

Gazette. As a matter of fact, full discretion lies with the Minister, and I do not think it will be found he will act in any way unjustly or harshly to any section of the community except pure speculators. Through these speculators large estates have been piled up in various districts. The speculator uses dummies, and eventually sells back to the Government at as much as five or six times the amount of money it cost him. I can go even further. He not only gets blocks himself but he gets his friends, customers, and relations to take up blocks, and eventually the State has to pay 17s. 6d. or £1 or more per acre for what cost 3s. 9d. per acre. It is said the speculator does not exist, but we have only to look at the advertising columns of the daily papers of two months ago to discover columns of advertisements advertising blocks for sale. Yet some members say if the speculator exists he exists to a limited extent only. Mr. Connolly complained there was no reference in the Governor's Speech to freezing works at Wyndham. The position in reference to these works is that nothing has actually been done except the preparation of plans. The Government have not yet had the opportunity of going into this question, but when they do go into it they will come to some definite decision and act promptly. I need not delay the House. It has often been said that the Address-in-reply debate is a waste of time. I have never supported that view. I think it is valuable from many standpoints. It enables the representatives of various districts to express opinions and criticise the policy of the Government in power, and it is a valuable help to Ministers in another place or their representatives in this House. I feel a certain amount of gratitude to members for the fairness of their criticisms during the course of the debate. I do not think there was a single instance in which an unfair attack was made on the present Government or in which bias was exhibited in any shape or form. Members did not even criticise to the same extent as they have criticised Governor's Speeches on former occasions, but their criticisms

have been delivered in a fair, honest and intelligent way.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

ADJOURNMENT—ONE WEEK.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) moved—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 21st November.

Question passed.

House adjourned at 9.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 9th November, 1911.

	Page
Questions: Collie Coal Miners, Police Court proceedings, Police Court fines, Magistrate's decisions, Alleged boycott	169
Railway contractors and Government property	170
Election return, Kimberley	171
Papers presented	171
Bills: Criminal Code Amendment, 1a.	171
Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act Amendment, 1a.	171
Local Courts Act Amendment, 1a.	171
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, 1a.	171
Address-in-reply, fourth day	171

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (4).—COLLIE COAL MINERS.

Police Court proceedings.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Justice,—1, Is he aware that on September 20, before the Collie Police Court, Mr. Alcock, on behalf of the Crown Prosecutor, asked for an adjournment of cases against the Collie Burn strikers, and that he and Mr. Wall promised if such adjournment was granted the

proceedings against the men would be quashed? 2, Did the Collie Police Court grant the adjournment on such representation? 3, Is the Minister aware that such promise to quash proceedings was broken, and that Mr. Barlee fined the miners on September 27? 4, Will the Minister cause an inquiry into the matter?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, No; the Minister is informed that Mr. Alecock, in asking for an adjournment, promised that he and Mr. Wall would use their best endeavours to have the proceedings abandoned, but distinctly stated that he had no instruction to that effect from the Crown. 2, The adjournment was granted on the understanding set out above. 3, The promise as set out above was not broken; Messrs. Alecock and Wall carried out their undertaking, but the Crown would not consent. 4, Answered by 1, 2, and 3.

Police Court fines.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Is he aware that Collie miners and Collie Miners' Union were fined on three separate days by Mr. Barlee, R.M., for practically the one offence—on August 29; September 13, and September 27? 2, Is the Minister aware that under similar circumstances the late Attorney General only allowed one prosecution and one fine, and further that Mr. Justice Burnside recommended such action as being sufficient to meet the requirements of justice? 3, Will the Minister cause an inquiry to be made into the above cases with the object of remitting the fines of the miners of dates August 29 and September 27?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: As an appeal is still pending in one of the cases forming the subject matter of these questions the Minister is unable to reply, but will be glad to give the fullest information when all legal proceedings are terminated.

Magistrate's decisions.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Is he aware that Mr. Barlee, R.M., recently at Collie tried two cases on the same day, and allowed

Collie Burn alleged co-operative miners 13s. 5d. per day wages in the one case, and 5s. per day wages, for miners not working at Collie Burn, in the other case? 2, Does the Minister approve of such discrimination? 3, Will he cause the differences to be adjusted?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. 2 and 3, The Department has already sent for a report as to the facts, and the Minister desires to refrain from replying to these questions until he is in possession of full details.

Alleged boycott.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is the Minister aware—(a) that 90 miners (many of them with wives and families) are practically boycotted by the alleged Scottish Co-operative Company, and that such company is getting the coal trade from the Government? (b) that the system of boycott is contained in Clause 3 of the indenture of the company, which states—"That every applicant (for a share) shall now or hereafter become an employee of the company, etc.?" 2, Will the Minister take steps to at once stop the boycott by ceasing to take further coal supplies until the present difficulty is ended?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The Scottish Co-operative Company is supplying coal to the Railway Department, but I am not aware that any boycott exists as suggested. 2, The relationship of the new company to the old is now under consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONTRACTORS AND GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (for Mr. Price) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that from two to two and a-half miles of rails and fastenings were granted to Vincent Bros., contractors for Boyup-Kojonup line, for use on their private line? 2, Was any charge made for the use of such rails and fastenings? 3, How long have Vincent Bros. had the benefit of such State property?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, A fortnight ago the Executive Engineer under the contract discovered that 397 pairs of rails and equivalent fastenings, equal to two and a quarter miles, belonging to the Government, were in use by the contractors at their saw mill at Benjinup—about 7 miles from Boyup on the main line between Donnybrook and Boyup. On ascertaining the facts, the Executive Engineer wrote to the contractors on the 27th ult., requesting them to return the rails within a fortnight. The contractors made no request for the temporary use of these rails, and had no right whatever to divert them to any purpose outside of the contract. They have had the use of the material for about four months, and the question of further action is under consideration.

ELECTION RETURN—KIMBERLEY.

The Acting Clerk announced the return to a writ issued for the election of a member for Kimberley, showing that Mr. Arthur Male had been duly elected.

Mr. Male took the oath and subscribed the Roll.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Report of Superintendent of Public Charities for 1911; 2, Report of Chief Inspector of Fisheries, 1910.

By the Minister for Mines: 1, Amendments of regulations under the Audit Act, 1904; 2, Orders-in-Council under Section 35 of the Audit Act, 1904.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1, Criminal Code Amendment (introduced by the Minister for Justice).

2, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902, Amendment (introduced by Minister for Justice).

3, Local Courts Act 1904 Amendment (introduced by Minister for Justice).

4, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (introduced by the Minister for Works).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth day.

Debate resumed from previous day.

Mr. MITCHELL (Northam): Will you permit me Mr. Speaker to offer you my congratulations on your appointment to the high position you now hold. I am very pleased also that my friend, the member for Murchison, has been appointed Chairman of Committees. Whilst I can in all sincerity offer my congratulations to the Ministry on having obtained office, I cannot, and I am sure they will not expect me to, congratulate the country on the change that has been brought about. We must realise, however, that the verdict pronounced by the people has been very definite. There is no doubt that the electors have given their favours to the party at present in power with no meagre hand. We have no quarrel with them on that score, we are here as an Opposition, and as such we intend to do our duty. Notwithstanding our small numbers we have a duty to this great country of ours. It is the duty of the Opposition to criticise the measures that are brought forward, and it is equally their duty to help in the government of the country. So far as I am concerned, and I think I speak for all the members on this side of the House, I say that we are willing to lend a hand in that national work. The Governor's Speech is, of course, one of very little interest. I know that Ministers have had a very short time in which to form a policy, but I am indeed surprised to find so little life in the Speech. Western Australia has a great future, and the Governor's Speech might well have indicated, in some measure at any rate, what are the intentions of the Government party.

The Premier: Perhaps you would like it put in a phonograph.

Mr. MITCHELL: Perhaps it would be well if the Premier would get a phonograph. I have assisted in the government of this country for the last five-and-a-half years and can speak with some authority as to what has happened. Six years ago this coun

try was in a depressed state, but during the last six years that depression has disappeared and we have enjoyed a prosperity recently such as has never before been experienced in the history of the State. I hope that prosperity will continue, but I fear that the country will suffer a setback for some time at least. Party politics, demand I suppose, that new members should spend some time in denouncing their opponents; this is to be deplored, and it is particularly unfortunate that new members do not come to the House chokeful of enthusiasm for work. My friend and former colleague, Mr. Gregory, has come in for a great deal of criticism. He is not here to answer for himself, and I unfortunately am not the expert in mining that some of my friends opposite are, but I do say that Mr. Gregory did magnificent work, and if the present Minister for Mines does as well his fame will go down to posterity. I hope that he will do as well, although I know that he has not the same opportunity, because mining is not in the same position as it was. The position throughout the State is in my opinion, a serious one. Two months ago the country was buoyant and hopeful, the people had faith in the future, and there were great works in hand. To-day the position is serious, but this is no time to be despondent; rather is it time for all to help to the fullest possible extent, and the best in every member will be required if the prosperity which we now enjoy is to be continued. The Ministry took office at an exceptionally prosperous time, if one excepts the depression that exists in our back country where the crops are in some measure a failure. In every other direction there is prosperity throughout the land. Gold mining is looking up, the timber industry is brisk and prosperous, there is enterprise everywhere, and one can hardly turn a street corner in Perth without running up against a pile of bricks. Agriculture, too, is most satisfactory, and the South-west never looked so well. I realise that there will be some falling off in revenue, because of the bad season, but notwithstanding that,

I claim that the country was never more prosperous than it was six weeks ago. Despite the present trouble there is no need to be alarmed about the future of our wheat lands. In the Governor's Speech the bad season is mentioned. I think that is a pity, because if Ministers had had time to inquire they would have heard from their officers that where the cropping was done under proper conditions, the harvest is all right.

The Minister for Mines: That does not alter the fact that it is a bad season.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes, it is a bad season, but the cropping in the districts affected is done in a most primitive fashion. The seed is simply harrowed in, and I suppose nowhere else in the world is the farming done in such a careless fashion as in that part. In the Northam district, where the crops have been successful, we have had this year little more than the average rainfall of Nangeenan, but there is no doubt that if the cropping in the Northam district had been done in the same careless fashion as in the districts further east, the crops would have been not nearly so satisfactory. I mention this because some doubt has been raised as to the wisdom of settling these magnificent stretches of country to the eastward. We have had a State Farm at Nangeenan for a number of years, and from the settlers there, too, we are able to know something of the possibilities of that district. With the past we have nothing to do, but fortunately the future is all ours. We are developing a great country, and it is a task which we can be cheerful about. We have a magnificent area for wheat and stock, and fruit, and I suppose the member for Bunbury will say for timber also; and in addition, we all know that the gold mining industry has produced more than a hundred million pounds worth of gold. There is no need to be depressed about the future of such a country as this, but the speeches have been all too depressing, and not the least depressing of them was that made by my friend the member for Bunbury. The giants who came from that district in the past, giants in their political out-

look as well as physically—I speak of Sir John Forrest and Sir Newton Moore—were men who enlivened this country. They did not endeavour to lead the people with leaden feet and depressed minds; they were optimists and they did great good for this country. My friend from Bunbury says that I am a dreamer of dreams. I plead guilty to having dreamed of greatness for Western Australia; I have dreamed dreams that have meant much to the people of this State. I can see that we have a great country, and one with ample room to provide full opportunity for every individual in it. I desired by my legislation to bring opportunity to all, and I defy any member of this Chamber, no matter whether he is in accord with my work or opposed to it, to say that other has been the case. I have worked for the people since I have been in Parliament, and I did not deserve the remarks that came from the member for Bunbury, a man altogether inexperienced so far as Western Australia is concerned. He may know Bunbury, but he does not know Western Australia as I do. I can afford to be optimistic because I know. It was said by my friend that he was pleased that the optimist had left the Lands Department, and that he approved of the present Minister for Lands—approved of him, I suppose, because he regards him as a pessimist. A pessimist has been said by a wise man to be one who, having the choice of two evils, selects both. The Minister for Lands had the choice of two evils, and he selected both. By his instructions to make speculation impossible, he has depressed the general selector. If it be good to be a pessimist, I do not wonder that the member for Bunbury does not admire my ways, but I hope that in future he will take example from those gentlemen who represented Bunbury before his time. We listened yesterday to the explanation by the Minister for Lands of his instructions—I think he called them instructions and not regulations—with regard to the land question. I venture to say that explanation cannot be regarded as satisfactory, and did not justify his action. The Minister has

given as his reasons for issuing these instructions his desire to deal with the speculator, and his desire to see that the conditions of improvement and residence are enforced. I am entirely in accord with him when he attempts to deal with the speculator and when he attempts to have the conditions of improvement enforced; but are not the real reasons to be found even in the speeches delivered before the elections where it was said that I filled up the Land Office with speculators? Something had to be done to justify the statements that were made throughout the State and particularly in my district.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Who made them?

Mr. MITCHELL: The Minister for Lands made them. You know full well he made them, and I daresay you repeated them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Prove it.

Mr. MITCHELL: Will the Minister for Lands deny it?

Mr. O'Loughlen: You produce one.

Mr. MITCHELL: A speculator? I cannot. Is there not also a desire to retard settlement until the new and laws are decided upon? We have the party's platform formulated by congress, and it suggests itself to my mind that it is possible congress must be consulted before a definite change is made. I approve of waiting if to wait means to rescind some of these clauses in the labour platform, such as non-alienation and nationalisation of land; it is well to wait if to wait means we shall have the land laws more nearly approaching those now in existence. While I believe the last mentioned reason is the one which has actuated the giving of these instructions, I am bound to confess the Minister has power to make regulations under the Land Act. The Minister came here and read to us evidence given before the land board by certain would-be selectors. I saw the Minister afterwards and he told me he read this evidence to show just what men have to pass through before securing a selection, and that he did not wish to infer that these men had endeavoured to sell their blocks afterwards. The Minister mentioned no names, but it might well have been

inferred from his remarks that the men who had on oath given this evidence had gone out and endeavoured to sell some of their land.

The Minister for Lands: Why make the inference now when you know exactly what I meant?

Mr. MITCHELL: You told me it was not so.

The Minister for Lands: Then there is no need to make the inference.

Mr. MITCHELL: Your speech has gone to the public and I have no intention of letting it convey the idea.

The Minister for Lands: My speech did not convey the idea; why make the insinuation?

Mr. MITCHELL: I make no insinuation, I simply wish the public to know what your idea was.

The Minister for Lands: You are simply repeating something as an inference you know is not correct.

