliament, and consider what the position of the finances has been during that time. If the average figures for those three years are taken it will be found that in round numbers the gross revenue per annum has been approximately five millions. But before ascertaining the net revenue we must deduct the expenditure on railways and other business undertakings, which was disbursed for the purpose of earning revenue. Averaged, and again in round figures, that expenditure is two millions, leaving a net revenue per annum of three millions. But again, before carrying on the business of the country, one has to deduct from the net revenue the interest and sinking fund which is payable yearly. That again has averaged about two millions, leaving one million per annum for carrying on the affairs of the country. It is, I think, unfortunate that we are in the habit of referring to the gross revenue as the revenue. It is of course quite correct, but it is liable to mislead. The average annual revenue available for carrying on the affairs of the State during the past three years has been approximately one million. That is the net revenue after paying interest and sinking fund. And having one million to spend, we have in each year spent on an average £1,675,000. Those are the figures which one has to keep one's eye upon. Of course that can only lead to destruction, to utter disaster—we are facing that way now—if things go on as in the past. For my part I can see no indication that things are improving. I can see many reasons for feeling that one ought to make preparations, as a business proposition, in the event of things not improving but becoming worse. Now I should like to refer to the figures for that period of three years, that is to say, the gross revenue, and the net revenue, that is the money available for the government of the country. In the first of those three years, the gross revenue was £4,622,000, the net revenue, after paying interest and sinking fund, was £772,000, and we spent £1,478,000. In the following year the gross revenue jumped by £322,000 to a total of £4,944,000. The net revenue, after paying interest and sinking fund, was £906,000, and we spent £1,558,000. Although the net revenue increased by £134,000 the deficit was decreased by only £53,000. The increase in revenue between those two years was as nothing compared to the enormous increase in revenue that has taken place between the last two years of the period. The gross revenue for last year was £5,863,000, and the net revenue, after paying interest and sinking fund, was £1,215,000. The gross revenue had jumped by £918,000, and the net revenue by £309,000. We had a net revenue of £1,215,000, and we spent £1,883,000, with a deficit of £668,000. In mentioning the deficit let me for a moment add this: it has been stated over and over again that the deficit for this year is £20,000 less than the estimate. That is not true. The deficit for this year is £75,000 over and

above the estimate. The mistake has arisen in this way: the estimated deficit, as it appeared on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, was £688,000, but that figure was explained by the Treasurer when he made his Budget speech as being subject to a deduction of £95,000. The real estimated deficit was therefore £593,000. Those figures appeared in the "West Australian" of the 10th October last. The £593,000 estimated deficit has been exceeded by £75,000. It is not a matter of importance, except that it would be important if these representations were made to mislead people into believing that the position is better than it is.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is the sinking fund on the Coolgardie water supply.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

MR. PILKINGTON: Of course it does not matter two straws whether the estimated deficit has been or has not been exceeded; but it matters very much if the public are to be told that the position has improved because the estimated deficit has not been exceeded. There is no reason why that statement should be put forward. Such a statement should not be made. The facts should be put forward. I have shown the extremely buoyant nature of the revenue. The Premier is fond of referring to the buoyancy of the revenue, and it is evident from the figures I have given that there is a buoyancy in the revenue. But that buoyancy may not be due to the extremely happy circumstances which the Premier believes to exist. The Premier has said it is due to the prosperity of the country. That, I think, is the purest nonsense. I do not believe that any person looking at the true facts can believe that the revenue is buoyant because of the great prosperity which is said to be amongst us. I should like to ask hon. members to look back. Some of them, I think, will be able to remember the occasion to which the last hon. member who spoke referred, that is to say, the period in Victoria prior to the bank smash, say the ten years before 1893. During that period certain things existed which it would be well for us to note now. There was an enormous inflation of bank credit, the bank deposits went up by ten millions. That was during the ten years before 1893. They were higher than ever before in Victoria. There was an appearance of great prosperity, money was flowing freely, huge incomes were made. At the same time the revenue of the country was more buoyant than ever before. The revenue went up by two millions. Now those things exist to-day in this country. Since the war began the bank deposits in this State have gone up by nearly 100 per cent. I speak of the period up to the 31st March last. We have there that same inflation of bank credit. We have the appearance of prosperity, money flowing freely, and we have the buoyancy in the revenue. Now that buoy-

ancy in the revenue under these circumstances is a symptom; but it is a symptom, not of prosperity, but of enormously inflated credit. The position is not precisely the same as it was in Victoria, but it has certain points of resemblance which it is important we should realise. In Victoria the bank deposits went up because the banks were making enormous advances on land values; and as the banks made enormous advances, so the amount of money in circulation in the country increased, and up went the bank deposits. Here the results have not been brought about in the same way, but mostly by Government borrowings, as has happened in several of the countries in Europe. However, that is the position, and the buoyancy of the revenue is due almost entirely to the inflation of credit. The Premier may say, and say quite correctly, that good prices have been obtained for wheat and for wool, and that therefore we have a more buoyant revenue than if those prices were lower. That is true, but the big factor in this buoyancy of the revenue is, I think, the same factor as existed in Victoria, namely, the enormous inflation of bank credit, and the enormous increase therefore of the amount of money in the country, without, of course, any increase whatever in wealth. Those are facts and figures which I believe to be beyond serious dispute, and I think we are entitled to ask the Government what is their policy in regard to this matter. I regret to say that, so far as I can see, the Government have no policy. We are told that all will come right, we are told to wait, to hope, and it will all come right. That is the suggestion. Sometimes the suggestion is that we shall so increase our production that the affairs of the State will right themselves. That, again, I believe to be the purest nonsense. I do not believe any country on earth ever increased its production as rapidly as Western Australia would have to do to correct the present state of affairs. I regret to say the Government appear to have adopted the policy of drift which has characterised their predecessors. The policy is one of simple drift, and no attempt is being made to grapple with the situation. Personally, as I have said on several occasions in the House, I believe there is no possible means whereby this country can get straight, and no possible means whereby Australia can straighten her finances, except the simple old means of drastic taxation and drastic retrenchment. The policy of the Government is, therefore, that of plain drifting. They do nothing. They suggest nothing. They drift helplessly, hopelessly, and lifelessly, and apparently they do not know where they will finish up. It must be remembered that if we allow things to go as they are going now the position will become worse every day. All of us must know that during the last five years we could have borne higher taxation without serious trouble. Higher taxa-

tion during the last five years would have been easy. I venture to say that a good many business men in Perth will view the matter in this light: Had they been taxed during the last five years it would not have been any great hardship, but to be taxed during the ensuing five years will be a hardship. And yet, taxation must come. If the Government wait to impose their taxation until things are extremely bad then the taxation will be harder to bear. During the period of apparent prosperity through which we have been passing, when money was running freely and being spent freely, taxation would probably have been little felt.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They would not allow it to go on.

Mr. PILKINGTON: Quite so. If the taxation had been put on, it would have had beneficial results in many directions. When people do the right thing it has beneficial results in many directions. If taxation had been put on at the right time it would have checked the shameless extravagance which has been going on here and elsewhere, not only in Western Australia, but in Australia generally.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This House wanted it put on but the Council would not allow it.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I was not here at the time, so cannot discuss that point. The fact is, that if taxation had been put on it would have checked extravagance, and gathered together for the benefit of the State moneys which were being used in an extravagant way. It would have taught the people to live less expensively and to avoid extravagance. It would have made them ready to face the situation, and helped to do away with the unrest which exists in the world to-day. At present the working man at the bottom is pinched when the cost of goods goes up. What he sees, or thinks he sees, is that he himself is being pinched, while everyone else has more money than ever before, and is better off. He sees that, and naturally feels that he is being badly used. If the Government had taxed solidly and vigorously the working man—I refer now to the man on the minimum wage—he would have seen that other people were also bearing their share of the burden. He would have seen that other people were also suffering, and would not have felt the same indignation which at present, I regret to say, he feels somewhat keenly. I hope the Government will deal with this question immediately, and tell us what they propose to do. Generalities are of no use. What we want is a policy showing how it is proposed to deal with the finances of this country in such a way that the revenue and expenditure may, to use the Government's own language, be brought into closer accord. I wish to deal also with one or two other matters, and to say a few words particularly in reference to the recent strike of civil servants, and the manner in which it was dealt with by the Government. I think the Government method in this instance has been very disastrous, and that

it will in the future cause far greater trouble than it has done in the past. An ordinary strike is a very different thing from a strike of civil servants. Personally I think an ordinary strike ought not to be illegal. I am not, of course, suggesting that strikes are advisable, or that they are things to be encouraged, for, obviously, they are not. I cannot myself, however, see any justice or right in making a strike illegal, or a lock-out illegal. At the same time, I think that in striking, men are exercising a right which they ought to possess, but a right which they ought not to exercise except in unusual circumstances, but when we have a strike of civil servants we have something entirely different. When we have a strike of civil servants we have disloyalty in its widest and worst sense.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. PILKINGTON: A strike of civil servants is nothing else than disloyalty. It is rebellion.

Mr. Harrison: Mutiny!

Mr. PILKINGTON: It is vile and shameful. It has no likeness or connection with the ordinary strike of working men in an ordinary business. The thing should have been dealt with on the basis of its being a rebellion, and disloyalty to the State.

Mr. Lutey: Run in the Ministers for not dealing with it, and for not giving the civil servants a living wage.

Mr. PILKINGTON: That is the issue which has come forward, and appears to have suggested itself to the people as being the real issue. Were the civil servants justly or unjustly dealt with? I believe—I may be wrong—that the civil servants had very grave grievances. I believe they had very grave grievances indeed, but I say that no grievances on earth, no grievances that can be conceived, will justify the civil servants in acting disloyally, as their action in striking indicates.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. PILKINGTON: In dealing with this question of the civil servants' strike, I put aside their grievances wholly and entirely. I admit their grievances are serious, and that these grievances have not been redressed, and that in the absence of redress they have been patient; but nothing on earth can justify the civil servants in striking, and in their attitude of disloyalty and rebellion. I ask hon. members to consider the position. There are three great departments of Government, the Judiciary, the Executive, and the Legislature. What was the position of the three departments of Government? The Judiciary was at a standstill; the administration of justice in Western Australia was practically stopped. The Executive was wholly and completely paralysed. Parliament, however, was not called together. Parliament was simply ignored, and presently we shall be told, I suppose, that here is a Bill and the civil servants say, "You have to pass it. Pass it or we go on strike again." What are we going to do? The position has been that Parliament has been wholly ignored. A board has been promised to the civil ser-

vants, and, for aught I know, has been appointed without any reference to Parliament, with authority to carry on and ultimately to be ratified by this House and by another place. I confess that is to my mind the most unconstitutional procedure I have ever heard of. It is astounding and amazing that Ministers, under constitutional government, should ignore Parliament in this manner. That, however, is a phase we may perhaps pass over for the time being. The point is, that the whole of the Judiciary and the whole of the Executive were paralysed, and Parliament was ignored. What was the position? There was no Government. Government was gone. The issue was not whether the civil servants had grievances or not but it was, is there to be government or is there to be anarchy? That was the only issue. I venture to say it was the duty of the Government to call Parliament together. The thing could easily have been done. There was no difficulty in calling Parliament together. Parliament could have reassembled, and a Bill introduced to provide that on a certain date the civil servants should return to work, and that any civil servant who did not return to work, *ipso facto*, would cease to be a civil servant as from the day on which he struck, and so forth. Had that been done I believe the civil servants would have returned to work. Had they not returned to work we would have known where we were. We would not have had to deal with this rebellion and this mutiny as if it were an ordinary strike amongst the minimum wage-earners.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did not deal with it in that way: they sent out armed police.

Mr. PILKINGTON: The thing was dealt with in such a way that, as the leader of the Opposition interjected, striking is now respectable. They dealt with it in such a way that the Government represented to the people of the State that striking in the civil service is a thing that is respectable.

Mr. Johnston: You loan them the money that they might have earned.

Mr. PILKINGTON: During the period of the strike? That was a thing I was going to mention.

Hon. P. Collier: Without interest too.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It is true the Government sat firm. They were not going to pay the Service for the time they were out on strike; nothing on earth would make them do so; they were adamant. But they did pay them.

The Minister for Works: No, they did not.

Mr. PILKINGTON: They did pay them. It is said that repayment is going to be made in the future. It is said that repayment is going to be made beginning, I think, three months hence, and that the repayment is to be made over a period of 12 months. I wonder what the Government will say to the civil servants who may say to them, "If you take that money off we will go on strike again." Rightly or wrongly it is accepted, I believe, by the civil servants as a fact that they are not going to have that repayment enforced.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

Mr. PILKINGTON: They think that is part of the bargain. They may be quite wrong, but they think it is part of the bargain.

The Attorney General: They do not even think it.

Mr. PILKINGTON: They think it is part of the bargain, but they may be entirely wrong. The Attorney General cannot know they do not think it unless he has asked them. If he has asked them he must have some reason for supposing they do think it.

The Attorney General: I know a great deal more of what they think than you do, considering the number of times I have seen them.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I suppose the attitude of the Government really is, "We say to you emphatically that you are going to repay this money," and then—

Hon. P. Collier: The Attorney General was the only Minister who was friendly towards them, so they said, but he was not the whole Cabinet.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I do not know where the suggestion of repayment came from, but I believe the money will not be repaid.

The Minister for Works: Do you approve of it?

