

mously adopted at the conference of Premiers held quite recently in Melbourne.

Mr. Taylor: You will hardly get through before Christmas

The PREMIER: I am not particular if we do not rise before Christmas. As long as we do not sit too late at night, possibly we may be able to extend our sittings over another month. However, I am satisfied these proposals will commend themselves to members as being reasonable, and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition, in view of the attitude he has taken up in the past in regard to the necessity for securing the financial independence of the State, will see his way clear to give them his support. In conclusion I can only say that, so far as the Government are concerned, we propose to faithfully endeavour to carry out the policy that has already been outlined, one that we believe is to the advantage of the State generally, and which we hope will have the effect of making this State, which I feel sure we trust it will always be, one of the foremost States of the great Commonwealth of Australia.

On motion by *Mr Heitmann* debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 13th November, 1908.

	PAGE
Questions: Early Closing, weekly holiday...	60
Loans Sinking Fund	60
Railway, Mt. Magnet-Black Range	60
Murchison Firewood Coy., exemption...	60
Busselton Jetty extension.....	61
Motion: Timber Reserves, Jarrahwood	61
Address-in-Reply, third day	61

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

QUESTION—EARLY CLOSING, WEEKLY HOLIDAY.

Mr. BOLTON asked the Premier: 1. Will he make a statement to the House explaining the attitude of the Government

on the question of the alteration of the weekly half-holiday under the Early Closing Act? 2. Will the Government withdraw the Proclamation or defer the date of the alteration until Parliament has discussed the question?

The PREMIER replied: I have already given notice of my intention to move on Tuesday, 17th inst., for leave to introduce a "Bill to further amend the Early Closing Act, 1902," the discussion upon which will afford an opportunity of placing the views of the Government before the House.

QUESTION—LOANS SINKING FUND ACCOUNT.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Treasurer: 1. What is the total now to credit of the Loans Sinking Fund Account? 2. What proportion is in cash and what proportion is invested? 3. How is the Fund controlled. 4. Is the cash balance of the Fund held in the State or in London?

The TREASURER replied: 1. £1,993,196 6s. 4d. 2. In cash, £3,815 9s. 4d.; invested, £1,989,380 17s. 3. By trustees appointed by the financial agents of the State with the concurrence of the Governor-in-Council. 4. In London.

QUESTION—RAILWAY, MOUNT MAGNET-BLACK RANGE.

Mr. HARDWICK (for *Mr. Carson*) asked the Premier. When do the Government intend calling tenders for the construction of the Mt. Magnet-Black Range Railway?

The PREMIER replied: Approval for the calling of tenders has already been given, and a notification will appear in the next issue of the *Government Gazette*.

QUESTION—MURCHISON FIRE- WOOD COMPANY EXEMPTION.

Mr. HOLMAN (for *Mr. Heitmann*) asked the Premier: 1. Has the Murchison Firewood Company been granted three months' exemption from payment of rent on rails supplied by Government? 2. If so, upon what grounds?

The PREMIER replied: No; but I understand an application has been received.

QUESTION—BUSSELTON JETTY EXTENSION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have the departmental engineers made any report in connection with the extension and improvement to the Busselton Jetty? 2, If so, what is the departmental estimate of the cost of the proposed work?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Scheme No. 1.—To extend the present jetty a length of 500ft. by a width of 37ft., and to dredge swinging basin on each side thereof and approach channel to a depth of 24ft. Estimated cost, £52,750. Scheme No. 2.—To extend the present jetty 1,305ft. by a width of 14ft., with an additional length of 500ft. by 37ft. in width. Dredge out swinging basin to a depth of 24ft. Estimated cost, £25,200. Scheme No. 3.—Similar to Scheme No. 1, but dredged only to a depth of 23ft. Estimated cost, £42,200. Scheme No. 4.—Similar to Scheme No. 2, but dredged to a depth of 23ft. only. Estimated cost, £20,400.

MOTION—TIMBER RESERVES, JARRAHWOOD DISTRICT.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) moved—

That the report dealing with the reservation of timber areas for State purposes in the Jarrahwood district be laid upon the Table of the House.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): The motion did not appear to be quite clear. What the member evidently desired to ascertain was the area reserved for Government purposes. It would be satisfactory if the Premier promised to provide the information, otherwise an amendment would have to be moved.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): The hon. member had better leave the

motion as it stood, so that what information there was would be laid on the Table. The member asked for the information yesterday in the form of a question. An endeavour would be made to supply the information.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): In speaking to the Address-in-Reply I desire to make a few remarks in connection with the recent elections. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) claims that this side of the House had a win at the elections. I must say that on the surface I also thought we had a win, but the Premier has assured the House that his side had a brilliant victory. Certainly the Opposition have increased in numbers by five, and taking a purely superficial view of the case one would think they had been successful; but now that the whole matter has been stirred up and the profound wisdom of Bunbury has been brought to bear upon the question, a different complexion seems to have been placed upon it. I wish to congratulate the Premier and his followers on the victory they scored at the elections, and sincerely hope that at the next elections they will score just such another one. The Premier said he rose to reply to the Leader of the Opposition rather in sorrow than in anger. There was one thing in the Governor's Speech which caused me very great sorrow, and that was the lack of mention as to raising the salaries of members. I noticed that omission with sincere regret. During the discussion mention was made as to certain remarks published in the Press, and I should like to read a paragraph taken from that classical Government supporter, the *Sunday Sun*. The paper says:—

“Which is the class that is exploiting the people we wonder—the raw scallywags of the Bath type, who live on the game of politics and who

might find it difficult to get a living any other way. . . ."

I should say that a man who lives on £200 a year has nothing to be very proud of. The paragraph continues:—

"the heroes of 'onkus' selection ballots, the ward bosses and wire pullers of the Labour movement, or the men who have chosen to sacrifice their businesses and professions to politics?"

Then follows a long eulogy of the Attorney General, and of the would-be members for Boulder and Hannaus, holding them up as examples of self-sacrifice for the benefit of the country. It is very apparent that newspapers supporting the Government can use abuse as well as the *Worker*. So far as I am concerned I do not care whether the Press abuse or praise me, but a party supported by the *Sunday Times* and the *Sunday Sun* certainly should not squeak when they get a little abuse themselves. There is another point I would mention and that is in regard to reporters travelling at State expense on Ministerial trips. Whatever the worker may do, there is one thing about him and that is if he wants to go anywhere he has to pay his own passage, or if it should be, his representative the worker pays it for him. I remember travelling through the Pilbara district with the Minister for Mines and on that journey there was a reporter who was travelling at the expense of the State. He reported the whole of the proceedings of that trip. As a matter of fact on that trip I was chairman for the Minister for Mines at public meetings on four occasions. I introduced about eight deputations to him and I was present at four social functions that were given to the Minister. All these matters were fully reported, with the exception that my name was never mentioned. What I want to say in regard to the Press, since the Premier has introduced the matter, is that I do not care whether the Press reports me or not, but when I have to pay part of their passage money I think their reports should be impartial, and I will now enter a strong protest against the Government carrying round reporters

to report their side of the case only. Speaking on matters referring to my own district, the first one of importance is the Marble Bar Railway. The hon. member for Roebourne informed us that this railway is a thing of the past. I must assure the hon. member that he is wrong. There has been no railway at all there, but I devoutly hope it will be a thing of the very near future. I can only say that this railway is more justified now than it has ever been. In regard to the same hon. member's remarks about the starting point of this railway, he stated that while he was living in the district he opposed the railway starting from Port Hedland. This would lead the House to assume that the hon. member had lived there. That is not a fact; he lived at Roebourne. When he was in Roebourne there really was no Port Hedland. There are one or two other matters requiring attention from the Government and I hope they will receive it. One is the question of providing a water supply for Port Hedland. This question is a very serious one. Towards the end of last year or at the beginning of this year a very serious position of affairs arose, and it was only averted by an opportune fall of rain. The water there is very bad, and I am sure the Government at an early date will have to take into consideration the question of providing a suitable water scheme for Port Hedland. Another matter which will perhaps interest the Attorney General is that with regard to the holding of Quarter Sessions, and I think this applies to several other districts besides my own. Undoubtedly the absence of Quarter Sessions is a very serious drawback to that part of the State. At present all cases are tried at Roebourne and the expense that people are put to is very considerable, and sometimes cases are allowed to fall through because the people are not able to afford the expense of attending the Court at this distant place. I feel sure it would be very much cheaper for a Judge to travel around these parts than for the Government to take their witnesses over considerable distances. There was a case recently tried at Roe-

bourne in which there was a large number of witnesses many of whom had to come from Marble Bar. The expense of this case would have been considerably reduced if the Court had been held at Port Hedland. I hope the Government will give this matter their attention. The Hon. Mr. Moss speaking on the Address-in-Reply stated it was the duty of the Government to endeavour to promote our mineral industries. On that question I agree with Mr. Moss. The present unsatisfactory state of the country is owing in a slight extent to the falling off in the mineral production, and there is no possible doubt that there is a magnificent future for the North-West as far as its mineral wealth is concerned. There is an enormous belt of country there still unprospected, and I am sure it will be wise on the part of the Government to do something more in the future than they have done in the past in regard to opening up the mineral resources in those parts. Another question that we have heard to some extent discussed in this House—and I regret the Minister for Agriculture is not present—is with regard to camels and to camel tick. We have been told that the "Century" camels were all thoroughly clean and that there was now no danger of the spread of tick in the Pilbara district. I can assure this House from my own knowledge that the camel tick is as prevalent there as it could be. I can assure the Government too that the camel tick is on horses at the present time, or it was when I was in Pilbara not long ago.

Mr. Monger: They do not do any harm.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If the hon. member knew anything at all about it he would know that the tick at least is a disease on the camel and the continuous presence of the pest decreases the camel's carrying capacity and weakens the beast. These camels will of course shift into other parts of the State and they will be bound to take the tick with them. The result will be that we will have all the camels in Western Australia tick infested. It has been asserted

over and over again that the Indian tick will not live in Australia, but the tick that has been introduced into Pilbara has lived there for the past 18 months, and we have not now the Indian but the Australian camel tick. You must bear in mind the great power of insect nature to conform to local environment, and it is quite possible, now that we are breeding an Australian tick, that we shall not wonder later when we find that it is able to make its home anywhere. I contend it is the duty of the Government to endeavour to stamp out this pest. It has been introduced through the neglect of the Government departments, and it is the duty of the Government to endeavour to stamp it out. There is a danger that the tick will spread to horses as well. The difficulty at Port Hedland could easily be overcome, I think, by the erection of a dip there. An excellent place for the dip could be found. All camels have to pass over a causeway to get their loads to Port Hedland, and the dip I think could be constructed at the causeway, and all camels going there could be forced to pass through it. The owners of the camels could be charged a sufficient fee for the use of this dip. I hold the Government should erect the dip and compel all owners to drive their camels through it. The owners would find it much cheaper to clean their camels in that way than by the method they are at present adopting that of tarring and greasing them by hand. There is another matter the hon. member for Roebourne mentioned, that is in regard to native dogs. I would just like to say once more that this State has a wonderful inheritance in the pastoral lands of the North-West and Kimberley, and it is the duty of the Government to endeavour to do as much as possible to increase the value of that land. There is no doubt that dogs are certainly a very great drawback to the squatters, and of course while they are there the Government cannot ask so high a rent for their land as they could if the pest were exterminated. The proposition put forward by the squatters of the North-West is that the Government should

enable them to tax themselves and the money so raised should be devoted to the destruction of dingoes. The proposition is a fair one, but the hon. member for Roebourne will find out when he has been in the House as long as I have that the North-West is a long way from the seat of government. It is three years since the Premier sent a sympathetic message to these people and promised to bring the matter before the House. We have not heard it mentioned yet, and I do not think there is much chance of getting it before the House in the immediate future. However, it is pleasing to know that we have a representative from those parts who is prepared to help me on the question. There are one or two matters in connection with freezing works that I would like to call attention to. I should like to refer to the geographical position of the North and the North-West. It has been said over and over again that the freezing works would be in the far North-West, at Wyndham. Of course if one looks at the map it will be seen that the freezing works would be in the Kimberleys and that they would be nearer Port Darwin than Port Hedland. As a matter of fact when we talk about freezing works in the North-West we want to get them about 700 or 800 miles further south-west from Wyndham. This would place them somewhere about the North-West of the State. The Treasurer stated that by the erection of these works we would provide facilities for freezing the cattle of the North-West. It would be just as reasonable to erect freezing works at Eucla for the convenience of people at Geraldton, as it would be to erect freezing works at Wyndham for the treatment of cattle at Onslow. I am pleased indeed that the negotiations for these freezing works have fallen through. I am convinced that had the meat ring accepted the terms of the Government it would have had the effect of breaking up that ring. The fact that they did not accept the Government terms shows that there was some danger as far as they were concerned in the proposals of the Government. With regard to these freezing

works I would say I believe they should be not only at Wyndham, but in three or four other places on the North-West coast. They would then prove of great advantage to the State and the people in those districts. At the same time I believe those freezing works should be provided either by private enterprise or by the Government, and the proposal that they should be half and half will always have my strongest opposition. Again, in regard to this matter, during the discussion on this question of freezing works, I notice there have been many statements made in regard to the amount of land available up there. The Minister for Agriculture in speaking said he knew that there were millions of acres of first-class land available in the North-West for anybody who wanted it. All I can say is I do not know where it is, and I have been there oftener than the Minister.

Mr. Monger: You have not been in Kimberley.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is no doubt that in the Kimberleys there is some splendid land, but along the rivers wherever it is possible for a man to start, the land is held by the big squatters. The hon. member for York (*Mr. Monger*) knows that country pretty well, and he knows the country was taken in blocks out from the river, the land being used is along the rivers, the land back from the rivers is being held but not stocked. In giving evidence before the Meat Commission *Mr. Connor* was asked a question about how the small men stocked their runs. He said he would not like to answer that question, that he did not care to cause any ill-feeling—the insinuation being that the small men stole their cattle. It is rather a serious statement to make.