Mr. MITCHELL: I know it, but I mean the public to know it also.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. MITCHELL: Certainly. I mean the public to know it, if the Press will be good enough to publish these remarks. If people give false evidence before the land board why not prosecute? They give evidence on oath and if they give false evidence they should be prosecuted for perjury. The Minister also inferred that I had permitted speculation in land. He knows full well I refused to register transfers until improvements had been made. Of course I exercised the right, as he very rightly says he intends to exercise it, of permitting registration where I thought it advisable. I have with me a rent list which I had prepared at great cost and trouble, setting out the date from which improvements begin on each block. When I went to the Lands Department I found this information was not available to inspectors, and that they could only inspect blocks they were instructed to inspect after the necessary information had been supplied to them. Now the inspectors have this rent list, and they can see just what improvements should be effected on every block open to inspection.

Also this rent list is open to the public, and if a man has neglected to make his improvements or observe the conditions, this rent list will disclose just what ought to have been done. In fact this rent list will do more to bring about improvements than 100 inspectors. The Minister has said an army of inspectors would cost a great deal of money. He knows also full well that I closed an enormous area of land against free selection. Under free selection it is possible for all and sundry to take up land. If a person happens to be the first applicant there can be no refusal given; but under the land board system surely we escape the speculator? What other system is possible? Here we have a board composed of capable and responsible men to take evidence on oath, and, having taken that evidence, to decide between the applicants. If a speculator can get in under this system I venture to say the present Minister will have to let him in; because to shut him out would be to close the land board altogether and prevent settlement. Six years ago conditions were totally different. Until that time the only improvement required in connection with a free homestead farm before transfer could be made was fixed at £50. It was that when my friend was previously Minister for Lands. True, it was only for a few weeks that he was in office, but that was the law, and it was left to Sir Newton Moore to require improvement conditions before allowing a transfer; and he was entirely right. The Act provides that improvements shall be calculated in two yearly instalments. If the Minister will say that the improvements for the period entered on should be completed before the transfer is registered, he will be doing all that is necessary for protecting the State. After all it is a matter of development we have in consideration; we want the work done; and if the work is done as required by the Act, I think the Act means, if I read it correctly, that the Minister must register the transfer submitted to him. There are a good many new members in the House, and I may explain that the Land Act provides that land may be

held under free homestead farms conditions under which the only payment made is the survey fee, and the conditions are certain improvements and residence. I realise a man must perform residence before he can get his title. He certainly must conform to the five years residence before he is eligible for a title. But a man gets his block simply on the undertaking to reside; and if he does not reside he should be dealt with as I always dealt with him. Under Clause 55 a man is relieved, in return for residence, of certain of the improvements he has to do under Clause 56. Under these two classes of tenure, homestead farms and blocks under Clause 55, there is a personal covenant, and it is quite impossible for the Minister to register a transfer unless that personal covenant has been observed, because residence cannot be performed by a deputy. Under Clause 56 work only is required, but the selector is required to do 50 per cent. more improvements than under the residence clause. I would like to point out the amount of work that has been done on the land sold. The Minister said that reference to the *Monthly Abstract* would show that the total improvements made on our land were altogether disproportionate to the requirements of the Act. If the Minister would be good enough to look up the figures I am sure he will admit that the total improvements made are more than are required under the Act. We have alienated altogether 7,200,000 acres of land, and we have in process of alienation 11,800,000 acres. Of this land 7,000,000 has been taken up within the past six years and the whole of the improvements on it are not due. Taking the average, about three-fifths of the improvements only would be due now. We have cleared 1,869,000 acres, according to the *Abstract*; we have improved by ring-barking, partial clearing, 3,400,000 acres; and in addition to that, although it is not shown here, we have fenced in a great deal of conditional purchase land which is in course of improvement and is being used for grazing purposes. In February, 1905, there were 327,000 acres under crop; to-day there are 855,000 acres

under crop. Six years ago a little over two million acres were improved; in February last 5,300,000 acres had been improved. We have done nearly twice as much in the past six or seven years as was done in all the years that went before. Surely no more could have been expected? The Minister has been to the new areas beyond Northam, and he will agree with me an enormous amount of work, magnificent work, has been done by selectors. There are, of course, some who are not doing their duty by the country, but these people are not nearly as numerous as we are led to suppose. The man who is not doing his duty should have his land forfeited as soon as possible. This rent list I have referred to will help our inspectors to dig out these men. I hope the Minister will forfeit holdings that are altogether neglected, but I hope he will show leniency to the man doing his best. Many of our selectors are fighting against great difficulties, want of water, and great distance from railway, and such like; they are family men and, of course, have troubles that have to be attended to. There are many disadvantages they have to face, and they deserve the greatest possible consideration from the Minister if they should ask it at his hands.

Mr. Heitmann: There has never been any complaint about that class of settler.

Mr. MITCHELL: No. The man complained about we cannot get hold of; we cannot hear the names of these speculators. I have tried often to find them but without success. There are no less than 9,000 people who hold homestead farms. If each man held other land, even it be only 1,000 acres, there would be 11,843 holders. Certainly the speculator has not large holdings. He cannot have them when it is realised there are 9,000 people holding free homestead farms, and when most of these people have conditional purchase land in addition. I mention these things because it is bad for the State that word should go abroad from the Minister that there is speculation to the detriment of the genuine selector.

Mr. Heitmann: So there is.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is very easy to assert. I believe there is speculation, and I always desired to put it down, but it is not on a very large scale. The Minister said I had said in the House that I did not quite know how to do it. I know I could not do it without hurting thousands of genuine settlers; he is not going to do it without hurting thousands of genuine settlers.

Mr. Heitmann: That has to be seen. I am having a ticket on the Minister.

Mr. MITCHELL: When you remember that these improvements represent more than six millions of money, you will agree with me that the man on the land has done his duty fairly well. There has been a dearth of workers for the last twelve months, and men have not been able to carry out all the improvements they desired to make. I should like to say that this question of land development is a great one; it has a great influence, and the regulations affect not only the man on the land but all people in this State, and particularly the workers. When we remember that six years ago we had our timber and gold mining and other industries flourishing, and we compare the prosperity of to-day with that of six years ago, and remember that it has been brought about by land development, we will see how important it is that the Minister should go carefully. The bad effect of hastily-made regulations cannot be speedily removed. If my friend were to withdraw his instructions to-morrow the effect of them would not be got over for the next two years. All false calculations must be paid for by someone. In private concerns we pay for them, and in public life when a Minister makes a false calculation the public have to pay, not the farmer, and the people who are putting up the piles of buildings in St. George's terrace, the much despised St. George's terrace, where there are hundreds of workers employed, would they have embarked on such enterprises if it had not been for the policy of land development introduced and carried out by the late Government?

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Pingelly (Mr. Harper) must not clap his hands. It is disorderly.

Mr. Harper: I apologise.

Mr. MITCHELL: The agriculturists of Western Australia have provided for all the rest; they have made work possible in many directions, and they are responsible for the prosperity and activity in Perth to-day. They are also responsible for the addition of extra storeys to buildings in Hay-street, and the magnificent warehouses which are going up in St. George's-terrace. I believe there will be men out of work in a very short time. That can very speedily come about. Six weeks ago there were no men out of work, although the member for North Perth tried to work up an unemployed scare. He failed, however, because there were no unemployed.

Mr. Heitmann: How do you account for it?

Mr. MITCHELL: It is easily understood by hon. members that it is only a short step from prosperity to depression, and it is a very short step from sufficiency of employment to a shortage of work. If there are 50,000 workers, and 51,000 jobs, the workers are independent men and they can choose the work they care to do; but if there are 50,000 men and 40,000 jobs, not one of 40,000 men is independent, because there are 10,000 other men who must work to live, and who are willing to take the place of anyone who gives up his employment. Our desire is to provide a sufficiency of employment.

Mr. Heitmann: Is that why you cut up the Avondale estate?

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes; I desired to give the workmen a chance to make homes for themselves. The Government have a serious responsibility to face, and if men are thrown out of employment it will be because of their land policy. If there is an unemployed difficulty the people will know what has caused it. There is one thing that might be done to save the situation, to some extent, and that is to announce definitely the intention of the Govern-

ment in regard to the land policy. It is necessary that this should be done, and I ask the Government to do it. I know this country and I know what is required, and I have no hesitation in saying that we shall strike a time of depression unless the land policy of the Government is definitely announced. The financial institutions and storekeepers have done much to assist development. I said six years ago that I could develop this country with the aid of men without money. I have lived in the country districts for years and I know what the storekeepers and friendly help have done in the way of assisting the people to make homes for themselves and to become producers. We set about the development of this country with the aid of poor men. The financial institutions came to our assistance as well as the merchants and storekeepers. The banks were induced to advance against conditional purchase leases. They hesitated to do this four or five years ago, and they only did it then when they induced someone to become guarantors. The banks, however, saw that the improvements which were necessary were carried out over the period that the leases had reached, and they knew that if it became necessary there was the power to transfer so long as the improvements had been made. Without the power to transfer the banks were absolutely in the hands of the borrower, but if this new idea is put into operation that the holders must be residents, the land immediately becomes forfeitable. No matter what the Minister may say about his intentions, I have no hesitation in saying that he would not see a financial institution penalised. The banks cannot view with the same favour that security which, in the past, they saw in conditional purchase leases. The Minister has declared that when a man resides on his land he must have five years' improvements effected, and he must have held the land two years before it can be transferred. Under non-residence conditions, he requires ten years' work to be done before it can be transferred. Here, again, you see that the man with money is protected. If a man has

enough money to effect five years' improvements he can sell his land at the end of two years, but the poor struggler cannot transfer it until five years have expired. So, too, with the man who holds land under non-residence conditions. The law of the State is good enough for most of us, and as it stands to-day it should be good enough for the Minister. The banks and the stores are willing to help to develop the country, but they rightly ask for protection. It is their duty to have that protection, and they cannot be blamed if they call up money, and if they refuse to advance in the future as freely as they did in the past. Bank managers are only human, and when the opportunity offers to get more for their money they naturally take it. We have managed to get the interest down to the lowest possible rate. Money was available and the banks offered to lend it at reasonable rates. The difference between the past and the future will be that the man on the land will have to seek out the banks, and the banks will lend with reluctance and at a much higher rate of interest. Then, again, the result of the decisions of the Government will be far reaching, far beyond the man who is now on the land. It is true, as my friend says that he will establish, if necessary, a State Bank, but first let him liberalise the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You opposed that.

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. I declared during the recent election campaign that I would take the opportunity of passing a liberal measure this session.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You voted against it twice.

Mr. MITCHELL: What does the hon. member mean by that? The hon. member was not here, and he has no right to discuss that which he knows nothing about. I have not voted against the liberalisation of the Agricultural Bank; in fact, it was I who made it as liberal as it is to-day. It was the present Premier who, when leader of the Opposition, declared that the Agricultural

Bank had fulfilled its functions and that there was very little further use for it. There is not a man in the State who cannot but say that I am alone responsible for the present liberal state of the Agricultural Bank. I have read that the Minister for Lands is going to establish a bank if the other banks do not toe the line. Well, more power to him. Is he going to start stores as well, and is he going to consider a promissory note as a good security? I think he will find that a promissory note is a very indifferent security unless he has the right to enforce payment. Many will repudiate payment if they know they can safely do so. My venturesome friend who now controls the Lands Department is willing to do these things. We heard a lot about machinery for the farmers before the elections; we do not hear a word about that now, and during this debate not a word has been mentioned on the subject. I hope that the Government will see to it that the settlers do not suffer by this hasty action of theirs. When it comes to the matter of deferring rents, the Minister said that the present leader of the Opposition when Premier had not announced that he would be willing to defer the rents. I was with him when he told a deputation that we would defer the rents, and as a matter of fact, the form the Minister referred to was prepared during my term of office. I did not propose to send that form to every selector who had not paid his rent. I proposed to send it to the Progress Associations throughout the State, where men desired to have their rents extended. The Minister says this form must be endorsed by the land officer or a bank inspector. If he waits for either of the officials mentioned to endorse all the forms that must be sent in, because these people have no crop, the officers will have nothing else to do for the next three or four months but that work. We have made it quite clear that we intended to treat the farmers leniently, and I can remember a farmer having said to me on one occasion, "We are voting for your Government on this occasion because we have struck a bad season and we know you will see us through."

Mr. Heitmann: Some farmers have

been waiting for years for the railway facilities you promised them.

Mr. Swan: Some have been waiting for years to give them a bump.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is true they have given us a bump. There is no reason why they should not, for the liberal voters are absolutely free men. They give no pledge, nor do they belong to any union, and when we are elected it is on a free vote. I venture to say that unless our friends opposite mend their ways long before the three years are over the very men who have put them in will be glad to have us back again. Before I leave this land question I do ask that the policy of the Government be prepared as soon as possible. It is essential that it should be done. The Minister touched upon the cost of living. At the elections the cost of living was made a vital question. Before I left the Department I asked that inquiry be made into the question with a view to bringing down cattle from the North. On the 17th October last a circular was sent out asking the squatters if they would be shippers in the event of a steamer being provided by the Government to transport cattle from Wyndham during the cattle season. That is all right and proper. It is a right thing to do, but that is all that has been done. The latter part of the second paragraph of this circular should be interesting to hon. members. It reads—"An effort, however, will be made to fill what is represented to the Government as being a long felt want, but if in the meantime you can make satisfactory arrangements for the marketing of your stock I would suggest that you do this, as we may find it impossible to get a boat." That circular, I am afraid, will provide but cold comfort to the people who want cheap meat.

Mr. Frank Wilson: During the election they were going to purchase a boat.

Mr. MITCHELL: I believe that is so. The cost of living is high, of course, but are not wages higher than they were, and can you have high wages and cheap living? Do the people of Western Australia desire it? You cannot have high wages and cheap living. For my part I prefer the high wages. What is

the object of unionism but to provide high wages and, of course, other improved conditions? If there be anything in unionism it is to give the people who belong to the unions a chance. If you have a bootmakers' union and wages in that trade go up, the people have to pay more for the article. The higher cost of living is to some extent due to the higher wages that are being paid. I do not mind that, for I prefer to see the wages high. The member for Perth said that when you come to fix wages you should not have regard to supply and demand. That is right enough, but still it is a question of supply and demand, because a man must work and must eat. I know that in the Labour platform, you have a right-to-work clause, but I think that if you altogether refuse to have any regard to the law of supply and demand you will find that you have to supply work for many more than you can possibly pay.

Mr. Heitmann: Does supply and demand govern the manufacture of superphosphates.

Mr. MITCHELL: Of course it does.

Mr. Heitmann: Yet the price in Western Australia has gone up.

Mr. MITCHELL: Western Australia is not the whole world in regard to superphosphates. The price depends upon many things.

Mr. Heitmann: It depends largely upon the operations of the combine.