Mr. PILKINGTON: Approve of it! I do not approve of anything that the Government have done up to the present in regard to the strike, and I do not expect to be able to approve of anything they are going to do in the future.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. PILKINGTON: During the adjournment I have been informed that in the figures which I gave before tea I made an error. I stated that in the real deficit there was an excess of £75,000 over the net estimated deficit. When making that statement I was not aware of a circumstance of which I have since been informed, by the Premier, that the Act which was passed last session rendering it unnecessary to pay the full amount into the sinking fund of the Coolgardie water scheme has not been carried out. The authorities in London objecting to the full amount not being paid, the whole amount has been paid in as before. The amount was £75,000, and to that extent my figures were inaccurate. I should like also to add to my remarks regarding the public service strike this, that although the strike was an act of very gross disloyalty I do not, of course, for one moment suggest that every individual civil servant who stopped work was guilty of disloyalty. As we all know, many of the civil servants stopped work for the obvious reason that they could not go on, had no chance of going on. My own belief is that a very large number, a not large majority, of the civil servants would have much preferred continuing their work to striking.

Hon. P. Collier: There was nothing to prevent the majority from continuing work if they so desired.

Mr. PILKINGTON: There was the simple difficulty, which very frequently arises, that the minority had charge of the machinery, and, having charge of the machinery, they took advantage of that fact to create a strike.

Mr. Jones: The civil servants went back to work because the majority wanted to go back.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I am merely expressing my own opinion. I do not wish to speak of the civil servants, as a body, as being disloyal from end to end. That would be quite untrue. I am guarding against any possible false impression which I may have created by my remarks before tea. Now I should like to refer to some remarks made by the leader of the Opposition in the course of his speech on the Address-in-reply. The hon. gentleman stated that there was a class war. He stated that he himself was very undesirous of doing anything to increase the class war between employers and employed, but he said that in his opinion that class war existed, and must continue to exist as long as the present capitalistic system existed. He said further that the class war existed for the reason that the interests of the employers and the employed were diametrically opposed. It is at the present time important that those who speak regarding matters closely connected with the unrest which we know exists all over the world, should be careful of their language and careful of the opinions which they express. We are—I suppose there is no reason why we should not face the fact—the world over closer to the possibility of revolution than any one individual of us has ever been in the course of his life hitherto. We have emerged from a period of unexampled peace extending over many years, followed by the great war; and the unrest throughout the world is evident to everyone. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that things should not be said, or if said should not be allowed to go unanswered, which tend to increase that unrest. Now, if it were true that there is necessarily and always a class war between employers and employed because their interests are diametrically opposed, I cannot see much hope of industrial peace. But I believe the plain fact is that there is no truth whatever in the suggestion that the interests of employers and employed are diametrically opposed. The instance which the leader of the Opposition gave was this: he said it is to the interests of the employee to get high wages, and it is to the interest of the employer not to pay high wages, and therefore the interests of employee and employer are diametrically opposed.

Hon. T. Walker: On that score.

Mr. PILKINGTON: On that one point. Now let me take another instance. In exactly the same way, the interests of the wool grower and the wool buyer are divergent when it comes to the price of wool. The wool grower wants to sell at the highest possible price: the wool buyer wants to buy at as low a price as he possibly can. That is quite true, but I have no hesitation in saying that the interests of the wool grower and those of the wool buyer are not diametrically opposed in any sense. I say it is to the interests of both that the wool industry should be successful. Their interests, so far from being diametrically opposed, although they are divergent at one particular point, are almost identical. And the same thing is true as regards employers and employed. It is to the interests of both employer and employed that the industry on which they live should be prosperous. That is their big interest. Their interests, so far from being diametrically opposed, are on most points

practically identical; and even on the very point of wages, exactly as on the question of the price of wool, it is of vital importance to the employer that his workmen should be paid on such a scale as will enable them to be efficient. That is to say, it is of importance to the employer that the wages of the workers should not be so low that the workers will become inefficient in any sense. And it is important to the wage earner that his wages should be such that a profit shall be available sufficient to enable the employer to run the industry. So that even on the very point of the wages themselves the interests of employer and employed are not diametrically opposed at all.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What percentage of profit is a fair thing to enable an industry to carry on?

Mr. PILKINGTON: That always depends entirely on circumstances.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If you were a shareholder in a business proposition, what would you say was a fair percentage of profit?

Mr. PILKINGTON: One cannot possibly say that unless one knows the conditions. What is a fair return in one case may be utterly unfair in another. We know that while five per cent. may be an adequate return in one industry, it would be utterly insufficient in another.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If you could get 100 per cent. profit, would you take it?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Yes.

Mr. PILKINGTON: If I could get 500 per cent. I would take it. All the profits that I can honestly make in any business I am prepared to take. I see no objection whatever to that.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And would you compel the coal miner, for instance, to obey any law that might be imposed?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PILKINGTON: I do not quite follow the hon. member. I say that any person who is carrying on a business is entitled to make any profit he can make while carrying on his business fairly and honestly. I will go further and point out that if a business is carried on prosperously in that way, it is very much to the benefit of the country; and I may add that if businesses are making big profits, that is the way in which wage earners may expect to be paid big wages.

Hon. P. Collier: Not necessarily at all.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It does not work out.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I did not say, "necessarily." I venture to say that the hon. member interjecting is under a misapprehension. It has worked out in America, where that truth is recognised by the Labour Party, who have done more for the people they represent than any other Labour party have done for their people.

Hon. P. Collier: They are softer in America than ever we were in Australia. They are working eight hours a day there still.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PILKINGTON: These interjections cannot alter the fact that real wages in America have for many years been higher than in any other part of the world.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And the hours longer.

Hon. P. Collier: The workers are relatively worse off in America.

Mr. PILKINGTON: The "relatively" may be left out. The real wages in America have been higher than in any other part of the world for many years.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Our gold mines have paid 25 millions in dividends, but that has not improved the conditions of the wage earner.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have an opportunity.

Mr. PILKINGTON: The Labour party in America have recognised the unquestionable fact, the indisputable fact, that high wages can only arise when there are big profits from the industry—I am using the word "profits" there meaning all the proceeds, of the industry less outgoings other than wages. From high profits alone can one obtain high wages. There is no fund on earth from which high wages can be paid, except profits. Consequently high profits are essential before high wages can be paid. That fact has been recognised by the American Labour party for many years.

Mr. Jones: You mean, by the American Labour Federation.

Mr. PILKINGTON: By the Labour party in America. I do not mean certain small sections of the workers of America; I mean the American Labour party represented by Mr. Samuel Gompers.

Mr. Jones: We know him.

Mr. PILKINGTON: There is one other matter to which I wish to refer, and that is the policy of the Government in regard to State trading concerns. I think we are entitled to know what the policy of the Government is.

The Minister for Works: It is quite clear.

Mr. PILKINGTON: We have in the Government the Minister for Mines, who I take it is in favour of State trading. We have in the Government the Attorney General, who I understand is against State trading. Then we have the Minister for Works, who, I understand from his own statements, is both in favour of State trading and against State trading.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the Minister for Works all right.

Mr. PILKINGTON: That position exhibits a versatility which I think does the hon. gentleman credit. But these facts only lead one to confusion as to what is the Government's policy in regard to State trading concerns.

Hon. P. Collier: Any old policy.

Mr. PILKINGTON: All we know is that under the present Government State trading concerns have been extended very greatly. That is all we know. If from their fruits we should know them, I should say that the present Government are in favour of State trading; and, if they are, then Heaven only knows why they are not sitting with hon. members on the Opposition side of the House. There has been for some time a persistent rumour that a commissioner of State trading concerns is to be appointed. It is announced in the Governor's Speech, but for some time past it has been rumoured that this is going to take place. And rumour went so far as to state that the gentleman to be appointed was no other than the Minister for Works. I sincerely trust that this will not turn out to be well founded. Of course I cannot know whether or not the rumour had anything in it, except that I now find in the Speech that such an appointment is to be made. I trust the Govern-

ment are not going to do any such thing as to appoint one of their own members to that post.

Mr. O'Loghlen: We require an experienced man.

Mr. Munsie: We cannot appoint a man opposed to State trading concerns.

Mr. PILKINGTON: But the Minister for Works is both for and against State trading concerns. However, I earnestly ask the Government to let us know definitely what their policy is on this matter and how they propose to carry it out. It is true as the Premier says, that we have been told over and over again that they are against State trading. But what they do is to increase the State trading concerns. I remember that only last year at the Royal Show the member for North-East Fremantle suggested to me that I should go over and see what the Government were doing at the State Implement Works. I went across and found amongst other manufactures which I believed to be new, a cart, a dray, a bedstead and a machine for making macaroni. At every turn one comes up against the amazing versatility of the Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: On a point of order. I object to that.

The SPEAKER: The Minister cannot interrupt unless the hon. member addressing the Chair resumes his seat.

Mr. PILKINGTON: For the advantage of hearing the Minister saying anything I shall be pleased to resume my seat. It is a pleasure to see that I have roused the Minister. I have found it most difficult to do so. I do not possess the happy knack of hon. members opposite of throwing across to the Minister bouquets of compliments and therefore I cannot, as they can, rouse him to blush and gush and flush like a flattered flapper. However, the Minister for Works has led me into a by-path. I came here to speak of these State trading enterprises. I do hope that the Premier will tell us definitely and clearly not only what the policy of the Government is in this respect, but also the way in which he proposes that that policy shall be carried out.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [7.43]: I have listened with interest to the members for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) and for Perth (Mr. Pilkington). I think you, Sir, in the course of your varied readings must have come across that old character Mark Tapley, who took credit to himself for being jolly under the most distressful circumstances. I think the House can take credit to itself for still being jolly under the distressful circumstances depicted by those two hon. members. The member for Perth in discussing the financial position did not to my mind draw a fair comparison when he dwelt upon Victoria in its boom days. To me it seems that Western Australia with its handful of people has an enormous task in front of it to grapple with the financial position, and to meet the various requirements that come from all parts of the country, one member asking for a railway, another for a harbour, and a third for the introduction of the bulk handling system. Notwithstanding all these varied requests importunately made, the

Government are taken to task for not keeping revenue well ahead of expenditure. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) declared that we should have been more heavily taxed in the past. When we look back to pre-war days, when the pound sterling would buy a pound's worth of goods, and then consider that the value of the pound sterling is to-day somewhere in the neighbourhood of 10s., I do not think those prosperous days freely commented upon by the member for Perth are very apparent. Still whilst the House is composed of all shades of opinion, the remarks of those two hon. members might well be taken to heart. The possibility is that if the Government were to take those remarks to heart, some of those requests which all of us are so ready to bring before the Premier might not meet with so cordial a reception. In comparing Western Australia with the other States we cannot but remember what we have gone through during the war. Two years ago in one hour I saw eight large ocean steamers pass through Sydney Heads. I saw new industries right and left, factories and steel works going full steam ahead, warehouses piled with goods intended for the South Sea Island trade previously done by Germany, abounding prosperity on every hand. The war put money into the pockets of the people of Sydney and Melbourne while it took it out of ours. I am sorry the Minister for Mines is not here, because I have some interesting matter to bring under his notice.

Mr. Jones: He is never here after tea.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is not fair.

Mr. Jones: But it is true.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is not true. The member for Sussex has on the agenda paper a notice that he intends to move for the issue of a regulation governing prospecting for oil. I have here an extract from the latest issue of the "United Empire" as follows:—

At the present time, when the question of the supply and control of the oil supplies of the world is exercising the minds of all Governments and affecting so many matters vital to commercial interests, it is worthy of note that Western Australia is hopeful of participating in the production of oil. The Hon. John Scaddan, Minister for Mines in Western Australia, who is preparing a Bill to promote and control oil in that State said recently:—

"Judging from information supplied to me I am fairly optimistic regarding the possible discovery of oil in Western Australia. True, a lot of work has yet to be done before anything definite can be said. I realise the importance and value of the discovery of oil, not only to Western Australia, but to the Commonwealth and the Empire. Therefore anything that can be done to encourage prospecting should be done."

This was in the July issue of the paper quoted from, the editor of which goes on to say:—

It is sincerely to be hoped that if the prospector succeed in his quest the conditions governing the granting of licenses will be made sufficiently attractive and will be at least not more onerous than obtains in other parts of the world. In view of the serious situation regarding oil, no possible field should be neglected, and the Western Australian Government will be well advised in offering investor and prospector alike every inducement to enterprise.

I hope that when the motion to be moved by the member for Sussex comes before us members will take that interest in this matter which its importance warrants. In this State we have all the minerals known to science. The only thing which appears to have been omitted is petroleum, and there is no reason why petroleum should not be found in this country, seeing that we have large supplies of brown coal, shale and ordinary coal, and that usually oil is to be found adjacent to coal fields. It is of no use relying on the geologists, for it is a matter of drilling. The drill alone will prove whether we have oil. Up to the present the reports of the engineers have been fatal to any project for starting a petroleum field. It is only by trusting to the drill and by giving every encouragement to the investor and the prospector alike that we shall learn whether we have this very valuable asset within the State. It has been suggested that there are sinister influences behind this question of oil supply. In any case it is up to us to investigate and find out what the sinister influences may be so that we may bring to a successful issue the search for oil.