Mr. Monger: It is only supposition.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, it is only supposition; but it has to be borne in mind that the big men in Kimberley did not have these runs handed down to them by their ancestors for four or five generations back. They were small men themselves not so very long ago, and perhaps they know how the small man stocks his run. Now, we have just this

position. The Government mentioned something about frosts in the Governor's Speech, but we have this position—in the Kimberleys Connor trying to keep the small man out, and in Sussex the Treasurer trying to keep the small worker out. They might well speak of a frost. It seems to me there is a pretty cold time ahead in Western Australia for anybody in a small way while the present Government are in office. The hon. member for Roebourne made rather an extraordinary statement in regard to the Federal Parliament. He said that the Federal Parliament was interfering with the legislation of the State Parliament. I would certainly like the hon. member in future, in speaking of the Federal Parliament's encroachment on the State Parliament's functions, to give an instance of where they have encroached.

Mr. Osborn: I did not say it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I must have misunderstood you.

Mr. Osborn: You did.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Well, for fear you do say it, it will be just as well to give a specific instance when making a statement of that kind. The Treasurer in a recent speech had some remarks to make about Federation. It seems to me to be the usual thing. At the outset he mentioned the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the State, and he referred to the fact that notwithstanding the £69,000 commandeered by the Federal Government the State's finances had balanced. It seems to be usual for Ministers to speak in a most disrespectful manner of the actions of the Federal Parliament. They always refer to this particular transaction as commandeering. Yet the High Court have decided that the Federal Government had a legal right to keep that money, and further than that, we must bear in mind that that money is being held for Old Age Pensions and Defence, and these are both matters which distinctly have been handed over to the Commonwealth under the Constitution Act. I think hon. members should consult that Constitution Act before they begin to

talk about the Federal Parliament encroaching on State rights. Again, we have heard many members who have left this Chamber for the Federal Parliament, including Sir John Forrest, professing to be in favour of Old Age Pensions, but their advocacy of Old Age Pensions was, apparently, only to catch the unwary voter, for their action in regard to the Surplus Revenue Bill has proved that they have no intention of giving the Old Age Pensions support. I am in favour of it, and I am glad the Federal Government are prepared to carry out the pledges they made on that question. I am also strongly in favour of an attempt being made to defend this Continent, and I think it comes with very bad grace from the Premier, who is a captain, or major, or something of the sort in the Army, to continually complain of an attempt on the part of Australia to defend herself. However, the Federal Parliament and the people of Australia care very little for the remarks of the Premier, or the cry about interfering with the State Parliament; because they know the people of Australia are on their side. Again, it has been said pretty regularly of late that the people have drifted towards Unification. In my opinion this State would be far better governed by a State Parliament than it would be governed from Melbourne or from Yass-Canberra, but that is only conditionally on having a reasonably good Constitution. When it comes to a question as between the Federal Parliament and this Parliament and the Upper House and restricted franchise, then I am voting for Unification every time. If the Government desire to prevent the spread of this cry of Unification they had better endeavour to alter the Legislative Council franchise. Another question, a perennial one, is in regard to Asiatics. Many people blame the Federal Parliament for doing things they should not do, but for my part the one complaint I have against them is that they have left undone things they should have done. I say again, that Broome with its Asiatics is a menace to Australia, and it is disgraceful to allow that state of affairs to remain any

longer. Broome is no use whatever under its present conditions to this State, except that it pays a little revenue on the whisky that is drunk up there. All the supplies come from other parts of the world ; they are brought there by black labour boats, and the produce goes away by black labour boats. The shell is sent away to London, and all we have is the place where the shell used to be. It would be better to close Broome down than to continue the present condition of Asiatic labour. It has been said that if we allowed no more Asiatics in Broome the pearling industry would close down. Well, the taking away of the shell is denuding the beds of the pearls, and if the beds were left alone for a few years the shell would then be found in shallow waters where the white men could get at them. Again, it is said that if the industry were closed down the Asiatics would come into our waters and still fish though they would not be in the State. Well, we have a remedy for that, and that is to build an Australian gunboat and run along the coast. I am sure that in the future we may want to use our gunboats, and that would be good practice for them. Another matter the Federal Parliament has not attended to is allowing black-labour boats to run on this coast. These boats do as little as they possibly can for Western Australia ; Western Australia practically gets nothing from these boats that they can possibly withhold, and at the same time they charge the settlers on the coast every farthing they can screw out of them for freights. Again, there is very little doubt that on these boats, or through these boats running, there is a great deal of smuggling both of Asiatics and opium, and I wish to point this out, that by the provisions made by the Federal Government it is altogether impossible to prevent smuggling. Judging by the opportunities afforded, there certainly must be a great deal of opium smuggled right from Broome down to Geraldton. The Minister for Mines came out with a proposition one morning to run State steamships on this coast.

Mr. Bolton : He was frightened.

Mr UNDERWOOD : He was boomed in the *Sunday Times* as the great democrat of Menzies who was going to dish the Labour party again and run these boats. But somebody apparently talked to him, and he appointed a gentleman to inquire into the matter.

Mr. Johnson : The hon. member is out of order ; he ought to say the Minister for Mines.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Yes, the Minister for Mines. However, he decided to make inquiries, and he appointed a gentleman to inquire. That gentleman went to the steamship companies and asked, "Are you overcharging these people?" and the reply was, "No, certainly not."

The Minister for Works : Do you know where he inquired?

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Yes, of the steamship owners.

The Minister for Works : Is that the only place where he inquired?

Mr. UNDERWOOD : I trust I shall be allowed to go on without this unseemly interruption. I do not know where he inquired, but I do not think that he could have inquired at the right places, because I know positively that the information he got was not according to facts. However, the Government did not build the steamers, and I do not think that they have any intention of doing so ; at the same time I am convinced that there never will be any satisfaction in the shipping arrangements on that coast until the Government do run steamers there. In respect to the recent Menzies election it will be remembered that when the Electoral Act was introduced the Attorney General and the Minister for Works told us that it was introduced solely with the view of purification. They were very great on purity just about that time. In respect to the Menzies election it has been proved in evidence on oath that certain persons who were on Mr. Gregory's committee—one of them was his chairman—voted illegally. And after voting illegally for Mr. Gregory they came to Court and helped Mr. Gregory to overthrow the election. Yet the Bill was introduced for purity. There are one or two peculiar things regarding that Bill. The

Premier last night spoke of the organisation of the Labour party. My experience is, that the Labour party's organisation is a very poor thing compared with the organisation that has been brought to bear on postal voting. There seems to me to have been a secret service party behind the present Government. In my electorate there were votes from all parts of the country. One gentleman who has been Mayor of Midland Junction for the last two years voted in Pilbara.

Mr. Osborn: He was in Pilbara at the time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: He is also on the roll for Guildford.

Mr. Bolton: And has been on the roll for Guildford for eighteen months.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Men from Subiaco and Victoria Park, *bona fide* residents of those places according to the Judge's ruling, voted in Pilbara. In fact, the way the votes were raked up against me was absolutely a scandal. I know a great many people in the district and a great many voters, but it surprised me when I saw some of the people who voted. However, to return to the Menzies election and the Electoral Act and illegal voting. Mr. Gregory speaking at Niagara the other day made the statement that he could have brought evidence to the Court to show that men were illegally on the roll, that they had got on the roll under age, or were unnaturalised. Well, if some prospector, Carr Boyd for instance, were to come to me and tell me that he had found radium out beyond Cosmo Newberry. I would expect him to produce some of it before I believed him, and knowing the gentleman, I would expect Mr. Gregory to produce something before I believed him in this connection. But he said he would not bring these men to Court because they would be liable to prosecution. Here we have a member of the Ministry that introduced the Bill for the purification of elections telling us he knows men who got on the roll by false declaration, but he would not bring them up because they would be prosecuted. This makes something of a hole in that purity cry we heard when the Bill was before the House. Those people who voted at the Menzies election are,

according to the Act, liable to imprisonment not exceeding two years.

Mr. Bolton: So is the Mayor of Midland.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I hold it is beyond all shadow of doubt the duty of the Government, to prosecute those people. Mr. Gregory has said he would not bring the evidence forward, because there would be prosecutions. The penalty for making a false declaration in postal voting is the same as that for making a false declaration to get on the roll, and there should be a prosecution in the one case as much as in the other. I hold that these people should be prosecuted if it were only to let us know exactly where we are. Now I come to the Judge's verdict. The Judge ruled that Section 161 was not intended to be in the Act. He said it would make the Act look ridiculous. Of course it always strikes me as ridiculous if a thing is there and is not to be used. I would like to read the section. It is inserted in the division which deals with disputed returns, and is practically an instruction to the Court. Of all the divisions in the Act this is the one by which the Court should be guided. The section says:—

"The Court shall inquire whether or not the requisites of section one hundred and fifty-six have been observed, and, so far as the voting is concerned, may inquire into the identity of persons, and whether their votes were improperly admitted or rejected, and whether the result of the polling was correctly ascertained, but the Court shall deem the roll conclusive evidence that the persons enrolled were, at the date of the completion of the roll, entitled to be enrolled."

The Attorney General in introducing the Bill gave us to understand that he at least thoroughly meant it. He said—

"The provisions for making up rolls make it necessary for every roll to be dated, the original rolls and the supplementary rolls, and this provision in regard to disputed returns is that the Court is to take the roll on the date it bears on the face of it as being the correct roll."

With that language in the Act, and I

contend it is very clear indeed, and with the Attorney General's speech, I fail to see how the Judge could throw out that section, and not consider it. If he will throw that out, I contend we will have to get his ruling on every section of the Act. Therefore, it is necessary that we should have those people prosecuted in order to ascertain where we stand. If Section 161 does not apply it is possible the Judge might rule that other sections do not apply, and that it was intended to imprison these people for five years, or that we did not intend anything of the sort, but that these people were deserving of recompense, and should be rewarded with a trip round the world. It is difficult to see how the Judge could arrive at that decision. Every other man who knows anything of the English language would say it was impossible to put the position more definitely than the wording of that section; and if the wording of that section does not show the Judge what is intended, the English language is of no use and nothing will do but to drive in the intention of Parliament with a hammer and gad. In regard to postal votes, I maintain that it is desirable to curtail the system to a great extent. It has proved a source of corruption ever since it has been in force in the State, but I would not like to abolish the system altogether, though I hold it was never intended to enable people in Victoria, thousands of miles away from the constituency, to vote. I would suggest an amendment that people voting by post must attend before the postal vote officer in the district in which they are going to vote. Postal vote officers should be appointed in each district and should not be allowed to issue postal votes for any other district. Thus a person would need to go to the house of the postal vote officer to take out a vote for the particular district. With such a provision I think we could have the system a little better than it has been in the past. Now we come to the Government policy. The Premier in his presessional speech mentioned that the Commonwealth had commandeered £60,000. Then he went on to say that the liberalisation of the Agricultural Bank Act was the direct

cause of the marvellous increase in agricultural development, and of the immense acreage under crop. He said, "The year has been the most successful one ever experienced in land settlement; 1,100,554 acres having been taken up." Now we have heard that sort of thing pretty often, all this about the "marvellous leaps and bounds." It is a peculiar thing in the English language that certain words are always used for certain things, and "leaps" and "bounds" are two words used most consistently in connection with the Government land policy. The marvellous "leaps and bounds" that are made in agricultural products! Here are the "leaps and bounds" we are making: In February of 1899 Western Australia had 171,171 acres under crop. Ten years later, this year, we have 494,000 acres under. So during the ten years under review the amount of land put under crop has been 223,210 acres. Where are these "leaps and bounds"? It has taken ten years to get 223,210 acres under crop. At that rate of progress it will take 30 years to get a million acres under crop.

The Minister for Works: You are a brilliant mathematician.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It will take 300 years to get ten million acres under crop. These are the "marvellous leaps and bounds" we are making. A jew lizard would go faster. It will take us one hundred and fifty years to reach the present South Australian standard, and South Australia was the last State of the Commonwealth to be established. Further than that, it will be noticed that it means just roughly that we have brought under crop 31,000 or 32,000 acres each year. Last year the area was 36,000 acres, so that last year was only a fair average year. Where are the "marvellous leaps and bounds"? Where is the "marvellous increase" in agriculture? We have sold a million acres and put 36,000 acres under crop. It will take 30 years to get the million acres under crop. This is our "marvellous" policy. This is what the Government send to England as their policy. They say they are settling the land, but the land they

are settling is merely the dust in the eyes of the people. Again, if this marvellous increase in agriculture is taking place, why does it not show in our population returns, or in our railway returns? If this marvellous increase is real, then the people must be producing something, and if they are producing, the produce must go over our railways; but notwithstanding that we have built hundreds of miles of railway during the regime of the Moore Government, the railway returns have decreased and there is less stuff carted over the railways than there was three years ago. Yet we have this "marvellous increase"—these "leaps and bounds." Speaking on the question of the land policy of the Government, we come to the matter of administration, and I take the opportunity of pointing out a few things I think should be altered in the Lands Office. Here is an application I put in myself for a block of land that had been previously selected and was gazetted as open for selection. I applied over the counter, and two months after I received a letter to this effect:

"I have to inform you that no action can be taken with reference to your application for conditional purchase under Section 56 of the Land Act, 1898, until the expiration of seven days when the term of grace given to the present holder expires."

The thing was gazetted as forfeited I think in February, but in April they told me: "There is a present holder. We are going to give him seven days' grace." The letter continues:

"This course has been taken in conformity with the decision of the Minister not to forfeit any homestead farm for non-payment of the second instalment of survey fee until the owner had received final notice of seven days that his holding would be forfeited for non-payment of instalment."