Mr. MITCHELL: I hope if the hon. member and his party are satisfied on that point they will bring in phosphates from outside, and let us have it cheap. However, this question of the cost of living might well engage the attention of the Government, but I do hope they will tackle it wisely. During the campaign the question of potatoes was worked for all it was worth in my electorate, and indeed I was nearly put out over a potato. The Minister says he is going to keep out the disease, and continue the restrictions. He is going to do as I did. I suppose there is not a member opposite who did not make use of the potato cry during the recent elections.

The Minister for Mines: The Minister is going to vary your restrictions.

Mr. MITCHELL: If he gets the disease in he will require to vary the restrictions with a vengeance. Surely this is a thing worth some sacrifice. The people who will be growing and exporting potatoes as the result of all this are those who, to-day, are working for wages.

Mr. Heitmann: Those who will export potatoes as you exported lambs.

Mr. MITCHELL: Neither the farmer nor the farm workers would get much consideration from the hon. member. He would tax all that they produce if they dared send it to the ship. Living is cheaper in Eastern Australia because they encourage the producer to increase his output until he is exporting.

Mr. Heitmann: You exported one shipment of lambs and imported two.

Mr. MITCHELL: We are importing reject lambs from the Eastern States all the time. There are far more lambs available in Western Australia to-day than the market can take, and they have been sold down to 5s. The Minister is determined to keep out the potato disease, but unless he is careful his announcement will be worth as much as the Premier's announcement that there will be no depression. He is going to alter the boundary to include Katanning and shut out Kojonup; but the alteration of this boundary does not mean much, because the boundary was set there against supposed clean potatoes from the East. We are to get them from the East with a certificate that they were grown 30 miles from the nearest infected area. The alteration of this boundary will mean the lifting of the quarantine existing around Perth to-day. The Perth potatoes, and Perth is not a clean area, will be allowed to go along the Great Southern to Katanning, and unless the greatest possible care is exercised these potatoes will find their way to Albany. There is the utmost danger in this proposal, and I hope the Minister will pause before he puts it into effect. It is truly marvellous the way we have kept out disease for so long. When you remember that one

diseased potato taken into the Albany district would probably cause the whole of the district to be infected you will see how urgent it is that not the slightest risk should be run. I ask the Minister to pause before making this regulation, for it may have a disastrous effect. The railway trucks carrying potatoes to Katanning may easily carry a few loose tubers along the rest of the journey to Albany, and the chances are very great that these odd potatoes would find their way into the fields as seed. You cannot persuade people that they do not know all about Irish blight. As a matter of fact there is only one man in the State who really does know, that is the pathologist of the department, Dr. Stoward.

The Minister for Railways: The Minister is working under Dr. Stoward's advice.

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not care if he is. He is not supposed to take Dr. Stoward's advice in such a matter. We have got to remember that Dr. Stoward is a pathologist and a professional man, and to decide whether the disease exists and advise as to a boundary line are two entirely different things. It is a mere matter of common sense as to where this boundary line should be; at any rate, I warn the Minister that he is running a great risk in this proposed alteration. When I was in the Eastern States, Dr. McAlpine, the pathologist in Victoria, said to me at the conference that this potato disease would be recorded throughout Victoria in a few days. At that time it was confined to a small area, but within a few weeks it was discovered in all parts of the State because seed from the infected districts had been sown. Then again, I understand that the Minister is going to do away with the peeling of potatoes, and instead, dip them in a 10 per cent. solution of sulphuric acid, but it will be a very serious thing if somebody makes a mistake and uses 50 per cent. of the acid. This discovery was made by Dr. Stoward while I was in office, and though I tested some of the potatoes which had been dipped, I was careful to see that Dr. Stoward tasted them first, and if the Minister is going to use this solution

I hope that he will taste them before asking me to do so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You are not trying to frighten the people, are you?

Mr. MITCHELL: No I am not, but I am saying that care must be taken, and I believe that the dipping should be carried out under the supervision of a responsible departmental officer. At any rate, I am afraid the public will not appreciate the potatoes when they know that they have been dipped in sulphuric acid.

The Minister for Mines: You are aware that Dr. Stoward recommended that the potatoes would be perfectly safe?

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes, I know that. The discovery was made during my time, so I am well aware of all that has been done. Dr. Stoward told me that if the solution was made too strong there would be danger, and I am merely asking the Minister to be careful to see that not more than 10 per cent. of sulphuric acid is used.

The Minister for Mines: Surely advice of that kind is entirely unnecessary.

Mr. MITCHELL: After hearing the Minister's remarks I think the advice is necessary. The Minister also said that he would prevent a corner in potatoes. We imported potatoes and distributed them after peeling in order to prevent a corner. Locally grown potatoes will be cheap in a few days, and I wonder if the Minister will claim credit for this. It should be remembered that they would not be grown locally if the people had not known that I intended to continue the restrictions, and so gave them confidence in their planting. I see that Geraldton, too, is to have diseased potatoes from the East, but if the price is at all reasonable why not let them have good wholesome West Australian potatoes? At any rate, I hope the Minister will think twice before allowing imported potatoes into Geraldton, or that he will at least inquire as to the quantity of local potatoes likely to be available. A very large area is under crop within the State at the present time, and the crop is magnificent. I have just visited some of the potato

areas in the South-west, and the people are going to get very big returns from their plantings. If these imported potatoes go to Northampton the potato industry in the north will be jeopardised. Geraldton should be protected, and if the people in the north are to have the Eastern potatoes, the Minister should have them dipped in this solution that is proposed to be used so that they will be free of disease. I should like to say a word or two with regard to the freezing works which were mentioned yesterday. The Minister for Lands stated that files had been built up and that he objects to the building up of files, but it was by the use of files that we built up this country, and it was by means of files that we have carried this idea of freezing works to such a stage that all that is now necessary is to sign cheques for the works. Bunbury is a port which has a big country at the back of it, and it too will require its freezing works. The Fruit Commissioner, Mr. Moody, will tell you that Western Australia has a great future as a fruit-producing country, and that the country which has Bunbury as its port will be a very large exporter of fruit and lambs. We must, therefore, have freezing works there, and at Geraldton and other places. We must establish abattoirs in different parts of the country if we are to have cheap meat.

The Minister for Mines: Then why have you not done that?

Mr. MITCHELL: I endeavoured to do so but I was opposed by the member for Guildford, the member for Swan, and others.

The Minister for Mines: You had your majority.

Mr. MITCHELL: It was a very bare majority, and whilst there were some on the Opposition side who supported me, members know the trouble we had to persuade Cabinet and Parliament to agree to the work. However, the future belongs to my friend the Minister for Lands. The present Government have the report of Mr. McCann, and that report should satisfy the member for North Fremantle, who, I hope, will see that these works are built. We can cheapen meat only by providing facil-

ities in order that the smallest grower may have an opportunity of competing. We have established sale yards at North Fremantle, where stock is sold every week, and if we had abattoirs and freezing works there the smallest men could buy, and enter into the trade of supplying the consumers in the metropolitan area. I have a few remarks to make in regard to the recent elections. My friend who represents Perth stated that the people had sent the Labour party into power because of the Redistribution of Seats Bill and the increase of Ministerial salaries. I would be pleased if I could think with him, because they had a poor excuse indeed for turning us out if those were their only reasons. The Redistribution of Seats Bill was a bogie trotted throughout the country. I do not know what the Ministry intend to do, but up till now we have had representation of various industries—representation of agriculture, of gold mining, of timber, and of pastoralism. The boundary lines of Sussex have been criticised, but if honourable members will make the jarrah forests all grow in one square block, we can alter the design of that constituency. As far as the increase of Ministerial salaries is concerned, it is strange that no objection was raised when the matter was before the House. We know the Federal Ministers draw their payment as members in addition to their Ministerial salaries. For my own part, I showed that I did not want the salary by working for three years without any payment, but I do not think Ministers will find £1,300 a year too much after they have met all the demands that are made upon them. However, they have decided to reduce their salaries and I do not suppose that anyone on this side will vote against them. The elections were fought on different issues altogether; they were fought by canvassers who misrepresented the situation. I had it from a friend of mine that the member for Perth during the campaign stood on the kerbstone and stated that the member for Northam was making a fortune out of potatoes. Somebody interjected "He has only two acres," to which Mr. Dwyer answered—"Well,

does he not get 20 tons per acre, and are not potatoes worth £30 per ton? Is that not a fortune?"

Mr. George: How many acres had you?

Mr. MITCHELL: I had two acres but I did not get 20 tons to the acre. It was also stated in the Northam electorate that I owned the machine called the Mitchell harvester.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is nothing to what you stated.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes it is, because I stated just the truth and this was the very opposite.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Speaking down south you accused the Minister for Lands of incapacity and dishonesty.

Mr. MITCHELL: No, I did not, that is not the truth.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You did say that.

Mr. MITCHELL: I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You said he was dishonest in the exposition of his policy.

Mr. MITCHELL: I did not, but I said the explanation of the platform was not honestly given.

The Minister for Lands: You accused hon. members on this side of trying to rob the people of their farms.

Mr. MITCHELL: I told the people the truth, and stated that hon. members had signed an undertaking to nationalise all land, and that they could not nationalise the land unless they robbed the present holders. I asked time and again that the intentions of the Labour party in regard to the nationalisation of the land should be put clearly before the people. I took the written platform framed by Congress and read it to the people throughout the State.

Mr. Bolton: And you have been dubbed "truthful Jimmy" ever since.

Mr. MITCHELL: Is the hon. member in order in making that statement?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. Bolton: Not in repeating a statement that has been made?

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that the hon. member did not make the statement himself, but that he repeated something

which had been said. Therefore he is in order.

Mr. Bolton: I said the hon. member had been dubbed "truthful Jimmy."

Mr. MITCHELL: And with perfect truth, and I am sorry I cannot return the compliment. I hope that the next Governor's Speech will be a more cheerful one. I stated that the Ministry had had no time to frame a policy but I hope that we shall meet fairly early next year, and that many public works will be mentioned in the Speech. I want the line from Wongan Hills to Mullewa as soon as possible, and I think that all the railways we have undertaken should be built at an early date.

The Minister for Mines: How many did you advance during the last nine months? They are at the same stage as when we passed the Bills.

Mr. MITCHELL: I think the hon. member is mistaken. I do not know what was done by the Works Department, but I believe that the survey parties have been out all the time. At any rate the Government can make amends by pushing forward the construction of these lines.

The Minister for Justice: Will you support a railway to Esperance?

Mr. MITCHELL: No, I will not, but I will support a railway to Nornalup Inlet, which would be a hundred times better for the State than a railway to Esperance, because it would serve magnificent land and magnificent timber. There we can have our dairy farms. I hope the 150 dairy farms I proposed to establish will be gone on with.

The Minister for Mines: It only struck you a couple of weeks before the election.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is better for an idea to strike one a day before the election than never. The idea would never have struck the hon. member. In addition to the development works and harbour works I hope irrigation will be pushed on with, particularly at Harvey, where there is a magnificent citrus country. Then the Bunbury Water Scheme, with irrigation all along between Collie and Bunbury, should be looked into. I hope Ministers will go into these works. We do not

expect it to have been done up to now ; but before the House meets again I hope Ministers will tell us what they intend to do. It is true, as the Minister for Lands says, they may do it first and tell us afterwards ; but that is not the right course ; Parliamentary practice requires that Ministers should tell us first. The matter of water supply is being attended to actively in the agricultural districts by the energetic Minister for Lands, but he forgets that I carried most of the scheme he is undertaking up to a certain point, a point that helps him to go on with the work. Why not be generous ? Ministers have taken credit for many works. Many of the works were well under way before we left office. I had 24 road clearers and water supply carters out when I left office, and two years ago I established a system of sinking dams and wells and clearing roads for outback settlers.

The Minister for Mines: How many storage tanks did you put on the Dowerin-Merredin railway ?

Mr. MITCHELL: I ordered them to be put in ; it was entirely my idea, and if credit is due to anyone credit should be given for setting the work going. The Goomalling water scheme should be actively pushed on. Goomalling is a rising township and there is a tremendous settlement between there and Northam. The people are in a bad way for water, as unfortunately many of their wells are going salt. The Minister has inquired into this work, and I hope he will push on with it as soon as possible because it is urgently needed. I hope Ministers will remember it is not only the actual work of administration that counts, it is the influence of Government that counts. The work of a Government is an easy matter because they have competent officers, but the influence of a Government is quite another matter. I urge Ministers in this connection to consider well before altering the policy that has meant so much to Western Australia. At any rate, theirs is the responsibility. I am quite ready to admit they will not readily take responsibility without serious thought ; but after six years of

experience in the House, and after a life devoted to business, I am probably justified in expressing some opinion about the work of the Government. It is the influence of Government that counts. This great country needs men and money. It can get men and money ; it is for Ministers to do the work. Unless the work of development in the outback country is actively pushed on, the building now going on in Perth will stop. There is no need to be afraid of the future. There is a glorious outlook in every direction. There are immense possibilities, which only need skilful and bold handling ; and if the Ministry will be brave I am sure there are enough men on their side of the House to endorse them, and I am sure all will be well in this State of ours.

