

is given to a parent this shall be considered to be the provision by the Minister of a satisfactory means of conveyance. A parent who accepts a driving allowance is thus brought under the compulsory clause and is bound to send his children to school every day, unless there is a reasonable excuse for the non-attendance. Clause 6 gives the teachers an appeal board on which they shall have representation. This refers to ease in which teachers for alleged misconduct or breach of the regulations are fined any amount in excess of 15s.; transferred at their own expense—which is a severe penalty; reduced to a lower grade—which is an annual financial loss to the teachers extending perhaps over many years; or reduced from any position to a position carrying a lower salary; or dismissed. The Minister is now called upon to decide what the punishment shall be for disciplinary offences, and his decision may seriously affect the future welfare of the teacher, who has no right of appeal. It is seldom necessary for me to exercise the power I possess in this respect. But I believe in the principle of an appeal board in cases in which men have permanent positions under an Act of Parliament. The Public Service have an appeal board; so have the police, the warders of the Fremantle prison, and the railway officers and employees. In each case the men have representation on the board, a consideration that has resulted in a more contented service than we should otherwise have. The constitution of the board is to be, a police or resident magistrate as chairman, a representative of the Director of Education to be appointed by him, and a representative of the teachers, or his deputy for the time being on the Public Service Appeal Board. The Bill is the result of conferences I have had with the teachers, who are prepared to accept the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. Potter, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th October, 1926.

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

QUESTION—TRAMWAYS, PERTH.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has he read in yesterday's "West Australian" the evidence of Motorman James MacIntosh Fraser, given in the Arbitration Court on Tuesday, "that seldom a day passed without a train being concerned in a collision: that the brakes were not always effective; in fact, very few brakes on bogey cars were up-to-date"? 2, Will he have the statement inquired into, and if the position is as stated, will he take immediate steps to remedy it in order to protect the public from the danger of serious accident?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, The statement as published was obviously incorrect and was subsequently corrected in the court.

QUESTION—I.A.B. SETTLERS, CROP INSURANCE.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Lands: What are the names of the underwriters with whom re-insurances—fire and hail risks—upon assisted settlers' crops have been effected?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: It is not customary for information of this description to be disclosed.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Industries Assistance Act Continuance. Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

2, Royal Agricultural Society.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY REGULATION.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is to provide for the inspection and regulation of employment in the timber industry. It is surprising that a measure of this nature has not found its way to the statute-book long before this. The timber industry is employing perhaps the largest number of men of any industry at the present time. Though we have special legislation governing employment in other callings, there has been none for the timber industry. There is special legislation under the Mines Regulation Act to govern mining, which industry is employing only slightly over 3,000 men, while the timber industry is employing nearly 7,000 men. I will not say that employment in the timber industry is quite so dangerous as in mining; still it ranks second to mining in the matter of risks to which the men are exposed. Statistics of accidents and claims under the Workers' Compensation Act show that that is so. This Bill is framed largely on the Mines Regulation Act. There is quite an assortment of Acts that at present govern employment in the timber industry. They are the Inspection of Machinery Act, the Factories and Shops Act, and the Health Act. We propose to leave the inspection of boilers, which requires technical knowledge, to the inspector of machinery, but the duties of seeing that ordinary safeguards are provided around dangerous machinery and of carrying out the inspection that has been made spasmodically and not frequently by inspectors of factories, together with the little if any inspection made under the Health Act are provided for in this measure. Those duties in future will be combined and will be entrusted to regular inspectors appointed under this measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: You provide for inspection of machinery under this Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, but not for inspection of boilers. A man of technical knowledge is required to examine a boiler. An inspector who has worked in

the timber industry all his life might not understand the technicalities of a boiler. There has been a serious drawback attached to the inspections of the inspector of machinery. When he goes to a mill the boiler is his main objective, and he has to give notice to the management of his intention to inspect so that everything might be in readiness. Consequently the management always knew when an inspector was expected, and men in the industry allege—whether it is true or not, I cannot say—that on the days the inspector made his visits safeguards would be provided around dangerous machinery but would disappear after he had left.

Hon. G. Taylor: Such guards could not have been of a very permanent kind.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is the allegation made by the men.

Hon. G. Taylor: My experience on the goldfields does not bear that out.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Under this measure it will be the duty of inspectors to travel around the mills, and there will be no need for them to notify the management of their visits. The inspectors will be men acquainted with the industry and they will know just where the risk of danger lies. Regular inspections will be made. Though portions of timber mills at present come under the Shops and Factories Act, it has been impossible, with the limited staff available, for inspectors to frequently visit the mills. It is more than one man's work to look after the timber mills, scattered as they are over so great an area. Consequently the department have not been able to carry out more than one inspection a year. Tram-lines, hush tracks and both mill and bush landings do not come under the definition of factory and no inspection of rolling stock has been possible. Thus there has been no provision to inspect a section of the industry that involves risk to the employees, although serious accidents have occurred owing to faulty tram-lines, faulty rolling stock and faulty bush landings. Under the Bill the management will be called upon to provide safeguards and afford protection for the men, and I believe it will amply repay mill owners to see that such protection is provided. Under the Workers' Compensation Act they have added responsibilities, and the little extra expense entailed to provide safeguards will, I believe, be repaid by a lessening of accidents and an increase of efficiency that the men will display when

they know they are not exposed to former dangers.

Mr. George: The falling of trees cannot be guarded against.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; and this Bill does not provide for the inspection of trees other than the clearing of them. Under the Bill trees must be cleared back from the bush tram-lines. Now they are frequently left growing close to the lines, which are laid in thick forest. In fact, they are left too close for safety. The timber workers at their annual conferences for many years have urged the introduction of a Bill of this kind, and I do not think it can be maintained that the measure is before its time. Indeed, it is long overdue. Similar measures exist elsewhere, although the timber industry is not in every State dealt with in a separate Act. Victoria has provisions similar to this Bill, but there they form part of the Factories Act. For convenience sake it is thought better here to deal with the timber industry in a separate measure. There is considerable complaint about the smoke nuisance at mills. It is stated that the fires burning there the whole year round create a nuisance, that the smoke blows in through the mill and is sometimes so bad that the sawyers are unable to see the saws, that the winchman cannot see the hookman, and that the benchman frequently has to wait until the smoke lifts before he can see the pin, the saw, or anything else.

Mr. George: How do these fires come about?

Miss Holman: In the burning of the waste timber.

Mr. George: They do not come into the mill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The smoke nuisance depends upon the direction in which the fire chute is situated and upon the way the wind is blowing. Only a day or two ago I was at a mill and was told that just as I arrived the smoke had cleared out of the mill.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was because you arrived.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No doubt. There are mills at which the fire chute is in the wrong direction, and the result is that the prevailing winds blow the smoke through the mill. In such a case either the fire chute should be removed or else a smoke screen should be erected. The Bill provides for the control of inspectors by an officer already in the Public Service. Instead of creating a new department it is

proposed here, as in connection with the inspection of scaffolding, to place the administration of the measure under the Chief Inspector of Factories. There are to be district inspectors, and also a workmen's inspector to be elected by the workmen themselves. He must, however, be a man with an intimate knowledge and a thorough experience of the timber industry. His appointment will be for a period not exceeding two years. His salary, of course, will be paid by the State. As in the corresponding provision in the Mines Regulation Act, this Bill proposes that the workmen's inspector must have had not less than five years' practical experience of the industry.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are not making any provision for his payment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He will be paid in the same way as other inspectors. The Bill does not fix the salary.

Hon. G. Taylor: Where will you get the salary?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have it in my pocket.

Hon. G. Taylor: When you appoint officers under a Bill, you arrange for their salaries.

The Premier: Not in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The salaries are provided on the Estimates. The Bill also gives power to appoint a special inspector in case of technical or scientific knowledge being required for the investigation of a big accident, or for some special inquiry. In such cases the department would have power to appoint special inspectors. The powers given to the inspectors generally are very similar to those possessed by inspectors under the Mines Regulation Act. Prosecutions, however, will be initiated under the authority of the officer controlling the administration of the measure. The machinery clauses call upon the manager or agent to afford facilities for inspection, and require the keeping of a record book at each mill. In that book the inspector is to enter particulars of each inspection that he makes, and the book is to be open to examination at reasonable times by persons interested, including representatives of the employees. The duties and responsibilities of the manager in respect of the due observance of the provisions of the Bill are also set out. There is a clause requiring notice of accident to be given to the district inspector, and to the officer administering the measure. This provision is similar to the corresponding provisions in the Mines Regulation, Inspection

of Machinery, and Factories and Shops Acts. Then there is provision for investigation into the cause, or causes, of accidents causing death or serious bodily injury. The inquiry is to be made by an industrial magistrate, if deemed necessary. There is power to compel the attendants of witnesses at the inquiry, and also power for their examination by a representative of the workers' union. The Bill prohibits interference with the place where an accident has occurred, except with a view to saving life or preventing further accident, until the place has been examined. The person appointed by a magistrate to investigate an accident may, however, permit a resumption of work in cases where such resumption is deemed to be necessary.

Mr. George: The whole mill might be stopped for several days.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Power is given to permit resumption of work, but if there is a point in dispute as to the cause of an accident which has involved death or serious bodily injury, it might be desirable that work should be suspended for a day or two, pending the definite establishment of the cause.

Mr. George: I am not suggesting that evidence should be done away with; I am only pointing out that if a man got cut with a saw—

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There would be no suspension for a slight accident like that, but only for an accident involving death or serious bodily injury.

Mr. George: A saw might kill a man; it is no respecter of persons.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If there was a death from such a cause, and it were argued that the saw was not properly fixed or had no adequate safeguards, it would be far better to stop work pending a thorough investigation, or until permission to resume work had been obtained from the industrial magistrate or his nominee for the conduct of the inquiry. This provision is very similar to the corresponding provision in the Mines Regulation Act, and, of course, it will be administered with due regard to all the circumstances of each particular case. The Bill requires the efficient guarding of dangerous machinery and appliances, and the maintenance of the guards in efficient condition. Further, it requires the provision of an ambulance, or a stretcher, and a supply of first aid appliances at mills where power-driven machinery is used. It also re-

quires a weekly examination of buildings and plant and machinery by the manager or by a qualified person appointed by him. Responsibility is placed on the workman to see that the appliances he uses, and the place in which he works, are reasonably safe, and to report anything that he considers unsafe. A similar provision is contained in the Mines Regulation Act. The Bill provides for procedure to secure compliance with its requirements. The procedure will be by the service of requisitions specifying defects and dangers and requiring them to be remedied. The responsibilities of the owner, agent, or manager in respect of such requisitions are defined, and provision is made for appeal against a requisition to an industrial magistrate if such requisition is objected to. The Bill prohibits persons having a personal interest in a timber holding, or concerned in the management of it, from serving on the jury at a coroner's inquest when an accident has occurred. Persons interested may, however, attend the proceedings and examine witnesses. The district inspector is required to be present, and the jury may view the scene of the accident. The Bill also provides for the making of regulations governing the matters covered by it, including duties of inspectors and methods of inspection, ventilation of mills and prevention of dust, sanitary conditions on timber holdings, safety of machinery, mill gearing and so forth, safe handling of jockeyed logs, lighting of mills, safety of skids and decking, drainage of tram lines, bush landings, and other places, smoke screens, prohibition of employment of persons unable to speak English in places where such inability would be a source of danger to others, safety of bush landings, control of treatment of timber by powellising or other process dangerous or injurious to health, housing accommodation of workers, pure water supply, and other necessary purposes. Copies of regulations must be posted up in every mill. Penalties are set forth in Clause 25. I do not think the measure will need to be urged on the House, since it is long overdue and refers to an industry which employs a great number of men. Indeed, it is surprising that some such measure as this has not been enacted long ago.

Mr. George: Have you any idea how many accidents have occurred during the last five years?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I can get that information if the hon. member desires it, but I have seen statistics showing

that in point of accidents the timber industry ranks second to the mining industry.

Miss Holman: In the office of the Timber Workers' Union there are statistics of accidents in the industry.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The timber industry, I repeat, ranks second to the mining industry for serious and fatal accidents. I saw the statistics some time ago. As regards minor accidents, very few men employed in the timber industry carry a whole hand; most of them are minus some of their fingers. That fact was brought home to me in the first arbitration case relating to the timber industry. Not one of the union witnesses had a full hand; and I was told that this peculiarity was the result of chance and not of design.

Hon. G. Taylor: It was not stage-managed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. Any man who walks around the mills becomes impressed with the fact that there are very few timber workers who have not lost a finger or two. Now I wish to quote a few extracts from reports made by factory inspectors. These reports give the impressions obtained by the inspectors when viewing the mills. In quoting I shall not mention the names of the mills referred to. One report states—

The housing and hut accommodation at this mill are bad. The log landing consists of a log alongside the line. The logs are rolled on to this and then on to the ground. Everything at this mill seems to be done with a view to cheapness and without any regard to the safety or comfort of the workmen.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is the mill referred to a State mill?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think such a charge could be levelled at any of the State mills.

Hon. G. Taylor: In that case you would not mention it.

Mr. George: This was probably a very small mill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Another report contains the following passage—

On the day of inspection it was fairly windy, and the heat and smoke from the fire chutes came into the mill. In places where the fires are close to the mill a screen is, in my opinion, necessary, as with the smoke in the eyes of the operatives the work is rendered more dangerous than it otherwise might be. The log landing at this mill is very steep and dangerous, and, as the practice of jockeying logs is carried on here, accidents may be expected at any time.

Mr. Davy: What is meant by "jockeying" logs?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It means putting one log on top of two.

Mr. George: I know of a case where the logs from the log yard went clean over the mill. Fortunately no one was hurt.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Another extract reads—

The mills on this line, as in other parts of the State, need plenty of room for improvement in regard to safe working conditions, in directions not covered by this or other Acts. The log landing at . . . mill is unsafe. It is too steep a slope, and is in a narrow cutting. The practice of jockeying logs is carried out here extensively. The log trucks are the usual timber mill cannon-buffer bolstered wagon, no springs or axle boxes. With these wagons, if anything is run into by them on the line, there being no springs to take the shock, there is almost invariably an accident. In proof of this there is the . . . mill. There are the ordinary cannon-buffer wagons and float trucks with spring buffers, axle boxes and flat springs over the axle boxes. With the spring wagons there has been only one accident, which the spring wagons only prevented from having serious consequences. With the other type, accidents have been fairly numerous.

Another report says—

The mill landing at . . . is also rather steep, and jockeying of logs is a regular practice. At . . . is the most dangerous log landing in the State. It is very wide and exceptionally steep. I watched a rake of logs being unloaded; five sets on the rake had "jockeyed" logs, and in each instance the three logs were unloaded together.

Therein is the grave danger. If they pulled off the log before pulling out the chocks, it would be better. The report continues—

The logs after leaving the trucks, rolled down the landing at a terrific speed, and jumped at least a foot in the air on hitting any small obstruction. One man was killed on this landing some years ago, and I was told that there have been several narrow escapes.

Of course that does not apply at every mill as the following report will show:—

As an instance of conditions existing at another mill, the landing, is perfectly safe and definite orders are given here that "jockeying," wherever reasonably possible, is to be avoided, and when a log is jockeyed the top log is to be unloaded first and before the chocks are out. The majority of the log trucks at this mill are sprung.

Hon. members will see that there are some mills where the managers are adopting methods affording protection to workers, so

as to prevent accidents. A further report states—

A fatal accident happened to a hookman of over 20 years' experience. He was unloading a rake of logs at about 4.15 p.m. on the 5th November, 1925, at a certain mill. As I was in the vicinity I visited the mill next day and ascertained that the mill landing is fairly steep, and that the space between the skids is filled up, leaving no space for a hookman to get away if a log should roll after the chocks were knocked away. It appears that a set of trucks was being worked and contained four logs, three on the bottom of the trucks, and one on top or "jockeyed." The chocks had been knocked out safely, and preparation was made to unload the four logs together, the rope from the winch being thrown round the four logs, and the hook driven into the bottom log at the bottom of the truck from the landing. The back log rolled, and the hook flew out; the log the hook was in, and the jockey, reared in the air; the jockey rolled back and jambed the unfortunate worker against the back of the cutting. He died within two minutes as a result of internal injuries, the log lying across the middle of his body.