I have no objection whatever to giving all the notice possible and all the grace that should be given: give these persons everything; give them the country and I will go away. But when once it is decided not to give them this land but to throw it open for selection then I expect to get it if I am the first to apply

for it. That is my own personal case. Here is another case from Nullagine. I have with me here an extract from the *Government Gazette* of Friday, 17th June, 1907, pointing out that certain leases and licenses had been forfeited through non-payment of rent for the first half of the year 1907. The block referred to was numbered 2459. A person in Nullagine on seeing this *Gazette* notice in the following month wired to the Under Secretary for Lands asking for verification of the notice, and he received the following reply, dated 11th July, 1907:—"Block referred to open for selection." He then wired his money with the application and received a receipt for it on the 15th July, 1907. The next he heard was by letter from the Under Secretary for Lands, dated 20th November, 1907, which is as follows:—

"In reply to your application for late pastoral lease 2459/102, I have to inform you that no action could be taken until the lease was absolutely forfeited for non-payment of rent. This has now been done and enclosed you will find a form of application for pastoral lease of 20,000 acres including late 2459/102. The area has been increased to meet the requirements of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1906, which fixes the minimum area of pastoral leases in the North-West Division at 20,000 acres unless hemmed in. Please sign the enclosed form where indicated in pencil, at the same time furnishing the full Christian names of each member of your firm and their occupations. Further it will be necessary to declare whether you desire to hold the lease as joint tenants or tenants in common. In the former case, in the event of decease of one member of the firm the survivors absorb his interest in the lease. In the latter case the heirs at law of deceased become co-lessees with the survivors."

The application form was filled up as desired and the remainder of the rent was sent. This happened notwithstanding the fact that the forfeiture was gazetted in the previous July. It evidently does not matter at all whether a notice has been published in the *Government*

Gazette or not, that is so far as the Lands Department are concerned. On the 29th January of the following year he received this communication from the Under Secretary for Lands:—

“With reference to your application No. 624/96, I beg to inform you that the Hon. the Minister for Lands has now decided to withdraw the land included in late No. 2459/102 from selection and again throw it open by notice in the *Government Gazette* on the 27th February. All applications received on or before that date will be considered as simultaneous, and the land will be allotted by the Land Board. Your application must therefore be held over at present.”

And on the 17th March he received the following letter:—

“With reference to your application No. 624/96, for 20,000 acres of land in the De Grey district, being late pastoral lease 2459/102, I beg to inform you that owing to the fact that the land has been withdrawn from selection and thrown open on the 17th February, it has now been decided to fix a board meeting for 11 o'clock on Wednesday, 17th June next, when you will be able to appear and give evidence in support of your application, or else arrange with an agent to do so on your behalf. In any case, the enclosed form should be completed and returned for consideration by the board.”

The return fare from Nullagine to Perth is £32 and it takes two months to make the trip. That is how the Government dealt with a man in my electorate. At the same time John Winthrop Hackett, junior, of Ireland, could get his application approved of with the least possible notice and in the quickest possible time. We should attend to the people who have been out back in this country rather than those who remain in Ireland and never intend to come here at all. There are many other complaints about this department and my experience is that it is in the worst possible condition of chaos. The Under Secretary for Lands in his report complains that certain people have been writing to the Press regarding the non-fulfilment of conditions, and he says he

would like those persons to lay specific cases before him. If they did that he would look into the matter and if it were found then that the conditions were not being complied with, and the holder had no very good excuse to offer, the blocks would be forfeited. It appears from this that a man either has to improve his land or else be very good at making excuses. During the discussion on the Lands Department Estimates last session I complained about land in the Cunderdin district being held for many years without any work being done upon it. I gave specific instances and mentioned land which was held right against the Cunderdin station. The Premier then said that if anyone would give him specific instances where the improvement clauses had not been complied with he would forfeit the land forthwith. I sent a copy of *Hansard* containing my remarks and the Premier's reply to Cunderdin and told the people there that I had done my duty and if there was any land there upon which the proper improvements had not been made, they should call the inspector's attention to it. A man by the name of Condon called the inspector's attention to a 400 acre block alongside the railway. The inspector looked at it and it was clear that absolutely nothing had been done to it and the only thing left was to recommend the forfeiture, which he did. The forfeiture was gazetted and the land was thrown open for application. Condon went to Northam to put in an application, and in order to do so lost his railway fare and two days' work. Two months later he received his application money back with a notification that the land had been withdrawn from selection and that the old holder had been reinstated. Here is a specific instance. In the past great credit has been given to the Minister for Lands, but in my opinion his actions do not bear out the character given him. He is genial and bluff, and I must admit he bluffed me. I know of thousands of acres of land that have not had any work done on them in the way of improvements. These lands have been held for years under conditional purchase,

and have not been forfeited under the improvement clauses as they should have been. I do not blame the inspectors for this, for I believe they endeavour to do their duty. But after all it is a good man who does his work the way the boss wants it done. In my opinion the Government do not want to forfeit the land.

The Premier: Have you ever brought cases under my notice?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, in this House I have done so. I have just referred to a man named Condon who applied for certain Cunderdin land. I told you about Mr. Hodgson's land and mentioned the fact that he sold it afterwards and received the transfer all right.

The Premier: I know nothing about the case at Cunderdin. In every case brought under notice where improvements have not been effected the land is forfeited if a legitimate excuse is not provided.

Mr. Bolton: The interpretation of "legitimate" is the trouble.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I say again that it is not the fault of the land inspectors that the work is not done. One thing the inspectors are particular about is with regard to the work done in fencing. In this respect I think they should use a little more discretion or give a little more time in which that work might be done, that is of course to those men who are really working the land. The condition in the Act which refers to the necessity for fencing should be struck out, as there are many other improvements which could be effected and which would result in some return coming to the holder of the block.

The Premier: It is not necessarily a condition that fencing should be done. If an amount equal to that which should be spent in fencing is spent in other ways of a remunerative character no objection is taken to a man doing that work instead of the fencing.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I know of cases where men have been forced to go on with their fencing when their position was a stringent one and they were making great efforts to get in a crop. Such a case as this occurred at Taminin. Here is a case which occurred to me, which

shows the manner in which affairs are carried on in the Lands Department. A reserve was thrown open at Quairading: it was surveyed and applications had to be in by the fifth of the month. I went to the Lands Office to have a look at the plans and I was told they would not be out for two or three days. Therefore the applications were received first and the plans were printed afterwards. I have also had considerable trouble in regard to maps in the Lands Department. I received a map of a certain portion of the country, supposed to be marked up to date, but when I went over the land I found a survey line which did not appear on the map. I followed up that line and then ran against a crop, about which also there was no reference on the map. Proper plans of the district should be prepared and if the officers cannot mark them correctly the plans should not be given out. To continue with the policy of the Government, for I might as well go right through it—it will not take long for it is not a very great policy—there is a little about the loan finances, and then it refers to the construction of 400 miles of new railways, including the line from Nannine to Meekatharra, the Goomalling extension and others. The agricultural lines constructed in the past have not proved that the result of their construction is to take settlement with them. I have seen certain plans of the country along the Bolgart-Newcastle railway. Those plans may not be right, for they come from the Lands Department, but from them it is clear that the land which is to be opened up by that railway belongs to the Midland Railway Company. Anyone who disputes that contention can have a look at the map and the truth of the argument will be proved.

The Premier: Plans were here when that railway Bill was passed through.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Almost all of that land belongs to the Midland Railway Company. That does not strike me as being a very excellent policy and one likely to forward the best interests of the country.

The Treasurer: Tell us something about Pilbara.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Government build railways, but when men go to look for land in the proximity of those lines they are informed they have to go 20 miles further on before any land is available. Then there is the difficulty experienced by men in getting land. We are spending some £8,000 or £10,000 a year on immigration and with that money the Government are bringing out agricultural immigrants to the country. These men are supposed to go on the land. If we desire immigrants to get a fair start we should not allow them to knock about the country for a long time without getting a start on the land, for all they are doing is to spend the few pounds they bring with them. The Under Secretary for Lands in his report for the year 1906-7 says:—

“Although the amount of selection shows a falling off it may safely be assumed that practically the whole of it has been acquired for the purpose of genuine settlement, as the land is not as a rule favourably enough situated to encourage the speculator, and where blocks are made available in good situations there is usually such competition for them as to ensure the applicants having to appear before the land board, which inquires into the merits of each application and grants the land to the one who appears to have the greatest claim to it, or to possess the best qualifications, thus reducing the chances of speculating or dummying to a minimum.”

That was the state of things according to the Under Secretary for Lands then, and it is evident that even at that time there was no land available for selection within proximity of the railways. I receive letters almost weekly from people in the outback parts of the State asking if I know where they can get a little decent land near a railway, but I do not know where to get it for them. We pay land guides, and I asked one, it does not matter where, and he told me there was no land within 20 miles—not of a railway, but within that distance of any proposed railway. He said there was plenty of good land further out, but none at all within 20 miles. I hold this,

that a man who is struggling to make a start it is impossible for him to go 20 miles out. It is in the first few years that the difficulties will kill him.

The Premier: What about the men who were 100 miles out before there were any railways at all?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They did not go farming in those days, they gathered sandalwood. If you cannot get into a station and out again in one day you cannot make farming a success. We are building railways, we are bringing immigrants, and at the same time we have no land to offer them within 20 miles of a railway line, and yet the Government tell us they are doing marvellous things. The Premier told us last night that the Melbourne Agency had been a wonderful success.

The Premier: And has it not?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. I will tell you about it. What has increased the population? Has it been the Melbourne Agency, or “Wongi” Nelson in England?

The Premier: I say the agricultural population has increased in the agricultural districts. You have only to go down the Great Southern Railway and see for yourself.

Mr. Bolton: The decrease in the gold-fields population accounts for that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: With regard to the Melbourne Agency, I read a paragraph just after Christmas wherein it was stated that Mr. Ranford was lecturing in Victoria and had just then gone to Tasmania. There was a big heat wave in Victoria at that time. Tasmania is one of the most prolific little islands in the world, and possesses a population of only 80,000 people. If we got the lot it would not make any great difference to our State. Just fancy, of all the places in the world, going to Tasmania to look for immigrants; a place that wants them more than we do.

The Premier: And we got them, too. Why, the whole country is held by about 11 people.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Ranford went to this place for immigrants.

The Premier: And he got them.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will tell you a little story about Mr. Ranford. He met a nigger in one of the places where he was lecturing, and asked him whether he was looking for work. The man replied, "No blanky fear; I am looking for a cool place to lie down." We have undoubtedly some splendid land in this State. There is no possible shadow of doubt about that. We still have millions of acres, and it is up to Parliament to consider what we are going to do with it. We can see what has been done in the Eastern States. I will read to you one or two little extracts showing what has happened in some of these places. You can read them almost daily in the newspapers. Here are some school inspectors' reports and school inspectors, it must be admitted, report correctly. I have here five or six reports from Queensland. The State school inspector at King's Creek reported—

"The children here are, with few exceptions below the average in mental power. They are a depressingly dull lot; some of them half-dazed. The chief industry here is dairying, and a large percentage of the pupils are employed before and after school in milking and they appear to have little energy left for school work."

That is one of them. There are similar reports from Bergen, Glencoe, Glenvale, and Templin. Then again I have here a paragraph from the *West Australian* dealing with child slaves at Bega. Bega is a splendid agricultural district and there should be no necessity for slaves there. The paragraph, which is dated 4th June, reads:—

"The employment of child labour in the Bega agricultural district is referred to in the following strong terms by School Inspector Smith in his annual report:—'Children of tender years are often up before daylight tending cows, feeding calves and pigs, and cleaning up manure, and when breakfast is over they have often a long walk to school, where, fagged and sleepy, they are physically unfit to receive instruction. They are often compelled to leave school early in the afternoon to assist at home in the

same monotony of labour, unrelieved by a bit of fun of any kind.'"

Mr. Gordon: That is under a Labour Government.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is New South Wales. The others I read related to Queensland. Now I will read you what the Honorary Minister would like to see in Western Australia. Here is a copy of the *Journal* of the Department of Agriculture, issued by the authority of the Minister for Agriculture, and is, I presume, printed for the sole purpose of giving useful information to farmers. This article is headed "A Woman's Dairy Farm. Useful Girls." It says:—

"At 5 a.m. the woman dairy farmer raps at the guest's bedroom door and says, 'Time to get up.' Twelve-year-old Jean has already lit the fire and boiled the kettle, while her sisters drive up the cows. Thus writes 'Sheba' in the *Argus*. Children are valuable on a dairy farm. My hostess's active daughters are, in her opinion, worth twice the same number of boys, for boys are apt to absent themselves at evening milking-time. Says the mother, 'I couldn't get on without my girls. Apart from milking, they're splendid hands at rearing young stock. They coddle the calves as if they were babies, and, unlike their brother, would never let one go without a meal because it failed to come when called. If, notwithstanding all their coaxing, a weakling refuses its milk, Siss tempts it with beaten egg, and pampers it up till gradually the puny thing develops into a saleable beast. My girls have the same knack with all animals. The little ones pet the foal and ride on his back as soon as he's big enough. They coax him to let them slip a halter over his head, and later you'll see two of them driving off, with the colt as quiet as a lamb between the shafts, for a load of wood or a sheep for killing.' Till half-past six all hands are busy milking. When the separating process begins the novice grows interested, and is forced to confess that modern dairy methods, if unpicturesque, are cleaner,

more hygienic and far more economical of time, labour, and material than of old. The separated milk, gushing from its outlet, rapidly fills numerous pails, each topped with piled-up froth. This fleecy scum, too gaseous to suit the digestion of the calves, is removed, and is reserved for the poultry. The milk must be warmed to a certain heat before it is regarded as wholesome food for the cow-babies; but at last their breakfast is ready; and, leaving a copperful of water to boil for washing up, we seize one bucket, or two, as the case may be, and trudge to the calf paddock, shouting 'Sandy' as we go. Sandy being the youngest calf, is fed first. He drinks his half-bucket but then, with his young face all a-slobber with milk, he begins to show off, like the spoilt beastie he is. His fellows, likewise full of breakfast and tricks, follow suit, and the visitor, surrounded by 'chewers' all kicking up dust and dribbling facetiously, understands why the sprigged dimity, snowy apron and buckled shoes of the traditional milkmaid are never seen off the stage. When we return to the shed all the appliances connected with the separator are submitted to a drastic cleansing. First they are rinsed in cold water, next soaked in a borax solution, then thoroughly scalded, and lastly the nozzle of the steam-pipe is introduced into every shink and cranny. 'The separator is now ready for to-night,' says the mother; who adds, 'two of the children have brushed out the milking stalls, and two other shave got the cows' evening feed ready, so we'll sit down comfortably to breakfast. Then the girls will drive the cream to the station on their way to school, and won't be back till milking time.'