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

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I rise to support the adoption of the Address-in-Reply with that natural feeling of diffidence and timidity that a new member may possibly be expected to disclose on an occasion of this kind. In the first place I wish to join in the chorus of congratulations Mr. Speaker has received on his elevation to the honourable position he now occupies. I regret, with the members of the Government that our eastern agricultural districts are suffering from the dry season which we have experienced, and I applaud the Government for their action in publicly announcing that they intend to give an extension of rents in those cases which are worthy, instead of giving extensions in a hole and corner manner as has been the practice in the past. The present season shows us that more water supplies are required, and that when we have good seasons it is the duty of the Government to enlarge the existing water supplies, particularly in the dry districts, and those districts to the east of the Great Southern Railway. I am perfectly confident the Government will enlarge and make more permanent our water supplies in these dry districts. It is pleasing to note from His Excellency's Speech that

the Government have every confidence in the mining industry. As a Western Australian born, as one who was here in the early days, I can appreciate to the fullest extent the great difference the discovery of gold made in this country to the prospects and future of us all. The people on the goldfields look to the Minister for Mines to do a great deal more to help bona fide prospectors than was ever done in the past. It has been my fortune lately to spend some 18 months on the goldfields, and I can say throughout the goldfields the feeling existed that absentee companies, concession companies and shepherders of leases got an amount of consideration from the late Minister for Mines they were not entitled to receive. Of course the Perth Press spoke in eulogistic terms of Mr. Gregory's administration of the Mines Department; but when we remember that not one goldfields district has returned a Liberal candidate, and that the Liberal party could not get candidates on the goldfields, we can see what the people of the goldfields, who are surely entitled to judge, thought of the past Government's administration of the Mining Act in mining districts. Another significant fact to which I would like to make reference is that, although the late Minister for Mines had time to go to my electorate and address some small meetings and tell them why the farmers should not return me, he did not dare to go to one of the principal mining centres of the State where his administration was known and understood to tell the people of the goldfields what he had done for the mining industry. It is a good thing for him he did not. It is pleasing also to note from the Governor's Speech that the lodes in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Mines are improving at depth. As a representative of an agricultural district I am always prepared to help to give a legitimate measure of assistance to the mining industry that has been such a great asset to this State. People in the agricultural districts recognise that our great goldfields markets, our local markets, are the best they have. I look to the Minister for Mines to stimulate

the mining industry by letting prospectors get possession of those leases that have been withheld from them in the past, and also by giving cheaper water to the low-grade mines. It is pleasing to learn that several new agricultural railways are to be built by the present progressive Government. I cannot help referring to the promise the Premier was good enough to make at Narrogin that the Kulin loopline would be authorised this session and built as soon as possible. It may not be known to all members of the House that the Narrogin-Kulin loopline was recommended for special priority of construction by the Railway Advisory Board just about a year ago. Since the date of that recommendation the late Government introduced 11 agricultural railways, and these railways were authorised, but they did not introduce any Bill for the construction of the Narrogin-Kulin loopline though it was recommended for special priority by their own officers. On the other hand they shelved the report of the Railway Advisory Board. It was a disgraceful action, and one that recoiled on them with vengeance at the recent elections. I am sorry the leader of the Opposition is not here to give some explanation as to why that important railway, that would have served hundreds of settlers, was shelved in that manner. I am sorry he is not here to tell us whether political influence was at work to take it away from those settlers and give it to a different locality altogether. However, I do not suppose we will ever know the reason now, but the people should know why the railway was shelved when others were authorised. That railway will serve the Dorakin area. Three years ago Sir Newton Moore promised the settlers on the Dorakin area a railway. They have never had it although the price of their land was increased to pay for the railway they did not get. I hope the Government, when they build the line, will take it right through to Kulin and not delay it at any point short of that locality. The people at Kulin have always been promised the railway. Most of the country is settled right through in 1,000 acre blocks

and the building of the railway means the difference between success and failure to a lot of men who are already on their holdings. I would like this line built with some of the expedition that was used in building the Bullfinch railway. Although that line is a failure it at any rate gives us the opportunity of seeing how railways could be built when urgently required. I would like to see the same expedition used in building a line to Kulin as was used to enable stock-jobbers and market-riggers to make so much out of the Bullfinch gold mine. It is pleasing to note the Government intend to establish a Parliament Committee for Public Works. I hope to have the honour of bringing before that committee several important proposals. The first I hope to be permitted to draw their attention to is the strong case that can be made out for the immediate construction of the Narrogin-Arnadale trunk railway, as that line is required to open up a great district and to bring the whole of the Great Southern districts, Katanning, Wagin and Narrogin, and all the eastern country, 57 miles closer to Fremantle, the port of export. I look to the co-operation of the metropolitan and other members in this matter. The distance from Narrogin to Fremantle *via* York and Perth on the present route, is 174 miles, whereas *via* Arnadale it would be 117 miles. What does that mean to everyone travelling to the Great Southern district and to Albany? A saving of 57 miles on the present journey. I earnestly hope before the labours of this Parliament are completed that line, at least, will be authorised and on the statute-book. I may point out that the Narrogin-Arnadale railway has been recommended by the agricultural advisory board. Another proposal I hope to bring forward is that of a railway from Williams to Quindanning and Marradong. There is an old settled district there of 50 or 60 years standing, and there is a big population, and they have never been considered at all by Liberal Governments in the past in regard to railway facilities. When we look at the other old settlements in Western

Australia we see that the fertile valleys of the Swan, the Blackwood, the Avon and other rivers have been opened up by railways, and I look forward to the time when the fertile valley of the Williams River will be similarly opened up by the Labour Government. True it is that there are some big empty estates in that district held up, such as Boranning and Jennamartin, and I understand that when railway measures are passed the Government are given power to resume these big fertile properties. Though this power has existed in the past it has never been exercised by Liberal Governments, and I hope when the railway proposal to serve Quindanning and Marradong is brought forward the Government of the day will not hesitate to resume some of that unimproved land and give the owners its value in full, and settle upon it many people who will be only too glad to take it up. I hope the Minister for Lands will send down the Advisory Board to report on that proposal, and that we may be able to have its report before the Parliamentary Standing Committee when the opportunity offers. The Wagin-Darkan railway is also one that I hope to see started and I trust it will be taken down South of Darkan to serve the settlers towards Moodiarrup. With regard to the Wickepin-Merridin line, that was authorised in January last, I am sorry the late Government did not see their way clear to make a start with the work. I thought it was amusing to hear the member for Sussex talking about the delay in the construction of that line, when he authorised it and did nothing up to the time of the elections. Now he turns around and criticises the Labour Government because they have not made a start with it in less than a month. Why did he not make a start with it? At any rate, I would urge the Government to build that railway quickly. It is a very important proposal because it is going to give direct communication between the whole of the Great Southern districts and the goldfields markets. I was sorry to hear the remark that fell

from the member for Moore when he declared that the late Government had treated his constituency as an alien district. I would like to assure the hon. member that we have a Government now that will not treat any part of Western Australia as an alien district. I would like to say also that there is another part of Western Australia which has been treated as an alien district by the Government that has lately been given its deserts by the people of the State. The late Government neglected and traduced a fertile part of Western Australia and I need hardly say to the goldfields members that I refer to the district of Esperance. I hope the new Government will remember what the late Government did not know, that the Esperance-Norseman district is part of Western Australia and is entitled to the same consideration as other parts of the State, and I hope the new Government will set to work and let the settlers in that district have the same assistance from the Agricultural Bank and the same facilities which are given to settlers elsewhere. That is all they ask for, and I claim that the people living there are entitled to it. I do not congratulate the late Premier on the way in which, to retain office, he tried at the recent elections to stir up the dead cry of coast versus goldfields. The Esperance railway was the bogey he talked about in the coastal districts, and he tried to frighten the people of the coast into voting for his candidates, but the people everywhere recognised that they had a common enemy in the late Government and they refused to be bamboozled by that cry. Living as I did on the goldfields for some time, I was pleased to find that every second man had an interest in a block of land in the agricultural districts, and the people on the goldfields freely recognised that the ultimate permanent prosperity of Western Australia depended upon its agricultural industry, and the representatives from the goldfields heartily believe that too. The goldfields people and the goldfields members alike have the common desire to see the agricultural districts in Western Aus-

tralia opened up and settled, and we all know that many of our best settlers in the agricultural areas have come from the goldfields districts. I say, let us open up all parts of the country, the Great Southern district, our fertile lands in the South-West, and let us also open up the Southern mallee farming lands between Esperance and Norseman. In that district, we were told by a majority report of the Agricultural Advisory Board that there are a million and a quarter acres of first class wheat land available for settlement, and it is gratifying to know that this year, when there are so many water difficulties in other parts of the State, every dam in that district is full, and according to the hon. member for Kalgoorlie the settlers there are cutting two tons of hay to the acre. I hope that the Government will introduce a Bill this session to open up that agricultural land, and that the Bill will provide for the construction of a line from Esperance 60 miles northwards. Amongst the reasons for feeling thankful that the people returned the Labour Government the one that strikes one most is that the people recognised that they had a common interest right throughout Western Australia. The member for Sussex tried to stir up parochialism and prejudice to get support at the recent elections, but I am pleased to say that he failed miserably in his effort. It is dangerous to have a leader of public thought in Western Australia trying to set two great sections of the community against each other, and the people showed they were not prepared to listen to that cry which he urged so persistently. I was never alarmed by the thought that we would have a goldfields Ministry, and as a matter of fact to-day we have more Labour members from the coastal districts than from the goldfields districts, and all those members have elected Ministers who, they feel confident, will be fair and just to every part of Western Australia and every section of the community. I am particularly glad to know that the Government mean to introduce a Bill for the provision of homes

for the people, and I hope the effects of that Bill will not be confined merely to the centres of large population, such as Perth, Fremantle, Narrogin and Northam. I hope the residents of the smallest agricultural centres and the men on the land as well will be permitted to take advantage of the provisions of this measure to provide homes for themselves. It is particularly desirable that the men on the land should be assisted to make homes, but it is an unpleasant feature of our settlement in new districts that we have so many bachelors established on the land. The late Minister for lands—if he were here, I would call him the Minister for Lands and Promises—used to go about the country promising to take up the question of wives for the farmers, but he never did anything in the matter at all.

Mr. Green: He was not game to stop in the house and take his medicine.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Members opposite do not know half the things that gentleman used to promise when he went round the country. I say in all seriousness that we have a great problem to face in the fact that so many of the new settlers are bachelors. I am satisfied that if the Government will assist to build houses on the land, the bachelors have the energy and enterprise to do everything necessary to see that those houses are properly tenanted.

Mr. George: Does not the Agricultural Bank assist to build homes?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It does not, but it should do so. It is satisfactory to know that the Government intend to liberalise the Agricultural Bank, and it speaks well for the confidence the Goldfields Ministry have for the farming districts, and it speaks well for the new Government's desire to help the men on the land when they declare that to be one of the first measures they propose to introduce this session. Everyone in the country knows how the Liberal Government, a little over a year ago, voted against the liberalisation of the Agricultural Bank, and it was peculiar to me to hear the Minister for Lands say that he approved of that plank when we all know he voted

against it a little over a year ago. On the eve of the elections, of course the Liberal party suddenly discovered they intended to liberalise the Agricultural Bank, but it is very doubtful if they ever would have done it, and it is doubtful whether the financial interests of St. George's-terrace, to which some of them pay so much consideration, would have allowed them to do it. I hope that very much larger advances will be made to the settler on the land, and I hope provision will be made to take over from the private banks some of the securities which they hold.

Mr. George: The private banks would be very glad.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They have good securities down our way. I do not know about the hon. member's district. With regard to the public service appeal board, I am sure every member is pleased to know that the Government intend to remove the Public Service Commissioner from that board, and every civil servant will be glad to know that it will no longer be necessary for him to appeal from Cæsar to Cæsar, from Jull to Jull, in the way he has had to do in the past. If the Public Service Commissioner had a proper sense of the fitness of things he would have refused to sit in that position, reviewing his own decisions, for so long. I am sorry that the Premier did not tell us with regard to the Public Service Commissioner's appointment that it was the intention of the Government not to ratify what had been done by the late Government. The Premier truly said it was the most monstrous action he had ever heard of when he learned that the Liberal Government had renewed Mr. Jull's appointment nearly a year before the first term of office had expired. It appears that the appointment has not been confirmed, and I hope that the Government will shortly tell us, at any rate the people expect to hear it, that they do not intend to ratify the monstrous appointment that the other Government intended to make. The leader of the Opposition said the civil servants had supported the Labour party. I do not know whether they did so, but if they did it was because

they expected justice at the hands of the Labour party, and the rank and file of the civil servants will never get justice while Mr. Jull occupies the position of Public Service Commissioner. There are people in Western Australia who believe in very low wages for the rank and file, and plenty of increases for the man of influence at the top. I can imagine that a Government who represented people with that view found that Mr. Jull admirably suited them, especially if they had the back of their heads the idea of bringing the wages of the rank and file down to 6s. a day. Such people and such a Commissioner were in thorough accord. Anybody looking through the *Government Gazette* for the last three months would find plenty of reclassifications of civil servants drawing over £300 a year, while the rank and file have been absolutely refused reclassification at all, even when given important and arduous duties to perform. I disapprove of increases to public servants drawing over £300 a year, and the giving of the most of the work to underpaid officers and temporary hands at 10s. a day. I say that the seething discontent which permeates our public service is due to the presence of the present Public Service Commissioner in his position. What can you expect when you get a Public Service Commissioner who, having the right to appoint other commissioners to assist him in classifying the public service, turned round and did the whole lot by himself? It is a sign of his unbounded arrogance, and his brazen cheek, that he should have the unblushing effrontery to classify professional men by himself: ho, a mere clerk, classifying geologists, engineers, medical men, scientists, such as the Government astronomer, surveyors, architects, draughtsmen, and other experts. I say it is an insult to those professional men to ask them to accept a classification by Mr. Jull. He actually takes credit for having done it by himself, but I do not think the officers he classified give him any credit whatever for the manner in which he did it. I hope that in the reclassification of the professional branch, to take place very

shortly, the new Government will see that the professional officers are classified with the assistance of professional men, and not left to the mercies of a mere clerk any longer. I would remind Ministers that the Public Service Commissioner actually kept them in ignorance of the fact that he had been reappointed to that position until after the election for the Metropolitan-Suburban province had taken place. Why was not the Premier told about it as soon as the new Government was formed? It was kept from him until after the Metropolitan-Suburban election was over, and the civil servants in that province were not allowed to know what Mr. Gregory had done until after the poll closed. If only it could be discovered where the Press got the information after the ballot boxes closed that night, it would probably be found that it came from Mr. Jull himself. I say the fact that the Public Service Commissioner lent himself to a secret conspiracy, such as his appointment was, is a sign of his utter unfitness for the position of Public Service Commissioner. The whole spirit of the Public Service Act is that full publicity shall be given to every appointment in the public service, yet this important appointment was fixed up not only without publicity, but absolutely in the dark, and in agreeing to this Mr. Jull showed his utter incapacity to hold the position of Public Service Commissioner. I would like to remind you, too, that when Mr. Jull was first appointed the positions in his office were filled in the same way, without applications being called, as directed by the Public Service Act. Our civil servants are a fine body and I hope the Government will not leave them any longer to the mercy of Mr. Jull, an unspeakable autocrat, who, nevertheless, proved to be a mere tool in the hands of the late Government. I may say that I was pledged to my electors at practically every meeting held, to oppose to the utmost, in the interests of the civil servants, Mr. Jull's reappointment, and I say the supporters of the Labour party throughout the country will be shocked if it