Mr. George: How long ago was that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In November, 1925.

Mr. George: I cannot understand that, because the machinery inspectors were at work at that time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have already pointed out that, without desiring to reflect upon the inspectors at all, the inspection of machinery is a farce. The inspectors have to notify the managers beforehand that they intend to inspect the boilers. They pay particular attention to the boilers and have not paid much regard to anything else.

Mr. George: That has not been my experience.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It has been the experience of the great bulk of the men engaged in the industry. Another report says—

At this mill it is the practice to store a large quantity of logs on a spare landing at the back of the mill landing, and these logs are piled up to a height of about 12 feet. The manager admitted that it would require a very experienced man to remove those logs, but he did not consider it dangerous. This is also the practice at . . . , and is in my opinion dangerous. If once the logs got away, nothing would stop them, and it is almost certain that serious accidents would follow.

There is no law at present to provide against such conditions. These matters do not come within the scope of the inspection of machinery, factories or health laws. A Bill of this description is absolutely essential.

Mr. George: The mill at which the logs were piled up 12ft. high must have been a big one.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, probably that was at one of the bigger mills. I do not think it can be said that the Bill will inflict hardships upon the timber industry. It will not call for any great expenditure. It merely provides for measures for the protection and safety of the men engaged in the industry and is essential, considering that so many men are employed in the timber industry. Those men are at work far away in the bush and very often are many miles away from medical aid. They are away from hospital conveniences and, in fact, from doctors as well. I think we are warranted in legislating for the protection of the workers, without inflicting hardships upon industry.

Mr. George: No one will deny that protection should be afforded.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think the House will agree with that contention. We have not gone beyond the scope of the Mines Regulation Act in framing the Bill. In fact it follows that legislation closely and is similar to the provisions in the Victorian Shops and Factories Act where they relate to the timber industry. I do not think it can be held that the Government have gone too far. As I have already pointed out, the measure is long overdue. There should not be much objection to the passage of the Bill and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. George, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Stamp Act Amendment.
 - 2, Supply Bill (No. 3), £1,363,500.
- Without amendment.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.8] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is a short one. It applies to three districts only. Hon. members who have visited Albany are aware that in Stirling Terrace there are gardens opposite the main business premises and at the rear of the

railway station. It appears that the gardens were formed upon portion of what was a declared public road. The Albany Municipal Council desires that the road should be closed regarding those portions upon which the gardens have been established. The council asks that it should be made a Class A reserve and thus be kept for the purposes of parks and gardens for all time. The officers of the department have made the necessary surveys and see no objection to the reserve being declared. Action cannot be taken, however, without the approval of Parliament; hence the inclusion of this provision in the Bill. Then again the Perth City Council has purchased an area of land at Victoria Park for the purpose of forming a recreation ground. As the area is divided by portion of Willis-street, it is desired that that portion of the street shall be closed and included in the recreation ground. There is no objection to the land being used for recreation purposes and if in future any additional road access is necessary, it can be provided along the northern boundary of the reserve. At East Perth also the City Council has some land to be developed for recreation purposes. At present part of it is used as a rubbish depot, but part of Swan-road runs through the area. It is necessary for that portion of the road to be closed in order that a proper recreation ground may be established. That is all that the Bill deals with and hon. members can see the lithos dealing with the propositions. There is one small matter I overlooked in regard to the Albany proposal. Three small areas there are also dealt with. On one a returned soldiers' memorial has been established at the corner of York-street and Peel's Place, while there are also two small gardens at the corners of Duke-street and Frederick-street where they enter Peel's Place. These are also to be included within the scope of the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.12] in moving the second reading said: This Bill deals with an alteration of reserves, none of which are Class A reserves.

The Victoria District Turf Club desires to sublease the Geraldton racecourse to the local golf club for a period of 21 years. The proposal has been placed before the departmental officials and no objection is raised to granting the powers asked for. The powers are to be conditional upon provision being made in the lease, which will have to be submitted to the department for approval, that at least once a year the course can be used for racing purposes if so desired. There is a race club there and races are held at infrequent intervals during the year.

Hon. G. Taylor: How many race meetings are held a year?

The Minister for Railways: Three or four.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At any rate, the racecourse will be considerably improved as the result of the subleasing of the ground to the golf club.

Hon. G. Taylor: Will it still be a Class A reserve?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not a Class A reserve. It was land granted to the race club for a special purpose and that purpose cannot be altered without the consent of Parliament. The Bill also provides for a change in the purposes for which the Newcastle Race Club secured their land. It appears that the racecourse is held in the names of Messrs. B. D. Clarkson, B. Connor and J. H. Phillips for the purposes of the Newcastle Race Club for a period of 99 years, dating from the 1st October, 1901. Owing to the northern portion of the racecourse being severed by a public road, the trustees desire to surrender that portion of the land that is north of the road in order that the area may be granted to Mr. C. J. Lloyd, who is the chairman of the Toodyay Race Club. The land will be handed to him in exchange for about two acres of Mr. Lloyd's property which is fenced in as part of the racecourse and on which, with the owner's permission, there has been erected a grandstand. Hon. members will see the position regarding this and the former matter on the lithos. The Newcastle Race Club have been using Mr. Lloyd's land for some time. The Bill will authorise the transfer. The Bill also proposes to grant permission to the Marble Bar Road Board to lease for pastoral purposes portion or the whole of the town common. Some years ago the Marble Bar Board improved this land, providing fencing and water supply, and now to-day they cannot get sufficient revenue to

enable them to meet the interest and other charges on the loan they raised for the improving of the reserve. Motor cars are coming into use so much that the reserve is not utilised to the same extent as was the case previously. Ample provision will be made for the requirements of the general public. The department has no power to allow the road board to lease the common. The proposal has been referred to the Mines Department, and the department has raised no objection. However, it cannot be carried out without the permission of Parliament. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

BILL—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [5.16] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is to bring the Act of 1912 up to date. As a matter of fact, the Act has been a dead letter, for it has been found impossible to give effect to it.

Mr. Teesdale: It has been carried out fairly well in the North.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not mean to say that the pastoralists have not lived up to its conditions in many ways. When in the North recently, I saw on some stations fine accommodation for shearers, although on other stations the accommodation was not up to the standard required by the Act. Quite early in the piece it was found impossible to enforce the Act, owing to the enormous areas to be covered and to the enormous expense that would be involved if the provisions of the Act were insisted upon. That has been put up to each successive Minister since the passing of the Act. Although the Act was passed in 1912, it did not come into operation until 1914. It was introduced by a private member, Mr. McDonald, then member for Gascoyne, and was passed by another place in a modified form. On the 7th January, 1915, the Chief Inspector of Factories wrote to the then Minister as follows:—

With reference to the administration of the Shearers' Accommodation Act, 1912. I have to report, for the information of the Hon. Mr. Dodd, having on the 6th instant interviewed

the Solicitor General, Mr. Sayer, and as a result beg to state that in my opinion the Act as it stands is unworkable, and the enforcement of its provisions at a reasonable cost to the department practically impossible for the undermentioned reasons:—

1. Before the provisions of the Act can be applied to any shearing shed, the inspector must have evidence that eight or more shearers are employed.

2. Upon being satisfied that the Act applies, the inspector must ascertain by inspection in what respects the Act has not been complied with; he must then notify the employer in writing, directing him within a time mentioned in the notice to comply with the requirements. The notice must be served personally or be left at the employer's residence. This notice is not an order, and the employer is not compelled to obey it.

3. On the expiration of the time mentioned in the notice, a second inspection must be made to ascertain whether the notice has been complied with.

4. If the employer fails to comply with the terms of the notice in the time stated, the inspector must then apply to two justices to make an order on the employer to comply with such requirements, under Section 13. The justices may order the employer to comply with the requirements, and may specify what things shall be done, and the time within which the order shall be carried out, or they may dismiss the complaint, and no order for costs shall be made against an employer unless he has failed for an unreasonable time to comply with a notice. "Unreasonable" is not defined, and it is at the discretion of the justices to say what is an unreasonable length of time.

Should the justices make an order, a third inspection must be made on the expiry of such order, to ascertain whether it has been complied with, and if not the inspector must then prosecute the employer a second time for non-compliance with the order of the court, and on conviction a penalty not exceeding £10 may then be imposed. It will be seen from the foregoing that the cost both in money and the time of inspectors to secure the enforcement of the Act will be very great indeed, and I would suggest that the question of amending the Act in such manner as to make it workable receive consideration.

That was 11 years ago. Yet no attempt has been made to amend the Act and it has remained practically a dead letter although, as I have said, I saw, particularly on the Murehison and on the lower Gascoyne, some very fine accommodation for shearers. However, at one shearing station I came through, the manager was good enough while I was there to allow the men to meet me. They strongly urged upon me that the Act should be amended at the earliest opportunity. While they were satisfied with the accommodation at the station on which they then were, they had come through accommodation on another station which, in their own words, was not fit for dogs. I did not see

the place they mentioned, but they were emphatic in saying that a dog should not be called up on to live in such accommodation. We are now taking steps to make the Act workable. Members will agree that, in view of all the circumlocution provided in the existing Act, it would cost a mint of money to enforce that Act. It is not much wonder that it has remained a dead letter.

Mr. Teesdale: Up North the police administer it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so. No inspector has been sent up there, and the administration of the Act has been left entirely to the police.

Mr. Mann: They ought to be capable of administering it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I should be prepared to leave the general inspection to the police, although I think it might be more satisfactorily done by a man with a proper knowledge of ventilation, lighting, and conditions of hygiene, a man such as would be selected as an inspector of factories. Sections 12 and 13 of the Act are those referred to as being very difficult of working. Under the Bill they will be repealed. If the Bill passes it will not be necessary to make the three visits prescribed by the existing Act. Power is given to the inspector to notify the owner when he has reason to believe that the requirements of the Act are not being complied with and to direct that they be complied with within a given time. At the expiration of that time a second inspection will be necessary to ascertain whether the terms of the Act have been complied with. If they have not, the inspector may then require the owner to appear before a magistrate. The existing Act applies only to shearing sheds where eight or more shearers are employed and it operates only while the shearers are actually at work. No power is given to inspect or to order things to be done when shearers are not actually employed. In the days when the Act was passed there was not the extent of machine shearing that there is to-day. What eight men would do in those days can now be done by two or three. So there is no reason why the number of shearers should be fixed at eight. A further point: to require that the inspector should visit all the sheds and be there when shearing is in operation is utterly impracticable. The inspector could not get around all Western Australia during shearing time, except at enormous cost. We are deleting the provision that limits the number

of shearers. The Act will then apply to sheds in which shearers are employed, irrespective of their number. But so that no undue hardship shall be imposed on the small pastoralist, provision is made that the Act shall not apply to sheds where less than 1,000 sheep are shorn in one season. That basis is a much more satisfactory one than the number of shearers. Up North I saw sheds fixed with 20 stands, but employing only eight or nine shearers. Had the pastoralists so desired, it was quite easy to dodge the Act by knocking off one shearer and employing only seven, thus making the season spin out a little longer.

Hon. G. Taylor: It would increase their expenses.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Still, it must pay them in some respects, for one shed I visited had 20 stands, yet employed only eight shearers.

Mr. Davy: Perhaps in consequence of a drought.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is true they had not as many sheep as in previous seasons.

Mr. Lamond: Was that in Kimberley?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. Mann: Is there any evidence that the pastoralists have wilfully attempted to evade the Act?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, as I have said, a number of shearers, speaking before their then employer, told us that on another station they were asked to sleep in a place where, to use their own words, no dog should be asked to sleep.

Mr. Mann: Is that an isolated case?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; there is up there a number of sheds that do not provide decent accommodation, although I am perfectly willing to admit that at other sheds the thing is done really well. The definition of employer is altered. We are substituting the word "owner" for "master." The word "master" is a relic of the past, and yet it exists in our law. The employer is called the master.

Mr. Davy: Do you not like that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That word should not be left in.

The Premier: For the reason that in these days he is not the master.

Mr. Davy: The word "owner" will have the same connotation in due course, and you will have to change that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The word has a nasty ring about it.

Mr. Davy: It is like the change from Eurasian to Anglo-Indian. The latter term is just as offensive now as the word Eurasian used to be.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: An Eurasian is a crossbred.

Mr. Davy: So is the Anglo-Indian.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not at all. An Eurasian is half one thing and half another.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not think that affects the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When I was in Ceylon I found there was no comparison between the two terms. There is, therefore, this widening of the definition of employer, which will also mean the contractor. Over 90 per cent. of the shearing in Western Australia is done by a contractor and not by the owner. The contractor takes a number of sheds, and engages men to do a round, and places an overseer in charge of each gang. The contractor may have a number of gangs. This definition will also include the owner, the contractor and the overseer. Clause 4 requires that in the accommodation erected after the commencement of the Act, compartments to accommodate not more than two persons shall be provided. The Act provides that a compartment shall accommodate not more than four persons. It is proposed that these conditions shall remain operative in respect of accommodation already provided, and that the new condition shall apply only to accommodation to be erected in the future. The proposed conditions operate in Queensland under the Workers' Accommodation Act, 1915. I was hesitating whether to include in the Bill a provision that the existing accommodation should be brought up to this standard within a given period, say a year or two.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Did we not by law fix the accommodation at four?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That has been inoperative. It was passed in 1912. Every succeeding Minister has been asked by the department to alter the Act, on the ground that it could not be enforced.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We said certain buildings must be put up.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I suppose it will come to four eventually, but this Bill is asking for two. Provision is made for not less than 480 cubic feet of air space to be allowed for each person in each sleeping compartment in the buildings that are to be erected in future. This provision is

similar to one existing in Queensland. Our Act provides for 360 cubic feet per person. The provision for 480 cubic feet will mean that for every two persons a room will be required approximately measuring 10 ft. by 10. I do not think we are asking too much when we say that two men shall have that amount of room. Some men go into tents 8ft. by 10ft., accommodation that is occasionally used by two men, but it is altogether too small. On any of our constructional work we have tents for two men 10ft. by 12. We are not asking too much in this case, although we are increasing the area. This is bringing the matter into line with the standards set in the other States. We are prohibiting the storage of food in rooms used for sleeping accommodation, and, unless permitted by the regulations, in any particular class of cases, it will be required that the kitchen shall be separate and apart from the sleeping room. The Act prohibits the cooking or serving of meals in the sleeping accommodation, but does not prohibit the storage of food in the sleeping accommodation. This Bill will make that illegal. Similar provisions are found in the New South Wales and Queensland Acts.

Mr. Mann: It could not hurt to have tinned stuff stacked in a room.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is better that all food should be kept right away from the sleeping accommodation. The Bill requires the provision of sufficient light, including artificial illumination, and sufficient ventilation in each sleeping or dining room and kitchen, and also requires the cleansing, fumigation or disinfection of the rooms at least once a year. The Act provides for the lighting and ventilation of the sleeping and dining rooms, but excludes the kitchen. It does not provide for any annual cleaning or disinfecting. There is no provision in the existing law for artificial illumination. This clause merely brings the conditions into line with those existing in the other States. Although our existing law requires the sleeping and dining rooms to be suitably floored, no provision is made for the flooring of the kitchen. I do not know why the kitchen was left out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The kitchens are usually floored with flags.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That would be termed flooring.

Mr. Thomson: Cannot some provision be made for Brussels carpets?