Mr. O'Loughlen: A £10,000 bonus is already offered by the Federal Government.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It has been remarked to-night that we have put up a record in the asking of questions. Had I not been a minute or two late this afternoon I should have asked a couple myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no occasion for any apology.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I had intended to ask the Minister for Industries what is being done in regard to the forest products laboratory. I understand that an agreement has been entered into between the Federal Government and the State Government, the State Government having granted a site and a certain sum of money, while on the other hand the Federal Government have agreed to supply plant, pay salaries, provide material, and build the laboratory. Now we hear rumours, whether correct or not I do not know, that the Federal Government are hedging. It was with a view to ascertaining from the Minister whether he had any late information that I proposed to ask certain questions to-day. The member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen) is interested in this matter. No member of this House has a better knowledge of the wealth

of our forests in the matter of essential oils, paper pulp, tanning bark, etc., than he has. It is up to the Minister to keep the Federal authorities to their compact and get the laboratory into operation as soon as possible. Experiments have been made with a view to producing paper pulp from young karri. Paper pulp is a most valuable asset to-day to any country which can produce it, as the member for North Perth will admit. Now it seems that we shall have to send our own timber to foreign laboratories. We sent Mr. Boas to England, America, and India to make investigations into this matter, and though he has had a successful trip and has acquired a lot of valuable information, very little progress towards actual work seems to have been made. While the war was on, we were on the qui vive to utilise our latent resources and waste material, to burn up all this timber in such a way that the essential oils would be preserved, and economise in other respects, but now that the war is over, I suppose we shall get a lot of these products cheaply from other countries and the opportunity will slip by. This is why I urge that something should be done to get this laboratory into operation, because we have in our forests untold wealth that only needs to be properly utilised. I was pleased to hear the other day that the Minister had informed a deputation from Leederville that Herdsman's Lake was being drained. This may seem only a small matter, but last year, when speaking on the question of water supplies, I mentioned this as one of the works for the future. It was a project which in the past had been regarded as likely to prove valuable to the city, as an area for vegetable gardening and dairying purposes. But I little thought that we were so near to a realisation of these advantages as appear to be the case. This is doubly interesting to me because it shows we are on the eve of developments, many of which are bigger than some members anticipate. The mention of this drainage scheme brings to my recollection another project of which I have spoken in this House. Over 20 years ago the late Lord Forrest placed a sum of £20,000 on the Estimates to provide for investigations into the practicability of constructing a series of locks on the Avon River. Recently we read in the Press of the immense quantities of water which overflowed the weir at Mundaring, but when I tell the House that the overflow at the Northam weir in one day was sufficient to fill the Mundaring catchment, members will realise how much water is going to waste. In one season there was a total overflow of 63,661 million gallons of water. The Mundaring catchment covers an area of about 300 square miles, but the Avon catchment has an area of over 4,000 square miles; so members can picture for themselves the immense volume of water which is going to waste every year. It has been said that the water of the Avon is salt. No doubt it is. Like the rivers in most arid and semi-arid countries where the evaporation is great,

salts prevail in varying degrees in the pools of the Avon Valley. I hope that preparations will be made in the near future for the damming of this river, because I think investigation will prove that it is a practicable proposition. The damming of this immense quantity of water and the making of the Avon a live stream would tend to reduce the salinity of the pools. In New South Wales, by the growing of saltbush and mangolds and the planting of trees along the creeks, it has been possible to reduce the salinity and bring otherwise unfit soils under profitable cultivation. A Californian professor demonstrated that the black alkali could be successfully combated, and that land impregnated with the most deadly form of salt, the white alkali, was capable of being treated and profitably cultivated. If proper investigation were made and the right means were adopted, the Avon River could be successfully locked and the land, instead of carrying a few sheep and being worth about £10 an acre as at present, could be brought under cultivation and increased in value to nearer £100. The other evening I asked the Minister for Agriculture certain questions regarding supplies of wire and wire-netting. In spite of what the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) said, I believe we shall have a fair number of agricultural labourers immigrating to this State. The hon. member spoke about the conditions in the old country being better than they are here. I had personal knowledge of farming conditions in the county of Shropshire 25 years ago and though they have improved since, I am satisfied that no farm labourer there would have an opportunity to acquire a farm of his own as he would do if he settled in Western Australia. The hon. member can say what he likes about the conditions in England being better than they are here. Farm labourers might be receiving a few shillings per week more, but there are no chances for men to go on the land there as they may do here and, after a few reasonably good seasons, get farms of their own.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You allow that the opportunities in this country are getting very limited.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Mr. McLarty will tell you that.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A good deal of our best land is being cut out. I wish to impress on the Minister that we have millions of acres of second class land which should be properly investigated. Demonstration farms not State farms such as we have at present, but farms worked by the farmers themselves, should be established. They would not cost much to run. Similar farms have given wonderful results in other countries, and the farmers have been able to grapple with the big problems which retarded their progress. It would be wise to adopt the system here and see if something could not be done with

the great areas of scrub land which at present are growing only rabbits and other vermin. I wish to speak more particularly of wire-netting. Members may think this is not a matter of special importance, but I wish to point out that it is one of considerable importance. In the far out areas at Graball, Wandering, and East Kuminin, and all along the eastern belt, we have soldier settlement. Out there the dingo is rampant, and it is impossible to keep sheep, though sheep and wheat are the ideal combination for a holding. I visited the school at Wandering recently and noticed that the children were making a garden. I asked one little chap which was his plot of wheat. He replied, "I am not growing any wheat. Some of the boys have planted it, but as fast as it comes up the rabbit comes and eats it." The presence of the dingo is making it impossible to keep sheep.

Mr. Smith: The children ought to be taught rabbit trapping.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Twelve months ago it was stated in the Federal Parliament that large works had been erected together with a plant capable of supplying the whole of Australia's needs in wire-netting, and would be in operation in four months. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie), in speaking on price-fixing about six months later, mentioned that a certain man in Perth, who required 20 tons of No. 10 wire, went to a local firm and got a quotation of £60 per ton. Considering the price asked unfair, he cabled to England and got the material landed at Fremantle for £30 a ton. This was a month or two after we had been assured that there would be in operation works capable of supplying the whole of the needs of Australia. Twelve months have gone by since then. When I asked the Minister for Agriculture if this market in the Eastern States was being exploited, and if the Government were attempting to get something cheaper, the answer given to me to question No. 2 was that it was known that works were being erected in Australia.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I do not think he inquired at all.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I do not know whether he did so or not.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It was a poor old answer.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is not a fair thing. Knowing the urgent need there is for this commodity, the Minister might have told me something of a more sensible nature other than that the Government knew that works were being erected in Australia.

Mr. Johnston: Very little progress is being made with the works.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The works have been turning out wire.

Mr. Johnston: They are about two feet high at present.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Since the strike I believe the works have been turning out wire. The only difficulty was that the Federal Gov-

ernment took a lot of the wire to Melbourne, and did not give Lysaghts in Sydney a chance.

Mr. Johnston: They are shifting the whole plant from Parramatta to Newcastle, and the whole plant is about two feet high.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is only fair that the Minister should put on one of his officers to find out about the wire, and see whether something cannot be done to produce it. I have asked the Attorney-General to consider the position regarding machinery under the hire purchase agreement system. I want to prepare the House, in case the Government see fit to bring down an amendment to the hire purchase Act. Amongst the many cases I could deal with there is one in which a man buys a harvester, and pays £94 deposit upon it. The firm from whom he buys it takes the harvester back, and is in the happy position of having the harvester and the £94. The unfortunate farmer, however, is in the unhappy position of having lost both his money and his harvester, which he may have only had for a season or two. In Saskatchewan, to which the member for North-East Fremantle is constantly referring, they have seen to it that something better is instituted there. It is provided in the Act in force in that country that machinery so seized shall be valued, and the man from whom it is taken is given the credit for what he has paid, which is only fair and reasonable. On one occasion I drove out with a machinery traveller, and remarked upon the large number of machines his firm appeared to have on their hands, as returned machinery. His laconic remark to me was, "That is all buns." They get so much money, and they get back machinery that may be somewhat worn and damaged, but the unfortunate man from whom it is seized is left with nothing. I should like to make a few remarks in regard to the North-West, a subject which appears to have occupied the attention of members during this debate. I daresay many hon. members have received pamphlets from the Hon. McDonald, of Queensland, wherein he advocates a scheme for a line to link up Bourke with Camooweal. A few days after I received the circular I noticed that the Federal members from South Australia had approached the Prime Minister with a view to their getting the Federal compact carried out in the building of the North-South railway. Prior to this we had members of the Upper House making a tour of the Eastern States advocating our own northern railway. The scheme advocated by Mr. McDonald is no doubt a big and far-reaching one, and of very great importance to Sydney and Melbourne so far as the markets are concerned in times of drought. The North-South railway is also of paramount importance to South Australia. We have, however, our own barrow to push with respect to our railway system in the North. In each of the schemes that I have seen, particularly that of Mr. McDonald's, they all show the linking up of the three sections, the North-South railway, the Bourke-Camooweal section, and the

northern line for Western Australia. The member for North-East Fremantle stated last night that opinions were somewhat divergent, and the pious hope was expressed that members of this Chamber would be given an opportunity of investing in the company. The same hon. member stated that another member said that the land of the North-West was good for agriculture, and another denied it and said it was good for pastoral purposes. I do not know that a visit by members of this Chamber to that part of the State would do very much good.

Mr. Johnston: We can soon settle that dispute.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I question whether the hon. member would be able to decide that question altogether on the right basis. I do not think that matter can be decided by members, although it would be a very pleasant thing that we should take the trip. I think we are on the eve of bigger developments in our North-West than we are aware of. There is money to be laid out there if we only go the right way about it. I am assured by men who are in the know, that money is awaiting investment in the northern part of this country, and Western Australia as a whole, if sufficient inducement is held out, and if the conditions regarding boring for oil are not made more onerous than they are in other parts of the world, and that we shall possibly see more developments in the North than we are at present expecting. I am asked by an hon. member representing the North-West what policy I would put forward. I am not here to outline a policy, but would be pleased to talk over the matter with him when I have finished my remarks. The member for Kanoona (Mr. Walker) has also asked me if I have anything to say regarding bulk handling. I have this to say, that so far as terminal elevators are concerned, the sites that are to be used are of paramount importance. We have had a report from our Agent General on the bulk-handling system as carried out in America. He stated that throughout the length and breadth of America and Canada there were scores of elevator plants badly laid out, and, though up to date, they were being run uneconomically. Other parts of that country, however, had profited by the fact that they were able to avoid the mistakes made in those instances. He urged the then Government to pay particular attention to the sites on which they placed the elevators at the ports. He instanced Montreal, where, by avoiding the mistakes made in other places, they had the finest system of elevators and conveyors of wheat in the world. He stressed the point that the Government should give this feature the most urgent attention. I hope the session will be productive of useful work. I am sure the Premier is looking forward to a fine harvest, and that he thinks we are going to get it, as I do, and that this will be a big factor in increasing the buoyancy of our finances, upon which so much stress was laid by the member for Perth to-night. I also believe he thinks that this will assist the State in

reaching a more solvent position than we are in to-day.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [8.26]: There are one or two matters I should like to comment upon to-night. I had not intended to address myself to this debate, but there have been so many references to the North that perhaps it would seem as if I were neglecting my duty if I had not something to say about the districts I represent. I compliment the Government upon their expressed intention to energetically develop the North-West. This has come rather late in the day, but I think they are really in earnest this time. A Minister has been appointed, who is supposed to take charge of the whole of our North-West.

Mr. O'Loughlin: He has taken charge of other things before.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do not know if he is briefed with the necessary authority to act on his own initiative, or whether he will be in the same position as the late Minister for the North, who had a good deal of title but very little power. The North-West is of sufficient importance to warrant there being a special portfolio for it. On one or two occasions I have expressed my dissatisfaction at the way the district has been put off with a Minister who had practically no power and no responsibility. The time has come when there should be a special portfolio dealing with the North-West. The department need not necessarily be a large one, but it should be one to which members representing the North-West could go and have matters dealt with in a reasonable time. At present one has to go to a Minister, who has to refer to another department, and by the time one gets an answer to a question a long interval has elapsed. That is wrong. We in the North-West are placed at a great disadvantage. Our mails are very infrequent, and we have to rely a good deal upon telegrams. We ought to get answers to our queries in a reasonable time. I feel sure that in the Minister who has been appointed we shall have one who has the interests of the district at heart, and will do what is best for it if he has the necessary power. Much has been said about the North-West by people who know very little of the subject. I do hope that some of those members who are always tacking the North-West to the end of their speeches will take more interest in that part of the State and will, during vacation, see for themselves what the district is like; their words then would carry more weight than they do at present. Very few members have been up there, and I trust that within the next 12 months some of them will make a point of going to the North-West to see what it is like. We have a fine illustration of the action of one of the Governments in the far north of the State in the shape of the meat works. I do not care which Government was responsible for the initiation of those works; every credit is due to them for having established them, because at the present

time the small holders of stock who were at the mercy of the big operators are now in the position to take small mobs of fats to the works, sell them at a fair price and go away with cash in their pockets.

Mr. Lambert: The Labour party platform made it possible to establish those works.