should happen that this secret arrangement between the late Government and their creature be confirmed. I congratulate the members for West Perth and Claremont on the fact that it was not known before the general election that that reappointment was to be made. In regard to the Governor's Speech, I am pleased to know that the local court procedure is to be simplified. As a clerk of courts for some years I know how necessary it is that the form should be made simpler, so that people can conduct their own cases without going to a lawyer. I hope the Government will also consider the question of increasing the jurisdiction of local courts up to £500. We now have competent stipendary magistrates in different districts, and I hope the Government will consider very seriously the question of increasing the jurisdiction of the local courts in order that people will not have to come to Perth to the Supreme Court with every little case. It is a good thing to know that the Government propose to establish a court of criminal appeal. The law of the country at present protects property and gives people the right of appeal in civil cases, whereas, so far, they have had no right of appeal in criminal cases, where a man's character, reputation, personal liberty, and even his life, may be concerned. I congratulate the Government on having determined to give the right of appeal in these cases. I am glad to see also that it is intended to give civil servants full political rights. This, in my opinion, should have been done years ago. In regard to educational matters, I would like to say that more schools are required outback in the farming districts. It is a grievous thing to see fine, healthy children not receiving proper primary education, and I hope the Minister for Education will take into consideration the advisability of converting a number of largely attended half-time schools into full-time schools. Some hon. members have spoken highly of the proposed establishment of a university, and I am glad to support those remarks; but to my mind it is of far more importance

that the children of our settlers in the backblocks should get full primary education. They are not getting it to-day. I hope that, next year, the Government will bring forward the question of State manufacture of agricultural implements. All the Labour candidates in agricultural districts have promised the farmers harvesters at cost price, and I hope those promises will be fulfilled, and the settlers relieved from the grip of the machinery rings. To me one of the most pleasing results of the recent elections is the fact that the breezy optimist from Northam, for so long the Minister for Lands, has now been removed from that position. The alteration is welcomed from one end of the agricultural districts to the other. His tenure of office was marked by a complete reversal of the land policy which had obtained since the days of Sir John Forrest until he (Mr. Mitchell) became Minister. Previously any man with a stout heart and a strong pair of arms could go on the land in this country; but Mr. Mitchell so increased the fees in one way and another, and the price of land, that now a man of limited means cannot go on the land in this State with any confidence. Until immediately before the recent elections Mr. Mitchell was charging up to 25s. an acre for land 60 miles from a railway, and which, on his own classification, was shown to contain one-third sandplain. That meant that at the end of three years the new settler on that land would have to pay £60 a year rent for 1,000 acres of it. The man would not get the money off the property, and so could not pay it. I hope that when our new Land Bill is brought down it will contain a clause giving these men relief under our new conditions. The trail of the money lender was over most of Mr. Mitchell's dealings with the new settlers, and the new settlers had to pay ever since the hon. gentleman was first made Minister. Through the open columns of the *West Australian* I charged Mr. Mitchell that during his administration of the department he had increased the price of land fixed or recommended by the men who inspected

the land; that he would not let the inspector who saw the block fix the price, but that from his office in Perth (he Mr. Mitchell) used to put up that price. The hon. gentleman has never contradicted that statement, and I say he cannot. Further than that, the member for Northam introduced a policy of centralisation in connection with the land board. Before he became Minister for Lands we did occasionally have a local land board sitting in Narrogin, but never while he was Minister. I say Mr. Mitchell assisted the speculator and the estate agent by having the meetings of the land board in Perth when they ought to have been held in country districts. I hope the new Minister will once more give us local land boards, and that when there are two or three applicants for on block, the board will once more go into the district instead of sitting in Perth. I hope, too, that the chairman of the local roads board will be given a seat on the local lands boards. Also, under Mr. Mitchell's regime delays of from 12 to 18 months took place in regard to practically every application for an unsurveyed block of land, and I hope the new Minister will put an end to these delays. The reorganisation of the Lands Department was also faced by the member for Northam, and he appointed three under secretaries to help with the work. One was to deal with people whose initials ran from A. to F., the second was to deal with those from G. to M., and the third with those from N. to Z. The result was that if Mr. Brown, Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith of Narrogin came to Perth with a similar request, they had to see three separate officers; and if their requests were at all involved, they would very likely get three different replies. The alphabetical system may be a good method to deal with bank ledgers, with which the member for Northam had so long an acquaintance, but it is a bad way of dealing with settlers on the land. I hope the new Minister for Lands will try to alter that system. I hope he will give each of these under-secretaries different districts or parts of the State to deal with. Possibly one could deal with matters concerning the wheat belt, the second with matters concerning

the South-West, and the third with matters concerning mining and pastoral districts. At any rate, let us have the work distributed and not on an alphabetical basis, which is cumbersome and unfair to the officers, because each officer has to keep at his finger tips knowledge of land matters affecting the whole State instead of having to keep in touch only with matters covering separate districts or parts of the State. The late Government put up the price of poison land and sandplain to 14s. and 15s. an acre. In regard to these poison lands we are face to face with the fact that we have parts of the State that are poor, and I hope the new Government when they are bringing the Land Bill forward will bring in special regulations to deal with this inferior class of country. We are pledged to let all settlers have their land for three years rent free. Why not let them have it for seven years rent free on this particular class of country? Because anyone who will face the task of removing the poison from this poor land is one that should be encouraged. We should also encourage the selection of sandplain country. Just before the elections the member for Northam appointed a Poison Commission, and the chairman of the Commission, needless to say, came from Northam. He was sent to the Williams-Narrogin electorate on the eve of the election in the capacity of Poison Commissioner, and was paid by the State. I consider it a scandalous abuse of the people's money. That appointment was made on the eve of the election, and a gentleman, whom I am told is a close friend and political supporter of the ex-Minister for Lands, was appointed chairman. The member for Northam used the State's money to send that Commissioner into my district for a considerable part of two months immediately preceding the elections, and from what I am told the chairman of the Commission was not backward in praising the member for Northam and the Liberal Government while he was supposed to be doing his work as Commissioner. I have something else to say about the election tactics of the member for Northam. I criticised his policy in the open columns of the *West Australian* some six weeks before the election,

but he did not reply to my criticism, which was somewhat on the lines of that I have uttered to-day. He could not reply to it, and he wisely did not, but he adopted the tactics of the cuttle fish in the matter. He waited until the very week of the election and on the Saturday before the election he published a column in the Narrogin paper dealing with different land matters and with my candidature. It was a despicable action to wait until it was too late for me to make any reply at all in the newspapers in Narrogin. He referred to the fact that I was an apostle of higher prices when a Lands Department officer. I do not quite know the Parliamentary method of describing that statement, but I will risk calling it a deliberate misstatement; because, while I was in the Lands Department, I always did my best to help the people to get their land at a reasonable price. He also referred to the fact that on many occasions I had expressed my admiration for his work. Well, those occasions are unknown to me; I defy the member for Northam to tell me of one. I knew too much about his work to express any admiration or any opinion different to what I have expressed to-day. This afternoon the member for Northam uttered a number of harmless platitudes with which most of us agree about the future of the country and the agricultural industry. I agree whole-heartedly with all those platitudes; and as we have had them once, I will not repeat any of them as I might otherwise have done. It is natural, when we come to consider it, the member for Northam should criticise the new Minister in the way he did. I venture to say that, whatever the new Minister did, the member for Northam would criticise in that same manner. We must remember the member for Northam has lost a good job which the new Minister has got, and that is responsible for a good deal of the criticism that has fallen from the member for Northam to-day. The member for Northam has said that the alteration in regard to potatoes does not mean much. Well, if it does not mean much, why does he object so much? I say it means much, because it means that in the Great Southern district, where we have a big population,

we will get cheap potatoes. We could not get them, we could not afford them when the member for Northam was Minister for Lands. I would like also to refer to the way in which the member for Northam starved the Narrogin agricultural farm while he was Minister. There has been no fresh land cleared on that farm for years. I believe he treated it as badly as he could. I am pleased to see the new Premier has been good enough to say that the claims of the Narrogin agricultural farm will be considered when the question of establishing an agricultural college in Western Australia is brought up, as I believe it is to be brought up next year. I hope the new Government when bringing forward their Estimates will carefully consider the question of increasing roads board grants. The late Government cut down the grants last year to about half what they were the year before. I hope that the new Government will bring them back to the old figure and at least distribute this year in road grants as much as was distributed by the Labour Government some years ago. We have big districts to open up, and it is necessary that the roads in these districts should be adequately considered. Many members travelled over the roads in the country districts during the recent campaign, and I am sure by their experiences they will be able to judge of the urgent need for increasing road grants right throughout the agricultural districts. In conclusion I would like to say I believe the Labour Government will do good work in protecting the producer against the middleman, and will serve the best interests of the people, not only in the agricultural districts but right throughout the State. There is good work ahead of the Ministry in regard to administration as well as legislation, and in both of these directions I look to the new Government to do a lot to make Western Australia a better country in the future than it has been in the past.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth): The last speaker, like other members on the Government side of the House, said he rose with a great deal of diffidence and timidity to speak. I must confess he displayed very little timidity in his drastic

criticism of the late Government. Should I be guilty of any breaches of debate I trust it will be put down to my want of knowledge of the customs of the House. and I trust I will be allowed some little indulgence, as in extraneous and new surroundings one naturally takes a little time to feel one's feet. I have not been connected with the late Government, but I am with them and share the criticism levelled at them to-day. I must confess at the outset that unless one was aware of the good work the late Government did—because despite what the last speaker said, they did good work, it was not all bad—one would have thought they had really done nothing and that everything done was to their discredit, and that the State had suffered by it. Therefore, I do not think members will agree with all the last speaker has said. He was too drastic altogether in his criticism. He ventured the opinion that had the appointment of Mr. Jull been known before the election took place I would not have been in my position to-day. I have a good deal of sympathy with the civil servants, and I will be only too happy to assist members opposite in bringing about something to do away with a good deal of discontent that now exists; but I am in the position of knowing that, had that appointment been known before the election, I would still be in the position I am in to-day. I congratulate the Government on assuming power under such favourable circumstances. It has been suggested that the circumstances are not favourable because some districts are suffering from want of rain; but this is not confined to Western Australia, because in some of the Eastern States they are likewise suffering from a deficiency in rainfall. Never in the history of Western Australia were the prospects better and brighter than they are to-day, and the Government are to be congratulated on coming into office when things are so bright and prosperous. I agree with Mr. Mitchell that we have a great State, the greatest in the Commonwealth, greater in prospects than any of the other States; and it only remains for good Government and for wise and just

measures to be brought down by the present Government to continue the prosperity the State has enjoyed under the late Government in the past five or six years. It is not my intention to harass the Government. I have come into Parliament with the determination to assist any Government in power to pass measures that may be for the progress, prosperity and happiness of the people of the State. I shall be ever alert and ready to assist in criticism wherever I think it necessary. Although the Opposition is not a big one, still we have some old campaigners and political veterans, and when occasion arises we shall be able to hold the fort and fight the necessary battles. Numbers do not count for everything. It may be the Government side will find dangers and difficulties arising that they do not anticipate, and very likely serious results will happen. The keen interest taken in the elections has been referred to. I think it creditable—the excellent poll right throughout the State; it shows the electors are alive to their interests, I trust they will not find their confidence misplaced. The Government have every opportunity, they have started in a good time when things are prosperous and they have absolutely all the power they can possibly want. One Labour member in congratulating me after the election, said he was only sorry a labour man did not win. I remarked he was decidedly greedy when the Labour party had already 32 or 33 assured seats. Something has been said about the increase of the Ministerial salaries, but I for one think it would have been better if those on the other side had adopted the suggestion which was thrown out, I think by the member for Swan, that this question should have been left to the people. It would have been better to do as they did in South Australia and have a referendum taken. Had that course been pursued the chances are we should have had the same result as South Australia had. But, as the leader of the Opposition stated, if the Government think their services are only worth £1,000 per annum, then we cannot quibble about their reducing their own salaries. The

question has been mentioned as to the state of the electoral rolls. During my candidature I found that there were a great number of electors not on the rolls, but who had a right to be there. I should like the Minister for Justice, if it is possible, to bring down an amendment of the Electoral Act so that those who have the necessary qualification and who are entitled to vote should if necessary, on the day of election, make some small kind of declaration that they have the necessary qualification, and then they should be enabled to vote. Even we might have a heavy penalty of imprisonment for several years if a person wrongly voted, but when people take the trouble to go to the poll to vote and are told that their names are not on the roll, and those people have lived in a district for years, it is discouraging to the electors to find themselves in such a position. I would like to see some amendment brought in whereby this difficulty would be overcome. I am glad to notice that the present Government have decided to adopt the suggestion of the late Government in regard to the weekly half-holiday. I am entirely in accord with the suggestion that the matter should be left to a referendum and I would go this far—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): When did they suggest it?

Mr. Allen: During the recent elections.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There has been a Bill here for the last two years.

Mr. ALLEN: When the time comes to vote I shall exercise that vote in favour of the Saturday half-holiday. The Wednesday half-holiday is of very little use to anybody and the principal sports all take place on a Saturday. I remember when I was in business in South Australia I was glad at the end of the week to be able to go into the hills and not return until the Monday. I shall be glad to assist the Government in this direction. I notice it is intended to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and I trust that whatever the nature of the amendment is, if it has the desired effect of putting an end to the industrial strikes and troubles, I shall be very glad

indeed. When this Act was first introduced it was thought that it would be the means of settling all industrial disputes. Unfortunately it has not proved so, and any amendment I hope will have the effect of settling industrial disputes. Those who have lived and been in districts where strikes have taken place know full well the terrible pain and suffering that is caused through strikes, and the loss of capital and of business caused through strikes, and if the Government bring in an amendment that will overcome these difficulties they will earn the good wishes of the people. I trust that whatever the Government do the amendment will be such that when an award is given it will be carried out on both sides. I am in sympathy with the Minister in trying to put a stop to land speculation. I am one of the Terrace agents, but I have no sympathy whatever with land which is taken up for speculative purposes. I have in my mind at the present time the case of two young fellows who for the past two years have been trying to get land. I do not know if their failure has been their own fault, but they have repeatedly gone before boards and have not been successful. I hope the Government will put right all this sort of thing and that in future there will be no complaints. As to the question of immigration, there is nothing in the Speech about it, but all are agreed on the one fact, that Western Australia needs two things to-day, capital and population. We must have immigration to settle the lands and to work hand in hand with the Federal Government to provide for our own defence. But it must be remembered that we want workers, not shirkers. It is no good bringing men out here who will not work. We want the right stamp of immigrant and then it will be found that the people will not be disappointed. A good deal has been said about the cheapening of food supplies. That is not a question which can come within the range of party politics, therefore I can say that I shall honestly do all I can to support the Government in cheapening our food supply. I had almost anticipated that the Government would have right away chartered

a ship and sent it to the North-West to bring down cattle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You cannot bring down cattle at this season.