Hon. G. Taylor: They would want linoleum first.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This Bill also provides for the supply of fly-proof safes in the dining-room and the kitchen, and for proper drainage, and for temporary accommodation where buildings erected for that purpose have been rendered unfit for habitation by reason of fire, the outbreak of disease, or any similar cause, or where the premises have been newly established, and there has not been sufficient time in which to erect new buildings. These provisions are similar to those existing in the other States, but have not been inserted in our own Act. It is proposed that the inspector shall have the right to inspect premises at any time during the year, and that his authority shall not be confined merely to the time when shearing is in progress. It would be impossible for the inspector to cover the whole State during that limited period. The Act provides that three days' notice shall be given when it is proposed to start shearing. This period was found to be useless, because of the big distances to be covered in Western Australia. It is proposed to extend this notice to one week. Another provision empowers the inspector to serve on the owner a notice to enforce the requirements of the Act at any shearing shed, although the shearers may not be actually employed at the time of inspection. It permits of a penalty not exceeding £25 to be imposed for non-compliance with the order of an inspector, or for other specified offences. Section 13 of the Act is repealed by a clause that empowers a police or resident magistrate, in cases where an owner refuses or neglects to comply with an order, or any part of an order of an inspector, to direct the inspector to carry out the work at the expense of the owner. That provision is contained in the Queensland Act. After a case has been brought before the magistrate of an owner who has not complied with such an order, the magistrate can direct the inspector to carry out the alterations, and the owner will be charged with the cost, and the expenditure shall be a charge upon the property. The penalties have been increased from £5 to £50, which is the maximum. It is also provided that proceedings for offences shall be heard by a police or resident magistrate. It is not considered desirable that justices should hear these cases, because they are frequently either station owners or managers, or the friends of station owners or managers. It is not reasonable they should

be asked to deal with cases of this kind. It is set out that the cases shall be heard by a magistrate.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All justices of the peace are not squatters.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the North nearly all the justices are squatters. Any taint of suspicion should be altogether removed. The House should readily concur in the view that this amending Bill is long overdue. The files of the department show that since 1915, the year after the existing Act came into operation, every Minister who has had control of this legislation has had his attention directed to the necessity for an amendment. The officers in charge have pointed out that the Act cannot be enforced without involving enormous cost and a great deal of the time of the inspectors. In consequence the law has remained a dead letter, and has not been enforceable. The police have occasionally made inspections, but at no time has an inspector, with a knowledge of the conditions which apply in the way of hygienic and sanitary provisions to every industry, ever been sent to these places. There is nothing suggested in the Bill that does not exist elsewhere. It cannot be held that we are penalising the new settler or the small farmer because, up to a holding of 1,000 sheep, such person is exempt. I have met many pastoralists who were most anxious that I should see the accommodation they afforded. They showed me round willingly, and at a number of places everything was in first-class order. I saw one or two places, however, where there was room for improvement.

Hon. G. Taylor: But which would have been first class accommodation in my day.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Wonderful strides have been made in the last 25 years. That which brought about the first Shearers' Accommodation Act in Australia was the fact that the pastoralists used to argue that, because shearers were engaged for only a week or two, pastoralists could not be called upon to make special provision, or to incur any expense in providing accommodation for them. That day has long since gone. It is now recognised that the shearer is part of the show. He is the man that counts. While he is on the job he works hard. Never in my life have I seen men working so hard as the shearers in the North.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is piece work.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not in the case of everyone in the shed. All hands

have to keep pace with the shearers. While he is at work he does work. He certainly stops work occasionally, has his smoke-oh and morning tea and other spells, but while he is on the job he works harder than any man I know of. That is recognised by pastoralists in general.

Mr. Angelo: It is a pity the men on the roads do not work so hard.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have a more constant job than the shearers, who have long spells between their jobs. They could not keep up this pace all the year round, or even for eight hours on end. I defy the best of them to work at that pace for eight hours.

Mr. Angelo: I should get lumbago.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think the hon. member would get to the undertaker.

Hon. G. Taylor: I am afraid he would get the sack.

Mr. Lambert: A little of it would do him much good.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: These men are entitled to this accommodation. They are called upon to do most strenuous and important work. This industry has meant a lot to Western Australia, and will mean more to it as the years go by. When these men have to toil so hard, travel so many miles, and work under such trying climatic conditions, we should see that decent accommodation is given to them. We are not going to any extremes: indeed, I am rather surprised at my own moderation in the framing of the Bill. I am anxious that the accommodation for shearers should be put on something like a decent footing, and that there should be secured for them a recognised standard of accommodation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1926-27.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 7th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £1,555 :

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.47]: I noticed by the Press recently that the Premier had attained his political majority. I wish to congratulate him on having reached the years of discretion so far as politics are concerned.

Mr. Mann: He has been speaking very nicely about you, too, lately.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier is in a very fortunate and unique position. He has introduced his third Budget and had the pleasure of forecasting a fairly substantial surplus. I do not propose to delve very extensively into figures. That has been done by the Premier and by the Leader of the Opposition. We were very fortunate in the last financial year from the revenue point of view, in having an increase of £426,720 over the total for the previous year. This was made up of land tax £31,963, income tax £87,702, dividend duty £28,428, and stamp duty, probate duty, timber fees, departmental revenue and revenue from other sources, making up the total that I quoted. There was a decrease in revenue under two headings, namely, railways £16,868 and Fremantle Harbour Trust £15,000. The Premier stated that the reason why his estimate had not been realised in respect of those two departments was because the harvest did not come up to expectations. It is quite a common practice in this House to say that the Railway Department is showing a loss on the carriage of wheat. I am sorry the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) is not in his place, because I would have liked to draw his attention to the statement by the Premier that he regretted the Fremantle Harbour Trust revenue fell short of the estimate by £15,000. The Premier added that that was due principally to the reduced harvest. This year, according to the Estimates, we are to have increases in revenue as follows:—Land tax £9,170, dividend duty £24,105, stamp duty £18,593, timber £7,019, departmental £91,552, Commonwealth £568,493, trading concerns £13,254, and public utilities £413,573. The receipts from the public utilities it is expected will be increased by additional railway earnings as the result of the big harvest that is anticipated. When one analyses the figures, the only conclusion that can be arrived at is that last year's increase was stupendous. This year, exclusive of the Federal grant, it is estimated that the increase in our revenue will be £577,266. The Treasurer anticipates that the total revenue collected will be £9,791,611, or an average of £26 5s. per head of the popula-

tion. That shows what a wonderfully prosperous country Western Australia must be. It is undoubtedly a good country for people to come to if they are willing to work. Our net indebtedness has increased. In 1924 it was £148 per head. At the present time it is £158, or an increase of £10 per head of population. So long as that money is wisely expended, and so long as we continue to develop our lands in the way we are doing, we have nothing to fear. If we continue to pursue our policy of land settlement, I feel convinced that it will be possible to budget in years to come for a continuance of surpluses. That is certainly a happy position for the Treasurer to be in. Nevertheless, when we come to analyse the position, we cannot but arrive at the conclusion that the good things that are coming to the State out of the present Budget are due principally to the financial assistance being rendered by the Bruce-Page Government. The reduction of 33-1/3 per cent. in the income tax has been rendered possible by the Federal grant. We have had £353,112, and for 1926-27 £212,812, or a total of £565,924, and the Premier proposes to distribute it as follows:—He intends to give to the gold mining industry £165,924. I am in entire agreement with that. Then £200,000 is to go towards the income tax reduction. That gives a total of £365,924, leaving approximately £200,000 which the Premier proposes to take into Consolidated Revenue, with a view to the extinction of the unfunded deficit, and for the purchase of Treasury bonds. Personally, I do not approve of that. The Premier stated that as the grant was made to cover disabilities suffered by the State, he considered that his proposed method of distributing it was sound. I trust it will not be expended as Cabinet will decide and that Parliament will be allowed to determine the method. I hope to be able to prove to the House that this sum of money should be expended in a certain direction. I propose to deal with the Federal grant and the reasons that led up to its being given to the State. We know that after repeated requests, and continued agitation by the people of Western Australia, and by the Federal members, the Federal Government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the disabilities of the State. The State Government appointed a committee representing all sections of thought, to prepare Western Australia's case. I have made this statement before, but I am going to repeat it to show how the £200,000 should

be spent. Mr. N. Keenan, K.C., was appointed chairman of that committee. The primary producers were requested to submit the name of a representative to sit on the committee, and they chose Mr. Teasdale. When the first meetings of the committee took place this gentleman stated that Western Australia was suffering grievously from the effects of the tariff. Mr. Keenan said that was not in accordance with the request, because all the States of Australia were subject to the same tariff and therefore Western Australia could not claim to be suffering special disabilities from the high tariff. Mr. Teasdale resigned and a committee were appointed by the Primary Producers' Association to prepare evidence from their point of view. I say without fear of contradiction that the case presented to the Commission by the primary producers, through the then secretary, Mr. Carroll, was the factor that influenced the Royal Commission in framing their recommendation and was one of the main reasons that led to our receiving a special grant.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think you can say that, seeing that scores of witnesses gave evidence before the Commission.

Mr. THOMSON: I am entitled to state my opinion. I consider that the case presented in behalf of the primary producers led to that recommendation, and before I have finished I shall prove it.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will find it difficult to do that.

The Minister for Lands: You might do it to your own satisfaction.

The Minister for Justice: Have you ever heard of a man called Bill Adams?

Mr. THOMSON: The Chairman of the Commission (Mr. W. G. Higgs) and Mr. Entwistle concluded that whatever benefit the policy of protection may have conferred on the other States of Australia, it had not benefited Western Australia, that it was impossible to give the primary producers of Western Australia relief by way of reduced Customs duties without injuring the secondary industries of the Eastern States, and that the only effective means of removing the chief disability was to restore to the State for a period of years the absolute control of its own Customs and Excise.

The Minister for Lands: You know it is impossible to get that.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier said the Federal grant was made to the State mainly to cover the financial disabilities suffered by

the State. From the Premier's viewpoint that might be correct, but I do not think it was that consideration which animated the Royal Commission when they framed their report.

The Premier: If protection has operated detrimentally to primary producers, it has affected the State financially. That is what I meant.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not intend to argue the question from that standpoint. I shall give reasons why I consider that £200,000 should not be utilised in the manner suggested by the Premier. I trust that Parliament will agree to its being expended in another direction, and I hope I shall be able to convince the Premier that in the interests of the State and of the people who are suffering the greatest disabilities, it should be expended in another way.

The Premier: You are placing on my words a very restricted meaning. When I spoke of the financial disabilities of the State, my remarks covered the disabilities of the primary producers from protection as well as every avenue of trade.

Mr. THOMSON: That may be the intention of the Premier, but the grant is not being applied to mitigate those disabilities. Paragraph 1 of the Royal Commission's report states—

As soon as possible after our appointment, we assembled in Melbourne for the purpose of considering the necessary arrangements for the conduct of our inquiry. The first matter which engaged our attention was the scope of the investigation as defined by our commission. A literal reading of the terms of inquiry might suggest that the only subject of inquiry was the financial effect of Federation upon the State of Western Australia, as represented by its Executive Government. We realise, however, that such an interpretation, even if possibly justified by the letter of our commission, would fail to give effect to its spirit and intention. We therefore interpreted the term "State" to mean not only the organised and responsible State Government, but also the people of the State, whether concerned as individuals or as collective bodies, corporate or otherwise.

Thus the Commission directed their inquiries not merely to the disabilities suffered by the State, but to the disabilities suffered by individuals consequent upon the tariff.

The Minister for Lands: Everyone has to pay the tariff imposts.

Mr. THOMSON: I shall show that the primary producers are paying more than

their share. Paragraph 123 of the report reads—

Mr. Carroll submitted a return showing the approximate cost of equipping a 1,000-acre mixed farm with a minimum equipment of machinery, implements and fencing material in 1901 and the cost of an equivalent equipment to-day, together with a comparison of the Customs duties imposed on agricultural machinery, etc., at the two periods named, showing that the equipment in 1901 would cost £569 3s. and the cost for the same farm in 1925 would be £1,188 17s. Mr. Carroll said—"The Western Australian Primary Producers' Association is of opinion that the greatest benefit which could accrue would be the removal of the duties that retard production or, alternatively, the re-possession of their own Customs House."

Here is the opinion of one of whom the Leader of the Opposition used to take great notice—Mr. J. C. Morrison, journalist, since deceased:—

Our real ill is the tariff, and I say this, although I am not a freetrader; I say it because it operates with peculiar harshness to us under the Federal system. We get all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of the protective policy. Can a remedy be applied? Yes, an annual special Federal grant of a sufficient amount, or the restoration to us, over a period of years, of control over our Customs and Excise, with the right to impose duties upon products of the other States.

The majority opinion of the Commission was as follows:—

Your Commission is of opinion that if the State of Western Australia had not joined the Federation that State might have imposed Customs duties partly protective and partly revenue producing, and derived advantage therefrom; that having joined the Federation, whatever benefits the Commonwealth protectionist policy may have conferred upon other States of the Commonwealth, it has not benefited the State of Western Australia; that the primary producers of the State of Western Australia have to pay more for their agricultural machinery, etc., than the primary producers of the Eastern States; that the primary producers of the State of Western Australia have not the benefit of home markets like Sydney with its 1,008,500 population, or Melbourne with its 885,700 population, home markets of such value that three-fourths of the primary products of New South Wales and Victoria, other than wheat or wool, are consumed within those States; that the primary producers of the State of Western Australia have to sell their products in the markets of the world; that it is impossible to give the primary producers of Western Australia relief by way of reduced Customs duties without injuring the secondary industries of the Eastern States, and that the only effective means of removing the chief disability of the State is to restore to the State, for a period of years, the absolute control of its own Customs and Excise.

I hope I am not wearying members by reading these extracts, but they are pertinent to my argument. Anyone who listened to the Premier's Budget Speech could not fail to feel convinced that its whole tenor was a recognition that land settlement and production were of paramount importance to the State. Indeed, he said it was the foundation of the State's wealth. It is very gratifying to us, who claim to represent the agricultural section, that the Premier should recognise the primary producers as the wealth-producing section of the State.

The Minister for Lands: Is not that so all over the world?

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier told us that of last year's loan expenditure exactly 50 per cent. was expended on account of agricultural settlement. He also said that a total of £3,788,973 had been expended on group settlement. I do not propose to discuss group settlement at his stage; I hope to be able to deal with it later on. The industry that has suffered most from the high protective tariff is mining. On mining machinery the high protective duties range up to 45 per cent. which, together with the duty on explosives and the increase in the cost of living, has made the position of the industry almost impossible, unless ore of a very high grade is mined. I thoroughly endorse the Premier's proposal to earmark £165,924 of the special Federal grant for the assistance of gold mining, but next to mining, agriculture should receive consideration, because it is a primary industry that has to accept the world's market value for its products.

The Minister for Lands: And the world's market value is pretty good, too.

Mr. THOMSON: Surely the agricultural industry, as well as the mining industry, is entitled to some little measure of relief. I am prepared to admit that primary producers will benefit from the reduction of the income tax by 33½ per cent. Still, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that in 1924 the present Government introduced an amendment to the land tax that abolished the exemptions and doubled the tax. In addition to that, land values have increased by 300 or 400 per cent. Where people previously paid but a few shillings by way of land tax, they now have to pay £10 to £15. Prior to the alteration made by the present Government, the primary producer was able to deduct the amount of his land tax from his income tax and so he paid only one tax.