Mr. TEESDALE: I have stated that it is a matter of indifference to me which Government established them. I am grateful to the Government who were responsible for them. At the same time I consider that the present Government would be justified in trying to dot the North-West coast with smaller works which would be large enough to cope with the stock in the surrounding districts. The Wyndham works, I am confident, will eventually justify themselves. At the present time, unfortunately, there is a fly in the ointment, as trouble exists up there amongst the employees. I trust that the employees will recognise that they are working for themselves, and that any trouble they may cause will act indirectly against them too. If they do their best, they will be doing good for themselves as well as for the State. I am sure they will find that to be the best policy. We have heard of the exploitation by the Queensland Government of the large iron deposits at Yampi Sound. It is a reflection on the Western Australian Government to think that we have had to rely on an outside crowd to show us that we have these deposits which are worthy of development. At the same time, we have other large deposits not only of iron but of lead and asbestos, and miles upon miles of country which has never been prospected. I know that from my own experience. I have followed many occupations in the North-West, including that of prospector, and I can confidently state that there is no man in Western Australia to-day who can say that we have exhausted the gold contents of the north. There are many places in what are at the present time blank spots that may yet become thriving townships. Had it not been for the scarcity of water, many miles of country would have been prospected before this and perhaps good finds made. I hope the Government will try to arrange for the Water Supply Department to provide water reasonable distances so that those who go out may be given an opportunity of developing that part of the country. On the subject of immigration I must confirm many of the statements made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin). I regret to say, however, that we shall not have that rush of farm labourers who were supposed to be waiting to come out to Australia. On the contrary we shall find that there are very few really good men who are willing to leave the Old Country. Their conditions are superior now compared to the time that the member for York (Mr. Griffiths) spoke about, namely, 35 years ago. I come from what was one of the worst paid agricultural districts in England, and I was surprised to

find on my return to it recently that there was so much prosperity there. I was astonished to find small farmers who, 35 years ago were poor people, were now in affluent circumstances, and that many of the labourers who worked for them were also holders of small farms and were on a fair way to becoming successful. Those men are not likely to come out here. At the same time, there are numbers of men with small capital who are waiting to embark for Australia as soon as decent facilities are provided. The exorbitant fares at the present time are retarding emigration from England to Australia. While the fares are exceedingly high, the accommodation is very poor indeed. A charge of £40 is made for accommodation which is not fit for blackfellows, and food is supplied which likewise one would hardly give to a blackfellow. It is a great shame to think that we have to pay £40 to companies that apparently do not appreciate the business that is given to them. Those companies, however, have such a monopoly that they are positively careless of the position that exists. I went home quite indifferent about the question of the nationalisation of steamers. I have returned from England in favour of Australia having her own steamers to take her own wheat and wool to London and to bring back immigrants. Even if those steamers were run at a small loss, the indirect gain would be great. That small loss would be far preferable to making cash disbursements to companies that spend very little indeed in this part of the world. They bring all their stores with them from the other end of the world and they are getting a notoriety for meanness which cannot be eclipsed. Those companies are actually taking over the barbers' shops on their vessels. They even envy the few pence which has been made in the past by the barber conducting those shops. It has occurred to me that they might top their meanness by taking over the lavatories as well and converting them into penny-in-the-slot arrangements. This is the mean, pettifogging spirit of the shipping companies, and the treatment that they are meting out to their employees. These are the people too who can pay £45 a ton for their shipping while they publish to the world at large what fearful losses they are making by carrying on their undertakings. I could not help being struck by a few remarks made by that autocrat of shipping, Lord Inchcape, a gentleman who is a positive dictator at the present time and who is instructing the Imperial Government how to run England. Not content with running three parts of the world when he was controller of shipping, he is now instructing the English Government how to deal with the housing problems. This is what he said at a meeting of shareholders of the P. & O. Company—

We regard it as uncommonly hard that the Commonwealth Government should

borrow money to place steamers in the Australian trade to compete with private enterprise. Merchants do not regard the step favourably, realising that if the Commonwealth Government enters the shipping trade, it may enter other spheres of activity.

The idea of the Commonwealth daring to compete with private enterprise!

If the British shipowners had Australia's resources against them it might end in their selling their vessels to the Australian Government. The present move is a direct attack on individualism and private enterprise.

These are the remarks of a gentleman who is always lamenting the tremendous losses made by his company, a company that is building new ships at £45 a ton so as to create further losses. He regrets, as he says, that the Commonwealth has been bitten by the idea to become a ship owner competing with private enterprise. I trust that the Commonwealth Government will find it possible to place passenger steamers on the line as well as cargo steamers and cater for some of the trade that now goes to the mail vessels. I feel confident that the time will come when we will be able to deal with our own cargo at Home and passengers as well. The member for North-East Fremantle referred last evening to the unfair treatment that the British Government had extended to the Commonwealth and New Zealand in regard to produce. The remarks of the hon. member may, I regret to say, find their way to the Old Country and they may be regarded as representing the opinion of all the members of Parliament in Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: He was really quoting Sir Thomas McKenzie.

Mr. TEESDALE: The hon. member regretted that the same high prices were not paid for Australian produce as were paid for the produce from other countries. The hon. member, however, did not take into consideration the difference in the distances. That difference would explain a good deal of the discrepancy in the prices. I feel sure that the prices paid to Sweden and Norway were compulsorily paid because the produce was required immediately and the Ministry for Food could not afford to wait for the produce to come from Australia, although I am confident the Ministry would have preferred to deal with the Dominions rather than the other nations, which might or might not at one time have been enemies.

Mr. Lutey: One of the Scotch members in the House of Commons accused them of profiteering.

Mr. TEESDALE: On the other hand, we have a good illustration of the way in which we have been treated in regard to our wool. The wool kings of Australia refused to handle the surplus profit that was made in the wool business. That to a certain extent counterbalanced what the member for

North-East Fremantle said about produce. The wool people were satisfied with the prices given to them and they recognised that the Government were taking a tremendous risk at the time. They were taking boats from other runs to put on the Australian trade, boats which might have carried two cargoes to the one from Australia. The efforts made to remove Australian wool were appreciated by those directly connected with the industry.

Mr. Underwood: The wool growers are not growing.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am pleased to hear that they were satisfied with the treatment they received. In conclusion I trust that our friends opposite who accorded the Government fair treatment last session will act similarly during the present session. I am sure they are moderate and reasonable people, though there may be one or two extremists amongst them. In their hearts it is their desire to see the State move along successfully, and I am sure they will help all they can to further the interests of the State. They may find themselves on this side of the House in the not distant future and therefore while they remain in opposition they must set a good example so that those who follow them on those benches may know what to do when the position is altered.

Mr. GREEN, (Kalgoorlie) [8.45]: In common with several members who have spoken on the Address-in-reply, I have to make passing reference to the subject of finance. I recognise that various speakers who have preceded me to-night and during the earlier days of this debate, are more competent to deal with that matter than I am; and therefore I shall touch on it but briefly. During the five years of the Labour Government there was a deficit of £1,360,000, or an average annual deficit of £270,000. One would have a short memory indeed if one did not recollect the hostile newspaper criticism hurled at the Labour Government every day in the week, including Sundays, during that period when the present Minister for Mines had fastened on him forever the name of "Gone-a-million Jack." I want to know what name is to be fastened, from the same source, on the Minister who is responsible for the deficit of 2½ millions which has been accumulated in four years. Probably we shall have "Gone-four-millions Jimmy." However, the extraordinary thing about the present deficit is that there has been no criticism whatever regarding it from the daily Press of this country, whose duty it should be to give the people a lead on the important question of finance. I have a respect for the present Premier as a genial gentleman. I think a good deal of him as such. But I say that there was no justification whatever for a change of Government in this country on the question of finance. And finance is the one excuse which the hon. gentleman has offered, though he has been unable to stop the financial drift and in fact has let it become worse.

The Premier: Do you object to increases in wages and salaries?

Mr. GREEN: I do not. I have heard from the Government side fabulous figures as to increases in wages in this country. I challenge the Premier to lay on the Table a return showing exactly the amount of the increases in the pay of the civil servants, who in fact have received nothing up to date, and in the pay of the other departments.

The Premier: Received nothing!

Mr. GREEN: I mean, not on the present occasion. We have the fact that whereas in 1919 the revenue was £4,944,000, in 1920 it was £5,863,000, representing an increase of £918,000. Nearly a million pounds increase in one year!

Hon. P. Collier: What has the Premier done with it?

The Premier: Paid wages on the railways.

Mr. GREEN: An increase of £918,000 in one year! Will the Premier attempt to tell this House—

The Premier: Yes, I will.

Mr. GREEN: I know the Premier will attempt to tell this House anything; but does he seriously expect to be believed—

The Premier: Yes, I do.

Mr. GREEN:—when he tells this House and the country that the increase in wages for one year has been £918,000? I doubt very much whether the increase has amounted to the figure of £250,000 which the Premier gave on a previous occasion.

The Premier: No, I did not.

Mr. GREEN: Where has the money gone, as the present Minister for Works said on a memorable occasion? What has the Premier done with it? No wonder the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington)—who gave us this evening a marvellous exhibition of intellectual gymnastics by retaining in his mind a string of 27 or 28 sets of figures—no wonder that hon. member asks what the Government are going to do with regard to finance? If the Premier had determined that his expenditure this year should exceed his expenditure for last year by not more than £230,000, he would have been able to balance the ledger this year. In that case he could have had the difference between £5,596,000, which was the expenditure for 1919, and £5,863,000, which was the revenue for 1920, or practically an excess of £267,000. What would the Premier have done if he had not had a buoyant revenue? He tells us that the country is prosperous and that we have a buoyant revenue. In spite of those facts we find he has gone back this year to the tune of about £700,000.

The Premier: No, I have not.

Mr. GREEN: The most unsatisfactory position of the country is that apart from the speeches of the leader of the Opposition, which are reported fairly and fully, the daily Press of Western Australia allows no opportunity for public criticism when any Administration except a Labour Administration is in power. More particularly has that been the case since the present Premier assumed

office—the present Premier, who on one occasion was considered utterly unfit to lead a Government, but who on his accession to his present office was hailed by the "West Australian" as "the man for Galway," the saviour of the country. Even with the help of the particular friend who meets the Premier in the corridor and dictates the policy of the Government, the Premier has been unable to prevent this mess in the finances of the country. Next I wish to say something with regard to what is still the leading source of wealth in this State—the great gold mining industry. In the Governor's Speech that industry is dismissed with a paragraph, and the paragraph is one that might well have been omitted. The Government damn the industry with faint praise. In fact, the whole tendency of the paragraph is to lead people to believe that what is retarding the gold mining industry, what is "causing my Ministers grave anxiety," is the increase in mining costs. That statement is, I will not say an unfair, but an ill advised statement to make in view of the fact that the men working in the gold mining industry have already cited a case in the Arbitration Court for increased wages.

The Premier: It had no connection with that, anyhow.

Mr. GREEN: I accept the Premier's assurance, but if that fact had been kept in mind the statement would have been an ill advised one to make. British financiers are unanimous in saying that in order to keep British credit as sound as possible it is necessary to retain gold as the currency of the British Empire. Therefore, gold mining is an industry of more than average importance to the British communities all over the world. It is a most regrettable thing that the gold mining industry, which in 1903 employed 16,000 men with an annual wages sheet of 3¼ millions, should in 1918 employ less than half that number of men. I must apologise to the House for not being able to give figures for a more recent year than 1918. The reason is simply that the Government have just handed to members the Mines Department report for the year 1918.

The Premier: You need not apologise.

Mr. GREEN: It is regrettable that the departmental reports furnished to members of Parliament are in many instance two years old.

Hon. P. Collier: All these reports are dated 1918.

Mr. GREEN: As far as public utility is concerned—and probably the supply of the departmental reports to members of Parliament represents their only public utility—they might almost as well have never been printed. If the Premier finds it impossible to get the reports of the various departments furnished more promptly, he might save some of his deficit by cutting out the printing of them altogether, for all the good they are. Let us take, however, the figures of 1918, which the present Minister for Mines, who, as usual is

absent from his seat, has been good enough to supply to the House. In 1918 the gold mining industry employed 7,790 miners, as against 16,000 employed in 1903. Those 7,790 miners received wages totalling £1,600,000, as against 3½ million pounds received by the 16,000 miners in 1903. What do those figures mean? That through the decadence of the gold mining industry we have had an annual loss of £2,000,000 in wages during the past 15 years in this country. Capitalising that loss in wages on the basis of six per cent., we have lost a capital value of £33,000,000 during those years. That loss, I say unhesitatingly, is, apart from the general muddling of the Government, responsible for the present position of our finances. That loss of wages is in the same relation as if we had lost an annual loan of £2,000,000 free of interest, each year. It does not require a very fertile imagination to recognise that the loss of that amount of wages has very seriously decreased the wealth producing power of this State.

The Premier: Do you want to start a State gold mine?

Mr. Lutey: You might do worse.

Mr. GREEN: If the gold mining industry is not as flourishing as it might have been, that cannot be ascribed to any lack of effort on the part of the mine employees. From the report to which I have just referred I learn that the gold raised per man underground—and this in spite of the fact that a leading daily newspaper of this State has referred to the miners on the East Coolgardie goldfield as Bolsheviks, Red Flag singers, I.W.W.'s, and all the rest of it—amounted to 271 ounces in 1917. That, on a basis of £4 per ounce—and we know that the price of gold is practically £5 per ounce for the time being—represents £1,084 for every man underground. In 1918 for every man employed underground in the same district 274 ounces of gold were raised. So that in 1918 the value of gold raised per man underground was £1,096, as compared with £1,084, in the previous year. The fact proves that these men have not been slacking off in their efforts, but in fact have increased their efforts. For the total of men employed on the East Coolgardie goldfields in 1917, including men working above ground in the industry, the average production of gold per man was 150 ounces; and for 1918 that figure rose to 152 ounces. On the basis of £4 per ounce, the 152 ounces represent £608 per annum. But, of course, the value of the gold should be calculated to-day at £5 per ounce, which would make the production per man employed during 1918 no less than £760 per annum. The increased cost of mining cannot be ascribed to any increase in wages, for there has been no such increase. Nor can it be ascribed to any lack of effort on the part of the men in 1918 as against 1917, because they have increased their production. It is in part due to the increased cost of mining supplies. In 1914 mining steel cost £35 per ton, whereas in 1919 it had risen to £70 per ton. Zinc shavings cost £44 per

ton in 1914, and £75 per ton in 1919. Cyanide cost 7½d. per pound in 1914 and 1s. 2½d. in 1919. Caustic soda cost 18s. 6d. per cwt. in 1914, and 76s. per cwt. in 1919. Several other commodities indispensable to the treatment of ore have risen in like proportion.

Mr. Duff: What about gelignite?