Mr. ALLEN: Is that the reason? By the way the Government were talking during the recent elections I thought that they would have already chartered a ship or two and sent to the North-West coast for cattle: As to the question of water supplies, I hope the Government will take the proper step to provide the metropolitan area with a more up-to-date water supply and now that the sewerage scheme is being connected with the houses more water will be needed. Our present supply is unsatisfactory and inadequate, and I hope the Government will get to work and do something at once. Primary industries have had a great deal of consideration, and properly so. They are in a prosperous condition. I trust our secondary industries will not be overlooked when occasion arises to give them assistance. I trust the opportunity will come when the Government will be able to give some preference to the secondary industries and place orders with them and thus assist them. A great deal of capital has been invested in our secondary industries in Western Australia, and they should be further developed. When we remember that seven million or eight million pounds go out of the State every year for the importation of goods, it will be seen that there is big scope in building up the secondary industries of Western Australia. I would like to express the hope that the Government will deal more generously with the Perth City Council in regard to its subsidy. At the present time the Perth City Council is only getting a maximum of £2,000, but if that council was treated at the rate of 5s. in the pound, they would get £5,060 a year. The Government should recognise the services the municipality have rendered to the Government and in consequence are entitled to greater consideration. If the Perth council were to be allowed to rate Government properties, on an estimate made in the year 1903, the Perth City Council would receive something like £11,000 from the Government.

I have expressed the opinion out of the House, and I express it again, that a great deal of time is often wasted over the Address-in-reply, therefore I do not intend to take up the time further. I should, Mr. Speaker, at the outset have taken the opportunity of congratulating you on the high and honoured position which you occupy. I do not know that I should be right in saying that I hope you may occupy it for a number of years, but I know that you will occupy it to the satisfaction of the House and with credit to yourself.

Mr. DOOLEY (Geraldton): I, like the previous speaker, have opinions about the time taken up on the Address-in-reply, and I think there may be a good deal of time wasted. But it is also very necessary that certain matters should be given voice to and many things referred to which perhaps members would not have an opportunity of doing under other circumstances. I would like, in the first place, to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment, because knowing you as long as I have, I am pleased to think that the choice of the House has been so unanimous. You are a man who at all times has been held in the highest opinion in public life, and for the spirit of justice which has been apparent in all your actions, therefore, I think the appointment is a happy one. In regard to the Ministers, although I offer my congratulations to those gentlemen yet at the same time I have to offer my sympathy to them because I recognise that they have a great task before them, coming as they have done into office when the work of previous administrators had accumulated through, I venture to say, neglect and carelessness in regard to their departments, therefore they have made the work of their successors very arduous indeed. There is an opinion prevalent in the northern districts, particularly at Geraldton, that we in the past have not been given that consideration that we should receive, and I regret to notice that so far as the Address from His Excellency is concerned there is a small matter that indicates that the present Administration have not altogether considered the

northern districts sufficiently. I refer to the fact that in speaking of the prevalent drought they specify the eastern districts only. I do not want to give my district an advertisement in the wrong way, but I want to say this, that there are settlers in the northern districts and particularly in the Geraldton district who are suffering, I venture to say, as severely as the eastern settlers are suffering from the present prevalent drought. But the consoling feature is the fact of the prompt and energetic manner in which the present Administration have dealt with the water problem. I am sorry indeed to say that in spite of all that has been done in the past the question of providing water for settlers has not been satisfactorily considered. Perhaps there is an excuse for that in the fact that Western Australia has been fortunate with regard to its climatic conditions, and we have not up to the present experienced anything in the shape of a drought of any severity, but it behoves us now that we are awakened by the admonitions of Dame Nature in this respect to let her sons represented in the Labour party take notice that this admonition is properly regarded and look well to the future as to water conservation. In regard to this matter I think the Government would do well if in the future in throwing open areas they make sure, before these areas are thrown open for selection, that there shall be no monopoly with regard to water reserves. I think in the past this matter has been entirely neglected. I know areas in the northern districts suffering considerably from want of water and there are water supplies held by private individuals, or private individuals have the ownership of them, and we know that people will not be too generous in times such as we are experiencing at present to allow that water to be used. But I do hope the Government in throwing open areas in the future, before doing so will mark well this point and take precautionary measures to see that before an area is thrown open sufficient water will be made available for the settlers. Not in the good times when water is plentiful, but that we provide for the future when we may have to ex-

perience another drought similar to the present. I was rather impressed with the remarks of the member for Wagin, when he referred to the methods adopted by the present Government in being so candid in regard to the financial position. He spoke to the effect that by so doing the Government were damaging the State's credit, and as a comparison, or example, of what should be done he quoted the position of a business man. That to me threw a sidelight on the difference between business methods and Government methods. So far as the individual is concerned it is only a matter of his own particular interests, but so far as Governments are concerned, the interests of the whole people are at stake. If the Government wish to retain the confidence of the people, they must give the people the confidence which they expect from them. I must give the Government credit for laying the financial position fully before the country, and I hope that, contrary to what has been done in the past, when financial statements are being dealt with, in future we will not have a repetition of the protests from the Auditor-General with regard to the manner in which the public finances are handled. Every year we notice protests with regard to the system of bookkeeping, and it seems to me that there must be something wrong with the Audit Act when the Auditor-General, whom we have appointed to watch the bookkeeping and the finances of the country, has to make such statements, and while in this Chamber these protests may be treated with the greatest of courtesy outside they are simply laughed at. I hope that if the matter comes before the House again some provision will be inserted in the Act whereby the Auditor-General will have the power to bring the responsible Minister before the Full Court or High Court to give reasons why he has not carried out the instructions or provisions of the Act, which is supposed to safeguard the finances and bookkeeping interests of the community. A good deal has been said during the debate with regard to land settlement, and the disastrous policy which the Government are introducing, particularly in connection with the non-

alienation or Government ownership as against private ownership. I must claim that I have had a somewhat different and exceptional experience with regard to this matter. So far as my district is concerned, I have had many farmers come to me who are anxious to convert their conditional purchases into leaseholds under the scheme put forward by the present Government. Therefore I am heart and soul looking forward to the time when the present Government will bring about a drastic reform in the direction of substituting non-alienation for the present system. While on the land question, I would like to say that, whatever the financial stress of this country may be at an early or distant date, I sincerely trust this Government will not attempt to do what previous administrators have done, and that is, endeavour to hoodwink the farmers and pastoralists by telling them that they are their friends while all the time they are piling up the costs of land administration. The member for Williams-Narrogin has referred to this matter and to the high survey charges. We know that survey charges were trebled by the last Administration, and also that the price of land has gone up; but the member for Williams-Narrogin explained that matter very lucidly to hon. members. The high price of food is a matter that requires to be taken up seriously by the Administration, and as the Minister for Lands stated last night that he was sick and tired of hearing these things mentioned this is essentially a matter that requires the closest attention from an administrative point of view. I come from a town where the price of commodities and house rents have been raised anything from 10 to 20 per cent. during the last few months, and whenever I attempted to investigate the cause I could get no satisfaction. I am now speaking of the ordinary commodities, particularly groceries, and I find that the retailers there are putting up their prices without justification or reason. With regard to the high price of meat, and the difficulties in connection with meat supplies in the North-West, I think that if the Minister for Lands would go thor-

oughly into the matter he would find splendid areas close to the centres of population in this State which could be utilised for stock-raising purposes. There are between the Murchison and Gascoyne some fine areas of land which, I daresay, could be leased in areas of from 20,000 to 25,000 acres and utilised for mixed farming or grazing farms. They are too far away from the market for wheat-growing purposes, but stock could be raised in those districts, and we should encourage people to go on them who understand stock-raising. In this way we could create a community of small squatters, or stock-raisers, and this system would go a long way to combat the increased cost of meat at any rate. Much has been said in regard to the mining industry, and this is another matter in regard to which I have a slight grievance against the Government. No reference is made in the Speech to the mining areas in and around Northampton. Most of them are on private property; but I did think the fact would be noted that there is a large area of agricultural country which is also rich in deposits of the baser metal. I know that there is a Mining on Private Property Act which, so far as these areas are concerned, has been flouted in the past. I have known genuine prospectors, working men, who were desirous of exploiting these mineral deposits and who made sure that they were within their rights in asking to go on this land, but the late Minister for Mines, who has been so buttered up by the members who spoke on the Opposition side, absolutely refused them permission. After getting a high legal opinion locally he sent across to the Eastern States and obtained from one of the big constitutional authorities an opinion which was favourable to the applications of these gentlemen to mine on this land, but he then turned round and stated that the British investor had to be considered, and the British investor in this case was an absentee, who was making no use of the land applied for by these people. Another matter I wish to refer to is the coal deposits in the Irwin district. The records show that coal has been found there in fairly workable quantities, and

that it is coal of a high commercial value, equal, if not superior, to the coal at Collie. This is a matter that requires to be gone into, if only for the purpose of satisfying the Government that there is a good proposition here. When we remember the great scarcity of fuel on the Murchison goldfields, and the distance which the wood lines have to go, it can be realised what would be the importance to these fields of an adjacent coal mine. I therefore sincerely hope that the Government will not overlook the fact that, so far as prospecting has gone, we have a good hope of establishing another coal-field. In this respect I trust that the error which was made in the past in allowing the coalfields at Collie to be exploited by private individuals will not be repeated in connection with these coal fields. The railways are extending in the north, slowly I must admit, and when we remember that here is coal which could be worked very economically by virtue of its being so adjacent, and that the Government would be a big consumer, it will be seen how desirable it is that we should keep private enterprise from cutting in and depriving the people of the profits and advantages that rightly belong to them. Another matter I wish to refer to is the question of ports. We have heard a good deal said about Esperance, and about Bunbury and Fremantle, and so far as the commercial importance of those ports is concerned I wish to state a fact which, perhaps, will come as a surprise to many hon. members, that Geraldton is the second port of commercial importance in this State; it ranks next to Fremantle by virtue of the value of the imports and exports. This can be proved at the Customs House, and the complaint we have at Geraldton is that the wharfage rates charged at Fremantle have acted as an absolute bar to the introduction of produce from the northern areas. This is a matter which, if the Government are going to live up to their traditions, and I feel every confidence that they will, they must thoroughly investigate, because we might just as well be in another State with a high protective tariff against the north if we allow it to continue. In con-

nection with this, before justice is done to the northern ports, and particularly to Geraldton, something will have to be done in connection with the railway. The Midland Railway Company certainly are providing slightly better facilities than they did in the past, but nevertheless while that concern is in the hands of the company, the railway will be a menace to the welfare and the proper development and advancement of the northern districts, because at the present time the company are allowed the right to operate differential rates, with the result that to divert the trade over their lines from Geraldton they are carrying produce at a far lower proportionate rate than is done closer to Midland, where of course the produce or the traffic of necessity must go to them. I think this is one of the things that the Government should attend to, and they should do their utmost to bring about the purchase of the railway, which will be an advantage to not only one part of the district but to the country at large, and particularly will it be so if the predictions of some of us work out correctly, and that is that our finances are likely to be not so buoyant in the near future as they have been in the past. I say that a reasonable offer should be made and negotiations started at the earliest moment with that company with regard to the purchase, and if they will not listen to reason, at any rate if they stand by their contract so far as charging differential rates is concerned, I trust that the Government will wake up to their responsibility and protect the people of the north from the operations of these rates to which I have referred, and do what they did some years ago, namely, run a steamer or a line of steamers from Fremantle to Geraldton in opposition to the company. It occurs to me that this is a matter which could be well taken up in connection with certain suggestions made with regard to the subsidising of the shipping service on the North-West coast generally. It is a matter too, that I am not leaving with this discussion this afternoon, and I can promise the Government that in season and out of season I shall peg away in the interests of the northern people, with the

object of consummating the purchase of the Midland railway, and if the company will not listen to reason, then I shall concentrate all my efforts in the direction of devising proposals whereby they will have to be brought to reason, so that justice may be done to the community which they are serving irrespective of the profits of the absentee shareholders. Another very urgent necessity, and a matter from which we have suffered in the north to a considerable extent, is the question of circuit courts. I notice that one portion of the State, at any rate the Eastern Goldfields, have been considered in this matter, while the people in the northern areas have been treated with scant courtesy in the past. This is a matter which is also beginning to become very irksome as far as the northern people are concerned, particularly as the population of the district I represent is increasing, and the importance of the port of Geraldton is increasing, as well also as the different centres on the Murchison, and I trust that the Minister for Justice will do all he can with regard to instituting these circuit courts. Wherever you go you cannot get away from the fact that disputes arise which can only be settled by legal process, and in a matter which has to be dealt with by the Supreme Court it means that litigants are dragged, in some cases, 600 or 700 miles over a very weary road to Perth, when, without much expense, a circuit court in Geraldton, sitting, say, once in every three months, could determine all these matters. This would be a considerable advantage which would be greatly appreciated by those of our people in the districts I have referred to. Another very urgent matter is in connection with the ports. I was very pleased to hear that the Premier had declared himself favourable to going into the matter of proper shipping facilities. We in Western Australia have not been blessed as other parts of the continent with deep water frontages. Our bays wherever we go abound with shallow water and with flat, receding shores, and we have to run jetties out to a very great distance in order to get any depth, and then we find reefs and shoals which,

through the very severe gales that blow, bring about added difficulties to shipping. So far as Geraldton is concerned we are suffering from these difficulties, and I sincerely hope that this matter will also be taken up. I would suggest the advisability of appointing a Commission of experts, say two or three gentlemen who have had considerable experience and who could report on some of these places which are growing in importance, Geraldton in particular, with a view of making suggestions for the provision of something like decent facilities. No matter what development takes place, or how prosperous the northern districts may become, until we are able to give the shipping something like reasonable facilities, there will be a tendency to divert the traffic through other channels. I cannot conclude without referring to the suggested amendment of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I think we might well make provision in the direction referred to by the member for Leonora when he stated that the question of the high cost of living, or what should constitute a living wage, should be prescribed or set down, if possible, in the Act, so that the Judge of the Supreme Court would have something more than his own personal prejudices or opinions to go on when fixing the basis of wages. I am ready to admit this is a very difficult problem under present conditions. The trouble seems to be that there is only a limited demand for a certain commodity which has to be manufactured and, of course, competitors, so far as the manufacturing element or the capitalistic element is concerned, are allowed to enter in the limited market, with the result that they cut one another's prices, and they regard human energy and flesh and blood just as some commonplace factors in the matter, and they think that the wages of the worker should be cut down without any consideration. I think also that the Act requires explaining with regard to the form of organisation. At the present time, no matter how diversified an industry is with regard to the different classes of work performed in that industry, the Act prescribes that for every little classification a union may or

shall be organised before it can appear before the court. I know from experience that a general union of workers that may be called into existence, and which may represent more than one particular industry, are debarred from going before the Arbitration Court; in fact, they are debarred from registration under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act. I do not think that it is in the best interests of the community, either of the workers themselves or of the people generally, and it certainly does not tend to industrial peace. If we broadened that Act by a provision to reduce the number of unions to, perhaps, one union of all workers in any one industry, we would be making an advanced step in the right direction, and concentrating the issue between the two main forces, labour and capital, and so tending to reduce friction. A good deal has been said with regard to civil service reform. I do not wish to say any more on that except to heartily endorse everything the member for Narrogin-Williams has said. He is competent to speak on this matter, and as far as my observations have gone in moving along my daily life amongst civil servants, I think the whole gist of the trouble lies in the fact that we have at the head of affairs, in the person of Mr. Jull, an officer who is not competent to deal with men of highly trained intellect. As far as I can gather, what they are asking for is a very small matter, merely justice; that is to say, that when they consider they have not been treated fairly their cases shall be heard on lines similar to those obtaining in every court or board of justice. I would refer to the question of municipal reform. At the present time we get complaints on all hands, from both municipal councils and roads boards, with regard to the subsidies. As far as municipal councils are concerned I venture to say that if the Act were amended to provide for the rating assessment on the unimproved value instead of, as at present, on the rental value, we would get twice the revenue at about one-fourth the cost to the resident ratepayers. More particularly would this be so if we were allowed to rate Government property. According to the present

Act Government property is free from rating, and as far as Geraldton is concerned, and I think this applies to Perth as well, the best and most valuable blocks are occupied by Government buildings. If the right to assess the rates on the unimproved value were introduced you would hear very little complaint from any municipality.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Only a few of the blocks are carrying Government buildings.