Now the primary producer has to pay not only income tax, but land tax as well, and he is in the position of being unable to pass on the additional charges. I should like to direct attention to the value of the wealth produced in Western Australia as shown in the latest "Statistical Abstract."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. THOMSON: I was about to refer to the wealth produced in Western Australia. In 1924, the total was £29,228,583. Of this, agriculture represents £11,183,724, pastoral £6,263,772, and dairying, etc., £1,362,914, or a total of £18,810,413. This last-named amount, made up purely of primary products, represents approximately two-thirds of the total wealth of the State. Mining produced £2,581,162, of which gold produced £2,060,298. The goldmining industry is receiving relief by way of remission of taxation on mining, and also participates in the 33½ per cent. reduction on income tax. The previous Government also gave a reduction in goldfields water rates of approximately £40,000. With all these reductions I am entirely in accord as they affect the gold mining industry. I wish it to be understood that in advocating that the £200,000 should be allocated in another direction, I am not opposed to the suggestion of relieving the gold mining industry. Forestry and fishing produced £2,582,101, and manufacturing £5,254,907, or approximately one-sixth of the total wealth of the State. I wish now to refer to the value of goods exported from Western Australia. In 1924 we exported wool to the value of £3,527,865, though unfortunately there was a drop of £208,435. Hides and skins represented a value of £461,303, and wheat £4,186,714, a drop in the latter figure of £971,306 compared with the previous year. Fresh beef represented £120,117, flour £1,294,311, and fresh fruit £232,149, or a total value of £9,822,459 out of a grant total of exports to the value of £14,581,657. This represents a little less than three-fourths of the total export value for purely agricultural products. I am quoting these figures to show that the primary producers are not in a position to pass on the various charges and tolls levied upon them by means of the high tariff, railway freights and fares, etc., because they have to take the values in the world's market. According to the report of two members of the Disabilities Commission, there is no doubt the primary producers are

suffering disabilities by virtue of the high tariff imposed upon them by the Federal Government. I, therefore, contend that the £200,000 which the Premier proposes to use for reduction of the deficit should be placed in a suspense account. As the grants now received are to be paid for a period of five years, we are sure that during that period we shall receive over £200,000 annually, exclusive of what may come to us if an agreement is made between the State and the Commonwealth concerning the North-West. If the North-West is taken over we shall receive an additional £150,000. We have received £212,000 this year, and each year the amount will be increased by £10,000. Next year we shall receive £222,000 and in the following year £232,000, and so on until the five years have elapsed. The £200,000 should be placed in a suspense account. A sum of £40,000 set aside each year, and spread over the five years, would make up £200,000 which should be made available to the primary producers and others who are carrying the burdens imposed by the tariff. The Government should make available this money to reduce freights on agricultural machinery and on crude oil that is used for tractors. We are opening up large areas of land for wheat growing. In some of these districts there is no water. I cannot understand why the Agricultural Bank will not make advances for tractors. It will make advances for horses so that a man may work his plant. In various parts of the State the settlers cannot carry any stock. They certainly cannot carry horses, and are therefore compelled to use tractors. Such people should be considered. In certain districts the bank should make advances for the purchase of tractors to enable men to carry on their farming operations. In cases where there is a draw upon the goldfields water supply main, the rates levied go up to as high as £33 on 1,000 acres, although the farmers cannot use the amount of water they are allowed. Until these settlers are free, or in a position to pay their way, they should be exempted from these water rates. If the Railway Department consider they are making a loss on the manure rates, the period should be extended. It is now limited to about four months. The period should be extended, and the farming community should be able to get the benefit of the cheaper freights throughout the year. The Minister for Railways may say that manures are carried at a low rate, and some

members may argue that it is not a paying proposition. The Premier has referred to the enormous areas of land that have been cleared and cropped this year, and is hoping that the yield will be 30,000,000 bushels of wheat as a result of the labours of the farmers. I ask members who comment on the low freights on manures where the State would be if manures were not available to the farmers? The Treasurer has prepared a return showing the railway freights on various classes of goods. It may surprise members to know that for every ton of manure that is carried by the railways they have a return freight equivalent to eight times its weight, represented by wheat, chaff, oats and such like products. This shows that it is a paying proposition for the Railway Department to carry manures, and that it also pays the State. I will read an extract from a leading article that appeared in the "West Australian" of 5th October dealing with the agricultural show. It is as follows:—

That this will prove to be the case is suggested by the rate at which agricultural machinery and motor vehicles and accessories have, in recent months, been pouring into the State. Since August 31 last year, there have been landed at Western Australian ports, agricultural implements and machinery to the value of £673,436, of which imports from the Eastern States accounted for £567,513, and those from overseas for £105,923. These importations included no fewer than 1,187 strippers of a declared value of £243,331. The figures here given take no account of motor cars and parts, motor bodies or chassis, the total value of the importations of which amounted to no less than £899,699. It is not possible of course to effect such an analysis of these latter importations as to appropriate their respective shares to town or country, but when account is taken of tractors and motor lorries it will probably be found that honours are about even and that it would be no exaggeration to put the total value of the imports for the year of agricultural implements, tractors, and motor lorries, and of motor cars intended for the farmers at well over a million sterling. Could anything, it may be asked, tell more eloquently the story of the agricultural progress of the country which, less than 20 years ago, was importing its own breadstuffs. Surely we have here one of the romances of British settlement and the evidence of an achievement which cannot fail as a spur to further endeavour. At the date of Federation the prospect of Western Australia ever becoming one of the great wheat-producing States of the Commonwealth seemed far more remote than to-day does the establishment of the dairying industry within its borders. Hopefully therefore may we look for the time when, if the policy of the immediate past and present administration is persistently pursued, the Royal Show will bear witness to progress in the South-West—the pre-

destined centre of great butter, bacon, and cheese production—similar to that which it now proclaims as attracting to the wheat belt.

I have worked out some figures to show what the position of the farming community is. On a harvester the duty is 35 per cent., on a disc plough 30 per cent., on a binder 45 per cent., on a cultivator 30 per cent., and on a drill 45 per cent. Those are five implements used by the farmer, and the average rate of duty on them is 37 per cent.

Mr. Griffiths: That is customs duty alone.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes. I have worked out two sets of figures to show the burden which the high tariff places upon the farming community. Assuming that the grand total of £673,436 which I have quoted represents landed cost including duty, and estimating the duty at 37 per cent., the actual value of the machinery is £491,560, and the balance of £181,876 represents customs duty, from which the farmer derives no benefit whatever. Again quoting the "West Australian's" figures, I find that £567,513 worth of machinery was imported from the Eastern States and paid no duty. Taking the same average duty of 37 per cent. as before, the value of the machinery imported by Western Australia from the Eastern States was £414,244, and the farmers of this State made the manufacturers and workers of Eastern Australia a present of £153,269.

Mr. Sleeman: Why not support the local article?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Are you anxious to stay in the Federation?

Mr. THOMSON: Taking the declared value of the overseas machinery as £105,923, there is to be added a duty of 37 per cent., including presumably freight to Western Australia and port charges here. The duty imposed amounts to £39,191. If no duty had been imposed upon all that machinery, the agriculturists of Western Australia would have received it for £192,460 less, a sum nearly equal to the £200,000 which the Premier has earmarked for reduction of the deficit.

The Minister for Lands: The report of the Federal Minister for Customs says it is not so.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not care what he says. One cannot get away from the figures which I have quoted from a leading article in the "West Australian" of the 8th October. Moreover the "Statistical Abstract" shows that last year this State imported even a greater quantity of machin-

ery. The deductions I have made from the figures are correct. I obtained the latest figures from the Government Statist's office.

The Minister for Lands: But your deductions from them are wrong.

Mr. THOMSON: They are absolutely correct. The agriculturists of Western Australia received £491,560 worth of machinery, and paid £192,460 in Customs duty on it.

The Minister for Lands: That is the result according to the prices you have put on the machinery.

Mr. THOMSON: No doubt the machinery cost the farmers more by the time they received it. I give these figures as my reason for arguing that £200,000 should be earmarked for relief of the primary industries and that these industries should receive the same benefit from the Federal grant as the mining industry is to be given. The mining industry has suffered severely from the tariff, and so have the primary industries. I defy anyone to prove that my figures are wrong. The amount of £673,436 which I have quoted represents a declared value of about £490,000 in machinery, the balance of nearly £200,000 being represented by Customs duty, from which the farmer derives no benefit of any kind. Now let me turn to railway rates and show where reduction can be made. It is only fair and reasonable that the Government should make part of the Federal grant available for lowering railway charges. The freight on a harvester from Bassendean to Katanning is £6 6s. 2d. on a 5-furrow plough it is £3 6s. 7d., on a 15-disc drill £4 6s. 1d., on a tractor £8 11s. 8d., on a binder £3 6s. 7d., and on a drill cultivator £4 19s. 10d. The Government could reimburse the Railway Department for a 50 per cent. reduction in the freight on agricultural machinery by allocating to them £40,000 out of the Federal grant; and this after all, would be a mere book entry, involving no loss whatever to the State. This would be relief on the same lines as the earmarking of £165,924 for the benefit of the mining industry. When the Federal Disabilities Royal Commissioners made their recommendations, they never intended that the State Treasurer should use part of the relief to reduce the deficit. The Federal money is given for the purpose of helping people who are suffering from disabilities imposed upon them, and not upon the Government of this State, by the high tariff. Incidentally I may mention that the only States which

benefit from the tariff are New South Wales and Victoria. At the recent annual conference of the Primary Producers' Association a delegate from Borden, which is in my district, quoted the railway tariff as to oils and crude kerosene for tractors. He said that a case of power kerosene costing 12s. 3d. at either Fremantle or Bunbury would cost 17s. 3d. delivered at Borden, the difference of 5s. per case representing railway freight. He also stated that the cost of railway transport of a case of lubricating oil from Fremantle to Borden was 7s. 6d. Those two instances illustrate the way in which part of the Federal grant could be utilised for the relief of the primary industries. In the early part of my speech I showed that the fruit industry had brought into Western Australia considerable amounts of money by the sale of fresh fruit. Unfortunately those who are engaged in the apple industry and send their product overseas have struck a very bad market this year, and the loss to them has been serious. Despite that loss, however, they find themselves burdened this year with an increased rail freight on fruit cases.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Not in every instance.

Mr. THOMSON: The increase applies to the hon. member's district. I dare say he has received from a part of his district the same protest as has reached the Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: I have also had a letter accepting the reduction offered.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member is referring to the King and Kalgan settlers. I consider that the attitude adopted by the Commissioner of Railways towards the King and Kalgan settlers is one which he has no right to adopt. It is an absurd position relatively to people who by virtue of their geographical position, exporting their fruit and being adjacent to an excellent port, are exempt from using the railways.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: The cost to them is greater by 9s. 7d. per ton.

Mr. THOMSON: Some of them have to cart their produce 30 miles by road. That is one of the anomalies of the position. My suggestion is that there should be reduction in the freight on agricultural machinery, reduction in the freight on shooks used by fruiterers, and reduction in the freight on oils which are essential for the tractors used by farmers. The Yilgarn district was dis-

cussed at the Primary Producers' conference. Efforts are being made to settle people on the Ravensthorpe lands. Unfortunately, owing to the peculiar position in which those people find themselves, it costs them as much as 11½d. per bushel to convey their wheat to Fremantle before despatching it overseas. In that instance the Government should make concessions and carry the settlers on until such time as the State has furnished them with the same facilities as are available to wheatgrowers in other parts of the State. It is on these grounds I contend that the Premier's allocation of £200,000 of the Federal grant for reduction of the deficit is not a sound business proposition. The average interest on our loans as a whole is about 4½ per cent., so that the Premier's proposal only amounts to saving this State a sum of £9,000 annually. The hon. gentleman has on other occasions, though not in introducing his Budget, referred to the Federal grant as a dole. If it is a dole, it is one given to the State of Western Australia not for the purpose of reducing the deficit but for the purpose of lightening the burden on those who are feeling the pinch of the high tariff most—a description which applies particularly to the primary producers. No one can read the Disabilities Royal Commission's report without becoming impressed with the fact that throughout the findings and the evidence the dominant factor is the sufferings entailed upon this State by the Federal tariff. If there are two Western Australian industries which suffer from the tariff, they are mining and agriculture. The mining industry the Government propose to relieve to the extent of some £165,924 annually; but agriculture, though bearing the heaviest part of the burden, is not to be granted any relief. That industry is probably providing three-fourths of the wealth of the State and it means that the burden the agriculturists are shouldering is greater than that borne by any other section of the community. I reiterate the statement that the £200,000 should be placed in a suspense account until such time as the Federal grant ceases, and should be used each year for the purpose of reducing the charges that have to be borne by the producers, thus providing some small recompense in recognition of the high duties on machinery and other plant necessary for the producers. We should bear in mind that the farmers are creating wealth. The consumption of wheat

in Western Australia does not fix the price the producers are to receive for their produce. The price the growers of wheat will receive for the forthcoming harvest will be the market price in London, less all charges that can be levied against the farmer right up to his very door. I hope the Government will give serious attention to the suggestions I have made. I trust I will have the pleasure of being present when this matter is being discussed and, irrespective of whether I shall be successful or not, I will give the House an opportunity to decide whether the £200,000 shall be devoted to the reduction of the deficit or to the relief of the burden under which so many people are labouring, particularly those engaged in primary production.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the members of the Country Party in the Federal Parliament supported the high tariff.

Mr. THOMSON: That cannot be said of the members from Western Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is so.

Mr. THOMSON: We, as a State, are responsible only for those we send to the Federal Parliament.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course, we cannot control members from other States.

The Minister for Lands: There was only one of our Federal members who said anything against the Government, and he was Gregory.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know that Green said much.

The Minister for Lands: He did not profess opposition; the other members did.

Mr. THOMSON: It is useless for members on the Government side of the House to raise a discussion on the Federal tariff, because the Labour policy is not protectionist at all; it is absolute prohibitionist.

The Minister for Lands: Is it?

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member knows that they would not allow anything to come in.

The Minister for Lands: That is all bunkum.

Mr. THOMSON: I believe there was one instance when the mining industry was being considered. The member for Kalgoorlie, Mr. Green, who is a Labour member, voted against the imposition of an increase of 45 per cent. in the tariff on mining machinery.

Mr. Richardson: That was policy!

Mr. THOMSON: If hon. members look into the matter, they will see that on every occasion members of the Labour party re-

presenting this and other States, have been if anything, worse than Pratten.

The Minister for Lands: Who introduced the tariff?

Mr. Panton: And who are the Government anyhow?

Mr. THOMSON: I am not arguing from that standpoint. I know who introduced the tariff, and I also know who supported it. Every Labour member in the Federal Parliament supported the high tariff.

The Minister for Lands: And the Leader of the Country Party in the Federal Parliament supported it.

Mr. THOMSON: The Leader of the Country Party in this House does not, and we are responsible only for the men we send to represent us from this State. On every occasion the member for Swan, Mr. Gregory and the member for Forrest, Mr. Prowse voted for reductions in the tariff.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not on every occasion. Mr. Prowse voted in favour of an increased duty on whisky.

Mr. THOMSON: I will admit that, but that is his—

Mr. Withers: Personal bias.

Mr. THOMSON: It may have been; I have nothing to do with that. The Government might have given some consideration to the phases I have mentioned. I am glad that provision has been made for assisting the mining industry but I also consider that assistance should have been given to other primary industries as well. The facts and figures I have quoted to-night have emphasised the burden that the producers have to bear because of the increased prices of machinery and plant generally. I have demonstrated clearly that, according to a statement appearing in a leading article in the "West Australian," out of £673,436 worth of imported machinery, £200,000 represented purely Customs tariff payments so that we made a present of approximately that amount to the machinery trade in the Eastern States. I maintain, therefore, that the intention of the Federal Parliament—I am convinced on the point—and also of the Royal Commissioners who inquired into the disabilities suffered by the State, was that money granted to us should be used for the benefit of the people of Western Australia. The position of the primary producers is that they cannot pass on the high cost of the machinery that they have to purchase from merchants who have to pay the income tax and will benefit accordingly

from the rebates suggested by the Premier. Yet those merchants are able to pass on whatever burdens they have to shoulder to the general public, and in the end the people have to pay. The mining industry and the farming industry are not able to do that; they have to accept world's parity and therefore are entitled to consideration in respect of the £200,000. I do not propose to go through the various departments, but there are one or two that I desire to touch upon. The Premier stated that it was the Government's policy to make the metropolitan water supply pay its way. In the course of his speech he said:—

The metropolitan water supply revenue, it is expected, will show an increase of £40,271, mainly due to increased water rates and a part due to greater consumption. Last year's operation showed a loss of £22,625. The general taxpayer carried this, which I consider to be quite unfair.

On the other hand, the general taxpayer does not have to carry the responsibility regarding the high tariff on machinery; that has to be borne directly by the farmers. As a party, it is part and parcel of our platform that utilities such as water supplies, tramways and so forth shall be placed in the hands of a trust and administered by such a body. The Premier told us in his statement that there was a loss of £22,625 last year in respect of the metropolitan water supply and he anticipated that there would be a profit of £40,000 this year by reason of the increase in the rates. That is a simple way to square the ledger. The Premier merely extracts more money from the public, and fixes up the ledger by increasing the rates.

Mr. Sampson: They have no competition.