Mr. GREEN: I have not investigated the rise in that commodity, but the hon. member no doubt will be able to support my statements later on. In my opinion there is only one way to deal with the question. I do not say that we can reduce the price of supplies to what they were in 1914, but most certainly the Government ought either to establish works for the manufacture of such supplies as can be profitably produced in this State, or, alternatively, should become the sole importers. It is a problem to know what to do to help the gold mining industry. I see that the Premier can comfortably sleep during a speech delivered in a stentorian voice such as I have. I cannot expect to awaken him, because he has been known to sleep through a railway accident, but I should like him to listen to what I have to say. He should realise that wheat and sheep do not constitute the sole source of wealth in this State.

The Premier: I never said they did.

Mr. GREEN: During the whole of the years I have known the hon. member the tenor of his remarks has been in that direction. Gold mining is such a valuable asset that we cannot afford to lose it. There is at least one way in which it might be assisted. The member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) and I have frequently advocated that bores should be put down at the north end of Kalgoorlie. By the setting apart for this purpose of a few thousand pounds from the mining development vote, much good might be achieved. Even if no gold were discovered, it would serve to show a number of small men who are spending money on that portion of the field that they were not warranted in further continuing their quest for gold in that locality. Then the question of salt water might be considered. Salt water is being charged for by the Water Supply Department. It is an economic waste to throw away the water in a mine, water which has to be pumped out because the department will charge for it if it is used. I realise that the Goldfields Water Supply scheme must, if possible, be made to pay. The utilisation of the salt water might be permitted and a record kept of the water so used, the value of the water being allowed to the department out of the Mines Development Vote. This would stop the economic waste at present going on. Let me refer to the death of Mr. McIntyre of Southern Cross. Many of us may have disagreed with all the deceased gentleman's views in regard to restoring the mining industry; but this much has to be said for him, that there never was in Western Australia a greater supporter of the gold mining industry. Mr. McIntyre was a man of certain idiosyncracies—we all are that—but it has to be frankly admitted that no

other man of his undoubted talents ever clamoured so vigorously to let the Western Australian public know the value of the gold mining industry to the State. We can only regret the passing of so distinguished a pioneer as Mr. McIntyre.

Mr. Johnston: Tell us something of the future of Hampton Plains.

Mr. GREEN: It is impossible for any man to say what the future of that field may be, but its unexpected discovery was a reminder also that none of us can say what the future of the industry as a whole has in store. With many others I believe that numbers of Golden Miles will be discovered in Western Australia long after we here to-night have passed away, and I am convinced that Hampton Plains and the districts of St. Ives and Mt. Monger will furnish at least four or five first class payable mines. During the recess £240,000 was added to the burden of the people of the State in the shape of increased railway rates, and the further the user of the railway is from Perth the more does he have to pay. I do not believe that any Government can assist production by imposing on the people engaged in primary industries a further burden in this direction. So long as the railways are run on their present lines, so long as we have one mile of railway to every 93 people, the railways can never be made to pay. To keep on increasing the rates is not to assist the primary producer, but to retard production, because there inevitably comes a point when production ceases to pay. That is never more clearly exemplified in any industry than in the gold mining industry. The dividend payer of to-day goes out of the list to-morrow and, may be, will be closing down within a few months' time. In these circumstances the Government would do well in refusing to tamper with the railway rates and in seeking increased revenue in other directions. It has been computed by people who have gathered local statistics that every man, woman and child in Boulder and Kalgoorlie contributes £10 annually through the railway rates. This means that a man with a wife and three children has to meet an imposition of £1 per week from which the householder of the metropolitan area is immune. There is one satisfactory way of meeting railway charges without imposing a burden on the people, namely, by a tax on unimproved land values. With sixpence in the pound on unimproved land values we should get half a million of revenue per annum, which could be applied to the reduction of the railway freights. If this were done the farmers who recently cut out taxation on unimproved land values from their platform would be in a much better position than they are to-day. We learn from the newspaper that the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) spoke strongly against the proposal. In view of this I think he owes the House an explanation, for the policy was part of the platform of his party before he spoke against it. I cannot understand the inconsistency of that party.

Mr. Lutey: He had an idea as to how the cat was going to jump.

Mr. GREEN: Probably so, although there are other members in the House who carry more weight than he does. While we have in this State one mile of railway for every 93 persons, in the Eastern States the proportion is one mile to every 296 persons.

Mr. Duff: In New South Wales one to every 400.

Mr. GREEN: The Commissioner for Railways has frequently said in his annual reports that the railways can never be expected to pay under those circumstances, but that a tax on unimproved land values would not only mean a reduction of railway freights to the farmer, but would also achieve the primary object of opening up land along existing railways. That is a subject sufficiently important for a full evening's debate. I regret that the party of the primary producers have withdrawn that plank from their platform.

Mr. Johnston: It was never in their platform.

[The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Munsie) took the Chair.]

Mr. GREEN: When it formed part of the Country party's platform a previous Premier, in answer to a question as to whether he was going to bring in a tax on unimproved land values, said that the Government would consider the matter. Now that the plank has been tossed overboard by the Country party, the Premier is not going to consider the question at all. We can see the influence that the Country party have with the Government. The "West Australian" has been fairly prominent from time to time in advocating this reform, and I ask that paper, through its reporters, to report this particular portion of my speech, because I suppose it is all they will report, and try to make the joss who writes the leading articles bring his subordinate—the Premier of this State—to heel and cause him to introduce the tax which that paper has advocated for so long. Railway freights have only to be raised high enough to kill industry in this State. While dealing with the primary industries, let me make some mention of what was said by the member for Kimberley (Mr. Durack). Several members have taken him to task for his statements. Although it would have suited him better to boom his section of the State, he has stated quite frankly that, as far as the Kimberley district is concerned, the dry season that prevails for six months of the year renders it unsuitable for tropical agriculture. I entirely endorse those remarks. I have been in the Kimberley district twice, and though I did not get very far inland, I came into contact with people who know the country very well. I made exhaustive inquiries and I am able to back up the hon. member in his statement that the white ants in the Kimberley district make it almost impossible

to grow a large quantity of tropical produce. He stated that Queensland was a far better country than Kimberley for growing tropical produce. Whatever Kimberley might be able to do by the aid of irrigation—

Mr. Angelo: That is the point.

Mr. GREEN: It is an idea which might be followed up, because it is a well-watered country for six months of the year, at any rate, and if the water were conserved, irrigation might be undertaken on an extensive scale. We have to recognise in connection with tropical agriculture that we would have to compete against very fertile countries which are almost at our back door, with Java and the chain of Dutch East Indian islands which are within two or three days' steaming distance of the Kimberley coast. Such competition, of course, could be met by the Federal tariff, which is pretty high in the case of tropical fruits. The hon. member said Queensland was a more fertile country and, because of its more regular rainfall, it was eminently suited for the growth of tropical produce, more so than the Kimberley district. Three or four months ago, it was my privilege to travel to the north of Queensland. I travelled through the whole of the six States, and in Queensland I was amazed at the fertility of the soil. I have been in a great number of tropical countries, through Central America, the South Sea Islands, Java, Singapore, and such like countries, but the coastal area of Queensland stands second to none for the magnificence and fertility of its soil. The leader of the Country party (Mr. Harrison) made mention of the station country which lies beyond the ranges. That country is practically similar to the Kimberley district, but on the large coastal area up towards Cairns, in fact one might say from Rockhampton to Cape York, there is tropical country second to none in the world, not even excluding Java, which is supposed to be the richest agricultural country on the globe. After travelling through Australia, I must say that I disagree with the views held by a large number of people in this State regarding immigration. I am an absolute and fervent believer in immigration. I believe we shall have to have immigrants. I believe the Australian born people are the best immigrants—that naturally follows—but we want to get past the narrow, parochial idea that we must have Englishmen, Irishmen, or Scotchmen as immigrants. The war is over; let us be tolerant. I do not say that we should go to Germany, but I have seen the effect of the mixing of races in America, and the American is second to none in the world in point of endurance, industry, intelligence and everything else. Although I am the son of an Englishman, I maintain that instead of confining ourselves to English, Irish and Scotch immigrants, it would be better to invite Scandinavians, people from the north of Europe, and Dutchmen, to come here. Bring them here free if need be, and mix them with our people, and we would then have a

broadly minded people than we have to-day. We would not have people such as the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), who made a remarkable statement in the House the other evening. Speaking with regard to work, he said that when we observe the attitude of the Australian people, we find that vigour is the last thing they desire. That is the statement of a transplanted Englishman. He will never forget that he is an Englishman. He will never be able to recognise that his slogan should be "Australia first." This is my religion, "Australia first against the world; Britain next." It is a remarkable thing that the people in this country who failed Australia in the recent great crisis were the people who were imported into the country. There are many Englishmen in this country who are democratic—I might instance the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones)—but the supreme test comes when there is likely to be a clash of monetary interests, and that happens in all countries having commercial relations, whether they are under the same flag or not. If there is any clash, do not forget the interests of our own people. Let us nail the Australian flag to the masthead. Let the member for Sussex remember that, as a member of the Parliament of this State, he has no right to enter this Chamber so long as he has disloyal sentiments to utter with regard to Australia. The trip which I was favoured to take through Australia—I travelled pretty extensively in every State—has given me a greater faith than ever in this country. I believe this country could support 150 million people if we could induce them to come here. I believe we could absorb 50 million people within the next 20 years, and 150 million within the next 50 years. I have travelled across the great continent of America, and I have not seen in the United States any country which can equal Queensland acre for acre. The only trouble with this country is that we are asking five millions of people to do the task that 150 millions of people should be tackling. The only way we can give effect to the policy of "produce" is by getting a larger population. The only way to solve the financial problems of this country is by getting a larger population. While the Premier is not the best of men to square the ledger—he has proved his inability to do it, though he has had a chance for four years—even he would have an overflowing Treasury if Western Australia had four or five millions of people to share the burden of taxation that 330,000 people are now trying to bear. There is one way to achieve this result almost immediately, and that is by imposing a tax on unimproved land values and opening up the lands in close proximity to railways for immigrants.

The Premier: By taxing the other chap.

Mr. GREEN: I intended to deal with some of the administrative acts of the Government during the period of the recess. We have a Government who do nothing when Parliament is sitting, and who have placed before us a programme which various speakers have said might as well be thrown into

the waste-paper basket; but when the Government get into recess, they begin a system of outocracy whereby railway freights are raised to the tune of £240,000, tramway fares are increased, and sawmills are purchased against the policy professed by the Government. On a previous occasion the Government started to sell sawmills in accordance with the Government policy. All this was done when Parliament was in recess. Why? Because the Government recognised that, under the criticism of this House, such methods could not be pursued. I say we have a dangerous Government.

The Premier: Do you?

Mr. GREEN: A Government who make important decisions of this character behind the backs of the people. Later on I intend to refer to an attempt at a joke made during the recess—I will characterise it by no other term—and that was to hand over the whole of the sandalwood industry to one firm in this State. I am not going to make any further remarks about it now beyond saying that I would be failing in my duty as a citizen if I did not have some pretty strong criticism to offer of an act that would never have been attempted if the House had been sitting.

The Premier: I do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. GREEN: The Premier does know what I am talking about.

The Premier: I do not.

Mr. GREEN: I spoke to the Premier on the subject while Parliament was in recess and I spoke in no uncertain terms. I spoke to him frankly. I recognised that the Premier was altogether free from blame. I give him credit for being honest. I cannot say that the action of a member of the Government in trying to hand over the sandalwood industry to one private firm in this State was honest. It was not. It could not be justified.

The Premier: Why do not you justify that statement?

Mr. GREEN: I am prepared to prove it up to the hilt. If a member of the Government does something for which he cannot advance a legitimate excuse, something that is not going to benefit the State, the only inference we, as sensible men, can draw is that there is some ulterior motive at work which has resulted in that particular course being adopted by the Minister.

The Premier: You have no right to say that.

Mr. GREEN: If that is so, the Minister in question is guilty by default for not having made it clear why he adopted that particular course. I have to find fault with Ministers for their absence from their offices during the recess. We back country members have correspondence from our districts which makes it necessary for us to visit Ministers pretty often. This takes up a considerable amount of our time, even if we can gain access to the Ministers when we call. I am not finding fault so much with the Premier, although he has had several

jaunts over East when he might have been here. The Premier is a hard working man; I give him credit for that. With the exception of the Minister for Works and the Honorary Minister, it is impossible to find the other Ministers in their offices on nine days out of ten during the parliamentary recess. The public are led to believe that Ministers are hard worked. I heard one Minister tell a deputation that he was glad they recognised he was a hard-working Minister. I do not wish to mention his name because he is not at present in the Chamber, and I would prefer him to hear any criticism which I have to offer. During the recess that Minister was not in his office on one day in six. Talk about going slow on the job!

Mr. O'Loughlen: Jaunting all the recess.

Mr. GREEN: Yet he would be one of the first Ministers to find fault with the workers on the Eastern Goldfields and to call them "I.W.Ws." and "slow goers on the job." If we want production from the workers, let Ministers set the example by sticking to their jobs during the recess.

Hon. P. Collier: There were never more than three Ministers in Perth at the one time.

Mr. GREEN: With regard to the State brick works, the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) said the other night that these works were selling bricks at exactly the same price as the private brick yards, that the private brick yards could make a handsome profit while the State enterprise could only make both ends meet. This comes from the erstwhile friend of the Labour movement who, as a matter of fact, was earning his living from the shillings per week that were handed in by the rank and file of the Labour movement, the same that exists to-day. This is rather a reversal of form. It is an entire mis-statement of the position. The State brickworks are to-day selling bricks for less than Mr. Law sells them. They are selling bricks for less than the Cardup people sell them. They are not losing money this year. They are making a handsome profit this year, and they are the best run brick works in Western Australia. Mr. Bradshaw, the manager of the State brickworks, is a man for whom I have the highest respect. His political views are entirely opposed to my own, but that does not make any difference to me.