Mr. DOOLEY: Even apart from the Government buildings, surely when you come to consider the conveniences that are afforded—you must not forget that, so far as Government buildings are concerned, the Government insist upon the best municipal work in regard to the maintenance of footpaths and public service generally—and remember that we get little or nothing for them, it will be conceded that it is only fair that we should be allowed to raise our rates on these properties. Another important matter in connection with the Act is the question of providing for the better security of tenure in respect to our municipal officers. I have known municipal officers to be highly trained gentlemen in their respective classes of work; but there is generally a difficulty in keeping these gentlemen, because of the fact that a municipality has the power of discharging them almost at a moment's notice, and this does not tend to encourage them to take the same interest in their work as they otherwise might do. Further than that, we should extend the borrowing powers of municipalities. Of the many assets a municipality has, the safest and most productive is proper housing, and it seems to me that we ought to give a municipality power to borrow money for building purposes. If the Act were amended in that direction Ministers would not have to worry in regard to the question of subsidies. I sincerely hope the Government will endeavour to give consideration to the Northern districts, and remember that although their predecessors have concentrated all their attention on one part of the State there are greater potentialities

ties in the North than those revealed in the Southern or Eastern areas.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. LEWIS (Canning): I rise to support the adoption of the Address-in-reply in accordance with the usual modesty that characterises our party in the hour of victory, whilst in the hour of defeat we can be equally brave. The most pleasing feature of the recent election was the circumstance that such a large percentage of electors exercised their privilege. While the people take so keen an interest in the government of the State we can rest assured that the Government will carry out faithfully the task entrusted to them. It is also satisfactory to note that the electors have returned a party that preaches nationalism. One factor that helped to return the Labour party and defeat the Liberal party was the recognition by the people of the splendid record put up by the same party in the national Parliament. Both from an administrative and a legislative point of view that party have put up a record of which the people of Australia are proud. Further than that, education has been the means of enabling the people of Australia to return from the ranks of the workers practical men who realise the difficulties the people have to suffer under and who can take control of the legislation and administration of the State and do more effective work in a short period than their predecessors have ever done before. During the short time the present national Government have been in power they have achieved more effective work than had previously been done in the history of the Commonwealth. Many reasons have been stated for the marvellous overthrow of the Liberal party at the recent elections. I realise that the most important factors in that were education and adult suffrage. People are beginning to realise that the party who in the past have controlled the destinies of the State have worked in the interests of a few privileged people, without regard for the great masses. I am pleased to congratulate the Minister for Lands on having instituted a policy which, I believe, will effectively develop the lands

of this State. Any casual observer travelling over the railway lines of the State must realise that the land close to the existing railways is in many districts nothing but a wilderness, while genuine settlers have to go out into the interior of the country under a diminished rainfall in order to gain a living from the soil. Clearly in the past speculators have held the land close to the railways for the sake of the unearned increment, and have thus retarded the progress of the State. I am pleased to see that every effort is to be put forth to assist the settlers on our land so that those who desire to take up land and utilise it shall have an opportunity afforded to them such as has never been afforded in the past. Owing to the dry season in certain parts of our agricultural areas at the present time we realise that settlers have to struggle with many difficulties, and it is pleasing to note the prompt action on the part of the Government with a view to alleviating the discomfort of these people. The Labour party realise that if we are going to have progress in the State it is essential that we should develop every industry. The more avenues of employment opened up, the better for the State and the Commonwealth generally. Therefore we are a national party. There is no attempt to set the goldfields against the coast. One of the sins the late Administration had to carry was that they always endeavoured to set the coast against the goldfields with a view to securing a further lease of power. The present Administration recognise that the coast and the goldfields are indissolubly linked together, and recognise also that if we are to have progress we must do all we can to assist those in our agricultural areas. And so we see to-day the national party in Western Australia having representatives, not only from metropolitan constituencies but also from agricultural constituencies, and a monopoly of representation from the goldfields constituencies; and this party is going to work unitedly to develop every industry. I am pleased to know that at last we have an energetic Minister for Mines who is determined to do all he can to open up new fields, the greatest stimu-

lus which can ever be experienced in this State. We realise that an industry which employs large numbers of men is deserving of every encouragement. We also intend to do all we can to build up the manufacturing industries in our metropolitan area. By doing that we create a market for our producers on the land. The Labour party, being all practical men, realise it is necessary to do this in order to promote the development of the State we are all so proud to belong to. There is also mention in the Governor's Speech of the importance of constructing railways. We realise it is necessary to build railways in order to develop this vast area, and the party to which I have the honour to belong will do all in their power to hasten this. They will see that the railways will not be opened up, as was often the case in the past, to enhance the value of the land of some who had a certain amount of political patronage, but they will see that the lines are built to serve the larger body of settlers. We should extend our railway system in the metropolitan area. I would like the Government to take into consideration the necessity for building a line along the south bank of the Swan river, as the progress of the district it would serve has been retarded owing to the need for communication. Besides opening up settlement, such a line would remove the congestion on the main line and would ensure more economical railway working. Trains are now hung up for hours because the lines are congested. By opening up the South-side railway a lot of the traffic from the Eastern line could be diverted. The line would do a vast amount of good and effect economies so far as departmental administration is concerned. We have, I am confident, at Como one of the finest beaches in the State, a clean, sandy, fine beach. If this railway was opened up it would enable our wives and children to visit that beach, and Como would prove a fine asset to that particular railway. I welcome the introduction of a Parliamentary Committee of Public Works. I believe public works should be inquired into and reports submitted to Parliament, so that Parliament can have something to

guide them as to the necessity for works. The committee might also consider the desirability of establishing State brick works. I believe there is a ring existing now, and that bricks cost from 50s. to 55s. at the kiln. I believe that by the State manufacture of bricks this ring could be broken up, and that we could manufacture bricks at from 30s. to 35s. a thousand. This would enable people with limited means to build homes for themselves, which they cannot do now owing to the monopoly that exists. I hope the Government will speedily deal with the early closing question, and have the referendum as to the weekly half-holiday. The Saturday half-holiday has been instituted in Melbourne and Adelaide, and though on its introduction some employers strenuously opposed it, they now realise the boon it is, and the advantage it is to have a little respite at the end of the week to be able to take a week-end journey that equips them for the work of the following week. I am glad it is intended to deal with this matter as soon as possible. I do not intend to discuss all the paragraphs in the Governor's Speech. I support the remarks of several speakers that too much time can be taken up by discussing the Address-in-reply, time which might possibly be devoted to work of a more urgent nature. Most matters have been very exhaustively dealt with already, but there is one there is no reference to, and I would like the Government to give it their earnest consideration, because it is in accordance with their policy of the nationalising of public utilities. I urge on the Government the necessity to go thoroughly into the matter of endeavouring to secure the nationalisation of the Perth tramways. Recently a Traffic Commission sat in Melbourne and took evidence with regard to the Melbourne Tramway Company, a monopolistic concern which in 1887, the year of the Centennial Exhibition, paid 72 per cent. dividend, and in another year 57 per cent. dividend, and in another year 38 per cent., and for several years over 20 per cent. dividend, the lowest dividend paid being 9 per cent. during the years of depression. The capital cost of that concern is £1,705,794. Interest and sinking

fund per annum is £123,750, and the profits per annum, including provision for reserves, exceed the latter sum. It is estimated that the profits of this company, owing to the increased population, will, during the last two years of their lease, amount to something over a quarter of a million. This is an example sufficiently striking to show us and demonstrate to the Government the need for securing the valuable asset of the Perth tramways. The settlement and progress of the district I represent has been largely retarded by the want of communication between the district and the City. The sole desire of these monopolistic concerns is to secure profit, and profit only. Repeatedly deputations have waited on the Melbourne Tramway Company, as they have in Perth, urging extensions to suburbs which have grown into existence, also urging the establishment of penny sections or penny fares; but at all times these requests have been refused. On the other hand we have in New South Wales a tramway system run by the Government who have introduced penny sections, and that system carries the bulk of the suburban traffic. If we compare the Sydney tramway traffic with the Melbourne tramway traffic we find that in Melbourne, with a population of 598,000, the passenger journeys per head of the population are 140 per annum, and the receipts are £700,000; whereas in Sydney, with a population of 635,000, the passenger journeys per head of the population amount to 312 and the receipts reach £1,161,184. In Melbourne the bulk of the suburban traffic is carried on the railways, because in the outer suburbs the people have no opportunity of getting tramway extensions, owing to the fact that the Melbourne Tramway Company exists solely for profit and has no regard whatsoever for public convenience or public interests. I believe, if the matter was thoroughly gone into to find out the value of the Perth tramway concern, the Government could submit a report and have a Bill brought in authorising them to immediately secure the system. It has been urged that our tramways should be municipalised, but under Government control they could be managed more economically.

By having them placed under the Railway Department, one staff would be sufficient to deal with the accounts, etcetera, of both systems, and it would prevent undue competition between the railways and the trams. I believe the trams could be placed under the management of a superintendent who would be controlled by the Commissioner of Railways. We would then link up the suburbs and not have lines running parallel to the railway, and transit facilities would thus be distributed over a big area, and the people of Perth would secure facilities, as they have in Sydney and Adelaide, to develop suburbs previously not in existence. The universal experience is that cheap and extensive travelling facilities create traffic. I hope the Government will go into this matter at an early date to find out how it stands. It is estimated the profits of the trams this year will be about £39,000. However, these figures are disputed; there is some doubt as to their accuracy, and I have not gone exhaustively into them. In the district I represent, at Belmont, Cannington, and South Perth, we would find settlement immediately taking place if tramway communication with the City were brought about. South Perth is an ideal suburb. People wish to live there but they have no means of communication. Again, it is the desire of the municipality of South Perth to municipalise the ferry system. They want a channel cut from Mends-street to Coode-street, by which means they could have a circuit and run boats, provided they got control of the channel. This, if brought about, would enable the people to have frequent and cheap facilities of transit for travelling across to South Perth, and this also would undoubtedly promote settlement in that suburb. I congratulate the Government on bringing in an amendment to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It is necessary that the Act should be amended so as to simplify it and provide some method to deal with disagreements before a dispute actually arises. If this is done I feel certain the Arbitration Court would be more effective in preventing disputes. We should simplify the Act by doing away with many of the judicial decisions and technicalities.

Such an amendment would create more confidence in the court among the workers. The Act has been found to be unworkable in many instances, and the workers would rather resort to other methods, because they have no confidence in the Act as at present constituted. I hope the Government will take into consideration the need for simplifying the Act and facilitating matters in connection with its administration so as to enable disagreements to be referred to the court and decisions given so as to prevent disputes. If we can prevent disputes we have done good work. It is the desire of our party to prevent industrial strife. We realise that when it takes place, if there is one section of the community that suffers more than another it is the wives and families of the men. We desire to do all we possibly can to constitute some tribunal that will prevent disputes. We realise that not only do those immediately concerned suffer, but also the dislocation in trade does a vast amount of injury to others not connected with the dispute at all. In fact we are all intimately associated; we all depend on one another; society is one living organism; if we inflict injury on one section the whole is more or less affected. I realise this, and therefore I feel the Government will, at an early date, amend this Act.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Before the tea adjournment I was referring to the amendment of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I would just like to emphasise this point. We should do all we can to prevent industrial warfare and to bring about peace, and when any dispute is brought before a tribunal that tribunal should be one in which the men have confidence. It is noticeable when a matter is being thrashed out in the Arbitration Court a great deal of emphasis is laid on the fact of trying to arrive at what is the cost of living. I think we should also endeavour to ascertain what profits are made in the various industries. That is a matter that should be inquired into so that the employers who are making huge profits out of the

efforts of the workers should have to disclose the profits they make, and thus we would arrive at a true basis for the remuneration of the worker. In connection with the public service I welcome the fact that the constitution of the Public Service Appeal Board is to be altered, and that there is also to be a reclassification. It is a remarkable feature in regard to bringing about a reclassification of the public servants that those most vitally concerned are never consulted in the matter. The Public Service Commissioner draws up a classification without consulting those immediately concerned. We should endeavour to do justice to those who are concerned; the public servants should be consulted and their views ascertained. That is the only way to arrive at a satisfactory solution which both parties are agreeable to. Those concerned should have an opportunity of ventilating their grievances and of stating how they are situated. There is another matter, the equal political rights to public servants. The leader of the Opposition stated that the public servants of the State would by and by dominate the State, and the result would be that the people of the State would rebel against it and take the franchise away from the civil servants altogether. That has been tried in Victoria by Mr. Irvine, but public opinion was so strong against it there that the Government had to restore the franchise to the public servants. The same thing was tried by Mr. Wade in New South Wales, where a similar proposal was brought forward. But I have found when you attempt to effect coercion against the British race the inherent sense of fairplay is so strong that people will not tolerate it. The leader of the Opposition when at Cranbrook was feeling that his political doom was coming on the 3rd October, and seeing that three Government servants intended to contest the constituencies of Claremont, Canning, and Geraldton, he sent a wire from Cranbrook to the Commissioner for Railways informing him that if Mr. Dooley, Mr. Burchell, and myself persisted in standing for election our services would have to be immediately determined. With the result that it created an electric spark