Mr. THOMSON: But the point is that the people of the metropolitan area, who have to pay, had no say regarding the construction, management or administration of the Water Supply Department. The Leader of the Opposition said that we were not getting value for the money spent in connection with the work at Churchman's Brook. That was the charge the Leader of the Opposition laid against the Government. If that is the position and the works are costing more than they should, we now know the easy way in which the position may be squared. All that is necessary is for the rate to be increased and the added cost passed on to the public. Yet those who have to pay have no say in the matter at all! I am as keenly convinced

as ever that the proper method of handling these utilities is to give the people of the metropolitan area control of their own public works. I hope to see established in Western Australia some day a metropolitan board of works, such as exists in Victoria and other States, so that that board will take charge of various metropolitan enterprises. They will then be under the direct control of representatives of the ratepayers themselves. Let me give an illustration regarding administration matters to-day. The policy of the Government is to do all work by day labour. It is also their policy that no one shall get a job unless he carries a union ticket. The railway from Norseman to Salmon Gums is being constructed departmentally. The engineer in charge of the work said that he considered the men should lay three-quarters of a mile of rails per day. I do not know whether it is a fair comparison, but when the Trans-Australian railway was being constructed an average of a mile of rails per day was laid. When a railway was constructed by the department during the time a former Labour Government under Mr. Scaddan were in power, a mile of rails per day was also laid. In this instance, however, the engineer in charge said that three-quarters of a mile of rails should be laid per day. Mr. Costello, the A.W.U. organiser, went along and said that only half a mile of rails would be laid a day. The most remarkable feature of the whole thing is that half a mile of rails is being laid in connection with that railway to-day! The engineer in charge of that railway is the Government representative, and if he contends that three-quarters of a mile should be laid daily and only half a mile is being laid, then the State is not getting value for the money spent from loan funds. I do not know whether my information is correct, but I believe that men engaged on the Norseman-Salmon Gums railway construction to-day are able to knock off work about 2.30 p.m., having laid their daily half mile before that time.

Mr. George: That is the general rule in railway construction.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know that it is.

Mr. George: It all depends upon the number of men in the gang.

Mr. THOMSON: My point is that the engineer in charge, who ought to know, said that three-quarters of a mile should be laid per day.

Mr. George: But it all depends upon the number of men in the gang.

Mr. Teesdale: But the engineer in charge ought to know what the men should do.

Mr. THOMSON: And I have indicated what the engineer said.

Mr. George: That is so.

Mr. THOMSON: But Costello says half a mile, and half a mile it is! If that is the way the affairs of the State are being carried out to-day, I do not know where we will land ourselves.

The Premier: I have a most effective reply to the statement and I shall take advantage of replying other than by way of interjection. The hon. member knows nothing about the facts.

Mr. Panton: He never does.

Mr. THOMSON: I have based my statement upon what appeared in the Press. I do not know any more than that.

The Premier: You do not know anything about platelaying. It all depends upon the number of men in a gang. You are suggesting that the same number of men in the gang would lay the half-mile as would lay the mile.

Mr. THOMSON: The engineer said they should lay three-quarters of a mile per day.

The Premier: It all depends upon the number in the gang.

Mr. George: The engineer would see to it, and—

Mr. THOMSON: Probably Costello would not permit it. I can judge only from what has appeared in the Press. If these works are costing more than they should cost, it is unsound economically, and even against the interests of the workers themselves; for it would be far better that those men should lay three-quarters of a mile and get that railway finished so that we could go on opening up and developing another portion of the State.

The Premier: A strike occurred there, and the matter is being settled by the Arbitration Court. What more do you want?

Mr. THOMSON: By the time it is dealt with by the court, probably the platelaying will be finished.

The Premier: That is not our fault. We are settling it by the constitutional method.

Mr. THOMSON: If the engineer-in-charge requires a certain result, that result ought to be forthcoming.

The Premier: When an engineer thinks one thing and the men think another and a

dispute is created, who is to settle it, the engineer?

Mr. THOMSON: I understand the men were inclined to go back, but that Mr. Costello said they were not to go back.

The Premier: Of course they would not go back. A dispute was created, and referred to the proper tribunal.

Mr. THOMSON: Well, I am giving the facts as they appeared in the Press.

The Premier: They are not the facts at all.

Mr. THOMSON: If the same thing applied to the construction of our metropolitan waterworks, the ratepayers in the metropolitan area probably are being loaded up considerably more than they ought to be.

The Premier: On the other hand, they may be getting cheaper work by avoiding a contractor's profits.

Mr. THOMSON: It does not work out in practice. Of course it is only right that people should pay for what they are receiving, but I have my doubt about the administration. The Railway Department was loaded to the extent of £90,000 through the Government introducing the 44-hour week. If the Government had left that to the Arbitration Court, the court might have conceded the 44-hour week; but we know it was the Government that did it, and that had the Government not interfered probably the railways would have shown a profit instead of a deficit. I want to touch briefly on the absolute lack of co-ordination between departments upon which we are spending so much money. We have the Lands Department sending out surveyors to survey land. It is then thrown open for settlement, the Lands Department fixing a price of, say, 10s. per acre upon it. We broadcast all over the world that men going on the land in Western Australia do not need any money at all, that the State will finance them. A settler comes along and takes up a block of land at 10s. per acre. He then goes to the Agricultural Bank and requests an advance on that land. But the bank says the land is not of any value. The Lands Department says the land is worth 10s. per acre, but the bank says it is of no value at all. If the settler be in a position to finance himself, and if ultimately he makes a success of his farm, the Taxation Department comes along and says his land is worth £2 or even £3 per acre, notwithstanding that the Agricultural Bank has already declared it is worth nothing.

The Minister for Lands: The Agricultural Bank does not say that of any land in the State.

Mr. THOMSON: The difficulty arises from the lack of co-ordination between the two departments.

The Premier: A blessed word, co-ordination; like Mesopotamia.

Mr. THOMSON: I should like to see the Agricultural Bank and the Lands Department co-ordinating better than they do.

The Minister for Lands: Parliament says the Agricultural Bank trustees must control the bank.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not going to discuss that phase of the question. We tell people in the Old Country that if they come out here we will give them land at a certain price, that for the first five years they will have no rent to pay, and that advances will be made to them through the Agricultural Bank. Unless the Government are prepared to give due assistance to settlers pioneering agricultural districts they should not allow those men to go out at all. Just a little more assistance given to those settlers would mean all the difference between success and failure. Recently I travelled many miles through a district.

The Minister for Lands: Southern Cross.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not saying which district. The men there were getting only half rates. The district is alleged to be in a dry area, yet in that district the Agricultural Department has clearly demonstrated by experimental plots the proper methods of farming.

The Minister for Lands: Where are the experimental plots in Southern Cross?

Mr. THOMSON: I did not say Southern Cross. The Minister cannot draw me like that. I am dealing with our land settlement policy. The Agricultural Department demonstrated what could be done in that district. Yet those men, coming from the Old Country, were allowed to go out there with insufficient financial support.

The Minister for Lands: Of course you are opposed to group settlement.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not.

The Premier: Yet your official organ said that all the millions spent down there had been squandered.

Mr. THOMSON: No, it did not.

The Premier: But it did.

Mr. THOMSON: We are not dealing with group settlement just now, but with land

settlement through the Agricultural Bank. The bank gave those settlers just enough to place them in difficulties.

The Minister for Lands: They were told that if they wanted to prove the district they would have to carry some of the risk themselves.

Mr. THOMSON: It is not a fair thing to expect men without money to go out and prove any district. The bank had no right to advance any money at all if not satisfied as to the value of the district. It is the lack of co-ordination between the departments that I complain of. One set of officers is encouraging people to go on the land, while another set is declaring that the land is no good, that the settlers cannot succeed there, and that if they go out there they will be given only so much financial assistance. There is the lack of co-ordination between the departments.

The Minister for Lands: The officers can only advise them of the uncertainty.

Mr. THOMSON: If you are not going to give those settlers the assistance to which they are entitled, you should not allow them to go out there.

The Minister for Lands: They said they had money with which to carry on.

Mr. THOMSON: The average man without farming experience does not know the expense he will have to face if he goes on the land. Either more assistance should be given to the settlers or they ought not to be allowed to go out at all.

The Minister for Lands: They went there before I had anything to do with it, and they went of their own will and accord.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not saying that the Minister or his department misled them.

The Minister for Lands: Men were turned down when they had no money.

Mr. THOMSON: Still I maintain——

The Minister for Lands: You can talk till you are black in the face. So long as Parliament says that Ministers shall not control the bank, it will be so.

Mr. THOMSON: I could only wish that the Government were equally sincere in dealing with other departments. They took a totally different attitude when dealing with the railway unions. We have a Commissioner of Railways who is supposed to be in supreme control of the department, but the Government went behind him and gave the men a 44-hour week and an increase of wages.

The Premier: They did not increase the wages. The increase was granted in accordance with the practice.

Mr. THOMSON: But the Government went behind the Commissioner.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Who gave him the power? We have an Arbitration Court.

Mr. THOMSON: We pay the Commissioner of Railways £2,000 a year to administer the department.

The Minister for Lands: You make it a practice to go amongst the farmers and tell them that sort of thing.

Mr. THOMSON: The Minister has no right to say that. The Minister, sheltering himself behind the Agricultural Bank, says he will not interfere. The Act stipulates that the management of the Agricultural Bank shall rest entirely in the hands of the trustees, and the Minister will not interfere. Why did the Government interfere in the Railway Department? Because it jolly well suited them.

Mr. Panton: Because Parliament decreed that the Arbitration Court should fix the conditions.

Mr. THOMSON: There is a lack of co-ordination between the Agricultural Bank and the Lands Department that I hope the Government will endeavour to remedy. I should like to know why the Premier, when in the Old Country, authorised the sale of the Agent General's house.

The Premier: That was explained last year.

Mr. THOMSON: It was not, or I do not remember it.

The Premier: It was, whether you remember it or not.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not think it was.

The Premier: Very well. I am not telling the truth.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not say that.

The Premier: I say it was explained; what else do you mean?

Mr. THOMSON: I have read "Hansard" and failed to find the explanation. I admit the sale was mentioned, but I should like to know the reason. The Estimates show a house allowance of £500 for the Agent General, and I think a big mistake was made in selling the house. Whoever goes to London as Agent General goes as the ambassador of the State. We had a house of excellent value for him, a fact that contributed greatly to the dignity of the State.

The Premier: Could not the Agent General carry out his ambassadorial duties in another house?

Mr. THOMSON: I hope the Premier will give us more information than is available to us at present. It was not in the interests of the State that that house should be sold.

The Premier: I thought otherwise, and I sold it.

Mr. THOMSON: Apparently because the Premier thought it right, that is to be the end of the matter.

The Premier: Well, it was right.

Mr. THOMSON: As the member for an electorate having more constituents than has the Premier's district—

The Premier: But they are very much less intelligent.

Mr. THOMSON: I claim to have the right to question such a sale.

The Premier: Of course you can query it, and you may continue to do so for ever.

Mr. THOMSON: Savoy House in the Strand is regarded as the shop window of Western Australia. Yet on the Estimates we find a paltry £50 for the purpose of sending home exhibits of what Western Australia can produce. That is the way we advertise our State in the Old Country.

The Premier: But you were Home two years ago.

Mr. THOMSON: And while there I did my part; I assisted to bring out some useful citizens, and at no expense to the State. I went Home at my own expense.

Mr. Panton: We had better send you back again.

Mr. THOMSON: These gibes are uncalled for. I am speaking of the requirements of the State, and the Premier takes exception because the matter is brought under his notice.

The Premier: There is as much money on the Estimates for exhibits this year as there has been in other years.

Mr. THOMSON: Does that mean that it is sufficient? A greater sum should be provided. Ever since I have been in the House I have voiced that opinion. As one who has been to the Old Country, I consider there is totally inadequate publicity for Western Australia. The proper use is not being made of Savoy House. If the position is as indicated, that men of means calling at Australia House, where we are supposed to have a representative, are being sent to the other States, while men without means are

being sent to Western Australia, it is the duty of the Government to see that greater publicity is given to our State so that we might get men of capital as well as men without capital. The Premier has accused me of making a misstatement regarding the desire of McKay's harvester firm to establish a factory in this State. The Premier said I knew nothing about it because the firm had established assembling works here. The Premier endeavoured to camouflage the position. I was dealing with the firm's desire to establish a manufactory, not assembling works.

The Premier: Well, they are works.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier knew that I was referring to the firm's desire to establish works for the manufacture of implements. I made it quite clear; yet the Premier said I was wrong and did not know what I was talking about. Since then Mr. McKay has published a reply which shows conclusively that the statement I made was correct.

The Premier: And my statement was correct.

Mr. THOMSON: But the Premier's chief desire was to cover up the real position. The step to reduce income taxation by 33½ per cent., rendered possible by the receipt of the Federal grant, may assist in the establishment of additional factories in this State. If firms show a desire to establish factories here, it is up to the Labour movement to do their part and give manufacturers the same opportunities as are available to them in the Eastern States. If the question were left to the men I think they would be quite willing to accept work under conditions similar to those worked by men in McKay's works at Sunshine, and probably they would be able to make a good deal more money than is possible under the conditions existing here at present. There are several other matters on which I hope to speak when the departmental votes are being considered. Let me repeat my contention that £200,000 of the Federal grant should be devoted to the relief of those people who are bearing the greatest portion of the burden imposed by the high protective tariff.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How would you do it—give it back to the Federal Government so that they could reduce the tariff?

Mr. THOMSON: If the hon. member had been in his place, he would have heard my

views. I commend them to his earnest consideration when "Hansard" is printed.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.41]: The Premier's Budget speech was a fine clear statement so far as it went, but he has left to each Minister the duty of dealing with the details of his department. Consequently not until we hear what the various Ministers have to say shall we know what their intentions are. The Premier really confined his remarks to telling us what had been done, without indicating too much of what the Government propose to do in future.

The Premier: I did, so far as the finances were concerned.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: But not so far as anything else was concerned. I take it that the time to discuss the policy of the Government will be when the Loan Estimates are under consideration. The Premier indicated that the State had received from the Federal Government a considerable sum of money which is being taken into revenue during the current year and will be of great assistance to the finances. The total amount of the grants for last year and this year is £565,924 and we have heard how the Premier intends to allocate that sum. Although he told us that a certain amount would be devoted to assist the mining industry, he did not give any particulars of the form that the assistance would take.

The Premier: That was not the time to enter into details.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not finding fault with that, but I fear it will mean a prolongation of the debate on the Estimates. Had we had the details of the various departments, members would have been able to curtail their remarks considerably by dealing with the whole of the departments during the general debate on the Estimates. I am more concerned about the Mines and Lands Departments than any others. My district is developing into a pastoral area, but there is very little mining going on in the remainder. I hope that something may be done to assist it. I am sure the Premier will be anxious to do anything he can in that respect. The sandalwood industry also plays a prominent part in the life of the district. We have heard a good deal about the prosperity of the State, and the buoyancy of the finances.

Without being in any way eulogistic, we must admit that this is the outcome of the land policy instituted by the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Good Lord!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That policy has been endorsed by the Government which followed his.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You know that is not correct. What did Hopkins do?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: He got a pair of riding boots and pants, and had to procure a special horse to carry him because of his 16-stone weight. He rode through Osborne Park and out to Wanneroo. I believe he also went to the Beverley district. Had he gone up to Gingin he would have passed through most of the agricultural areas that existed in Western Australia 21 years ago.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Who established Nangeenan?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Who increased the wheat yield from a few bushels to the 30 million bushels we are anticipating for the coming season?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: J. M. Hopkins' policy.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The policy of the Leader of the Opposition is responsible for the prosperity of Western Australia.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I defy contradiction of my statement.

The Premier: The prospectors will be looking at you.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I know it to be true.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is not true. No one knows it better than do you. You took part in the debates long before the Leader of the Opposition was in the House.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! These interjections must cease.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is time I got in a word or two.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect upon the Chair.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I should be pleased if the Chair would reflect upon someone else. We are reaping the benefit of the policy to which I have referred, notwithstanding the opposition from the cross-benches. The gold yield is falling. If we were dependent on gold to-day, as we were, say, 15 years ago, we should be in a poor position. Our borrowing capacity in the Old Country would not be at the rate of four millions a year. I am sorry to say that we could not finance this State if it

were not for our wheat, our wool and our timber. We have to look to these things in the future. I am pleased to be associated with one who had that wide vision to see what the future of the State would be, and was able to lift it out of a declining position into a prosperous one.

Mr. Withers: Was he not lucky?