The Premier: It justifies your respect for him.

Mr. GREEN: It justifies my respect for him, because it shows that I have respect for the man whether he agrees with me or not.

Mr. Lambert: Even if he is stupid on that point.

Mr. GREEN: He understands his own job, and his politics are his business. Up to the end of June last the State brick works made a profit of £2,700, after allowing for interest and sinking fund, and overhead charges.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They seem to have difficulty in getting men. They are advertising for pressers and other workers.

Mr. GREEN: That prevails everywhere. There is a difficulty in getting men to go away from Perth. This policy of increased railway freights, this idea of penalising the people outback, whether farmers or gold miners, does not help the position. People have enough hardships on the land and in mining camps without being penalised in that way. Workmen like to be in the city centres as well as other people. Who is there amongst us, as suggested by the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), who does not like to have a good time in the city occasionally? The same hon. member drew an eloquent picture of the hardships of the man on the land and in outback centres in contrast with the lot of the man in the city. There is no doubt that he was correct in what he said. The present price of first class bricks at the State brick works is 59s. per thousand, free on trucks at the works. The price of bricks at Cardup is 63s. per thousand, and at Armadale 65s. per thousand. The man who goes to Mr. Law's yard has, contrary to the statement made by the member for Guildford, to pay 6s. more for his bricks than he would have to do at the State brick yards.

Mr. Johnston: They cannot supply them, can they?

Mr. GREEN: The State brick yards have on order a million and a half bricks.

Mr. Johnston: They have to wait for months.

Mr. GREEN: They had five millions on order some months ago. The production of bricks at the State yards is seven million in 12 months.

Mr. Pickering: Are not most of the bricks taken up for the building of soldiers' homes?

Mr. GREEN: That is so, with regard to a large number of them.

Mr. Lambert: Why do not the Government duplicate the works?

Mr. GREEN: Bricks are also supplied privately. I have been trying to induce the Minister for Works to agree to the erection of another Hoffman kiln there. One is already erected, and with that the State brick works can turn out seven million bricks per annum. Without any increase in machinery at all—there is a press which is never used—and without any increase in any other part of the plant, by the erection of another Hoffman kiln the works would be able to double their output. As there would be less overhead charges in proportion to practically the same capital, the profits would be largely increased, and this addition would place the works on a sound financial basis. By his remarks the other evening the Minister for Works is committed to the policy of State enterprises. He recently purchased another sawmill. He is also committed to enlarging State enterprises, where to do so will assist the particular established business concerned.

Let him pursue a common sense policy in regard to the State brick works by incurring this comparatively small expenditure and doubling the output. There are scores of men out of work in the city to-day, bricklayers who have scores of jobs to go to, but who cannot go to them because there are not enough bricks for the works. Notwithstanding this the Minister would apparently leave to private yards this extra supply of bricks, although the private yards cannot keep up with the requirements.

Mr. Lambert: That is true.

The Premier: There would be a devil of a row if we did that.

Mr. Lambert: From your own side.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GREEN: I should like to deal with the question of industrial unrest, which has not been touched upon during the debate. Industrial unrest is the paramount issue in this and every other country. Unless the workers in a country are prepared to work under a certain set of conditions the whole production of that country ceases. The causes of industrial unrest in this country have been ascribed to Bolshevism, Sinn Féinism, German gold and other things. Those who made statements of that sort in regard to the average of Australian workmen do not know what they are talking about. The Australian workmen is not tainted with anything of the kind. Industrial unrest is universal to-day. Indeed, to get away from industrial unrest we would have to go to another planet, such as Mars. It is well known that industrial unrest naturally follows on any great war, but there are other causes for this state of affairs. One of these causes is that the worker in this country believed that a large number of their grievances would be redressed as a result of political action. They believed, for instance, that State ownership would remove many of these grievances and ills under which society suffers. I fervently believed that myself. Although I will continue to fight for State ownership of enterprises because I believe they are a means to an end, I maintain that State ownership as such will never entirely relieve industrial unrest. Under a system of Government ownership workmen do enjoy better conditions so far as certain privileges are concerned. It certainly gives them continuity of employment, but so far as any great benefit to them is concerned, I am sorry to have to say that under State ownership they are not a great deal better off than they would be under private enterprise.

The Minister for Works: I believe they worry us more than they do the private employers.

Mr. GREEN: I think that is so. There is a reason for that. The working man has been taught to believe that State enterprises belong partly to him, that they belong to the people. We can safely say that half the time of this Chamber is taken up by members of the Country party voicing their grievances on behalf of the farmers and settlers of the

State, and by members of this side in voicing the grievances of the worker. Our friends on the cross benches have a grievance because of the increase in railway freights which the Government imposed during the recess. Why do they rail against this? They do so because the railways belong to the people, that is so far as State ownership can cause them to belong to the people under capitalism. This being so, they think they have only to agitate sufficiently—provided they have the necessary balance on the side of the Government—to induce the Government to remedy the position.

Mr. Johnston: They have increased the rates three times since we have been here.

Mr. GREEN: Imagine the position if the railways were owned by a company. Does any hon. member think that if a company raised the freights threefold it would be any use the people's representatives raising their voices against it? The company would continue to put up the rates. The company would do what similar companies have already done in America. They have put the rates up as much as the traffic can bear. We should be in the same position here if our railways were privately owned, and it is because our railways are State owned that we are able to have some voice in these matters.

The Minister for Works: There is hardly the same parallel between the two. One has competition and the other has none.

Mr. GREEN: Under the old Manchester school, to which the Minister for Works apparently still belongs, although it is 50 years out of date, it was the universal belief of such economists as Adam Smith that competition was the soul of trade. The manufacturers of the Old Country believed that, and went in for open competition. I have a good deal of respect for them. They sharpened their wits. The employer of that particular period had to understand his business. He could not ride about in a motor car, and leave some workman, whom he had advanced to the position, to control his establishment. He was obliged to exercise personal supervision over the whole job. The man who excelled at his particular trade in those days and was able to put out goods of the same quality cheaper than his competitors, he was able to cut the trade, and it was that class of competition which, to a certain extent, built up the British manufacturer.

The Minister for Works: It was the reward of merit.

Mr. GREEN: Yes, it was the reward of merit for 1820. Between 1820 and 1920 a good deal of water has gone under the bridge. There has been a century of industrial history written. The men who control industry, and have fought one another in the markets of the world, have found out that by acting together and coming to an honourable understanding in the first place, and by forming trusts in their industries in the second place—just as Mr. Coates in the cotton industry in England has done, and the American tobacco

trust in America has done, and the British tobacco trust in Great Britain has done—they only need have one class in competition with another, that is their own class and the working class. The old ideal, to which the Minister for Works still hangs, died out 50 or 60 years ago, and the employers know a trick worth two of that. They know that the workers cannot form a ring, because they have only their labour power at their disposal. Their only means of protecting themselves is through their trade unions. I have even heard members of Parliament deny that they have that right. It has remained for a one time Labour member in this Chamber to defame members on this side of the House. I refer to the member for Guildford who has said, "I have been informed that the state of affairs at the Wyndham meat works is shocking. I have been told that at Wyndham there are at times a dozen or 15 bullocks on the ground, and if the management does not give them what they want the carcases, I am told (always 'I am told'), may remain there to rot as far as the men are concerned." Another cause of industrial unrest. The workers in this country believed that by putting their representatives into Parliament those representatives would do all they could to see that the men got a fair industrial deal. But there did come a period recently when a large number of the representatives of the toilers—those representatives who are Ministers to-day and who are sitting on the Government side and to secure whose return to Parliament I have seen men, after working for eight hours underground in fracteur fumes, walk miles night after night without fee or reward to assist in their election to Parliament—saw that anything they might do would not be questioned if they left the Labour party, if they forsook a party that worked for their return to Parliament. Those members would never have been heard of but for the workers of this State. That kind of thing has done more harm than all the I.W.W.-ism in the world. When the workers once lose faith in their representatives they naturally say that those representatives are all alike, and they ask "who is going next?" The workers see this great debacle after a man has changed his policy for the sake of personal gain. Is it any wonder then that they express feelings of mistrust? The workers say that after all, the Arbitration Court and all the tricks of legislation are no good. They declare, "We have been forsaken, we have been deserted, we have been betrayed. Let the politicians go their way; they have deceived us. We shall deal with future questions by direct action." I know of no factor that has been more responsible for direct action than the action taken by the members I have referred to. It has been stated by the member for Kataning (Mr. Thomson) that the whole trouble is that the workers do not respect the Arbitration Court, and that when a decision is given in their favour they go to work, but if it is given against them they say

it is a case of win, tie or wrangle. That was an unfair statement for the hon. member to make. Arbitration has served a useful purpose in Australia. It is defective, but it has made for industrial peace. In yesterday evening's newspaper I noticed what Mr. Blossome, the representative of the Chamber of Mines, did recently. There was a foregathering of the workers and mine owners of Meekatharra. There had been foregatherings for weeks there. The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) appeared on behalf of the workers to put their case before the court, and he made out such a good case for the miners that Mr. Good, representing the employers, and Mr. Sommerville, representing the workers, awarded the miners a considerable increase in wages. Mr. Blossome, because the judge who happens to be the president of the court had met with an accident and was absent, declared that the minutes of the award signed by Messrs. Good and Sommerville could not be allowed to stand. He declared that it was not legal that the men should be given the increase in wages. Do not hon. members think that that kind of thing may have something to do with industrial unrest? The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) this evening referred to the leader of the Opposition and took him to task because he said that some people declared there was a class struggle, and that he, speaking for himself, said he was not anxious to advocate class hatred, but that it was useless to shut our eyes to the fact that there was a class war. The hon. member went on to show what every man who has studied labour economics must recognise, that there is a class war. He pointed out that the difference was this: if I as a workman am working for an employer, I am out to get as much of what I earn as possible. I never get all I earn so long as I am working for a private employer because under capitalism that employer has to make a profit out of my labour. The general tendency for the employer is to get his workmen as cheaply as he can. That is only natural; I do not blame him for it, but it is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that it is so.

The Minister for Works: The wages are fixed by the court.

Hon. P. Collier: He fights the case in the court and he fights for the lowest wage.

Mr. GREEN: That is so. If there is anything further needed to prove the class struggle it is shown by the interjection of the Minister for Works. Why is the court established? To decide between the man who has one interest, the capitalist, in trying to get all the profits he can out of the man's labour, and on the other hand the man who wants to see that he can get as near as possible the full results of his labour. A court has to decide between them because the class struggle has gone so far. The Minister for Works still dreams of the golden age when the private employers were fighting each other. In the guild days in the Old Country there was a chance under the small factory

system for the worker who worked at the loom becoming master; but who can say under the altered conditions to-day, when it takes thousands of pounds to establish a woollen factory, that the ordinary girl or boy toiling at the loom will ever have a God's chance of becoming the owner of that factory? Under existing circumstances there comes a change of conditions in which one is looking for the new world which the hon. member promised was about to appear before them if they would only throw their bodies into the shambles of Europe. The member for Perth found fault with the class struggle which is an obvious fact and cannot be disputed, otherwise there would be no industrial unrest, and the hon. member held up as an example the great union in America, the union which has helped the workers. I spent five years in America; I was a bricklayer. I admire Americans; in many respects I admire their genius for organisation. I would admire their work, if I were a tourist, but I was one who took part in a class struggle in America. I was in an industrial union in America. We must recognise that in America there is not one man in ten whom we in Australia would call a tradesman.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Mr. GREEN: The Minister for Works knows that the British engineer even to-day is an all-round man, but the engineers in Ford's factory can be fired to-night and by to-morrow they can train a man to take the place of the other at the machine.

The Minister for Works: That has brought its own reward.

Mr. GREEN: What do we find to-day? In America—I am only quoting from memory now—the trades unionists under the American Federation of Labour controlled by Samuel Gompers total under two millions, while the population of America is 115 millions. In the United Kingdom, with a population of 40 millions, there are practically three and a half million unionists.

The Minister for Works: Not more?

Mr. GREEN: Possibly more because trades unionism in Britain to-day is booming as it has never boomed in history. In passing, I may mention that in our own metropolitan area the trades union movement is more solid than it ever was before. The American Federation of Labour leaves uneducated for, millions of people who are not craft unionists. I landed in America thinking that when I started work as a bricklayer I would have to pay 5s. into a union. Nothing of the kind. Under Samuel Gompers' federation I had to pay £20 before I could lift a trowel. That is a lovely spirit of unionism. I did not have £20. I landed in America with, I think, £5. And after a lot of humbug and approaching the secretary of the local union he said to me, "Yes, you can start, but you will have to give so much out of your wages." What I had to pay was 100 dollars, and I was told that someone would have to vouch for me until I could prove what I had actually

claimed myself to be. They made it a close corporation under the American Federation of Labour.

The Minister for Works: They are worse than capitalists.