Evidently this is what the present Government would like to see in Western Australia, and that is what I say we should prevent. That article, I think, is the most degrading advocacy of slavery that ever emanated from any part of the Empire that sings, "Britons never shall be slaves." What becomes of the land. In Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia it has been

allowed to get into the hands of a few holders, and these holders are grinding out rents and forcing tenant farmers to become slaves, and to enslave their children as well. With the great opportunity we have in Western Australia we should do something to prevent this State arriving at the condition that the other States of the Commonwealth have arrived at. Now we are told all we have to do is to open up the land. Of course my contention is that they are locking up the land—not only agricultural, but mining land. If you want to open up the land why don't you get to work and open it up? There is plenty of good land, and there are plenty of unemployed. I do not think the Government want to open it up on anything like the principles I would advocate. They want to open it up as has been done in the East, by permitting it to get into the possession of a few holders and then bringing in immigrants to act as tenant slaves.

The Premier: You know very well the Government brought in a provision to prevent large areas being taken up by one individual, and insisting upon progressive improvements as well.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I just want to say that it has been proved beyond doubt that the Government can cultivate the land, and it has been proved that the cultivation of the land is profitable. At the present time we are getting five shillings an acre for our land. That is deducting the expenses of land guides and land agents. If the land were cleared and made ready for the man to go upon so that he could start straight away, that land would be worth almost as many pounds per acre.

The Premier: Have we not had 180 men on one property during the last six months doing that very work?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. They have been ring-barking; but that is another question.

The Premier: They have been clearing.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am convinced of this, that if a man enters on the work systematically and with a fair amount of capital behind him he can, in five years' time, reap the benefits of the products of the land. After the clearing it will

be worth £3 or £4 per acre. And if the Treasurer wants to know how to remove some of the present debt of the State, there is an idea for him. There is no chance of loss in this scheme. We have here men who are unemployed, and you could get thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of men anywhere if you could find work for them to come to. But if you have not the work, they may as well remain idle in America or England, or in any other part of the world where they are. I feel certain of this, there will not be the slightest difficulty to get tenants or people to cultivate that land if someone prepared it for them. Then follow your land work up, and instead of having railways running through miles of uncultivated country you would have every acre producing something for the railways to carry. I do again protest against the selling of the land as it has been, and is being, sold, and I say, if we allow the lands of the State to go into the hands of the few, as has been the case in the Eastern States, our names would deserve to be spoken of with scorn. Further, in regard to this question of immigration, the Treasurer said you cannot get immigrants. That is not to be wondered at. I know of one case where a man who lives next door to me was induced to come to Western Australia by the lectures he heard delivered in England. That man is an electrician, and I know that since he has been here he and his children have wanted for bread. That is a positive fact, and I know at the same time he is a splendid tradesman and hard working man. Now when you bring immigrants to a country in this way it certainly is likely to be hard to get any more. I say it is a lasting disgrace to our Government to induce poor people to come to this country and allow them to starve. I think not another penny should be spent in inducing immigrants to come out under our present methods. If there is any desire to get immigrants, the only way to do it is to make this a good country to live in; then you can get as many immigrants as your country will hold. That was proved years ago, and it can be proved again at

any time. The only way to get immigrants is to find work for them when they come here. The money at present being spent in England is a total waste and could be better spent in this State in providing for the men already here and in inducing them to stay here.

The Premier: Are you prepared then to support a loan to carry out these works which you propose? It may mean £100,000.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, certainly I am.

The Premier: I am glad to know that, because you may have an opportunity of doing so.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not prepared to support a loan to build a railway to Mr. Glowrey's land; but I am prepared to support a scheme to get men out here, and give them work to do when they get here. However, I am not prepared to support any further agricultural railways until we have got the land that is along those already built cultivated and improved. I just wish to say in conclusion that I am convinced that Western Australia in the near future is to depend upon agriculture, and the system or method being pursued by the Government is not the best in the interests of this State. Instead of opening up the land and bringing it under cultivation the Government are allowing the best land to be locked up by a few people.

The Premier: You know that is an absolute misstatement.

Several Ministerial members: Question!

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): One would have thought after the remarks of the member for Pilbarra that one on the Ministerial side of the House would have got up and replied. However, as is usually the case they prefer to have charges hurled against them, and then either because the charges are true or they are unable to reply to them they say nothing. They allow us to do the fighting on this side, and after the speakers on this side of the House have all spoken we will have them getting up on the other side. In dealing with the Address-in-Reply many members have made the remark—not during this debate but outside the House in different parts of

the country—that they would like to see the Address-in-Reply done away with. I do not agree with them. I maintain that we should have an opportunity when the session opens to place our grievances and our views before the country; and this is practically the only time we can do that. I am of opinion that the time spent on the Address-in-Reply is time very well spent. In dealing with the question of the Premier's policy speech, we know it was very lengthy, and there were one or two good proposals in that speech. Taking it throughout—it is some little time since it was delivered—the policy speech was a regular mountain; but when we came down last session we found the Governor's Speech was practically bald. We find the same again this session. We find that when the House meets there is very little of importance in the Governor's Speech at all. I would like to know the reason why we did not met earlier this year than we have. The general elections were over two months ago, and there was no reason why we should not have met early in October, or over a month ago. Presently we will be accused of wasting time. It seems to me to be the general policy of Government supporters to sit in silence, and when we ask for information we are accused of wasting time. I realise that I was sent here to do my duty to the country, and whether the Ministerialists think I am wasting time or not, when I think I have anything of importance to say, or when I wish to speak upon any measure, I am going to get up and speak, and do my best to see that that measure is carried through. In my opinion the Government showed a great desire to cling to office last year. Instead of dissolving Parliament immediately after we sat in 1907, having the general elections in April or May and meeting in June or July they showed a desire, I think, to cling to office as long as they possible could. There would have been thousands of pounds saved to Western Australia and a great deal more business done had we adopted that course immediately after the 1907 session. It appears to me that these last 12 months has been spent by Ministers touring the country, with one or

two exceptions, at the expense of the State, and doing electioneering work at the same time. They have been travelling right through the country, devoting the whole of the time to attending functions and praising each other up; and that course of procedure has been adopted right through.

The Treasurer: That is very ungenerous.

Mr. HOLMAN: It is true.

The Premier: A different experience from what you had.

Mr. HOLMAN: I said "with one or two exceptions." For instance, I saw his shoulder to the wheel and helped to something different when the Premier put shift the trap out of the mud. But before I am through I will quote cases of another sort altogether.

The Premier: You kept each other busy when you were in office.

Mr. HOLMAN: There was so much intrigue going on around us, they did keep us pretty busy looking after ourselves. It puts me in mind of that old campaigner travelling out with the doctor to intercept the Minister for Mines coming down from the Murchison. The man who is Whip for the Government was very sadly disappointed when, acting under instructions from the Treasurer, he went out and examined the boxes and lumber but could not find his man. The old campaigner, one of His Majesty's forces, got out before them and fixed things up properly. He out-manceuvred and out-witted the Treasurer and his henchman, the Government Whip. As I said, the Government desire to cling to office as long as they possibly can. It is said that we desire to reach office, but personally I have no such desire because, as the result of my experience, I am convinced that there is little in it, and that a man does not get sufficient recompense. Still I have termed the present Government the "ring-tailed opossum Government." We have an instance of their quality in this respect in the Minister for Mines, a man shot and riddled by the electors of Menzies still clinging to office.

The Premier: Remember when you got that telegram?

Mr. HOLMAN: I got the telegram all right. I got it from a man who has proved a traitor to all manly instincts and to the party he was pledged to support. But I gave up the office I held. I never received a mandate from the people and still clung until I was dead and mortified, like Mr. Gregory.

Mr. Monger: Wait until he comes back.

Mr. HOLMAN: If we wait until the Minister for Mines comes back some of us will be here for a good many years. We find the Government are clinging to office as long as they possibly can, and while we have Ministers prepared to sacrifice every manly instinct to cling to position then the Government of this country cannot go on in a satisfactory manner. So far as the past year is concerned it has been practically a wasted year; nothing done, nothing accomplished. Ministers have promised certain things, have promised many things, and have done very little. The present position of the country is practically worse than it has been since I came here, over 15 years ago. We have scores and hundreds of men unemployed who cannot get a day's work, many of them good, hard-working men. I must, in travelling through the country, know from practical experience, and I am satisfied that if work were offering these men are prepared to do any hard work so long as they can get paid for the work they are doing. I say this state of things is very unsatisfactory indeed. Throughout the whole of Western Australia a depression exists and it is a very serious one. One can go from Albany to the Leeuwin, and right up to the far North, and the same state of affairs exists. There seems to be a lack of confidence in the country itself. I am prepared to say we have a country second to none in the Commonwealth. What is the reason of this depression? Many members blame Federation for it, but I am satisfied that it is not Federation at all; it is lack of confidence in those who hold the reins of Government in their hands.

The Minister for Works: Why did so many more people vote for us than for you?

Mr. HOLMAN: Because they were misled, and did not know what they were doing.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. HOLMAN: I have been reminded by an interjection from the Minister for Works that the majority of the people decided to support the present Administration, but that is taking rather an extended view of the subject, because in several electorates the votes were recorded against the Government. Take for instance the election at Roebourne. There the votes were not cast to put in a Government supporter; they were cast to keep out the Government candidate because he had proved a traitor to the party to which he previously belonged. In all probability had a straight-out Labour candidate contested the Roebourne seat the position might have been different. The Premier when dealing with this subject yesterday did not take into consideration the fact that in about a dozen electorates there were no candidates supporting the Opposition, and in those electorates the number of votes recorded totalled some 15,000 or 16,000. Had we had money behind us to contest those electorates, the position, as put by the Premier yesterday, would have been altogether different. There is the member for Greenough (Mr. Nanson) I do not know whether the Government claim him as an out-and-out supporter, but I remember reading a speech the hon. member delivered at Mullewa, in which he utterly condemned the financial policy of the present Government, likening it to the policy of a man with a short blanket who cut off a piece from the bottom to sew on the top and complained of cold feet. I do not know whether the Government can be cheerful in such circumstances, or whether they can claim certain members as out-and-out supporters. However, the position of the country is not satisfactory. Federation has been blamed, but I do not think it is fair to blame Federation for our own faults. During the last few years, in fact during the greater part of the time since Responsible Gov-

ernment, there has been a tendency for those in charge of the administration of the State to merely look after the interests of those who own property, the workers being sacrificed in the interests of those who own a considerable amount of property; and we will need to have a different policy before we can hope to have a permanent improvement in Western Australia. One thing that would send the State ahead at present would be a mineral discovery, no matter in what part of the State. It would assist us and certainly make the position much better. We remember that when gold was being discovered in big quantities the State made progress by leaps and bounds; and if we could get more mineral discoveries other industries would follow. However, unless we can do something in the immediate future to assist those people who are working outback on behalf of the people of the State (and of course for themselves), unless we can give them substantial assistance and encouragement we may look forward to the next few years in Western Australia as trying ones. Now, glance at the administration of the various departments. It is well known that the departments under the control of the Treasurer are by no means in a satisfactory state. We had the experience of the maladministration in connection with the Tender Board some little time ago; that matter was hushed up and very little information was given to the public; but from the laxity going on in that department, in all probability the same state of affairs may exist in other departments. The Treasurer will bring down his Budget in a fortnight, and we may hear some interesting things from him; but I am satisfied it will take something more than any optimistic remarks he may make about being cheerful and about "what is to be will be" to send Western Australia ahead and prevent us going back farther than we are now. In the new department brought into existence last year—the Taxation Department—some of the men employed are by no means satisfactory. The man who was taken from that department and sent up to contest my electorate would

not imbue the people on the Murchison with any confidence in the administration of the State departments. I believe another man employed was the one who acted as Mr. Gregory's informant in the Gregory-White case. If that is the class of man employed in our departments it is not a satisfactory condition of affairs. When there are plenty of really good men who are willing to work in the departments, it is marvellous how men of this sort can secure good appointments. I am sure that if these departments are conducted by men of the calibre I have mentioned, little satisfaction will be given to the people. Next take the question of immigration, and look at the class of immigrants coming to Western Australia. It is by no means satisfactory. Time after time we have men coming into the State and receiving positions here, that is working for wages. They are asked to come to Western Australia with a view to settling on the land, but as soon as they come here instead of settling on the land, other people are dismissed from the positions they hold, married men in some cases, and these immigrants are put in their places, and in some instances at lower wages. Among these immigrants we have had two cases of suicide. We have not only to pay money to bring people here, but we are also compelled to find them work, and then when they kill themselves in despair we have to bury them. I refer to a case of suicide at Russelton. I am not surprised at a man committing suicide in that part of the State after finding how things had been misrepresented to him. Here is the report of the affair as it appeared in the *West Australian* a few months ago:—

"A sad case of suicide occurred near Nannup. Lower Blackwood, on Friday morning. Last Tuesday twelve men, mostly immigrants who arrived by the R.M.S. Orient were sent from the Labour Bureau to work at the Nannup-Jarrahwod Extension. Amongst the number was Thomas Harris, 67 years of age. After working on Thursday he seemed depressed and complained that he was tired. On Friday morning two shots were heard, and the

deceased was found near his hut dead. He had fired one shot through the right and another through the left temple."