The Premier: Be careful not to disrupt the pact.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I shall not mind that as long as I do not disturb the equilibrium of members opposite. If they would leave me to the pact, I should not have much difficulty in getting through my few remarks. Of the money borrowed by the Mitchell Government 60 per cent. was spent in improving our agricultural areas and settling people on the land. That was a wise policy, and it should be continued for some years. People should be placed in a position where their labour will produce wealth. The difficulty about spending borrowed money is in getting the best results, but we have had results from the expenditure of which I have spoken.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You must have been reading the leading article.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will now refer to the financial position as compared with what it was in the days of the Mitchell Government. My friends on the cross-benches have referred to the cost of running State concerns because of the increased wages. It is a remarkable fact that during the life of the Mitchell Government these increases in wages amounted to between 50 per cent. and 60 per cent., whereas they have amounted to only 24 per cent. under the present Government. I know the answer will be that the present Government had to find the money for the previous increases also, but I would point out that the Mitchell Government had to find the increases that were paid by the Government before them. Furthermore, the previous Government had a smaller revenue than the State enjoys to-day, and the population has not increased in the same proportion as the revenue has increased. The Government services that are given to-day, and paid for out of revenue, cannot have increased to the extent to make the difference between the financial position as it is to-day and what it was three years ago. Had the Mitchell Government remained in office for a further three years, and improved the finances at the same rate as they did during their last

three years of office, there would have been a huge surplus to-day.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And God help the State.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Beyond doubt, that is the position.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What did the "West Australian" say in its leader?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will tell the hon. member what the "Worker" says.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I would rather hear that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will now deal with the subject I was prevented from dealing with the other night. According to report, men are being withdrawn from the mines suffering from T.B. and other diseases. They are being paid a remuneration which is creditable to the Government. These men should be provided for by the State. They have deserved well of the country. They have worked in the bowels of the earth and ruined their health. According to the Premier's speech in Kalgoorlie early this year, there is no doubt in the minds of the Government as to the legality of these monthly payments. In the view of other people, however, the payment is illegal. These men should receive the money, and no doubt, so long as the present Treasurer remains in office, they will continue to receive it. If, however, this Government went out of office and another Government viewed the matter in a different light, they might cease to make the payments and give the men what they considered was the correct amount due to them. That is not a proper position for Parliament to allow. If there be any doubt on the question, it would be wise for the Government to establish the fact by Act of Parliament, so that no other Government could interfere with it without the consent of Parliament. The trouble started early in January. It was the outcome of a meeting in Kalgoorlie. There was great excitement amongst the unfortunate men as the result of an article that appeared in the "Sun." I do not know what the attitude of that newspaper is, for I have not read a copy of it for years, but I do know what started the trouble. Ministers had to go up to Kalgoorlie. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this newspaper's statements. I should be pleased to know that they are absolutely untrue, but they went forth to the public and gave the Government much

cause for anxiety. The paper speaks of a sick miner and his family existing on 8s. a week for 10 weeks. It asks if this is a living wage, and if this is the result of the attitude of the Mines Department. These words are set out in big headlines. I am anxious to know that it is impossible to believe these statements, and that they are untrue. That is why I am making these remarks. Had I seen the paper before I should have gone to Kalgoorlie and examined the position myself, but I was in hospital at the time. This is an extract from the article—

There is a case in point, however, which shows more clearly than ever the Rip van Winkle tactics of the Minister for Mines. The exact circumstances are that a mine worker of South Kalgoorlie was employed on the Oroya Links mine at the time of the examinations. The examinations were on the 7th September last. A few weeks later he went to work at the Great Boulder mine, and on the 10th November was stricken with pleurisy, and he quickly fell away to a mere shadow. He was attended by Dr. Thorne, and later by Dr. Birmingham, who informed him that he had dust on the lungs. The man, although he was examined nearly four months ago, received no notification from the Mines Department as to his health, and it is quite evident that his certificate is pigeon-holed with others of the tubercular category, who immediately on the receipt of the notice of their withdrawal from the industry would be entitled to sustenance. In the meantime the department is not worrying over such a small matter as the cost of living. The Minister apparently does not concern himself over the fact that this sick man has a wife, and his dependants have had the huge sum of £4 to exist on and buy the necessary nourishing food with since the 10th November, which works out at 8s. a week.

It is a very scathing article, but I do not think that anyone who knows the Premier would believe it to be true. It caused some trouble, and members interested in the district held a meeting in Boulder on the 24th January. The Minister for Mines made a speech. There must have been some difference of opinion as to the position with reference to the two Acts, the one passed in 1923 and the other in 1925. According to the "Worker" the Minister made a very fine speech, and according to those who were present, he was well received. He pointed out certain things and went on to say—

Under the Act as amended the duty of the Government to find employment had been made a continuous obligation, and unless such employment was found, the ruling rate of wages must be paid. The Miners' Phthisis Act, as originally framed, provided that no man could come under it except he was in work when it was proclaimed last September.

Then he states that certain things have to follow—

In New South Wales any payment made under the Miners' Accident Relief is not taken into consideration by the Federal Government, and if a miner there receives from the Accident Fund £2 or £3 per week, the invalid pension allowed by the Federal Government is not reduced on that account. We are going to ask the Federal Government that any compensation fixed under the Miners' Phthisis Act should not influence the amount payable under the Invalid Pensions Act.

That is the Minister's statement, and a very wise statement.

They wanted to do this before they could definitely fix the amount of compensation payable to the man totally incapacitated by T.B. He would take their views back to Cabinet, the members of which would see what amount they would fix. It was only lately that they had returns from the laboratory showing how many were affected and the number of T.B. cases that must be provided for. They had their inspector interviewing these men.

The Minister further states—

It was necessary to know what they wanted before they could be dealt with.

They did not know what they wanted. The Minister went to the fields and found out what they wanted.

He had before Cabinet a recommendation to immediately give the T.B. men notice and take them out of the mines. That would be decided as soon as Cabinet met, together with the amount of compensation payable to men who could not work at any employment.

Naturally, after the appearance of this article members representing the goldfields, and all members possessing any humanitarian feelings, would inquire what had happened to cause the publication of so scathing an article, one showing so little sentiment for the Government supposed to represent workers.

Mr. Sleeman: Supposed to represent workers, you say?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I consider that they do represent workers, though from this article one would not think they did. It is an article which gives reason to suspect that the Government do not represent the workers. If there is any truth in the article, the suspicion would to that extent be justified. There should be no necessity for the appearance of a far-fetched, double-column article such as this to bring the Government up to their duty towards the people, especially as Ministers had Acts of Parliament to support them. I am merely stating what happened according to the article.

Mr. Sleeman: You are taking a lot of notice of it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am taking notice of the "Worker," which is the official organ of the Government. The Minister for Mines is reported as saying—

The Bill provided that a man should not receive less. He had no hesitation in taking back to Cabinet the accepted views of the union on the matter, but he could not make a decision without consulting the other members of Cabinet.

On that date, the 24th January, the Government, according to the Minister for Mines, who administers this legislation, had no idea what they were prepared to give the men. That is according to his own statement, not according to mine or to that of anybody else. It is according to his statement published in the "Worker."

In answer to questions Mr. Troy stated that the Crown Solicitor had given his opinion that "suitable employment" meant employment suitable to the man concerned and carrying reasonable remuneration. It did not mean work at rate of wages he was receiving, but at reasonable remuneration.

Mr. Troy went there prepared with a straightforward statement to make to these men, and I agree with what he says.

The awards in most other industries were better than those prevailing in the mining industry.

The Minister also stated—

The men need not be afraid they were going to be put on the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. The Government would fix the scale of relief at an adequate rate. In answer to further questions, Mr. Troy said that men desiring to get out of the mining industry by going on the land, who were not affected by T.B., would have to take equal chance with others by applying to the Land Board.

This refers to healthy men, not affected by tuberculosis or miners' complaint. However, there was a desire to help people not able to help themselves because of injury or sickness.

Compensation payable under the Act would be paid by the Mines Department direct, and not through the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. When the amount payable to those men who could no longer follow any occupation was decided upon, the regulation fixing it at that amount would be laid on the Table of the House, and no subsequent Government could alter it except by a similar procedure or by an amendment. If any Government wanted to alter the Bill, they would alter it in an amending Bill. He thanked the members for the welcome extended to him.

And so on. Other members spoke. This was a meeting of the miners' branch of the A.W.U., a large, enthusiastic and somewhat

turbulent meeting which passed the following resolution:—

That this union requests the Government to fix the basis of payment for those men taken out of the mines through having contracted T.B., and who cannot follow any occupation, at the ruling rate of wages, and on the death of such beneficiary payments for dependants at—widows £2 10s. per week, mother or father £2 10s. per week, dependant brother or sister £2 10s. per week, and 10s. per week for each child.

It is reported that the motion was carried unanimously. All this happened on the 24th January. Later the Premier went to Kalgoorlie, and the same paper reports his speech there. I do not wish to weary the House by reading the speech. The Premier knows what he said there. Mr. Troy came to Perth with the scale submitted to him. There was, presumably, the ordinary discussion among Ministers, and thereupon the Premier said he would go up to Kalgoorlie the following week-end and make the position clear. The report of the Premier's speech carries headlines which show the importance of the subject—

Premier satisfies workers that the Miners' Phthisis schedule of compensation is the best in the world. Speech at Boulder lays bare mendacious propaganda of Nationalist candidates for Upper House.

The Premier: Striking headlines.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, even more striking than those I have already described as scathing.

The Premier: The art of journalism is to get the whole article into the headlines.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think the paper got the whole article into the headlines in this case, because a large proportion of what the Premier said, or is reported to have said, though I do not think the "Worker" would report him as having said what he did not say—

The Premier: Certainly not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Not unless the paper thought he was not putting the thing in a proper light. If the paper thought the Premier was trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the meeting, it would have left the matter to the Premier.

The Premier: The paper would elucidate points that I left obscure.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The reports states—

Mr. Collier, who was accorded an enthusiastic reception—

Naturally. The hon. gentleman always got an enthusiastic reception, even before he was Premier or reached Ministerial rank.

The Premier: Before they knew me too well.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: They knew the hon. gentleman then, and they know him just as well now. I do not wish to try to convey anything different. My desire is to state what occurred as reported by the "Worker." We want to know exactly what the position is. We want to put the matter beyond any doubt. The Government are anxious to do their best for the people concerned, and we on this side of the Chamber also are anxious to do our best for them. Let us settle the question by statute, so that the men will know what they are to receive. The taxpayers of Western Australia will be only too pleased to learn that we have settled this question far beyond the reach of any Government going in or coming out, settled it so that the men and their dependants will be provided for by statute. The Premier is reported as having said—

They knew, of course, that if a man was taken out he would be paid full wages until suitable employment was found for him; but when he reached the stage that he was no longer able to work, the question of compensation came in. The Government had decided by way of compensation in such cases, to pay half wages in accordance with the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, and to wife or widow in accordance with the scale of the Workers' Compensation Act of Broken Hill.

The Premier knows whether that remark was made.

The Government had decided to create a board upon which the A.W.U. miners' branch would have representation.

There is nothing wrong with that. The Premier then proceeds to discuss the difference between the two Acts, the one known as Mr. Scaddan's Act, and the other which during its passage last year caused a good deal of confusion in this House. Anyone reading those two Acts would have difficulty in grasping their effect.

The Premier: The people got confused between the dusted men and the T.B. men.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, and that is the trouble. There is confusion among the people on the fields, and even in my electorate, where there are not too many deep mines and not too many men suffering from dust. The Premier said, according to the report—

The Labour Government decided to meet the position and so amended the Act to make it an obligation to find work for a man so long as he was able to do work, or pay him full wages, and to make provision for his wife and dependants when he passed away.

Another thing that the Premier said at the meeting was—

In the course of the amending of the Act, it was decided that the amount paid to men no longer able to work should not be less than the amount paid under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

I want to draw the Premier's particular attention to this part, because I do not know whether he was correctly reported. The published statement continues:—

That was put in as a basis. The Government knew that it did not compel them to pay that amount. Never in their minds for one moment was there any such intention. Had they put a higher amount into the Bill it was quite possible that it would not have passed the Legislative Council. Notwithstanding what men say to-day that Chamber would pass a higher payment they lied

I do not know whether that was the Premier's actual statement and that he really told the people that it was never the intention of the Government to pay in accordance with the terms of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, but that they intended to pay a higher rate, the reason for omitting a higher sum from the Bill having been the fear that it would be thrown out by the Upper House.

Mr. Sleeman: That House is a great stumbling-block.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not wish to attack the value of that institution at the present stage. The Premier will probably give us the opportunity later on when we are dealing with the Bill that is mentioned on the Notice Paper. Some of the men who, I know, always vote Labour in those parts, construed the Premier's statement to mean that it had a political significance. They considered that that was the object, because men who had engaged in the controversy at the meeting were at one time within the Labour movement, but at that time were out of it. They were members of the Upper House and two of them, including the President, were going up for election in the following May, and two direct Labour supporters were opposing them. Labour supporters held that view, and considered that the references to the rates to be paid had not much bearing on the amount that would be actually allowed. There was a good deal of bitterness shown by the different speakers because they were thinking of what the Premier and others had said, considering it was done for political purposes to secure the return of members to the Legislative Council.

Some of the miners were greatly confused by the position, and this shows how easily people run away on side issues. They considered that the reference to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund was included in the Bill because Mr. Kirwan and Mr. Harris and a few others who had been in the Labour movement, but were then out of it, would vote against the proposal.

Mr. Sleeman: They evidently knew them.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is what was suggested, and it was also said that the Premier did not want them to lose their seats.

The Premier: Those two or three members to whom you refer do not constitute the whole Legislative Council.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is so.

The Premier: It would be possible for them to vote for higher amounts and yet the proposition be lost in the Legislative Council.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Quite so. I am really indicating how some of the men construed the Premier's statements. As a matter of fact, I am sure, as I told the men, the Legislative Council could be trusted to authorise greater amounts than are available to-day. I do not think the Legislative Council would attempt to reduce any remuneration suggested to these men, particularly if members of the Upper House have ever visited the Wooroloo Sanatorium or the old tuberculosis ward of the Subiaco branch of the Perth Hospital. Anyone who has seen the sufferers from these diseases would never dream of cutting down any allowance suggested for their support. To show how easy it is to be confused regarding these matters, I would point out the provisions under what is known as the Scaddan Act and those of the measure dealt with last year. The Scaddan Act, which was the Miners' Phthisis Act of 1922, that was assented to on the 22nd February, 1923, was amended by the present Government last year in order, as the Government desired, to make the conditions infinitely better for the men concerned. I recognise that that was the Government's objective, but I questioned whether they were quite successful.

The Premier: I think so.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, successful so far as the Government are concerned from the standpoint of administration. Decidedly, the Government are living up to what they considered the amending Act of 1925 gave them

power to do. Section 8 of the 1923 Act included the following provisions:—

This section shall apply only within such districts, and to such mines, or parts of mines, as are declared from time to time by the Governor by Order in Council published in the "Gazette."

Section 9 goes on to say—

(1) It shall be the duty of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, Incorporated, to keep a register and on application by any person employed on, in, or about a mine at the commencement of this Act, and whose employment is prohibited under Section 8 of this Act, to insert the name of such person in such register.

Thus the section in the Scaddan Act makes it obligatory to register and for a register to be kept of the names. The section proceeds—

(2) Any person whose employment is prohibited as aforesaid, and whose name is registered in the register to be kept by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, Incorporated, shall have the right to receive from the Department of Mines compensation, equal to the ruling rate of pay in the district in which he was employed at the time of such prohibition for the class of work in which he was engaged, until other suitable employment is found for and offered to him by the Department of Mines.

I think the Premier will bear me out when I say that the Government considered that the use of the word "until" was detrimental to the workers concerned. It conveyed the impression that if the Government found employment for a man once, the Government were then finished with him.

The Premier: There is no question about that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I believe the Premier was absolutely correct when he took that view. It was quite all right when the provision set out that if the ruling rate of wages in the district where the man had been working was £5, he should receive £5, and so on, according to whatever rate might prevail. But there were so many references to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund that they led to some confusion! It was decided to amend the Act, and how did Parliament do so? The Miners' Phthisis Act Amendment Act of 1925 contained the following provision in Section 2—

Section 9 of the principal Act is amended as follows:—(1) In Subsection (2) the word "unless" is substituted for the word "until," in the seventh line. (2) Subsections are inserted as follows:—(4a) If the Principal Medical Officer certifies in writing that a person whose name is registered is or has become unable to work at any suitable employment,

compensation under Subsection (2) shall cease to be payable, but such person shall be entitled to receive from the Department of Mines compensation not less than as prescribed by the scale of relief in force at the commencement of this Act under the rules of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, Incorporated.