Mr. GREEN: Gompers never believed in the Labour party and he does not believe in it to-day, although the American unionists are waking up to the fact of the necessity for having a Labour party. I worked in the Southern States 10 hours a day as a brick-layer as I never had to work in Australia, for 3½ dollars a day, and when I got hard up against it I worked for 5s. a day in a cask factory, 10 hours a day. And it was costing me 15s. a week for my board. Why these low wages? Not because of the increased profits made by the manufacturers and capitalists of America, as the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) would have us believe. The hon. member's inference was that America was an example of a country making big profits, ergo, big wages in America. I contend, as against the member for Perth, to have demonstrated this evening that outside those American industries which have been catered for by unions, the workers have been let go hang by the fellows who have been making enormous profits. In the steel industry, which had a union under the American Federation of Labour about 20 years ago, three dollars a day was paid. That union was burst up by strike breakers, a thing which is not unknown even in Australia, a thing which has begun to be introduced into Australia, and which the present Government are fostering by giving Mr. Samuel Bennett, the registrar of industrial unions, instructions to organise another industry in the same union. The Government are going to cause disaster if they are going to have more than one union in the one industry. The Government will see those unions attacking one another; and if the policy of more than one union in one industry is persisted in, there is going to be more industrial trouble in Western Australia than Ministers dream of. I thought the little blood-letting that occurred at Fremantle might have taught the Government something, but apparently that is not so. Outside the particular craft unions catered for by the American Federation of Labour, those "splendid" employers of America who have been making millions are prepared to pay white men 5s. a day. In the same cask factory where I was employed at 5s. a day, negroes doing the same work were being paid 3s. 9d. a day. I honestly believe there is a way out of the industrial unrest. I do not believe that the way out is by nationalisation of industries. Neither do I believe that the way out is that mentioned by the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) the other evening, when he came along with his little panacea which he had borrowed from the university professor who was over here a little while ago, and who made himself pleasant to every little society with a social specific suited to the

particular society he was addressing. Before the church people he advocated a little churchianity and missionary effort, giving the worker the word of God, supplying him with a Bible and a cup of tea. That was the way out in that instance. At the Commercial Travellers' Club he declared it was wrong to say that the commercial travellers were excrescences on the social order, pointing out that they were in fact ambassadors of commerce. That was another way out. Certainly the professor never got any particularly hot criticism anywhere he went.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Hon. P. Collier: When he went to the Trades Hall he said Bolshevism was all right in Russia.

Mr. GREEN: Yes. He gave a lecture one night at the Trades Hall to prove that Bolshevism was an excellent thing. I, in common with other members, welcome any suggestion that may be offered, and the member for Guildford offered one whereby employers and workmen and the public should be represented on, say, State trading concerns, the Railway Department, or enterprises of that kind.

Hon. P. Collier: Triangular control.

The Minister for Works: Why so many attacks on the member for Guildford?

Mr. GREEN: I do not think this is an attack. I do not wish to be bitter towards the member for Guildford. That hon. member is very bitter as regards the Labour party, but bitterness is the natural attitude of the apostate. I am merely mentioning his suggestion in order to point out that it is not a panacea so far as the worker is concerned. The worker is concerned to see that he gets a little more out of what his labour produces than he has been getting up to the present. That is what is engaging the attention of those who advocate Labour politics all over the world. Most of the advocates of the Labour policy in the old world are university professors, it is true. They call themselves guild socialists, and I believe they have come nearer the social panacea than have any other propagandists. I believe with them that in order to make the workman take an interest in his own industry, it is necessary to give him a share in the direction of that industry. We have not succeeded in making the workman take an immediate personal interest in the State enterprises. When we were in power as a Labour Government, we often wondered how it was that the workman employed in what was his own job, a State enterprise, did not put forth his best efforts, knowing that he was working in something that belonged to the community. That seemed a very fair thing to expect of him. And yet we found, as a matter of fact, that even State ownership only went to bolster up, in one way, those very forces which entailed on the workers the payment of increased prices. So we came to the con-

clusion that State enterprise, although we believed it was right, was not in itself the true way out. The workman has to be given an interest in his work. I believe with William Morris in the delight of understanding one's particular craft and taking part not only in the work but also in the direction. I believe with William Morris that in the workman directing his own labour lies the road to a better social order. There is no need for a revolution in Australia to bring that about, and that is why I welcome the guild propaganda. I am not in favour of an immediate change. I do not believe in any revolution except what may be called a social revolution, which would mean a change in the methods of industry. There is nothing much to open one's eyes about in that. Change must come in the methods of industry: the whole history of the industrial world is a history of change. Let us not forget that at one time the British flag stood for slavery—the freest flag that ever floated. In spite of all the wrong it has done and is doing even to-day, with all that given in, the British flag is the freest that ever floated; and under that flag slavery was at one time considered right. At one time there were people in the old country and newspapers in the old country upholding slavery. And the same condition of affairs obtained, and at a much later period, in America. Why? Because the people found it cheaper to have slaves than any other kind of labour. The slave was better because one had not to pay him wages. Later on it was discovered by Great Britain that the slave was not cheap, but that he was very unreliable. Of course there never were any slaves in Great Britain itself, but there were slave owners in the British tropical dominions, such as Jamaica. The Jamaica slave owners kicked up a row about the abolition of slavery for a start, but they soon found it advantageous to get the negro to work for a small wage. The negroes had no unions, and the planters had not to worry about a negro when he grew old. Then they simply gave him the sack, and that ended their responsibility. Under the wage system the planter had not to bother about a negro when he was sick, because he was simply not paid during the time that he was incapacitated. In the United States the Press not only of the South, but also for a long time that of the North very largely, upheld slavery. Indeed, slavery was upheld from the pulpits of the Southern States, preachers thundering in favour of slavery, of which fact the people are to-day as ashamed as the people of the future will be ashamed that the pulpits of this generation should have thundered forth appeals to men to go to Europe and slay their fellow men; this, it was asserted, being in accordance with the dictates of Christ. All honour to such men as Wilberforce in England and Garrison in America that they saw the light before other people saw it. Indeed, William Lloyd

Garrison found it impossible to hold a meeting in America. On many occasions he had to flee for his life. Why? Because he pleaded that chattel slavery should be abolished. Indeed, the very negroes themselves thought that abolition was wrong. They said, in their curious negro vernacular, "Why, these good people would disregard the law of God." The very people that the abolitionists wished to set free were in favour of slavery. They thought abolition was against the settled order of society. Queen Elizabeth herself ventured her money in slavers—this "good Queen Bess" that we often talk about. Good old Puritan forefathers of mine, when they embarked to fight the Spaniards and steal slaves from them, and to bring slaves from Africa to America, went down on their knees and, in all sincerity, asked the blessing of Almighty God and hoped that their voyage in search of slaves would be profitable to His everlasting glory, amen. They honestly believed that slave-hunting and slave-keeping were right. And in the same way, I say, as we now believe that chattel slavery is wrong, will the people of the future believe that wage slavery is wrong. I believe that in the not very distant future wage slavery will be considered just as immoral in its incidence on the workers of the world as chattel slavery was on the workers of America 50 or 60 years ago.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.14]: At this late hour I propose to refrain from touching on much of the matter that has been dealt with by previous speakers, but one is compelled to take note of the financial position of the State to-day and of the growing deficit. Probably one could not get a better index of all that actually led up to the position we now find ourselves in than the interjection of the Premier to-night in reply to the declaration of the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) that the State brickworks ought to be duplicated. He said, "What a devil of a row we should get into if we were to do it."

The Premier: What about the timber mill business?

Mr. LAMBERT: He was not referring to the timber workers, but to the necessity for the duplication of the State brickworks. While we have an unsympathetic Government dealing with 20 or 30 million pounds' worth of invested capital, it is the avowed intention of that Government to disregard the money which has been put into the State brickworks, the railways, and the other trading concerns under the policy of the people of the country. Even the Premier would so far forget the accepted policy of the country as to say what a devil of a row we should get into if we were to place the State brickworks on a business-like basis.

The Premier: What about making a fuss over the timber mills?

Mr. LAMBERT: We are not making any fuss about the timber mills purchased by the hon. member. I compliment the member for

Boulder (Mr. Collier) upon his attack upon the most illustrious illustration of hypocrisy to be found in the political history of the State. The Premier told the people of the country that at the first opportunity the Government would sell every trading concern established by the Labour Government, and the Minister for Works has gone throughout the State with the same declaration. Has the Premier ever made any reasonable attempt to sell or close up one of the State trading concerns established by the Labour Government?

The Premier: Yes, the sawmills.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member knows very well that the selling of the State sawmills on the terms laid down at the time would have meant the immediate death of the Government. Those mills constitute one of the finest assets we have, an asset not only to the Government but to the people of the State. The financial position is attributable to the Government and to their policy. If we are to allow the big financial institutions to monopolise great profit-earning avenues which we have hoped to see monopolised for the people of the State, we shall certainly have to meet that financial drift which has been so painfully evident during the last four or five years. When the Labour Government were in power the organised newspaper influence and the then Opposition levelled charges against the Government, but no member of the Opposition was charitable enough to admit that men whom they have since taken into their own Cabinet had even an element of honesty about them. The dishonest practice was resorted to of using the power and influence of the Press to bludgeon the then Premier out of public life. When the Labour Government tried to establish certain industries, the power of the Press and of the then Opposition were directed, not against the soundness of collective ownership, but in an attempt to blacken the character of the then Premier and of those associated with him in desiring to do something for the people of the State. Although we have had peculiar somersaults and varying Premiers to deal with, the charity of the present leader of the Opposition has restrained him from resorting to anything of the sort. I do not say that it is within the province of the State Government to tackle the paramount question of finance. It must be evident to most of the State Governments of Australia that our financial destiny is in the hands of the Federal Government. Yet how little consideration have they given to this State, and how ready have they been to garner in all that is possible to bolster up their own financial position! To none is this better known than to the Government of Western Australia. By subterfuge and political trickery the Prime Minister has been prepared to stoop to almost anything with a view to gulling the public of the Commonwealth, forgetting that there was something ahead in respect of Western Australia much greater than anything he has attempted to do. If Federation was to be a useful instrument of government, it should have been utilised to settle the unpeopled portions of

Australia, to assist the smaller States to people their empty spaces. But not the whole of the blame for the financial position of this State rests upon the Federal Government. Unfortunately, we rely to a great extent upon the primary industries. I am prepared to pay a tribute to the Premier for his desire to settle people on the land. He has a great belief in our agricultural industry, in the fertility of our soil, and in the agricultural destiny of Western Australia. Still he must realise that the people engaged in that industry are but a small, if valuable, section of the community, and that to-day we are in the stranglehold of Federation and of the manufacturers of the Eastern States. It is regrettable that the Premier cannot see the necessity for releasing the people of Western Australia from that hopeless position.

The Minister for Works: I wish you would show us how to do it.

Mr. LAMBERT: I will give the Premier some idea as to how it can be done. Let me remind the Premier that we are paying to the Commonwealth Government three-quarters of a million of money by way of duty on goods imported into the State. Is he aware that eight million pounds worth of goods are brought into Western Australia every year? Does he know that out of the eight million pounds worth of goods imported, seven and three-quarter million pounds worth are manufactured articles coming either from overseas or from the Eastern States?

The Premier: About one half comes from the Eastern States.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, goods which could be manufactured in Western Australia. The Premier knows full well that, with our limitless resources, the greater proportion of these articles could be manufactured here.

The Premier: I agree with that.

Mr. LAMBERT: That being so, unless the Premier has an absolutely callous disregard for the interests of the country, though I prefer to believe that he is thoroughly absorbed in the welfare of the State in which he has been a conspicuous figure for the better part of a quarter of a century, the Premier should tell the people that the old-time conceptions of what he thought was right are absolutely wrong.

The Premier: No, I cannot do that.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Minister said regarding a comparatively tin-pot concern, our brickworks, that if a second Hoffman kiln, which the Minister for Works as a business man knows is necessary, were installed tomorrow—if that were possible—it could be fully employed. Why does not the Premier tell the people that the only hope for this country is to get secondary industries into operation? Why does not he tell them that while he is desirous of settling men on the land and of getting every acre in the State occupied, that is not the beginning and end of the functions of the man who should be the leader of public thought in the State? The Premier should remember that there are many men with large families in the metro-

politan area and on the goldfields who are not able to think in terms of acres. These men are looking for a brighter outlook for their children, but they know nothing of the land. The Premier as a practical farmer knows full well that a child must be brought up on the land in order to make good on the land. It is impossible to take lads of 15 or 20 years of age and try to make farmers of them. They must be disciplined to the land almost from their very birth. But there are many opportunities in this State offered by the natural facilities of the country, and those who are directing the affairs of the State for the time being should establish secondary industries and enable us to build up an army of skilled artisans and provide an opening which has not previously been available for the boys who are growing up. The Premier knows this is absolutely essential not alone to the financial interests of the State, but to the very life of the children, for whom we should have some concern. If the Labour Government were returned to power they would launch a sound, comprehensive developmental policy.

The Minister for Works: Sound, I expect.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, sound. It must be almost repugnant to the Minister for Works, crippled as he must be by the narrow vision of the present Government, to see the possibilities of establishing big industries and enlarging existing industries like the implement works and brickworks. The Minister for Works knows that most of those industries are on a reasonably sound financial basis. No man was ever more scathing in his unjust criticism of the policy of the Labour Government than the present Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: Not unjust.

Mr. LAMBERT: Absolutely unjust. I am not finding fault with the Minister for Works. I am not finding fault with his accepted beliefs as a private member in opposition. What I do complain of is that, after the people have invested money in these industries, it is open to question whether the administration of the man for the time being in control of these concerns is as sympathetic as we might expect it to be. I believe it would be almost unnatural to expect that the Minister would not give sympathetic consideration to any business concern in which he was interested. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) cited the Beenup brickworks. The Minister for Works must know it is a standing disgrace to the administration that there is not sufficient machinery at Beenup to turn out all the bricks required to build the suburban homes and soldiers' homes which are so urgently needed.

Mr. Lutey: Hear, hear! I said so last year.

The Minister for Works: You do not understand it; that is obvious.

Mr. LAMBERT: If I am wrong, I am quite prepared to accept any advice the Minister is prepared to tender. In that comparatively little tinpot concern I mentioned, the capacity should be duplicated at the first

opportunity. We have an almost limitless supply of raw material to turn out bricks for the metropolitan area during the next 50 years; yet the Government will not stir. In those works there is one engine of sufficient power to meet all requirements if the machinery were triplicated.