Fancy bringing immigrants to Western Australia to work as navvies on the railways, and at the age of 67 years. Yet the Government say what a splendid thing they are doing. It is a standing disgrace to the Immigration Department that the country has to pay steamship fares to bring men like that to the country, and when they get here they secure work as navvies, and then the poor unfortunates shoot themselves in despair to get rid of the lives that have been made a misery to them through being brought into this country. If we are going to spend our money in bringing men like that into the State, the sooner we stop our immigration system the better for the State. In fact I say that at present it is absolute nonsense to bring men here while we have hundreds of men unemployed. Between 300 and 400 men, without any canvassing at all, signed their names on sheets to say that they were unemployed and were willing to take work at anything. Yet while this is the case men are dragged from their homes in other countries and brought here; they are persuaded to think they are coming to a Paradise; and when they come here they go around to the Labour Bureau and get work by the dozen though we have hundreds of men here unemployed. It is a disgrace, and the people responsible for this should be put out of office, and those who would safeguard the interests of the country and the people here should be put in their places. This is going on day after day. We are informed on very good authority that these immigrants come to the country, go to the Labour Bureau right away and register themselves as unemployed, receive a ticket in red, and their names are written down in red in the books so that they are the first to get work. I say they should not get it, and that the people who are in the country, the people who have to pay the taxes to bring these others here, should have the work. At present married men in many

cases are thrown out of positions in order to give these immigrants work. Here we have a case of a man 67 years of age who was brought out here and shoots himself, and we have to pay not only the expense of his burial but the expense of the inquiry also. This will stand for all time as a blot against those responsible for the system. Again, let us look at the Colonial Secretary's Department. A question has lately come very prominently before the people in the metropolitan area that is, the early closing question, and it is a matter that does not redound to the credit of the Government or those responsible. We had a system of Saturday closing given the force of law by proclamation some twelve months ago. The question was discussed pretty freely before the elections took place, but it appears that certain people were given the tip that if they kept quiet the matter would be fixed up after the elections. I only surmise this, because from July until the general elections were over not a word was said about it, but as soon as the elections were over the same deputations came on and the matter was fixed up. Having for some time administered the Early Closing Act I am of the opinion that the second proclamation cannot stand, but we will have an opportunity of discussing the matter later on, so that I shall not deal with it at any length just now.

Mr. Brown: Why do not you advocate Saturday closing for Kalgoorlie and the goldfields?

Mr. HOLMAN: Kalgoorlie has nothing to do with me. The people in Perth asked for a certain thing and they got it, and I am satisfied that when they got it they should be content without asking for anything else. The member for Perth (*Mr. Brown*) will recognise the fact that the agitation has been brought about to a great extent by the publicans of Perth. They have caused the trouble, for they argue that, with the mid-weekly half holiday, people do not come in to Perth and therefore the same amount of money is not spent as before. I am not speaking without knowledge, for I have had conversations with publicans myself, and had I been a publican I may have adopted the same attitude. I do not say for a

moment, however, that I would do so. People who are led by the nose by the publicans are not fit to occupy responsible positions in this State.

Mr. Brown: Make the half-holiday universal.

Mr. HOLMAN: Now I come to the question of the railways. It has been said there is no sweating on the railways, but it has been now proved beyond doubt that a great many of the immigrants are employed in the department, taking the place of those who previously held the position, and who were discharged. We know that over one thousand dismissals have occurred in connection with the railways during the past three or four years, and it would be interesting to have a return of the number of immigrants employed in the department at the present time. In speaking of immigrants, I am referring to those who have come here during the past few years. Again, we find in connection with holidays on the railways that members of the staff are always paid during their holidays, but the workers are not, this decision having been come to by the Rason Government. At present the workers receive no pay when they do not work, but the staff are paid whether they work or not. I will deal more fully with the Mines Department later on, but what I say now is, that the Department is a disgrace to the man who has administered it for the past few years. Now let us look at the Attorney General's Department. We know that so far as Western Australia is concerned, justice is only a by-word. A poor man cannot get justice here. To my own personal knowledge justice has on certain occasions been practically prostituted here, and I can quote cases to prove that what I say is absolutely correct. Look at the question of Circuit Courts. We find that people from the Murchison, and from out-back districts generally, are compelled to come to Perth to have their cases tried, and this at very considerable expense. To my mind we should take the law to the people instead of bringing the people to the law, for it is unsatisfactory and unfair to ask a poor man to come from the Murchison to have his case tried in Perth. That has occurred time after time. These

remarks also refer to people living in the far North. Then as to hospitals. In the far back distant fields, where living is very hard, where sickness at times is rampant, where men have to live and work under circumstances in no way satisfactory, and where every facility should be given to enable them to enjoy the best possible conditions when well, and the best possible treatment when ill, hospital facilities are now being taken away. Men who are opening up the land, whether from the mining or agricultural standpoint should be given all assistance and treatment when in ill health. What have the Government done in order to bolster up private enterprise and give the big combinations more assistance? They have reduced the out-back hospital staffs. I intend to fight against this as hard as I can.

The Premier: These hospitals are all very well, so long as they do not spend all the money in administration expenses.

Mr. HOLMAN: During a certain portion of the year in those places the climate is the best to be obtained in the State, but during another portion of the year sickness is rampant, fever is about. The administration charges might appear high, for the reason that the staff have to be kept in the winter so as to be ready when the summer and its attendant ills comes on. Now I will refer to the Police Department. This question will probably be discussed at some great length this session. I hope so, for I maintain that the members of the force—although we have some of the best men to be obtained in the Commonwealth—are not treated fairly and squarely. They work for a paltry pittance of from 7s. to 8s. a day in some cases. Even on the fields the wages of a first-class policeman are only about 9s. 6d. a day. That places an absolute premium on crime, for it is almost enough to make a policeman a criminal to give him such wages, especially when it is remembered that on the fields the ordinary labourer, the pick and shovel man, earns his 10s. 10d. or 11s. 6d. a day. A policeman is placed in a high position of trust. On the fields men at times come in from the back country with a good deal of money in their pockets, and it is asked that these men with their property

should be protected by the police who are in receipt of this pittance of 9s. 6d. a day. It is almost compelling the members of the force against their will, their malice, and their convictions, to become criminals. The sooner we pay them a decent living wage the better will be the condition of affairs throughout Western Australia. Unless we pay a decent wage, we had better do away with the police altogether. The present position is by no means satisfactory, and it will never be considered such until we pay the policeman a decent living wage. The question of the use of personalities has been brought into this debate. Inside this House and outside of it the Labour party have been accused of indulging in personalities. I am perhaps one of those who speak strongly at times, but I can assure members that on every occasion I speak, I am fully satisfied that what I say is correct.

The Minister for Works: When you spoke on election night from the *Morning Herald* balcony was that correct? I refer to what you said about the Premier.

Mr. HOLMAN: Yes. I made the same statement at Bunbury. The Premier too made a statement about me which was absolutely incorrect.

The Minister for Works: Yet you say you are not personal.

Mr. HOLMAN: If a man charges me with a certain thing I am man enough to get up and defend myself, will put my story against his, and I will stand by the statements I have made. We have been accused of being the only ones to indulge in personalities. I make straight out remarks and where I tell a man he is doing wrong, I do not do it without justification. I speak strongly at times, and if a man has any thing against me, I give him credit for being able to speak strongly as well. If he is wrong I try and bring him up to the mark. I ask any member I have spoken strongly about to do the same with me. I will be ready to prove what I have said or else will make ample apology, if I find I am not justified in using the expression. Take the Minister for Works himself. Let him make the same remarks about the member for Collie that he did at a social

among a lot of men who supported him and perhaps the policy he advocated. That was a most unmanly and ungenerous, a most uncalled for and unnecessary speech.

The Minister for Works: What were the remarks?

Mr. HOLMAN: I would be wasting the time of the House by quoting any remarks of the Minister. Then we will turn to the remarks of the Minister for Mines about the people of Cue. He said it was a disgrace that the electors there should vote for the men they did. What right has the Minister for Mines to say such things about the electors of the Murchison. I say that the member for Cue is a far more manly man than the Minister for Mines, and that he has acted the man in the past more than that gentleman has done. The people who voted for the member for Cue are far more desirable men to have in the State than the Minister who has proved by his actions during the past two months that he is only a parasite on the people of the State, for he has clung to the position from which the electors kicked him out.

The Premier: I suppose that is not personal.

Mr. HOLMAN: It is absolutely true. Then the Premier when at Busselton made statements which did his colleague a great deal of good, and practically won the seat for him. These statements were against the Leader of the Opposition and myself.

The Treasurer: Your remarks won me the seat.

Mr. HOLMAN: That those remarks did not lose votes for the Labour nominee is proved by the fact that whereas the Treasurer had a majority of 400 three years ago, on this occasion he only just scraped home by 77 votes. That shows what convincing remarks were made. If an election were to take place now, and at all events at the next elections the Treasurer will say good-bye to the district of Sussex, just as he has said good-bye to the districts of Claremont, Canning, and Perth, or whatever seat he has previously occupied or tried for. Then again, we have the remarks of the second-rate Whip of the Government.

The following is a report from the Blackwood paper :—

“Mr. Layman brought off a neat little score at his meeting at Bridgetown. ‘Will you explain the attitude of the Moore Government in confiscating the money sent from the other colonies to help the strikers during the last timber strike,’ asked one of the electors of labour tendencies. Mr. Layman briefly replied, ‘It was never confiscated at all.’ ‘Did the workers receive that money,’ asked another elector also of labour tendencies. ‘I presume they did,’ answered Mr. Layman, ‘if it did not get into the hands of some of their leaders who had some other use for it.’”

That is a foul insinuation, which I hurl back in the member's teeth. It is a dirty insinuation. I was one of the leaders of the movement.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must not use that language towards a member of the House. I should have called him to order for his reference to the Minister for Mines, had that gentleman been a member, but I could not do so in the present circumstances.

Mr. HOLMAN : I am sorry I transgressed the rules of the House; I did not try to, but I used the language in the heat of the moment. I may have used, when speaking, language suitable to the occasion, but it was not in accord with the Standing Orders. I was one of the leaders in that dispute, on which occasion through the action of the Government, we were dragged before the courts at almost a moment's notice. When they found we could not come to terms, we were handed summonses, which were backed up by the Government, immediately we left the Premier's office. Although we received those summonses late on the Friday night, we were dragged into Court early on the Monday morning. On every occasion when the representatives of the men tried to get justice and brought cases against the employers in the same trouble, the magistrates refused to sit and try the cases, and the actions consequently hung on for years. That is an example which bears out the statement I made that justice is prosti-

tuted in this State. To refer to the question of the use of personalities, let us take remarks made by the supporters of the Government. One of the Government candidates in Perth used the following words :—

“Electors—Are you going to vote for a candidate whose followers glory in trying to damn the character of an honest citizen? Will you support such scandalous tactics? Can you expect pure politics from a bed of corruption?”

This is an example of some nice remarks made by the supporters of the Government.

The Premier : By whom were they made?

Mr. HOLMAN : By Mr. Veryard. He published these remarks broadcast through the land. I have mentioned these things to show that personalities and abuse do not come from this side. If they have done so there has been justification. What has been the abuse that has come from this side? Was it the reference that was made in the House to the fact that Faiz Mahomet secured £2,000 of the people's money, a sum which the Government were not justified in paying, and an amount about which the House was not given any information at all, although the House refused to grant compensation to this man. Even the Courts refused to give anything, and yet we find that Faiz Mahomet in an underhand manner got through Parliament £2,000 of the people's money, and the Government did not have the manliness to show on the Estimates where the money was paid from.

The Premier : It was given on the advice of a Judge of the Supreme Court.

Mr. HOLMAN : Parliament is above the Supreme Court or any of the Judges, and I say that Parliament decided that no compensation should be given. This question should not have been considered by Ministers without Parliament having been first consulted. This is one of the things that makes one feel suspicious. But I am satisfied that the money, although paid to Faiz Mahomet, was not received by him. That money was given to Faiz Mahomet to pay—the Minister for Works is looking at me as if I were

inferring that he took it, but I am not. The money was given to Faiz Mahomet to pay some of the heavy law costs and to fee some of the sharks of the legal profession, and I say this with all due apology to the hon. member for West Perth, because he was not fortunate enough to be in that case. Then we can refer to the fact that the Treasurer has brothers and sons-in-law who were able to get into good positions. We mentioned these facts in the House and we were charged with indulging in personalities. We know that the Treasurer when he was Minister for Works secured for his brother-in-law a nice position as supervisor of jetties at a very fair salary.

Mr. Foulkes: When was that?

Mr. HOLMAN: When the Treasurer was Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: This gentleman was a supervisor who had been working for the department on and off for at least a dozen years.

Mr. HOLMAN: At that time he was not working for the State.

The Minister for Works: He had been working for the department for at least a dozen years on and off.