I believe that it was the frequent use of the references to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, Incorporated, that led to confusion regarding men suffering from tuberculosis, and what are known as "dusted" men. I think that confusion caused a lot of the trouble that followed upon the publication of the article in the "Sun."

The Premier: The "Sun" did not understand the position. I do not want to say that the paper deliberately misrepresented it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not know; I merely have the report to go on.

The Premier: The Act of last year makes it a continuing obligation upon the Government to find work so long as the men are able to work and when they cannot work, to pay them compensation. That was the defect in the Scaddan Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Premier does not deny the report of his speech in the Kalgoorlie "Miner."

The Premier: No, of course not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have also a copy of the report of the board of control of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, Incorporated, and the statement of accounts for the year ended 31st January, 1925. Included in the report is the scale of relief. It sets out that the relief to guardians shall be as circumstances may warrant, and the scale of relief regarding married couples and widowers is set out as follows—

Married couple and widowers—25s. per week, plus 5s. for each child under 14 (maximum allowance £2 5s.). Single men—25s. per week.

The miners of Kalgoorlie knew that the provision regarding the maximum allowance of £2 5s. per week appeared in the Mine Workers' Relief Fund scale of relief, and they thought they would be treated accordingly and be paid £2 5s. at most. Thus hon. members will see how so much confusion arose. I want to know how the Premier has arrived at the £4 the men are being paid.

The Premier: It is not £4. We are paying the half rates, and then so much for each child.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is not in accordance with this report.

The Premier: No.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is where the confusion has arisen. They thought you would pay on this.

The Premier: We never intended to pay on that. The Act says it shall not be less.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think Parliament intended that you should pay as much as you like. In this instance the Premier was safe in going above the mark, because he knew that no difficulty would be created on this side of the House. But I want to see it placed beyond any Government interference. I do not think we are within our constitutional rights in spending that money under the provision of "not less than." The Minister for Mines told the people in Kalgoorlie he had it from the Solicitor General that the Government were perfectly within their legal rights in paying as much more as they liked. But if the Government can pay more than 25s., could they not pay anything up to, say, £50 per week?

The Premier: The Government, of course, are responsible for their actions.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: But I want Parliament, not the Government, to be responsible. Then no Government could go tiddly-wink-ing with it for political purposes. Suppose some future Government said to the men, "We will pay you £6 per week."

Mr. Marshall: The men wouldn't believe it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No, perhaps not. I have tried to clear up the misunderstanding. I do not think the Government did know how much they were paying at all. The Minister for Mines gave the show away. He said, "We did not know what you wanted until I came up. Now that I know what you want, I will take it to Cabinet." He took the scale with him, and the Government gave practically the scale submitted.

The Premier: Oh no, that scale was not adopted.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: However, I am not quarrelling with what you are giving, for I should like you to give just as much as the State can afford. I am sorry the Minister for Police is not here. There is in a section of the force a desire that they should have an appeal board under an Act of Parliament similar to that in New South Wales, a copy of which I have here. It is alleged that the police force of New South Wales is a very fine one and working amicably under the Act.

The Premier: Everything in New South Wales is working amicably.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Oh no! Far from that. I am told the police force in New South Wales is something for Australia to be proud of. The Commissioner of Police in this State in his last report is opposed to the appeal board, although in his report for 1924 he said this—

I am of opinion that the time is opportune for the appointment of an appeal board on similar lines to the one established in New South Wales to deal with appeals regarding the granting and refusing of promotion to a member of the force; the imposition of any punishment where such punishment consists of the infliction of a fine, suspension, or reduction in rank or pay, dismissal, discharge of transfer in connection with such punishment. The board should consist of a stipendiary magistrate and two assessors (who should be members of the force) one to represent the Commissioner and one to represent the members of the force. To give effect to this recommendation legislation is necessary, and I would urge it to be dealt with as early as possible. At a recent conference of police commissioners in Sydney I went into the subject, and am satisfied that the different police associations in the Commonwealth are desirous of having such a board, and at the annual conference of members of this force, held in August, 1924, a similar request was made.

That is the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police in 1924. But in his report for last year he goes back on that and is opposed to the appointment of such a board. Evidently he has some well-founded reasons for that later attitude.

Mr. Sleeman: He does not want the appeals.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: In his last report he said it would be impossible for anybody to carry on a private business if appointing men to positions because of long service.

The Premier: You are confusing two separate boards. The first was an appeal board in respect of offences, and the second in respect of promotion.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: But the Commissioner quoted the New South Wales Act of 1923.

The Premier: Yes, that is where a constable might be fined for any offence, and has the right of appeal. The second board referred to is an appeal board to deal with promotions. They are two different boards.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No, for in his report of 1924 the Commissioner referred to appeals in respect both of promotion and of punishment. He does not want an appeal board now.

Mr. Hughes: Because quite a few appeals are pending.

The Premier: The Commissioner in his last report referred only to an appeal board in respect of promotions.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Government granted a temporary board to deal with promotions. The Commissioner in his report said the temporary board was not successful. On the other hand, the police say it was thoroughly successful.

The Premier: The Commissioner's opposition now is confined to a board to deal with promotion.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That does not alter my statement. In 1924 the Commissioner wanted a board to deal with both punishments and promotions. He has since had a temporary board to deal with promotions. Evidently it did not suit him, and so he is now opposed to it, although perhaps wanting a board for other purposes.

Mr. Hughes: Most of the appeals that went before that board were successful.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have read them all. I only want to know whether the Minister for Police intends to meet the wishes of the force.

Mr. Marshall: How is that board in New South Wales constituted?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: A judge of the district court is chairman. He is appointed by the Governor for seven years. If any appellant before the board requires to be heard by the chairman and two assessors, such assessors, it is provided, shall be members of the police force and shall be appointed by the Governor for three years. One of them is nominated by the Inspector General of Police, and the other is nominated by the force in the manner prescribed. The member for East Perth suggests that the temporary appeal board upheld the men's appeals.

Mr. Marshall: Are you confident that the word "promotion" was used in the Commissioner's report for 1924, when he favoured the appointment of the board?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, I have read it out from a copy of the Commissioner's report. It was all published in a Press controversy.

Mr. Marshall: Pardon me for having a good deal of mistrust of newspaper reports.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not concerned about the hon. member's mistrust: I am taking the report of the Commissioner as printed in contradiction of the second report. It would not have been printed unless it was accurate. Both reports are in existence and it would be easy to ascertain

whether there was any discrepancy. I believe this case was put up by the secretary of the Police Union of Workers.

Mr. Hughes: He is not a pressman.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No. Perhaps the Premier will consider whether it is necessary to meet the wishes of those men. We have been accused of doing a good deal of propaganda work. As the Minister for Railways is not in his seat, I should like to know from the Premier the view of the Government regarding the motion for long service leave moved in this House three years ago. According to "Hansard" of the 19th September, 1923, the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock), now Minister for Railways, moved a motion in favour of long service leave for the wages staff, and I should like to know whether it was moved for propaganda purposes. A few months after the motion was debated we went to the country, and Labour won the election, doubtless as the result of their good work in Opposition and their wonderful propaganda work throughout the country. They were evidently able to convince the people that they were the proper men to take control of the Government.

Mr. Marshall: They had not a very difficult task.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not saying anything about that. I am afraid the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) is rather a load for the Premier to carry. If his actions in the country are anything like his actions in this House, the Premier has certainly a load to carry.

Mr. Teesdale interjected.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) evidently does not know the member for Murchison well. Recently I came across a man who had known him for years and he was talking of the repeated interjections made by the member for Murchison. "I suppose he cannot help it," suggested a third party. "No," said the other man, "how can he help it? He was vaccinated with a gramophone needle." Of course I cannot say whether that is true.

Mr. Thomson: It is a good old chestnut.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Three years ago the member for Geraldton moved—

That in the opinion of the House the long service leave conditions applying to the salaried staff of Government employees should also apply to the wages staff.

In the course of his remarks he said—

I cannot see why a privilege should be granted to one section of the employees and

denied to the other, who perform equally faithful service. My request is no new thing. I have here a list of the conditions existing in the other States.

Then he went on to refer to Queensland.

Mr. Sleeman: Was not that motion lost on your casting vote?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No.

Mr. Sleeman: Was it carried?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Whichever way I cast my vote while I was in the Speaker's Chair, it was certainly cast in the right way.

Mr. Sleeman: What you thought right.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It was cast according to Parliamentary practice and procedure. I did not worry whether it was favourable to or opposed to the question under consideration. Now that the Government, of which the member for Geraldton is a member, are in power, I want to know whether he has shown any earnest during his 2½ years' occupancy of his Ministerial position to carry out what he three years ago thought was a proper thing for the wages staff of the railways.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Would you be disappointed if he brought it into operation to-day?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is beside the question. I do not know whether I would really be justified in supporting such a proposition after the way in which we were treated at the last election, but members opposite would be able to carry it without looking for my assistance. If it came to a question of giving the workers a helping hand, I would follow the line of conduct I have adopted throughout the last 40 years, before members opposite knew anything at all about the Labour movement.

Mr. Sleeman: Is that propaganda work?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is interesting to hear that political fledgling. Not long ago a flood came and, owing to a bridge being carried away, the hon. member's constituency was cut off from the rest of the people.

Mr. Sleeman: What cut you off from this side of the House?

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Fremantle must keep order.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Let sleeping dogs lie. If I started to give the hon. member the reasons why Labour kicked me out, he would blush.

Mr. Sleeman: I am prepared to hear them.

Mr. Lindsay: He could not blush.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member would be well advised to let it slide. I can

justify my position, and have always been able to do so. I have never done anything of which I have reason to be ashamed. It is useless for the hon. member to try to irritate me in that way, and I do not want the hon. member, who has been in the public life of this country for about five minutes, to attempt to tell me, who have been in this House 26 years, what I should do. I have stood the storm and stress of every wind that has blown during all those years; I have faced propaganda work from end to end of this State and have withstood it.

Mr. Sleeman: You were blown away once.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If I do go down at the next election I shall go down with my flag waving high and my face to the foe. I have put up too many good stunts for the workers, not only in this State but in Queensland, to be frightened by anything the hon. member might say of me to-day.

Mr. Sleeman: "Them was the days!"

Hon. G. TAYLOR: My record speaks for itself; it is a record the like of which the member for Fremantle will never be able to achieve. I am capable of doing more for the country, and the people would trust me to do more than they would trust the hon. member to do. I wish to ask the Premier whether there is any possible chance of the Minister for Railways keeping faith with the railway workers in respect of the motion he tabled.

The Premier: I will consult the Minister.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I shall consult him, too, after the Premier's consultation.

The Premier: With our combined efforts, we should be able to do something.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, if it is no more than to sustain the member for Fremantle.

[Mr. Luley took the Chair.]

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [9.55]: Last Friday some large posters announcing the contents of the "Westralian Worker" were placarded all over the city. The first and chief announcement on the posters read as follows:—

Mr. Collier gives Westralia its first surplus for 15 years.

I should like to know whether the Premier kept anything back when he delivered his Budget speech a fortnight ago. If my recollection is correct, he told us that last year's operations had ended in a loss of

€99,000. How, then, could he have given Western Australia its first surplus for 15 years?

The Premier: If you had read the article, I think you would have found it stated that he gives Western Australia its first surplus this year.

Mr. ANGELO: I was dealing merely with the heading on the poster. I may tell the Premier that I went to the Parliamentary reading room to see the article, but found that the first page had been cut out of the paper.

The Premier: It is a much read paper.

Mr. ANGELO: In view of that statement by the "Worker" did the Premier keep anything back when delivering his Budget, or was the poster heading merely one of the usual misleading, eye-arresting statements that this section of the Press likes to make a few months before an election?

Mr. Lamond: You do not miss much.

Mr. ANGELO: I should like to learn a few points from the other side. I understand there was a fine cartoon in that paper.

Mr. Sleeman: There was, a few weeks ago.

Mr. ANGELO: The cartoon depicted the Premier in the role of a housekeeper and I considered it anything but flattering.

The Premier: I have a grievance against that cartoon.

Mr. ANGELO: It depicted the Premier with a great broom in his hand sweeping out a couple of wild cats, one of which was branded "High Taxation" and the other "Deficit." It went on to say that the Premier, in doing so, had attained his object. I consider the cartoon was correct up to a certain point, but it would have been more complete had a note been added to the effect that the broom had been supplied by the Nationalist Government. Even the money that enabled the Premier to sweep those wild cats out of the room came from the Nationalist Government.

The Premier: Which money?

Mr. ANGELO: The special grants from the Federal Government.

The Premier: Does the hon. member know so little of the position as to say that the deficit was affected by the grants from the Federal Government?

Mr. ANGELO: It was.

The Premier: Does the hon. member know that the deficit has nothing to do with the grants?

Mr. ANGELO: I know that special grants have been made for road construction and other purposes that have enabled the railways and other activities to earn more money and have placed our finances in the position in which we find them to-day. We have not yet got a surplus.

The Premier: I do not say that we have.

Mr. ANGELO: The cartoon says that we have.

The Premier: I hope you are not jealous that we are likely to get a surplus.

Mr. ANGELO: Not at all.

The Premier: You seem disappointed at the prospect of our getting a surplus.

Mr. ANGELO: I am not.

The Premier: I rather think you are.

Mr. ANGELO: I realise that the Premier is the housemaid using the broom that was supplied by the previous Government.

The Premier: I hope you would rather not see a deficit for political reasons.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier, in delivering the Budget speech, departed from the usual course and did not touch upon departmental activities. That, of course, curtails the opportunity for members to contribute to the general debate.

The Premier: It does no such thing.

Mr. ANGELO: I realise that we shall have opportunities later on, but I was referring to our opportunities during the general debate. Further, the Premier did not deal with the question of the transfer of the North-West. He explained that the North-West would form the subject of a special debate later on. I am sure that all members from the North-West will look forward to that debate. The member for Katanning congratulated the Premier on having reached his 21st political birthday. Every member will endorse his good wishes. An old proverb says, "It is better to be born lucky than rich." The Premier has much to be thankful for, not so much on having reached his 21st political birthday, as on having taken over the reins of office when he did about two years ago.

The Premier: Wonderful!

Mr. ANGELO: He certainly was born with a silver spoon in his mouth when he began life as the Premier. We often hear of farmers and miners who go out into unknown parts to take up land and try to develop a mine. We have heard of original pioneers who have spent years of their lives in an endeavour to make a farm or develop a mine,

but unfortunately, mainly through no fault of their own, they have reaped no benefit from their efforts. Through some cause they have been unable to complete the task, but a stranger may come along and reap the whole of the benefits of the work of the others.

The Premier: I think in my public life in this State I have done as much in the way of building it up and developing it as most men.

Mr. ANGELO: Quite so, but I was referring to recent years.

The Premier: Long years, too, before the hon. member entered Parliament.

Mr. ANGELO: The Mitchell Government took office in May, 1919, at the peak of the State's deficits. The deficit had then reached nearly three-quarters of a million per annum. The war was just over. Peace had not been signed when the Mitchell Government assumed office. Out of our population of 310,000 odd, 32,231 of our men left the State, and only 23,000 returned. At the time the Mitchell Government took office these men had not returned.

The Minister for Lands: Most of them returned in 1919.

Mr. ANGELO: The war was only just over then.

The Minister for Lands: It was over in 1918.

Mr. ANGELO: Peace had not been declared.

The Minister for Lands: They were here long before peace was signed.

Mr. ANGELO: They had been away for the previous five years. Ten per cent. of the population of the State had left to go to the war. If we deduct the women and children and the aged men it will be seen that probably 50 per cent. of the working manhood of the State were away during the war. Is it not to be expected that matters could only be in a very unsatisfactory state? We also know that when these men returned a great number took some time before they could settle down to the old conditions. When the Mitchell Government took office the railways were not earning anything like what they earn to-day. There was not the production to keep them employed. Members also know that the interest rates were abnormally high. The interest paid on loans or even on overdrafts for the Treasurer were considerably higher than they are to-day, going up to as high as 6¼ per cent.

The Minister for Lands: At the time the Leader of the Opposition took over he was getting money at £5 5s. 3d.