The Minister for Works: We cannot get the men. Our difficulty is to get the men to keep the place going.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know about that. It is only unskilled work, and the works are within a reasonable distance of the metropolitan area. It is neither laborious nor unpleasant work. If sufficient inducement were offered at remunerative rates, there should be plenty of men available.

The Minister for Works: It is laborious work, and requires skilled men. We pay higher rates than those paid to the ordinary labourer, and we cannot get the men.

Mr. LAMBERT: This country will always starve for men unless we can show that our industries can absorb the people who come to us. No one knows better than the member for Roebourne and the member for North-East Fremantle, who have just returned from England, what the position would be of men who desire to come here from the Old Country. Men have asked them what opportunities there are for remunerative employment here. Can these hon. members say that they were able to assure even their friends that if they came here they could get reasonable opportunities for work in the industries in Western Australia? I venture to say they could not do so. The Government have one of the soundest trading concerns on earth in the State brickworks. There is a daily demand for the products of those works, and yet the Government, because this is an industry which has been instituted by a Labour Government, will not place it on anything like a commercial basis. Unless the Government duplicate these works and administer them in a sympathetic manner, having regard to their utility and the requirements of the people, we will never have them placed on that basis which the people have a right to expect from the mandate they gave to the Labour party to establish them. These remarks apply also to such State enterprises as the sawmills, the State steamships, the implement works, and other concerns instituted by the Labour Government. The Minister for Works knows that if he had the handling of them in a private capacity he could get ten times as much out of them as he can handling them in his ministerial capacity.

The Minister for Works: That is a compliment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have no desire to shower compliments upon the Minister for Works. With the facilities at his command he should pay due regard to the money invested in these enterprises, and to the interests of the people.

The Minister for Works: I think I do.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the Minister showed an unsympathetic attitude towards any of these industries he would be false to the principles which we sometimes think he possesses. Much depends upon the success or otherwise of these State trading concerns. Why is it that some of the greatest blackguards and scoundrels in the world can go to the centre of finances of the Empire and endeavour to damn the credit of Queensland, when they are supposed to be representing the people of that State? That is one of the finest States of the Commonwealth. They do this because they know as commercial men that if the Labour Government in Queensland are given another few years in which to establish State industries the old time competitive system, which has so much undermined the economical and social system of that State, will be done away with, perhaps altogether. These men are busy painting black the fair name and financial position of Queensland. It is possible to establish many industries in Western Australia, though it will not be easy to do so. We must have due regard to the geographical position of such ports as Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, and Albany, and to the particular industries which are naturally suited to those ports. The Premier annoyed me with his light and flippant references to the devil of a row he and his Government may get into if they were to work a slight departure by duplicating a tinpot concern like the State brickworks. It is all very well for the Minister for Works to smile. Surely the financial position of this State to-day should command from him and those associated with him—and he has been associated with the Lord knows how many Premiers since he has been in Parliament—

Mr. O'Loghlen: No matter who may sink he swims.

Mr. LAMBERT: No matter who sinks, it can be said to the credit of Dad that he swims. I can only hope that this will be the last Parliament in which he will have the opportunity of administering the Works Department. When that greater saneness overtakes the electors of Western Australia, and when they have another opportunity of expressing their opinion of the Minister for Works and those associated with him, I hope they will give that gentleman a well deserved holiday, and the younger and more virile members will be selected to fill their places. It is the younger spirit which should permeate the policy of development in a State like Western Australia. I would call the attention of the Government to the position that science in industry occupies to-day. Let me quote these words—

There never was a time in human history like the present. Science never more literally pounded its way into recognition, nor was there ever a time when an exact knowledge in all departments of natural law was more insistently demanded, nor more directly applied.

That is not a mere platitude; probably the man of affairs to-day should know the exact

significance of those words. Almost in every phase of human activity the whole of the industries have been remodelled and reorganised on altogether different lines. The Minister for Works knows something about iron and steel, and he is aware that the other day the Government let a lease to a man to exploit certain iron deposits at Yampi Sound. He knows that that man desires to export these iron ores from Western Australia. The Minister should know better than any man—and his counsel in Cabinet should count for something—that not a ton of that ore should go out of this country unless it is exported as a manufactured article. It is regrettable to believe that with our financial resources, notwithstanding the deficit, it is to-day quite impossible to establish iron and steel works in Western Australia. It is a pity that the Minister for Works does not display that knowledge, and exercise that influence which I believe he could in Cabinet, and try to show that interest in things West Australian that he should. I recognise the great asset we have in the iron deposits at Yampi Sound. The position is that the moment those deposits were discovered and the moment it could be shown to the Federal Government that we had those reserves of iron, which will stand comparison with any iron deposits in the world, representations should have been made to the Federal Government, and the Federal Government would have replied, "We will not allow the iron ore to be exported." We could have replied, "We want the iron smelted in Western Australia." Financial assistance then would not have been refused.

The Minister for Works: Where is the fuel to come from?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Minister knows that in our timber mills to-day, and which we still possess notwithstanding the effort the Government made to sell them, a proposal they never intended to carry out—

The Minister for Works: Yes, we did.

Mr. LAMBERT: There are thousands of tons of wood that could be utilised for smelting iron ore. In other parts of the world to-day charred wood is being used for smelting iron ore.

The Minister for Works: Only in small quantities.

Mr. LAMBERT: I think it runs into 12 or 13 millions per annum in one place alone.

The Minister for Works: That is in Sweden, where they make a special quality of iron for the best quality of tools.

Mr. LAMBERT: And a special quality of iron is, as a matter of fact, particularly wanted in Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: We cannot take the timber to Yampi Sound.

Mr. LAMBERT: No; but the iron ore can be brought to a place like Bunbury, and smelted there.

Mr. Underwood: Why not take the ore to Bowen, and use it there? We are all Australians.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not elected to think in terms of Queensland. As the representative of a constituency of an autonomous State, I think in terms of Western Australia. My responsibility, as a member of this State House, is to conserve every interest that will foster the general welfare of this State. I care little for the affairs of Queensland. To-day that State has a Labour Government, and I am proud of the fact. I am also proud of the fact, of which I am reminded by the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey), that the Queensland Government have been bold enough, and big enough in their ideas to attempt to establish steel making in Queensland.

The Minister for Works: They have got the fuel.

Mr. LAMBERT: So have we in Western Australia. I would like the Minister for Works to question his technical advisers regarding the very doubtful matter whether the cheaper course would be to convey fuel to a central place in Western Australia or to take iron ore to Bowen in Queensland. I am not prepared to say off-hand which is the cheaper. However, I am convinced that it is quite possible for the Government of this State, if they are prepared to use the vast resources of Western Australia, to stimulate iron and steel production at the port of Bunbury, which is in close proximity to one of the finest coal deposits in the world—I am not speaking of the quality of the coal, but of the quantities available. But this Government cannot be expected to recognise the possibility of establishing either iron or steel works at any of the main ports on the coastline of this country, if they put the absolute strangle-hold upon the institutions that the Labour Government have built up. On this subject I speak somewhat heatedly and somewhat bitterly. However, I am very glad that sufficient courage has been shown, even at this late hour, to place the State trading concerns under the guidance and control of a Commissioner. I care little who the Commissioner may be. I care little as to the actual provisions of the proposed Bill. But I say it is a positive danger that, while we had an express mandate from the country to establish industries, which mandate the Labour Government obeyed, those enterprises should be handed over to an unsympathetic Administration. Under such circumstances we are not likely to command the financial respect of likely investors in Western Australia. I do not suppose the establishment of iron and steel works in this State has seriously engaged the attention of the Government. But it must be evident even to Ministers that to-day one of the paramount duties of the State Government, if the Federal Government fail, is to establish those larger key industries which are so important to the very life of the country. It is all very well for Ministers to go out into the highways and by-ways during election time and tell the electors that they believe in encouraging the investment of capital here. They do not. Let me repeat the warning note sounded by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin), that the peculiar position of this western State renders it very improbable that we shall get into this country the capital that is absolutely essential for the establishment of the necessary secondary industries. I care not whether a member is a Labour man, or a Country party man, or a

Labour Nationalist, or anything else; to-night I am addressing members only on behalf of Western Australia. I am not to-night standing here to defend the interests I am specially elected to defend, but am speaking in the interests of Western Australia as a whole. Before we are very much older we shall be going through the length and breadth of the land preaching the absolute necessity of establishing industries in this country. I say that to-day there is absolute need for thinking in terms of this great State, and if we do so we shall find that there are 50 different industries that we could establish. Are we going to establish them? Or are we going to wait until those men who are living in luxury in the Eastern States, who have grown fat upon our very poverty, come here to develop the industries that we have not got in this country to-day? I know, and you know, Mr. Speaker, the mineral resources of Western Australia. You know full well, Sir, that if some reasonable encouragement were given to the industries connected with mineral resources, we could add to the productive value of this State five millions or ten millions of pounds per annum. It is an absolute shame that to-day we are getting from overseas fully eight million pounds worth of imported goods. I may just refer to those bigger things, many of which are too technical for discussion here and all of which are more or less matters of Federal concern. Take the nitrogen industry, which was established in Germany during the war. What an awful thing it is that to-day not one of the State Governments of Australia is tackling that great problem! We know that Germany would have been absolutely isolated but for that industry. Had it not been possible for the genius of the electrical chemists of that country to establish the nitrogen industry during the war, Germany would not have lasted as a defensive nation for 12 months. What did they do? Do members think they had one pound of Chilean nitre in Germany for the manufacture of gunpowder? No; but they set to work and established an industry and, at the time of the signing of the armistice, they were in a position to turn out half a million tons of fixed nitrogen per annum, which could be used either for munitions or for adding to the productivity of the soil. If I had had an opportunity to speak earlier in the evening I could have given some interesting statistics regarding the growth of this industry, which unfortunately, enabled the great armies of Germany to stand up against the weight and forces of the British Empire for so long. This goes to show what is actually possible of attainment. A similar set of circumstances, similar resources, and a similar geographic position obtain in Western Australia. How is it that those in authority who are supposed to voice the great national sentiments of this country are not alive to the necessities of the State? If members look at the deserted cross-benches, they will see how well the farmers are represented in this House at the present moment. In the cold and callous absence of their members, the farmers are better represented in this House at the present moment than they have ever been represented before.

The Minister for Works: You are very sarcastic, you know.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not sarcastic. The Minister for Works knows that I am reasonably charitable. I hope that the party at present on the Opposition side will be able soon to go out into the highways and by-ways of the State and show the people what it is possible for this State to achieve.

Mr. Teesdale: There have already been two swan songs to-night.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope the Government will consider the question of generating electric current at Collie for utilisation at Bunbury. This proposition is particularly attractive to me, because I know from my experience of other parts of the world what big facilities for establishing many secondary industries are offered by a port like Bunbury, situated in close proximity to big areas of coal measures. I do not say this out of regard for the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money); but if I were representing a district with opportunities for the establishment of industries so apparent, I should never allow this session to close until I had obtained from the Government some earnest of their intention to establish, either by State enterprise or by assistance to private individuals, the industries which should be operating here to-day. Soon the leader of the Opposition will be afforded an opportunity to outline a policy which should command the support of the people of Western Australia. The electors will be able at no distant date to signify whether the whole of their interests is absorbed in the broad acres of this country. Any man, in levelling criticism at the Government, should have no desire to depreciate the efforts put forward by the Premier to settle people on the land, but the Premier must recognise that agriculture is not the only industry in the State. We have other concerns which ought to be fostered. The Premier ought to know that we have derived nothing from Federation, but, on the other hand, we have made the greatest possible sacrifices of any State of the Commonwealth. In Western Australia, where there is no possible opportunity of inducing the capitalists of the Eastern States to establish industries, where there exist fields of limitless resources that could be exploited by capital and labour working hand in hand, there are opportunities which, if advertised in England, or assisted by the Government, would lead to the establishment of many important industries. Woollen mills and factories of many descriptions could be established here, and men and capital would be attracted hither as never before. If we are going to tell the people of the old world that we have merely broad acres to offer and nothing else, we shall not get them. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) has told us that when he dared to mention in England one-half of the resources of this country, he was disbelieved. A small concern that I floated with a little capital over a year ago has actual realisable resources amounting to twenty millions of money, and I mention that in no boastful spirit. Responsible men representing the Imperial Government, men like Lord Morris and Earl Stanley have exclaimed, "Good God! Have you all these things in Western Australia? How is it that all these resources are undeveloped and almost unknown?" It is the duty of the Premier so long as he represents the people of this country to make known its resources.

I can only hope that side by side with the policy of settling the broad acres of the State, the Premier will see that the great mining industry, which has done so much for Western Australia and is capable of achieving very much more, receives that fostering care and assistance to which it is entitled. If this is done, the Premier will find that the mining industry will do much towards alleviating the financial position which exists to-day.

On motion by Mr. Underwood, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 24th August, 1920.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY FARES, FREIGHTS AND WAGES.

The PRESIDENT: I would point out for the information of hon. members that the question appearing on the Notice Paper is scarcely in the form of a question so much as a request. I do not think that Parliamentary procedure contemplates requests. I suggest that, as a question, the Minister should be asked, "Will he lay on the Table of the House," etc. There is a distinct difference which I think the hon. member will appreciate.

Hon. H. STEWART: Yes. I might say that it was suggested I should put the question in this form; otherwise the Minister might answer it "yes" or "no," and go no further.

Hon. H. STEWART asked the Minister for Education to lay on the Table of the House: 1, A railway return showing the additional revenue obtained respectively from metropolitan and country traffic, under the headings of goods, live stock, passengers, and miscellaneous, the return to cover the period from the last increase in fares and freights until 30th June, 1920. 2, The extra amount paid in wages for the same period as the result of the award of the Arbitration Court.