Mr. HOLMAN: He was working on the goldfields on the water supply, but I do not know that that would educate him to fill a position as supervisor. On this question of water supply I am reminded that a man holding the position of a hydraulic engineer also received some other position and it looks as if men who have been engaged in laundry work or anything of that kind could secure appointments in the service. I only mention this to show that when we deal with personalities we deal with facts. I was a Minister of the Crown for ten or 12 months, and I had relatives in Western Australia perhaps as poor as anyone in the country, and I would feel disgraced if I had to admit now that I found a position for any of those relatives when there were others in the State who were far more able and more competent to do the work. After what has been stated I feel it necessary to defend myself and what I have stated on the public platform I have been able to prove, and I can say it

here too without fear. One of the questions that we should look at as a non-party question is that of mining development, and I shall always be prepared to look on that question from such a point of view, because unless we foster our mining industry we will have little chance of building it up as it should be built up. I do not mean to infer that we have no other resources in the State. I do not say that all our possibilities are bound up in mines and minerals, but we should be in a position to pay more attention to this important industry and develop it more than has been done in the past. As far as I am concerned I will always be only too willing and too pleased to give all the assistance I can in that direction, immaterial of who occupies the Treasury bench. I can look back with pride to some of the work carried out in the Mines Department on my suggestion. Only a few years ago Meekatharra was struggling along and I was instrumental in having the system of time crushing introduced, which practically saved that place and brought it to the front. The people at that time were paying from 10s. to 12s. a ton for their crushing and I was instrumental in having the time system brought into force, which allowed men to crush their stone at the rate of from 7s. to 8s. I am pleased to see in the Governor's Speech mention is made of the carrying out of the railway to Meekatharra at an early date. Members will remember that a resolution was carried in this House last session to the effect that the line should be constructed at the earliest possible moment. I only hope that the work will be pushed on, because it will mean that the possibilities of the district will be considerably benefited and the chances are that employment will be found there for 1,000 more men than there are engaged there at the present time. In connection with the administration of the Mines Department we might look to the treatment that is being meted out to the people in that part of the State—I refer to Meekatharra. Even at the present time, although strongly urged to do so, the Mines Department have absolutely refused to give a water supply to some parts of the Golden Miles which exist in

that portion of the State. We have there a line of reef far longer than any in Western Australia. We have a belt of country extending for 36 miles which is auriferous right through. Some of the best returns have been secured in that part of the State. There in many cases the miners treat their stone by the pound and receive ounces in return. We cannot look to the success of the mining industry by securing ounces from the pound of stone; we must secure pennyweights from the ton, and we should be in a position to treat ore at the lowest possible rates so as to give those holding low-grade properties a chance of treating those properties at a low rate. What has hindered mining has been the administration of the past few years. During the recent elections, that has been driven home with such force that the people have not failed to recognise it. In all the mining constituencies in Western Australia we have had a unanimous expression of opinion that the administration is ruinous to the industry, and I am prepared to show by facts that that is absolutely correct. We know this full well, that one of the Minister's (Mr. Gregory's) bad proposals—and it was adopted to some extent—was the introduction of a system of greater security of tenure, the adoption of which in its full extent would have meant ruination to the industry. It would have meant that the ordinary small man would have been prevented from securing any ground at all. Even at the present time we find that the prospector received very little encouragement. We find that exemption is being granted to properties which are locked up and amalgamation is allowed, but the ordinary small man cannot get assistance in any shape or form. I will quote one or two instances to show what has been done. For instance, we have a case on the Murchison at the present time which I might quote. Over six months ago some men applied for the forfeiture of a lease. The case was heard before Warden Troy. The Warden would not forfeit the lease, but he fined the company £50 for not fulfilling the labour conditions. That case was sent on to the Minister in Perth in April

or May last, and it was not until last October that the Minister gave a decision. That is to say, for £50, that company was allowed to hold that property locked up without doing any work on it. The Minister for Mines allowed them to hold that property for six months for the sake of this fine. Take also the Legacy leases held by prospectors, men who have worked for 14 years in the goldfields of this country, men who brought money here and who made money and spent it, men with whom I worked on the Murchison over 15 years ago. They discovered these leases, got a reward claim, worked the leases, spent every penny they had on them, and then were compelled to go away and work for wages in order to get more money with which to develop their own leases. A mining speculator came along, jumped the leases, and the case was heard before Warden Troy. He decided that a fine would meet the case and he fined the prospectors £25. The speculator got behind the warden, came down to Mr. Gregory, and by some back-door influence got to the Minister's ear, and the result was that instead of upholding the decision of the warden the Minister took those leases away from those prospectors, the Parker brothers, and gave them to the speculator, against the recommendation of the warden. These prospectors who brought money to Western Australia and made money here, who went out to open up fresh country, erected machinery on their properties—what consideration were they shown by the Minister for Mines? The speculator came along with back-door influence and the men were robbed of their years of hard work and the leases were given to the speculator. Look at the difference in the case of the Star of Aberdare. That was held by a speculator who never did a day's work. Exemption was granted and tributers were allowed on the leases. Applications for forfeiture were made from time to time. The warden on the Eastern Goldfields recommended that they should be forfeited. The case was sent on to Mr. Gregory and he refused to forfeit the leases. He would not give them to the prospector

but he gave them back to the speculator. That is what they call pure administration. I say it is absolutely rotten, and no man should give such a decision when it is against the best interests of the mining industry in Western Australia, and against the interests of men who have tried to make the State a decent place to live in. Then again, we wonder why our gold yield is declining. The reason is because thousands of acres of our best gold-bearing land are locked up under exemption at the present time. Men are willing to work these leases, but cannot get them. Yet this heaven-born administrator states he is the only man who has ever administered the Mines Department properly. Well, let us have no administrator in the Mines Department at all and we will get better results. Can you wonder at the gold yield declining? The Star of the East has been under exemption practically for the last six years. Yet they can get another term for it. Then look at the question of assistance to prospectors. I know scores of legitimate prospectors who have never asked for it, and I know other good men who have asked for assistance and have not got it. Others of the Tom Duff type—he is a good enough fellow and I wish to say nothing about him personally; but he has never done much prospecting in Western Australia. He comes along and because he has influence he can get assistance to go out prospecting. The party I refer to are these: there is Duff, one of the syndicate; there is Mr. Quinlan, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General, Mr. Gregory's brother, and Tom Duff. They came and got horses and carts and provisions to go out, while other men who have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in prospecting in Western Australia cannot get a shilling when they want it.

Mr. Bolton: What is the initial expense?

The Premier: What did they do? They put £10 in the hat to give a man a start.

Mr. HOLMAN: And the Government put a horse and cart and some other things in the hat and they shook them all up and they went out and slept under

the hat. They could not do any prospecting, including the Minister's brother, who is a tinsmith like himself.

The Premier: What are you?

Mr. HOLMAN: I have been a miner and prospector for many years past, and the Premier knows full well that in parts of the district we visited a short time ago I was one of the farthest out 15 years ago. I have followed mining since I was 13 years of age, and if I was to go out of this House to-morrow I could go back to mining and would never go to the Minister for assistance. There is another question that causes doubt in my mind as to whether the policy adopted is a wise one or not. I asked questions in the House only a day or so ago. I asked those questions in connection with the purchase of the cyanide plant at Wiluna. It is practically useless. It is of no value to anybody. Now we find that this plant is purchased by the Government and that £100 has been paid for it. I know the old plant very well, and I know it is of no value at all. Mr. Urquhart, the owner of this plant, has been allowed to carry on work for years at the expense of the prospectors out there. I will read you a letter I have received:—

“Dear Sir,—I see the Government has purchased the cyanide plant of Urquhart's. Can you ascertain the price paid and the reason for buying. It is stated that the battery manager declined to take delivery with the residues in the vats, but on wiring Perth was instructed to do so. As the plant must be worn out there has evidently been some hanky-panky work and we will have the Minister telling us of the amount expended for the benefit of Wiluna, not mentioning how much his officers or friends make out of it.”

As I say, I know this plant well, and it is a disgrace to pay £100 for it, and I know that Urquhart is not the best man in the world.

The Premier: Is he a relative of anybody's?

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not know whether he is or not. I know an application was made to have him put on the list of Jus-

tices of the Peace. Word was sent me from the Premier's office. I advised that he should be put on the list. He was not put on at the time, but shortly afterwards he was. After I specially said, that to the best of my opinion the man was not fit to be placed on the list, he was placed on through some influence or other. That was the gentleman who applied for a license a little while ago when a private and confidential letter was sent to the magistrate sitting in the Licensing Court. I am pleased to say that Warden Clifton dealt with that letter as a magistrate should. But this man who can sell cast-off machinery to the Government can get a license granted to him. Still I am pleased to say we have some magistrates on the bench who protect the people of the State and refuse to be carried away by private and confidential letters. Take a different matter, which must exercise the minds of hon. members and people of Western Australia. That is the position of our industrial world in Western Australia at the present time. We have labour difficulties and we know those difficulties have been brought about to a great extent by concessions that have been granted. Take the Nallan concession, which never should have been granted. I have been informed that one, Baxter, secured this concession. It is a marvellous thing that Baxter, after he secured this concession, did not do much work upon it.

Mr. Heitmann: He did none at all.

Mr. HOLMAN: He sold the concession for £500 or £600. That shows you what is done with these concessions.

The Premier: What is the concession?

Mr. HOLMAN: The right to construct a tramway. I have not seen the agreement, but I believe it gave them the rails and sleepers for a certain time free of interest. However, at the present time, just to show you the position we are placed in, there is serious trouble on that concession. No work has been done there for the last 12 or 15 weeks.

The Premier: That is not the fault of the contractors.

Mr. HOLMAN: I say it is the fault of the contractors. Some men are prepared to give sixpence a ton more.

The Premier: They agreed to submit the case to arbitration before Warden Troy and to abide by his decision.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not know that. I know the men are not satisfied with the decision. At the same time it shows the danger of the concession. While men are prepared to give sixpence a ton more they cannot get into the country. Then there is the trouble at Kurrawang where the lines are held by Austrians; the lines running parallel with the Government line and practically in competition with it.

The Premier: They are not parallel.

Mr. HOLMAN: They were for some 30 miles. I am speaking of a few years ago. They have gone out in another direction now. Still, the trouble may be serious and may result in all the mines on the Golden Belt being closed down. What will that mean to the people throughout Western Australia? I say it is a highly dangerous condition of affairs. I remember years ago when we pointed out the danger of bringing out these Italians and foreigners, and here the danger is, face to face with us at the present time. It would not surprise me if it were to prove one of the most disastrous industrial troubles we have ever seen in this State. The position is a serious one in all respects. These men came from a low-wage country. They came out here and it seemed something wonderful, and a positive God-send to them at first; but now they know something of the country. And let me tell those who have advocated the bringing of these men into the country, if anything occurs in Western Australia as a result of this and causes havoc, I hope the Chamber of Mines and others instrumental in bringing these men out will be the first to suffer for having ever brought them into the country. And I am satisfied that they would, too. I say now that these men are law-abiding until they reach a certain stage. They are real good men some of them, and brave men, too, many of them. But what they understand in their own country is not what we understand here. However to show the good of unions, even at the present time our unions are helping them, and standing there and doing their best to

get the men to go back to work, and it is only that the Britishers are in the minority—

The Premier: Did I not suggest the formation of a union in order to avoid the last trouble there?

Mr. HOLMAN: The Premier will recognise that where there are 670 men and only 250 Britishers and the rest foreigners, if those foreigners like to agree amongst themselves to do a certain thing, it is useless for 250 men to vote against 350 or more. I am satisfied, and I am not altogether displeased, that the trouble has taken place, for it may have the effect of teaching those who hold responsible positions in Western Australia to protect our own before they flood the place with foreigners. At Nallan we have 150 men and only 25 are Britishers. I would like to see a good go; but I would like to see those who brought them into the country getting knocked from both sides. Our unions throughout Western Australia are not going to see these men starved into submission, whether Italians or Austrians or any other nationality. We are going to stand by them, and even at the present time we are sending assistance to some of the men at Nallan and doing everything possible, and going into personal danger in an endeavour to prevent these troubles. The member for Forrest has gone up to Kurrawang to try and see if he can get them back to work and so avert further trouble, relying on the assistance we expected from the Government, and which they should give to see that these men are justly treated.

The Premier: Have not the Government given that in the past?

Mr. HOLMAN: But not in all cases. The attitude these men have adopted in seeing that their grievances are redressed is not the attitude I would advocate. I maintain that before ceasing work in any industry every possible means of settling the trouble peacefully should be tried. Look at the trouble last year in the South-West, where 2,000 men were idle for 14 weeks, and after a severe struggle went back to work. I say without fear of contradiction, and the Premier knows it as well as I do, that these men are not receiving justice, they are not receiving,

since the settlement of the trouble, the treatment they should receive. What I mean to do is, that unless the trouble is fixed up in the near future, I shall move the House to have the £20,000 concession to the timber companies taken away from them. If they are going to rob the people working for them of that to which they are justly entitled, the taxpayers should have the benefit of this concession and not the companies. The Government give the companies a concession of £20,000 a year at a time when our finances are in their present condition, when we have £70,000 deficit in one month.

The Premier: For what was the relief given? In order to allow an increase of wages.

Mr. HOLMAN: Long before the trouble took place £17,000 odd was given. Some concession was given by the present Government. I do not know whether the Premier did it deliberately, but he was incorrect, and I deny it—he said that he had Holman and Bath in the bag over this matter, because they had asked for the concession. That is absolutely incorrect and I am surprised at the Premier making the statement.

The Premier: Your solicitor did it on your behalf.

Mr. HOLMAN: That is absolutely incorrect.

The Premier: I have a letter.

Mr. HOLMAN: I know the letter and everything else. We declined to be a party to the concession. The statement was made by the Premier that the concession was about £8,000; but after the meeting the Premier apologised to Mr. Thomas for making the statement.

The Premier: I said that the rebate of £20,000 was given to the whole industry, and that it was given as the result of the recommendation of an inquiry board appointed by the Daglish Government.