that kindled a flame throughout the State, and so aroused public indignation that on the Sunday after the Premier was quite pleased to back down and withdraw the very iniquitous instructions which he had given. In connection with that matter I say we realise, although we are Government servants the moment we are elected, we first of all represent the State, and our constituencies next. As to doing justice to the public servants we should not allow that to interfere with our duties as representatives first of all of the State and then of the constituencies we represent. It is not a right policy to adopt to try coercion. If one political party cannot educate the people to their ways of thinking then it is not right to attempt coercion, for if that is done rebellion takes place and it reacts on those who instituted it. There is another matter I would like to see considered by the Government, and that is in connection with main roads. Some scheme should be devised to overcome the difficulty that affects many municipalities and roads boards at the present time. In many scattered districts of Western Australia the roads board or municipality has to carry out great development work and to maintain main roads from which no revenue is received. It is a great tax on these bodies, and some scheme should be evolved to overcome this difficulty. It would create a benefit to many of the scattered parts of the State. I will not take up the time further as far as the Address-in-reply is concerned. Most of the items in the comprehensive programme to be introduced this session have been thoroughly dealt with. I thank members for the patient hearing they have extended to me.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on the high and honourable position which you now occupy, and I trust your career will be as lengthy and as honourable as that of Sir Jenkin Coles of South Australia. I also congratulate the Government upon the able manner in which they tackled the serious question of the wages of the railway men of Western Australia. I consider it reflects

great credit on the Minister for Railways and the Premier for the action they took in reference to raising the wages of the lower paid men in the Railway Department. I think it was a scandal that men were asked to work for a mere pittance in the railway service. I trust the Government will also take the case of other lower paid public servants in hand and bring their wages up to a living amount. There is not an elector in Western Australia at the present time who will not say that there are some public servants who are not receiving a fair wage. There are some police officers in receipt of a pittance of 6s. 6d. a day, which is a scandal to Western Australia, and while we are paying such low wages living is very high. Take the difference of the wages in South Australia, where the Government pay junior constables 8s. a day and 1s. a day allowance; here we pay 6s. 6d. a day. It is a scandal to pay men such low wages when we have to put them on the streets and place property under their control. I am sure this is a question that will be taken into consideration. In reference to station-masters, as the member for Murray stated some were receiving a pittance of 10½d. per hour. It is a wrong thing to allow such a state of thing to continue. If we make a comparison, which has been quoted often, between the Commonwealth Government and this Government, it will at once be seen that it is time the House took action to rectify the matter. There is another subject I wish to speak on. I regret to say that in some agricultural areas some of the farmers are meeting with hard times. I am pleased the Government have taken steps to try and relieve the farmers of their trouble in the way of water cartage. I trust that not only will the Government cart water for them, but that they will go a little further, if necessary—perhaps it is warranted—and provide seed wheat and other necessities required to keep the people on the land. I am sure it is very hard for the people in the back dry areas having to suffer such hardships. There is another matter. If I am informed rightly the produce carted on agricultural lines to and from the

farmers is charged 1s. per ton more than is charged on the older railway lines. If this information is correct I hope the Minister for Railways will take the matter into his consideration and bring the cost of transit on the agricultural railways to the same level as that on older railways. There is another matter to be seriously considered, the extension of telephone communication to our sidings. Many country centres are isolated, and if we can induce the Federal Government to spend a few hundred pounds, or perhaps £1,000, in giving these people telephone communication it would be a great concession to small places. In many places a man may require a truck for produce. He may have to ride eight miles to order the truck and eight miles back again, and then he often has to wait at the siding to see that the truck comes along. If there was telephonic communication with the siding and a toll system introduced it would be of great benefit to the outback centres along the agricultural lines. I would also like to see extended to the farmers further educational facilities, more schools established, and in country schools I would like to see more agricultural subjects taught. I do not think sufficient interest is taken in agricultural subjects in country schools, therefore I would like the Minister for Education to take into consideration the necessity of introducing more agricultural subjects into these schools. I would also like to see it arranged for hawkers to hawk amongst the settlers. The Hawkers' Act might be amended to allow Britishers to hawk amongst the settlers. This would be a great benefit to persons living in outback places. It would not only enable people to buy but it would enable the hawkers also to purchase from the farmers. In all the other States British hawkers are allowed to hawk goods amongst the settlers. I do not mean that we should allow coloured hawkers, but whether we allow them or not we know that coloured hawkers carry on business very extensively in the country. We have only to go to the South-West district near at hand to find the Hawkers'

Act is being thoroughly prostituted and no notice is taken of it. If you refer to any of the small storekeepers they will tell you that this is going on. I would therefore like to see the Hawkers' Act amended so that the settlers might be benefited thereby. I am glad to see in the Speech that the coal mining industry is increasing. I would like to see more interest taken in the production of coal and also in the search for coal. If judicious boring were carried on in different parts of the State the discovery of good coal measures might result. The member for Geraldton referred to Irwin. For many years we have heard of coal seams existing there, but I do not think that they have been judiciously tested. If the Ministry could see their way clear to take action in regard to testing these deposits we might get good results, and if we did get good results I think that the Government should retain the coal mines and work them as State mines in the same way as is done in New Zealand and Victoria. This would be of great benefit to the railways of the State generally. I am sorry to see that the Speech contains no reference to forestry. Steps should be taken to protect our jarrah forests, and one direction in which we could do that is by preventing the export of piles and telephone poles. In travelling through the timber districts it is surprising to see the number of telephone poles and piles that are cut and sent from the State, and I think we might take action to protect the jarrah industry against what I might call an abuse, because such things as telephone poles can be produced in iron. If we do not take some action we will have our forests depleted before we know where we are, and it will be a serious thing to have to go outside the State in order to buy our timber supplies. It is pleasing to see also that the Government are going in for an extensive public works policy, and when providing for that policy I sincerely trust they will not forget the metropolitan area, because there are many things in that area which we are justly entitled to ask the Government to spend a few pounds on. If the large amount of property

which the Government have in the metropolitan area, and which the municipal councils are unable to rate, is taken into consideration, I think it will be admitted that we have a call upon them for a few things which would be beneficial to the people in and around the city. One of the most important is the opening up of the river north of the causeway towards Guildford. If a dredge were to be put into the river north of the causeway it would confer a great benefit, not only by opening up the river but also by reclaiming a lot of the low-lying ground and thus doing away with the mosquito nuisance which is so detrimental to East Perth. I hope that the Government will provide in their Estimates for a dredge to work north of the causeway and continue the reclamation works. I think the Government might also take more interest in the causeway. For years past it has been a standing disgrace to all concerned and a menace to the people using it. I believe that under the Roads Act the Government have power to put this road in proper order and charge up the cost to the municipal councils of Perth and Victoria Park, and, sooner than allow it to continue in the disgraceful state it has been in for twelve months or more, the Government should take drastic steps to see that it is made safe for vehicular and other traffic. I note with pleasure that the Government are about to erect workers' homes, and there is not the least doubt that they will be of great benefit to the poorer residents of the metropolis. I hope that they will also take into consideration the advisability of establishing State brick works, because the price of bricks at the present time is very high indeed. The results which followed the establishment of State brickworks in New South Wales furnish a very strong argument in favour of the Government in this State establishing such works in conjunction with the system of providing workers' homes. I would like to support the member for Canning in his contention that the Government should assume control of the Perth tramways. In my opinion the Government should cause a valuation to be made and make an offer to the company, and if a

satisfactory arrangement cannot be made between the Government and the company, then the Government should substitute another service and run it in opposition to the present system, because the company at the present time are not giving the City a fair service. Instead of the City getting a proper tramway service, it is practically getting the leavings of Subiaco and other suburbs, because it is almost impossible at times to get a seat in a car after a tram leaves Thomas-street. The same may be said in regard to the Mount Lawley and North Perth routes, and it is a disgrace to the City council and the Government to allow a foreign company to come here and monopolise the rights of the roads in the manner this company have been doing for a number of years. They appear to take no notice whatever of what the City council says; in fact I do not think the City council has many rights over them because its rights were forfeited when the Council gave this concession. I should like to see the Minister for Works instruct his officers to go into the matter and see if there is not a chance of compelling the establishment of better conditions in connection with our tramways. Another matter in regard to which I should like to see the Government exercising its rights is the block of land on which the town hall now stands. I understand that the Government have a right to resume this land for public purposes if they require it, and undoubtedly they do require it for the purpose of building additional public offices. This town hall question has been discussed in the City council for the past sixteen or seventeen years, and the discussion will continue as long as this matter remains in the hands of the City council. I suggest that the Government should claim that site and erect offices for the public service; by so doing they would be settling this vexed question and putting the City council on its metal. Many people have tried from time to time to settle this issue but a settlement seems to be practically impossible, therefore I ask that the Government should assert their rights and resume the property. It is desirable also that the Government should take steps, as one hon.

member suggested, in reference to the metropolitan water supply. I believe that means could be adopted by which we could get an extra supply from Mundaring without putting any great strain on that scheme, and if the metropolitan area were to draw a portion of its supply from that scheme it would be a means of reducing the cost of water on the goldfields and in the agricultural areas along the pipe line. I have been informed on good authority that the experts who have visited the Mundaring catchment area are of opinion that by damming up the overflow below the present weir a lot more water could be impounded and that after the lower reservoir had been filled, the sluices could be closed and the upper one filled. When we get a fair number of sanitary connections completed we shall be in a difficulty for water, and I maintain that the provision of additional water supply should have gone hand in hand with the carrying out of the sewerage connections. Next summer we shall be dependent on bore water, and that is a commodity which the people of Perth do not appreciate. I desire to congratulate the Government on the bringing in of the long promised Veterinary Bill. I have appealed to many Governments to introduce this Bill in order to protect the settlers against the unscrupulous quacks who are travelling throughout the State, often brutally operating upon and mutilating very valuable horses. I could quote instances of glaring ignorance on the part of these quacks, both in the country districts and in the metropolitan area, and it is very pleasing to see that the Government have at last taken steps to bring this Bill before Parliament. I sincerely trust that it will be carried.

Mr. Nanson: I do not think there is any such Bill mentioned.

Mr. LANDER: Yes, there is a Bill promised to regulate the practice of veterinary surgery. I congratulate the Government, and I hope that the measure will be put through and that justice will be done to any veterinary surgeon who may be practising at the present time in Western Australia. The way that can be done is to ask him to pass half the examination

that a fully qualified man has to pass. Any man who takes up the veterinary profession should know something about anatomy, pathology, physiology, and parasitology, and be able to diagnose a disease when he is called upon at any time to inspect horses. I am sorry to say that many times I have seen veterinary surgeons called in to diagnose the ailment of an animal, and the diagnosis has been simply ridiculous. I have seen one of these quacks watch for hours a mare in the pains of foaling and not be able to tell what was the matter with her. Again I have known jarrah jerkers in the timber country to pay £23 for an operation for a malignant growth on the nasal bone, and what happened? In operating the man removed the eye, and a valuable horse was mutilated. When practices like that are going on it is time that legislation was introduced on the subject. The Victorian Government are, I understand, paying £8,000 a year towards the upkeep of a veterinary research department and they have some of the ablest men this side of the line. We might be able to derive some benefits from this department in Melbourne if we could induce the Government to provide a small sum of, say £250 per annum, for scholarships, so as to allow young men from the high schools to go to Melbourne with just sufficient money provided by the State to pay for the bare cost of their food. I think if we were to put by that pound a week we would have plenty of fathers who would pay the fees and other incidental expenses which might occur by sending their sons to these institutions. Veterinary surgery is one of the best callings in Australia when properly established. I hope this Bill will be put through, and also that scholarships will be approved of. Another thing I would like to speak upon is the export department. Some of the members opposite have referred to this, but have not referred to it in very encouraging terms. I think if we take up the results of the South Australian Export Department we can come to no other conclusion than that the settlers of Western Australia would be greatly benefited if an export depart-

ment were established here. In South Australia the department has been established for 16 years. When first established, lambs were selling in South Australia for 3s. 6d. per head; at the present time they are fetching 16s. This department sent to London in the first year of their existence 69 lambs, so that it will be seen that it started in a small way. Last year they sent away 341,036 lambs. This will give an idea of the growth of the department. They also despatched 1,760 tons of butter in one year and they paid, in bonuses, £1,510, while the profit last year was £5,600. I certainly think that the establishment of such a department is worthy of consideration in Western Australia, and it might well be given a trial. One way in which it would be beneficial to the settler would be that instead of allowing the shark to buy the produce from the settler at a considerably reduced price, the Government could send an export agent to make a valuation and allow the settler, say, 5s. off the market value and allow him to have the interest to himself. I visited a place on the eastern railway line recently, and the man there told me that he had sold his produce, as he was compelled to do, for £3 a ton, while at the same time he was paying £5 per ton back again to the chaff sharks. I trust the export department will be established and that the settlers will derive benefit from it. Another thing I would like to see established here is a market for the produce of the settler. At the present time the settlers are practically without any market in the City of Perth. I hope the Government will take into consideration the necessity for establishing an open market where any person can, for a nominal fee, take his produce and stop there until he disposes of it. By doing that I am certain that the settler, and also the residents of the metropolitan area, will benefit very much. Another thing I would like to see taken in hand is the milk supply, and I would like to see the Government make preparations for the analysis of the milk supply. There is not sufficient milk in January and February to supply the metropolitan area, and it is time some steps were taken to place it

under Government control, when the public could be guaranteed pure milk. I would also like to see a Government analyst appointed, who could devote the whole of his time to analysing the milk, and also make an analysis of the soils; there is any amount of work for an analyst to do in Western Australia. When we look at the horses which we see at our shows and compare them with the imported horses, we must conclude that there is something deficient in the Western Australian soil, which makes so much difference in the size of the bones. If we had a Government analyst he could take an interest in these things. Another matter I would like to refer to is that while Parliament is in recess, and during that time I have no doubt a Premier's Conference will be held, I would like to see the Premier attend it, and discuss with the Premiers of the other States the advisability of the whole of the Australian States taking some action in the direction of having a State-owned steamship service. This should be not only an interstate service, but a service which would run between Australian shores and the old country. When we take into consideration the fact that we have spent 150 million pounds upon our railways, surely we can raise about four millions between the whole of the States to provide a number of steamships. If one goes into the question it will be found that for about three million pounds it would be possible to construct eight vessels larger than any of those engaged in the trade at the present time. By adding one million to that sum it would be possible to have not only a fine interstate service, but also an international service. I trust that in the recess the Premier will cause this question to receive serious consideration. I do not intend to say anything further. I thank hon. members for the attentive hearing they have given me.

On motion by Mr. McDowall debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.10 p.m.