Mr. ANGELO: The price of all commodities and requirements for public works had risen considerably, necessitating higher wages than had previously been paid.

The Premier: Wages are higher to-day than they have ever been in Western Australia.

Mr. ANGELO: The same could be said of the revenue. The increase in wages cannot be compared with the small increase in revenue. During the term of the Mitchell Government the average wage of the railway men was increased by £58 per annum, and our civil servants by nearly £60. The revenue for the year after the Mitchell Government took office, in 1920, was only £658,000 higher than it was for the last pre-war year, but the expenditure, owing to the abnormal conditions and the added rate of interest, increased by £1,190,000 as between the last pre-war year and the year referred to. This means that the Treasurer had to find £530,000 more than was necessary in the pre-war year. These are facts we must not forget. When the Leader of the Opposition became Premier he had associated with him two or three members of his own party and three Ministers from the Country Party. The Cabinet of that day realised the great difficulties ahead. They fully understood that taxation could not be raised to any appreciable extent, and set themselves out to increase production.

The Premier: I suppose the hon. member has not forgotten that taxation was considerably increased.

Mr. ANGELO: It could not have been considerably increased.

The Premier: When the hon. member makes such a statement he should prove that he knows what he is talking about. Taxation was raised from 2s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. in the pound.

Mr. ANGELO: It was not increased to any appreciable extent.

The Premier: I suppose 2s. in the pound is not an appreciable increase.

Mr. ANGELO: It was impossible to increase it to such an extent as to wipe out existing deficits.

The Premier: You should not make misleading statements to the effect that taxation was not increased to any appreciable extent, when, as a fact, it was nearly doubled.

Mr. ANGELO: The Government of the day realised that the only hope of squaring the ledger was by increasing production.

The Premier: And by increasing taxation.

Mr. ANGELO: That was done to a lesser extent.

The Premier: Be fair and admit a fact. I am only stating a fact. Does the hon. member wish to deny it?

Mr. ANGELO: No, but I know that the Government of the day realised, and the Premier agrees with it, that an increase in taxation alone would never have wiped out the deficit. This had to be done in the way the Mitchell Government acted, namely, by increasing production to the utmost possible capacity.

The Premier: Of course!

Mr. ANGELO: In that way the freight on the railways was increased, and increased revenue was derived from our harbours and other Government utilities. The Premier of the day and his colleagues realised the necessity for increasing our wheat production and of establishing group settlements and developing the South-West.

The Minister for Lands: There has not been much revenue from group settlements.

Mr. ANGELO: Not yet, but the Minister must not forget that although there is not much return from group settlements up to date, the establishment of groups has certainly increased the earnings of the railways.

The Minister for Lands: Not since we have been here.

Mr. ANGELO: The railways certainly have been busy all the time transporting these people and their implements to the groups. Every settler occasions some traffic. The expenditure of loan money must increase the earnings of our Government utilities. However, as I have said, development was undertaken in every direction with the object of increasing the earnings of public utilities, particularly railways and harbours. It took a year or two before the results of these new activities made themselves felt in the finances of the State: but after three years' operations, that is to say in 1923, the Treasurer was able to announce a reduction of no less than £327,000 as compared with the deficit for the previous year. That, we must all agree, was indeed a laudable achievement. It was followed by a further reduction of £176,000 in the succeeding year, which was the year when the present Government took office, during June.

However, the present Government had been in office only a month or so when the accounts for the year were closed; so that the last Government can certainly take credit for at least 90 per cent. of that most satisfactory second reduction. The Treasurer of that period, Sir James Mitchell, forecasted that the reduction would take place.

The Premier: That year's finance belonged to that Government.

Mr. ANGELO: Then we must acknowledge that the late Premier within his comparatively short term of office reduced the deficit from nearly three-quarters of a million to about one-quarter of a million. This was done in spite of all the handicaps which the last Government encountered when taking office. The present Leader of the Opposition, when Premier, indicated that the policy he had in view would mean that in the following year, which is the last financial year, the deficit would entirely disappear. Last year, however, we had a deficit of £58,000, and this year we have one of £99,000. Still, I must acknowledge that these figures represent a great improvement on what obtained before the previous Government took office. The previous Government achieved their results without many of the great advantages which the present Government enjoy.

The Premier: What are those advantages?

Mr. ANGELO: The present Government came in on the flood tide of prosperity caused to a large extent by the activities and policy of the previous Government. We all know that production has materially increased. Our railways are much more fully employed now than they were five years ago. Our harbours have been crowded, and our shipping has increased considerably. Moreover, money has become much cheaper.

The Premier: How much?

Mr. ANGELO: Considerably.

The Premier: How much?

Mr. ANGELO: At least $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

The Premier: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. ANGELO: I can assure the Premier—

The Premier: An ex-banker talking such rubbish. One and a quarter per cent!

Mr. ANGELO: We know that the late Treasurer was paying $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and we also know that the present Treasurer can get money at 5 per cent. if he will accept it.

The Premier: The hon. member knows some things that I do not know. He may

be a genius in finance. I know I am not getting money at 5 per cent.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are getting some at 1 per cent.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes.

The Minister for Lands: That money at 1 per cent. has to be used for a certain purpose, and there is no immediate return from it.

Mr. ANGELO: But it all helps to increase the earning capacity of the public utilities.

The Minister for Lands: My chief official says he is doubtful whether that money is really cheap.

Mr. ANGELO: The Treasurer has had the advantage of increased taxation which was introduced by the previous Government.

The Premier: Have I had increased taxation in comparison with the previous Government?

Mr. ANGELO: The Treasurer got more revenue from taxation last year than the previous year.

The Premier: Surely the hon. member is not so stupid as that!

Mr. ANGELO: There has been increased land tax.

The Premier: It is useless to argue with a man who does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. ANGELO: Members know that the position is as I state.

The Premier: Either the hon. member is fearfully stupid or he is making a wilful misstatement.

Mr. ANGELO: On the Premier's own figures I say that the position is as I have stated.

The Premier: Confine yourself to the truth. It is a shocking thing when a member makes a deliberate misstatement over and over again in this Chamber.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We know that taxation is now much heavier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. ANGELO: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that I have made a deliberate misstatement.

The Premier: I withdraw that remark, Mr. Lutey, and I will say that the hon. member's statement is wholly incorrect, if not deliberately.

Mr. ANGELO: Let me prove what I have said. Here are the Premier's own figures. In 1924-25 he received from land tax £113,867 as against—

The Premier: The hon. member does not know any more about figures than does a blackfellow.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier received that amount as against £79,983 collected in 1923, when the Leader of the Opposition was in office. From income tax the previous Government received £390,000 as against £566,000 obtained by the present Government.

The Minister for Lands: Those totals do not mean increases in taxation.

The Premier: The hon. member does not understand that.

Mr. ANGELO: But those are the Premier's own figures of revenue.

The Minister for Lands: But those figures do not mean increase in taxation.

Mr. Davy: They mean increase in revenue received, though.

The Premier: But the hon. member has been speaking of increased taxation all the time.

Mr. ANGELO: Members know perfectly well that I am referring to taxation revenue. Taking the total received from land tax, income tax, dividend duty, totalisator tax, stamp duty and licenses, I find that the late Government received £987,000 odd for 1923 as against £1,224,000 odd received by the present Government for the year just closed.

The Minister for Lands: That is because the present Government have increased the value of land and caused more business.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. ANGELO: I think those figures should convince everyone that I have not made a gross misstatement. I have substantiated my contention by reading from the Premier's Budget Speech as printed in "Hansard."

The Premier: Your trouble is that you do not understand the figures.

Mr. ANGELO: The present Government have another little nest egg of £50,000 from sandalwood. That amount is the result of an Act passed by the previous Government. Again, there is interest charged against public works under construction. Of that the previous Government never had the benefit. On top of all these things, the present Government get a most bountiful rainfall.

The Premier: You seem dreadfully disappointed over the whole situation.

Mr. ANGELO: No. I am delighted with it.

The Premier: You are disappointed.

Mr. ANGELO: All I wish is that the present Premier should say, "We are doing

well, and I have done my share, but I must give a certain amount of the credit to the previous Government, who made these results possible."

The Premier: Did I not?

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier might have admitted that the former Government made that result possible.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! While the member for Gascoyne is speaking I must ask members to cease interjecting.

The Premier: Did I deny that that was so?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Premier: Try to be fair.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier might have been more emphatic about the point.

The Premier: More emphatic!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This conversation across the floor of the House must cease.

Mr. ANGELO: I am not taking part in a conversation.

The CHAIRMAN: That is so; the interjections must cease.

Mr. ANGELO: We have had references to the special grants the Premier is about to collect. I claim that those grants are wholly due to the past Government. Some time ago the Leader of the Opposition started to complain to the Federal Government respecting the unfavourable treatment meted out to Western Australia. He set the then Under Treasurer, Mr. Owen, at work on a special inquiry to ascertain just how Federation had affected Western Australia financially. I consider it was owing to Mr. Owen's report that the ball was started rolling, with the result that the Federal Royal Commission to inquire into the disabilities of Western Australia was appointed and the subsequent recommendations for special grants were furnished to the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Lands: And are we not to collect them?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I want these interjections to cease.

Mr. ANGELO: Then, again, we are enjoying considerable benefits arising from the agreement made with the Imperial authorities. It must be acknowledged that that, too, is due to the work of the Leader of the Opposition when he was Premier. When he went to England he dealt with that matter and fixed an agreement. Some people suggest that he should have made a better one and, in fact, better agreements were made subsequently. It should be borne in mind however, that there must always be a com-

mencement and the good work the then Premier did in securing the first agreement was the commencement of the new era of migration and development that the present Government, I am pleased to say, are carrying on. It has resulted in the increased prosperity of the State.

Mr. Davy: The fact that a better aeroplane is built does not alter the fact that the aeroplane was first invented by someone else.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier told us that the £560,000 of Federal money that he will receive, is to be allocated as follows:—£200,000 to the deficit, £165,000 to the assistance of the mining industry, and £200,000 as relief from taxation. We are all pleased, indeed, that the Premier decided to allocate the money in that way. At the same time, looking at the financial aspect, I do not know whether it was quite wise to devote the whole of the £200,000 to the reduction of taxation. It is estimated that the revenue for the financial year will amount to £9,791,000, and the Premier estimates a surplus of only £10,000. That is barely one per cent.! It is easy for some little thing to miscarry, and for the expected £10,000 surplus to disappear. In that event, we shall again be faced with a deficit. We are too close to the balancing line to make such a drastic reduction in taxation as 33½ per cent. Had I been the Premier I would have declared a 15 per cent. reduction straight away, and placed an amount equalling another 15 per cent. in a suspense account to be used as a rebate if the year's transactions turned out satisfactorily. Every member of the Committee would regret exceedingly if a deficit were experienced at the end of the current financial year.

Mr. Thomson: It is impossible; there could not be a deficit.

Mr. ANGELO: I am of that opinion, too.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: And that is what you know about it, too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Hon. members must keep order when they are asked to do so.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier would have been justified in retaining half of the reduction he proposes until he saw how the year's transactions panned out. If he retained 15 per cent. and anything untoward happened, it would form a contribution towards wiping out or reducing the possible deficit. Now he has the promise of

a good harvest. That will mean a tremendous increase in railway freights and harbour revenue. I hope, therefore, that there need be no thought of a deficit and that the Premier's reduction of 33½ per cent. will be warranted. But there is another point. As indicated in the cartoon I have referred to, the reduction of 33½ per cent. in taxation was made possible by the Federal grant, given to us by a National Government.

Mr. Lindsay: The Federal Country Party are concerned in the Government too.

Mr. ANGELO: It was the coalescing of the Country Party and the National Party that enabled the Premier to come up smiling. When members sitting on the Government side of the House consider the position, they should not take the credit to themselves that their official organ "The Worker" is extending to the Labour Government. "The Worker" has published the statement that the Labour Government gave the people the reduction of 33½ per cent. in taxation, but when we are considering the position, do not let us forget that the money enabling that to be done came from a Government comprised of Nationalists and Country Party members.

Mr. Lindsay: That is better.

Mr. ANGELO: It is the irony of fate that the Labour Premier is able to use the broom with which to sweep out the wild cats of high taxation and of deficits.

The Premier: Of course, we did not do anything at all! You can have the lot! So long as I can square the ledger, that is all I care about.

Mr. Davy: But the Premier would not make those extravagant claims for himself, such as "The Worker" did.

The Premier: Of course I would not.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This conversation must cease!

Mr. ANGELO: I was surprised to hear the Premier say that the Federal Government were keeping back £150,000 of the special grant because of the position regarding the North-West. From what I could gather from the Premier's statement, the Federal Government have retained that money in the hope of taking over the northern parts of the State. One would think that the Federal Government would allow us to draw that money and not retain it until such time as the North-West was handed over once and for all. I hope the Premier is pointing out to them

that it is the wrong way to do it. I think the Premier said the other night he was taking credit month by month on account of the £565,000 Federal grant. I should like to know if, on the other hand, he is making any debit month by month for the £160,000 grant to encourage mining, and the money that is going to the reduction of the deficit. Perhaps he will tell us that later on. There is no Vote for the North-West Department this year, the department having been abolished. I am not a bit surprised at the abolition of that department. Some years ago when I was in favour of establishing that department, I made it clear that what I thought was necessary was a Minister for the North-West who would spend five or six months in every year in the North-West making himself personally acquainted with all its conditions and requirements and would then come down here to attend Parliament and advise his colleague as to what the North-West required. I suggested he should have some small discretionary limit that would enable him, if he saw some little necessary work, to have it done but that on all bigger issues he should report to Cabinet. At that time I considered all that was necessary in the way of staff would be one officer just to look after the Minister's correspondence and keep the office open whilst he was away. Actually what we wanted was an advisory department rather than an executive department; so that when it was decided that a bridge should be built on the recommendation of the Minister for the North-West, Cabinet would instruct the Public Works Department to get on with the work; or if a school was to be opened, the Education Department would be advised and would send up a teacher. Instead of that, after the department was established a little time a staff was built up and almost a dual administration created. I told my fellow-members from the North-West when I heard of additional appointments to the staff, "That is the end of the North-West Department, for we can never agree to having two administrations in one State." But although the department has been abolished I hope the Premier—if we are to continue to hold the North-West—will appoint a Minister for the North-West, and let him devote his whole time to the one job.

Mr. Coverley: And let him be appointed from the Assembly.

Mr. ANGELO: Oh certainly, I agree with that.

The Premier: I am open to receive an offer.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier can depend on my support if he seeks to amend the Constitution to enable him to have another Minister, or even two, provided that one is to look after the North-West. We want a Minister for the North-West exclusively, one who will travel through the North, acquire knowledge of the North, and look after the North. Of course, if we hand over the North to the Commonwealth, the appointment of such a Minister will not be necessary.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Are you in favour of handing over the North?

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, but not on the conditions proposed by the Federal Government.

I am glad the Premier and others recognise that the interest taken in Western Australia by the Eastern States is being greatly enhanced. When visiting the East, I have noticed that people are becoming increasingly interested in this State. The publication of that little pamphlet entitled "The State's Activities" is a big factor in making the State known. I get a dozen copies of each issue and send them, some to the Eastern States and some to England, and in consequence I get many inquiries for further information. It is the duty of every Minister, every member of Parliament, and indeed every citizen, when he goes abroad, to act as ambassador for the State. We cannot do too much to bring before outsiders the great possibilities of Western Australia. It cannot be long before our wheat export will be larger than that of any other State in the Commonwealth, and within 15 or 20 years we should be exporting more wheat than all the other States together. I only hope that our other productions will increase in like manner.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.38 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 19th October, 1926.

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

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1, Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.

2, Justices Act Amendment.

Returned to Assembly with an amendment.

3, Broome Loan Validation.

Passed.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 13th October.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [4.38]: I have pleasure in congratulating the Government on having recognised the necessity for taking the very important step of reducing the income tax. A reduction of 33½ per cent. is a substantial one that must have an advantageous effect on financial arrangements in this State, particularly as it follows the abolition of the 15 per cent. super tax that hitherto was imposed. A great deal of harm has been done to Western Australia on account of the maximum rate of tax charged on high incomes. I happen to be in a position to know that it has led