Mr. HOLMAN: Yes; that was the first concession. It was a concession all the same, and it was supposed to be given for the betterment of the workers in the industry. I admit that the workers in the industry are better treated than before, but they are not receiving what they are justly entitled to under the agreement that was made. I drew attention

to the matter last session as a matter of urgency which I was not allowed to debate at any length, but unless the matter is settled satisfactorily I shall again move the House. I can produce the correspondence and the agreement whereby the men were to have certain information within 14 days of the settlement; but so far the company have absolutely refused to give us that information. We know well the position. Had the men in the South-West been of the same calibre as those men on the fields where the trouble has just taken place we would have had very serious trouble in the South-West before this. A week or two ago hundreds of men ceased work, but the officers of the union have been able to persuade them to go back to work to try to settle the trouble in a peaceable manner, and while we can get justice for the men there will be no trouble, but I shall be the first to advocate a cessation of work at the timber mills unless these men can get the justice they should have. If they do not we shall have trouble again. I can assure members that before many months are over this may come about. I do not say it with any intention of intimidating. I have gone to the Premier about it and have done my best to have the matter settled. I give the Premier credit for interceding and trying to bring about a settlement, but what I want to see is the full force of the Government used to compel the company to treat the men properly, or else take away the concession given to the industry and let the taxpayers of Western Australia receive the benefit of it. However, as I shall deal with this question more fully at another time I shall not delay members longer upon it. There are several important matters I could deal with in connection with the timber industry, but I do not intend to go more fully into them now. I should like to refer to some of the questions that will crop up in this debate. There is the matter of the increase to members' salaries. I am satisfied that members representing the goldfields districts in particular are put to a loss every year for travelling, postages and telegrams and other expenses, and I am satisfied also that the people

of Western Australia are convinced that members should have an increase in salary. Mention has been made in the House of Ministers and members travelling about, but I believe that Ministers and members should travel throughout the length and breadth of the State to see for themselves the possibilities and needs of the various districts. Money spent in that direction is well spent. However, I strongly object to men going up to the back country using State motor cars for political purposes. The Premier will remember that he had a special train to come away from a political meeting at Busselton.

The Premier: It was a goods train.

Mr. HOLMAN: A pretty good train. It seemed to run very conveniently.

The Premier: I had to wait three hours for it.

Mr. HOLMAN: In regard to the Premier's remarks concerning the elections and party funds used by the Labour party for the support of their candidates, we know that we have not behind us the timber combines or meat rings utilising their funds in support of those protecting them. The Premier said I offered to pay a man a pound a day and tucker to contest the seat at Bunbury. It is absolutely incorrect. I never made such an offer. I said in Bunbury that I would like to see a man contest the seat against the Premier. If we had had a man contesting the seat against the Premier we might have had a change on the Ministerial bench. In all probability the lesson we learned at the last general elections will give us food for reflection, and probably we will have a man contesting the election at Bunbury on the next occasion.

The Premier: That would be £25 for the Treasury.

Mr. HOLMAN: At any rate the cheques of that man would not be floating about the Palace Hotel like the cheques of some men who lost their deposits at the last election. I was offered a £15 cheque for £5, but I thought it a bad spec. However, the man who held the cheque was told to go to the Palace Hotel. At the Palace Hotel he was told that they would see

the Treasurer and see whether it could be fixed up or not. That is an absolute fact. The man who held the cheque was told by Mr. Dyke to go to the Palace Hotel, and the negotiations concerning the cheque took place at that hotel.

The Premier: You might have a cheque of your own dishonoured some day.

Mr. HOLMAN: In all probability, but I do not think if my cheque is dishonoured I would send it to the Palace Hotel.

The Premier: Some of your party have been there.

Mr. HOLMAN: I know that some of them have been there. The Premier has been very generous to them and has sent them home with a cheque for £15 for work done at the *Daily News* office or somewhere else. The position regarding the elections was put very nicely by the member for Pilbara. He said that another victory like that of the Government at the last elections would mean a change in the occupancy of the Treasury bench. The Opposition are satisfied with the result; they are satisfied that as soon as another election takes place we will be in a much better position than to-day. The Premier made a boast before the elections that we would come back with about 13 members.

The Premier: I did not; I said from thirteen to twenty.

Mr. HOLMAN: I am speaking of before the elections. That was the estimate given, thirteen or fourteen.

The Premier: You said you would get twenty-six.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, if we had got fair "doos" we might have.

The Premier: If you had not had with you 14 Labour Senators you would not have got within cooee of what you did.

Mr. HOLMAN: There must be a difference in the calibre of the men. If they won every seat they visited, the Premier lost every seat where he went.

The Premier: You said I won one.

Mr. HOLMAN: If you had lost that seat the country would have been better off, and the Premier and his colleagues also. In regard to support given by the Press and in regard to electioneering tactics, we know that everything was not of

the best during the elections. There was a man in the Sussex electorate supporting a Labour candidate. He was a good Labour supporter. He was an old identity, but a remark was made to him that he would be made a Justice of the Peace if he would turn round and support Frank Wilson. The Minister for Works turns up his nose at that, but it is an absolute fact. I can give him the name of the man who made the offer, and the name of the man who received the offer. The Premier will know them. The man has nothing to gain by making it known. It only shows what might have been done but did not come out to gain support for the Government. Take, for instance, the sending Home of Mr. Wallace Nelson. I do not think he is the best lecturer we could send, and I do not know about Press support, but there is a tendency among Ministerialists to run newspapers of their own in which they do not treat Opposition candidates fairly. I remember the Premier's paper down at Bunbury.

The Premier: It was accused of traducing Sir John Forrest.

Mr. HOLMAN: Perhaps some of their other sins will be forgiven for their doing justice to that gentleman at last. We have Ministers owning newspapers, or being shareholders in newspapers.

Mr. Foulkes: Who are they?

Mr. HOLMAN: The Premier is interested in the newspaper at Bunbury.

The Premier: Only as a shareholder.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Minister for Mines is interested in the North Coolgardie paper. Certainly they are very poor papers, otherwise they would not adopt the attitudes they do. A paper can have a policy and fight fairly against me, and I will give it every credit, but we know that the support of the Press as a whole in Western Australia was against the Labour party during the last election.

The Premier: You had the support of one of the leading morning papers.

Mr. HOLMAN: I except those papers that took up an attitude in the best interests of the country. I will say the *Morning Herald*, *Truth*, the *Geraldton Express*, and one or two other papers did very good work at the time.

The other newspapers, the bulk of the Press, were against the Labour party, and that meant a great deal. Again, to show the tactics adopted by Ministers, I have been informed that the opponents brought forward against the members for Kanowna and Mount Margaret were induced to do so by promises of substantial support and payment of expenses. Arrangements were made to oppose the member for Cue, but the proposed opponent said that he would not oppose the seat unless someone was put up to fight my seat. I had information of that from the candidate's own brother. I knew it before the contest took place, and I hope a lesson will have been taught those responsible for bringing the man against me.

Mr. Heitmann : The only fear I had was that the papers would be with me.

Mr. HOLMAN : An offer was made of £200 in order to get a man out against the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) so as to prevent him assisting the other Labour candidates. That is a fact. The meat ring and other combinations who were opposed to the Labour party did their best to prevent us from obtaining the support of the people, and a considerable sum of money was spent with this object in view. Our policy, however, is such that we need not fear. Before long the people will learn that we are best fitted to carry on the affairs of the State on their behalf. The future elections will prove that. The result of the election at Menzies, and of the elections in all the goldfields constituencies, practically provided a vote of censure on the Government. The result showed that all the mining constituencies were against the man who has held office as Minister for Mines for some years past.

The Premier : And he was the man responsible for your presence in the House.

Mr. HOLMAN : That is absolutely incorrect. Had I known the calibre of that gentleman I would not have had a word of support from him. The reason he came up to support me was not to get me into Parliament, for he had never seen me nor heard me, but I was the only man who could win the seat and he

came up in order to get his party into office. It was at that very time that the present Minister for Mines called the present Treasurer one of the greatest "boodlers" in the country, but now he sits cheek by jowl with him. The present Minister came up and spoke against the late Mr. Moorhead, one of the best men in the country, who was worth ten thousand Gregorys, and I am now sorry I opposed a man like that in order to obtain the return of a man like Mr. Gregory: I was innocent then, however. As soon as Mr. Gregory returned from the trip and the elections were over there was included in the Ministry one of the greatest turncoats in the country in the person of Mr. Rason. Can a man possibly rely on one who could act like Mr. Gregory did on that occasion. They say that he was responsible for bringing me here, but I then held the position which I do now, and that is to oppose as strongly as I possibly can men who have been referred to and who have been proved to be "boodlers" in Western Australia. I will do that on every possible occasion.

The Premier : We are all referred to as "boodlers" and are used to it.

Mr. HOLMAN : And it suits most of those so described. With regard to the Mines administration, it has been shown that the position taken up by the Government on the question of greater security of tenure was disastrous. That position should be dropped altogether whether the Minister is returned for Menzies or not. We know well what influence is being brought to bear in order to try and catch votes for Mr. Gregory at this election, and an example of that is provided in promises made to call tenders for slimes plants, etcetera in Menzies and Leonora, and there is undoubtedly the insinuation that the decision on this question might depend upon the result of the election. One need not be surprised when such things are done if Mr. Gregory is returned. Is that fair fighting? No. In a leading article in the *North Coolgardie Herald* appears the following:—

"The Mines Department is inviting alternate tenders for a slimes plant to

be erected at the Menzies and Leonora State mills. Tenderers are asked to tender, 1, for the supply and erection of vacuum slimes treatment plants and submit complete specifications, designs, and details of plant offered. 2, for the supply and erection of vacuum slimes treatment plant for the above-mentioned batteries as per plans. . . . That promise is now being redeemed, and not only at Menzies but Leonora also are slimes plants to be installed, which installation is more to the advantage of the department than the prospector now that the prospectors' failings are bought right out. . . . As a matter of fact, the *Morning Herald*, whose hostility to the Minister is well known, is now insinuating that the slimes plant is to be erected at Menzies for electioneering purposes. If a slimes plant is wanted at Leonora surely it is required more so at Menzies where so much slimes are lying idle. As matters now stand the prospectors of Menzies have to wait until after the election before their request will receive consideration at the hands of the Mines Department. We trust that it will then be favourably considered, as the matter is not only of importance to the prospectors but also to the business people of the community."

One can see the thinly veiled inference there. That is most unfair fighting. The position is this, that if it is a question of having either a Minister like Mr. Gregory or none at all, let us do without one.

Mr. Heilmann: We are going to do without him.

Mr. HOLMAN: And then with regard to the Electoral Act and the position of the postal votes in connection with the recent election for Menzies, and the hearing of the petition which followed it, I am quite satisfied that the attitude of the Attorney General in this matter was not the correct one. He should have given us an explanation on this question long before this. As I stated the other night, he misled me in the remarks he made when the Bill was before the House, and it is unfair that such a state of affairs as has arisen should have been brought about either owing to the incompetence of the

Attorney General or by the wilful misleading of members, who were thus thrust into a trap. On this question the honour of the Attorney General has been attacked, and he should have made a statement to the House long ere this. I am sorry indeed he is not here to-night to protect himself. I asked him to be in his seat, saying I would speak on this question. I have here the remarks he made when the Bill was before the House, but as they have been read I will not repeat them. He stated, however, that if a person's name appeared on the roll printed within three months of the day of the election he was presumably entitled to vote. We now find that those men who voted at the election were challenged by the scrutineer for Mr. Buzacott. Although we know that those men voted against Mr. Buzacott, although we know that all the illegal work was done on the other side, still when the case came into Court Mr. Buzacott had no chance. Although a layman, I will probably be permitted to say that Mr. Buzacott was absolutely correct, and the only ones who should have suffered were those who should have been prosecuted for illegally using a vote without having the right to do so. Section 161 of the Act sets the matter out most clearly, and Mr. Buzacott should not have been brought into Court at all. I say this, speaking from the experience of previous occasions, when the Electoral Act, with Mr. Burt in charge, was twisted inside out in order to give the other side every possible opportunity to score a win. Had Mr. Buzacott been in Mr. Gregory's place on the present occasion the decision of the Attorney General's father-in-law would have been altogether different.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not reflect on a Judge. He must withdraw that.

Mr. HOLMAN: If I may not do it I will withdraw it, but I will perhaps deal with the question by direct motion later on.

Mr. Draper: Do it outside this House.

Mr. HOLMAN: Probably if the hon. member hears me make speeches at all outside he will hear me say these things.

Mr. Foulkes: On a point of order. The hon. member has not withdrawn the remark he made.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am waiting for the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. HOLMAN: In accordance with the rules of the House I withdraw. Will that satisfy the member for Claremont? The hurried manner in which the case was rushed forward did not give Mr. Buzacott the justice he should have received. There was the petition lodged on the 6th and the rules were gazetted on the 9th. These rules were signed by Mr. Keenan, and they practically allowed Mr. Buzacott to be mulcted in costs.

The Premier: Could he not have applied for an adjournment of the hearing?

Mr. Foulkes: Of course he could have done so.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not know whether he could.

The Minister for Works: Did he apply?

Mr. Bolton: He had no opportunity that you know of.

Mr. HOLMAN: What would have been the result if he had applied and received an adjournment? He would have been mulcted in £600 or £700 costs instead of £400. We know the sharks who deal with these cases, and that the longer a case holds on the higher the costs pile up. Before the decision of the Judge was hardly dry in the Press the firm of solicitors appearing for the petitioner sent in their bill of costs to see if they could not make Mr. Buzacott bankrupt, and so prevent him from going on with the new election. It is not honest to rush in a bill of costs like that in the quickest time on record. The same thing occurred in my own case in connection with the petty police court action. On that occasion men who posed as honourable men used their positions to try and break up the trouble by locking up the men's money, and in that petty case in the police court the bill of costs amounted to £486. In the recent electioneering case men were brought down from the fields and put into the witness box to prove that a certain man voted, whereas that man was himself living within ten miles of Perth and could have given evidence. Other actions of a simi-

lar nature were taken. Can a man feel safe when such decisions are given? The same thing may be repeated in connection with the election now on, and I would not put it past those engaged in the fight. Despite the decision of the Judge I am satisfied that in a case such as that which was recently tried, the law would allow the Judge to scrutinise the ballot papers in dispute and see whether they were all right. The law says that the Judge must be satisfied that those votes altered the result of the election. I am satisfied that those votes would not have altered the result of the election; they were illegally cast and should have been scrutinised. I demand that the Attorney General makes an explanation as to why he made the statement he did when the Bill was before the House, and why he misled the House. This is not the first case of injustice having been done by the same gentleman. We have referred previously to the case of Mr. Gerald Browne, a mine manager, who shot a man and killed him and then was allowed to leave the country without standing his trial. That case provides a standing blot on the justice of the country for all time. Then there is the case of Warden Hicks. The Minister tried to damn that man for all time, and he went to the paltry *North Coolgardie Herald* and made certain statements to them which were published. Warden Hicks brought him into court for this and he received damages, but the State paid those damages and costs. The State had to pay this sum owing to the paltry pettishness of the Minister in trying to kick a man when he was down. This is the man who is now termed a Heaven-sent administrator. The fact of the calling of tenders for the slimes plant shows what the supporters of Mr. Gregory are prepared to do. Again here we have a letter from the Licensed Victuallers' Association, dated the 15th instant. It reads:—

"Dear Sirs,—I am instructed by my Committee to urge the Licensed Victuallers in the Menzies electorate to use every endeavour within their power to secure the return to Parliament of Mr. H. Gregory who is standing for election in the Ministerial interest. It is of vital import that the

trade should return to Parliament those who are committed to fairplay, seeing that an Amending Licensing Bill materially affects the welfare of all connected with the liquor interest. I might add that the trade have a better chance of securing this from the present Government than from any other source, and it consequently behoves all connected with Licensed houses to leave no stone unturned to secure Mr. Gregory's re-election. My Association asks that all Licensed Victuallers shall be alive to this fact, and I feel sure my Committee will not appeal in vain for your loyal and undivided support in the desired direction.—Yours faithfully, (Sgd.) A. W. B. Mather, Secretary."

The Premier: Is that the Mather who is the Secretary of the Temperance Alliance?

Mr. HOLMAN: Mr. Mather is the Secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' Association. When these people appeal to the Licensed Victuallers up there, it is coming to a pretty pass, but it is not only to the publicans that the appeal was made; the pawnbrokers were also asked to put in a voice. Here is another letter, written from 19 William Street, Perth. I think it is the German Club.

The Premier: You were down there the other night they say?

Mr. HOLMAN: If they say so I suppose it is quite correct, but I will read the letter which is to Mr. C. Wilhausen. It says:—

"Dear Friend,—I am taking this opportunity to appeal to you on my own and on my friends' behalf re the Menzies election. The petition which has just been heard in the Supreme Court here has brought irregularities to light on the part of Mr. Gregory's opponent which took place at that election, and consequently the election has been upset. As there will be a new election, I take this step and appeal to you in the name of all foreigners in Western Australia not only voting, but also using all your influence on Mr. Gregory's behalf. He has always been a good friend, not only to all German brethren, but to all foreigners. I can

assure you that I know of several cases where Mr. Gregory has paid out of his own pocket persons' fares who wished to go to the fields to work, and had not the money to get there. I also remind you of an incident which gave him a great name, not only in the Commonwealth, but all over the world. That was the Bonnievale disaster, where a miner was entombed. Mr. Gregory saw that a life was in great danger (the man was a foreigner) and acted with great promptitude, sending a special train with divers on board to Bonnievale to rescue this man. Yours faithfully, E. KRUG."

I think I have heard the name of Krug before. So this is the class of people who are asked to assist Mr. Gregory in his election—the publicans and the pawnbrokers.

The Premier: Another circular might have been read.

Mr. HOLMAN: A good many might have been read, but when a man is compelled to obtain assistance from foreigners we can remember that we have seen the result of foreigners coming to the State. The very existence of the State is threatened by these foreigners, and the people are asked to support a man whose cause is advocated by publicans and pawnbrokers. What is the country coming to? Support was asked for Mr. Gregory, because his interests were said to be the interests of the people who wrote the letter. Perhaps they meant Krug's 30 per cent. interest. I have shown to-night who is the prospectors' friend, and I have shown where he has absolutely robbed the prospector.

The Premier: Mr. Speaker, I submit that the hon. member is a little too strong in his remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: I asked the hon. member before to curtail his reference to Mr. Gregory. Mr. Gregory is not a member of the House, but there is a medium in all things.

Mr. HOLMAN: I have already given instances in connection with the Parker brothers' leases, which were taken from them. I will make the same charges outside the House. I say these men were robbed of their own rights, and not only

were they beaten for their leases, but instructions were given to the warden at Cue what to do, and then we hear it said that if Mr. Gregory is not returned it will be a national calamity. Why, even the bellman refused to deliver Mr. Gregory's dodgers. I intend to stand up for my reputation, even in spite of anything that may be written in the paltry *North Coolgardie Herald*, which is a rag that the ex-Minister is interested in. He has made a statement with regard to the railway men, in that paper—

Mr. Foulkes: Don't you think it would be fairer—

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not want any instructions from the hon. member for Claremont.

Mr. Foulkes: I want to point out to you the fairness of—

Mr. HOLMAN: The hon. member for Claremont should be the last in the world to talk about fairness. He himself has transgressed the rules of the House to such an extent that no other man would. He has tried to take advantage of a superior education to belittle a man. I would never do such a thing as that. I was referring to the statements which were put in this newspaper, and which are absolute lies. So as to try to make capital in that electorate, we have these statements published here in big print recording a certain time when I was Minister for Railways. The statement is as follows:—

"To fully realise the situation it is necessary to go back to 1905. At that time Mr. Holman being Minister for Railways the men were working under an industrial agreement. The men desired concessions which the Minister would not grant, and it is clearly evident that they received no assistance in any shape or form from Mr. Holman, or from Mr. Johnson who succeeded him."

The papers in my possession show that I did everything, and had I been in the position of Minister for another month, those railway men would never have been forced into the Arbitration Court. I have here one of the last letters that I dealt with in that department, where I

stated that everyone of those claims made by the men should have been granted. The deliberate statement was made and published in this paper, in which the ex-Minister is interested, that I did nothing at all. I have proof that these statements are quite incorrect. I object to men going into districts making statements which are absolutely incorrect, and which they know are incorrect with the object of securing support. If I gained my seat in this House by adopting such tactics, I should be ashamed, in fact I would prefer to remain outside, rather than do such a thing. I am proud to say that in the district that I lived in between fifteen and sixteen years, and which I have represented for seven years, I won the seat by ten to one. This shows that the people there have confidence in me. I maintain that if a man is to be traduced behind his back to try to get a certain position in this House, he is justified in taking any course of action to protect his reputation. I state without fear of contradiction that had I remained in the position of Minister for Railways another month, and had it not been for the fact that I received the telegram that has been referred to, I would have seen that the men were fixed up. As soon as Mr. Gregory became Minister for Railways these men were driven into the Arbitration Court. We have heard about sweating on railways, and it has been said there is no sweating. Charges have been made, and denials given that there is no sweating. It is denied even at Menzies to-day. Why should our railways be sweated to allow the Treasurer and four or five ladies to travel free on the railways? A Minister should be allowed to take his wife and family over our railways when he is travelling anywhere in the interests of the country, but I object to a Minister of the Crown taking five ladies "on the nod" to Albany in the Ministerial car. In all probability in defending my own reputation, and placing facts before people in a clear manner, I have spoken on some occasions with a little heat, but I assure you, Mr. Speaker, it was not done with any intention of flouting the Chair or transgressing the rules of the House. It was done because the occasion war-

ranted it. Though I am of an excitable nature, I believe in every member doing the same, and if they do wrong they must take the consequences, and that is what Mr Gregory will have to do. I hope and trust each and every member will work in the interests of the country, because the position in Western Australia is not satisfactory at the present time, and it will require the whole energies of the members of this Chamber, and also of the other place and of the people of Western Australia to prevent industrial troubles taking place. We want to bring about that tide of prosperity which everyone desires to see. I hope and trust also that the present immigration policy which is being carried out to the detriment of the country will cease, and that if there are things to be given that they will be given to our own people instead of encouraging poor unfortunates to come out here and shoot themselves.

Mr. BOLTON (North Fremantle): I have no objection to the adoption of the motion, but I object to its being carried until such time as I have had an opportunity of delivering my protest against benches of Ministers listening to an indictment such as has been delivered by the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) in a silence that is perhaps their best safety. Either the indictment is true or they cannot reply to it. It is well nigh time—

The Minister for Works: You did not talk like that at North Fremantle.

Mr. BOLTON: I talk like that, and talk like it anywhere. I should be very sorry and ashamed of myself to sit there and listen to such remarks and keep still and say nothing. That is not the way to carry on the business of the country. It is time the people knew whether we are to expect an answer to such a serious indictment as that delivered by the hon. member. We have heard something of underhand work. I know a little underhand work that perhaps the Minister for Works has been responsible for at the North Fremantle of which he speaks. There I was reported to have lauded the Premier, which I did in a personal way and ever will do: but some underground, underhand, work was

brought in to show that I had included his Ministers, which I should be long sorry to do.

The Minister for Works: Perhaps it is mutual.

Mr. BOLTON: I hope it is. There is one satisfaction on this side of the House—with our small numbers last Parliament we received very little attention from that side of the House. From the Leader of the Government we got a little but from other Ministers practically none. This session we shall be able to demand an improvement in this respect on account of our increased numbers. The hon. member claims to have had a victory at the last election and claims to have won seats where population has increased. How does he account for the success of this side at Balkatta and at North Perth; and how also for the member for Collie being blown out, although the Ministers went down to help their candidate? It does seem to me absurd to say that only on the goldfields did we achieve success. It was only at Coolgardie that we won a goldfields seat. We shall win another next Friday I hope. On the coast the Government were absolutely routed. If a gain to us of four seats on the coast was a victory for the Government, I cannot understand where it comes in. Then we can safely count on the Government candidate having been defeated at Roebourne. The Government were giving their moral support to Mr. A. J. Wilson.

Mr. Underwood: And their financial.

The Premier: You had better refer to the hon. member who has been elected, as to the action of the Government.

Mr. BOLTON: I believe the attitude of the hon. member has altered considerably since he arrived on the coast. Still he will not necessarily be as good and as blind a follower as certain others were all the last Parliament. My friend has got men of more thinking power than he had in the last Parliament, and if he counts this a gain he is welcome to his gain. We are likely to have a similar gain in like proportion at next election. That will satisfy us. I think that if each and everyone on this side of the House were to confine his remarks to

a protest against the silence, evidently arranged—

The Premier: Absolutely no arrangement at all.

Mr. BOLTON: I accept the statement of the Premier as sincere. How is it that nobody gets up and speaks?

Mr. Johnson: They cannot.

Mr. BOLTON: That is what it means. But one matter I want to refer to more especially is a question which I am convinced every member should take some interest in, and that is the scandalous action of the Government in this early closing matter. There is something of a very suspicious character about the continual chopping and changing of this regulation. I do not altogether want to go over the whole of the ground again, because presumably every public man has followed the newspapers and taken an interest in the matter and so familiarised himself with the question as it advanced. I was a little bit disgusted at the reply by the Premier to a question of mine to-day. It was the same old quibble. The answer was that notice had been given to-day to introduce a Bill. When will that be?

The Premier: On Tuesday.

Mr. BOLTON: He cannot do it until this Address-in-Reply is adopted, and I suppose he has good reason to expect that the proclamation proclaiming the day for the first of December will then have passed. Why is the proclamation necessary? Why should the alteration be brought about before Parliament is allowed to discuss the question? It was not so when the first petition was presented to the Colonial Secretary. No haste was made then to bring any alteration into force. They were given as much time as they liked, to prepare the other side. After the innovation of Saturday closing had been brought about there was naturally a cry from some that it did not suit the place. It very soon died down and after the new system had been in force for some few months evidently a scheme was formulated for obtaining a petition to spring upon the Colonial Secretary asking for a reversion to the Saturday night. In the meantime most of the business houses and firms and manufacturers had arranged an altera-

tion of pay days. All this means so much more work to get back to the old regime. And then, in the face of that, the petition presented to the Colonial Secretary was no good at all. I do not know whether the Colonial Secretary sought the opinion of the Crown Law Department, but I know he gave information to the deputation that if they were to prepare a petition in a certain manner they would tie the Government up so that they had no option. Was that a right thing to do? There were no complaints from the public. The only complaints were from one or two or three or four big shops in the City.

The Premier: Absolutely incorrect. I have had the small storekeepers waiting on me night after night with their books—although that did not affect me. As a matter of fact I was in favour of the Saturday half-holiday; but there is no option. It has already been explained that we had no option but to take the action that we did, backed up by the opinion of the Crown Solicitor.

Mr. BOLTON: The Colonial Secretary said the Government had no option but to accept the opinion of the Crown Law or get rid of the Attorney General. I wish to goodness they had got rid of the Attorney General. Legal opinion is divided to-day on the matter.

Mr. Hopkins: Have there been any rulings?

Mr. BOLTON: Yes. Stone and Bur and others have already given opinions and opinions are divided on this very same question. Does it follow that the Attorney General is the only legal genius in the State?

Mr. Hopkins: But why not get a ruling?

Mr. BOLTON: We are prepared to get a ruling, provided they do not make the alteration first. They set the proclamation for the 1st December, when they knew Parliament could not deal with it before that day. And again, the area affected extends from Midland Junction to—

The Premier: About 15 districts, and the original petition had absolute majorities from each of those districts.

Mr. BOLTON: Did the one framed for opening on Saturday night have the same?

The Premier : Yes, from Perth.

Mr. BOLTON: The same care was not exercised and not thought necessary in that very same petition as in the first one. They delayed it as long as they possibly could. Why was it necessary to make that proclamation issue on the 1st December? Because the date had already been fixed for the opening of Parliament. The probable time taken by the Address-in-Reply was well calculated by these same people, and it followed that the discussion could not take place in this House on the amendment proposed by the Premier. Why make all this trouble on the 1st December, just at the Christmas holidays? It forces the outlying centres, including Fremantle and Midland Junction to make the same petition to the Premier asking for the optional day. It is a most unfair proceeding, seeing that the first petition was, on the advice of the Colonial Secretary, taken all round the district for a majority before it was presented to him. The same position did not apply when the petition was sent to the Colonial Secretary asking for the optional day. The people now find the Government have made a mess of the proclamation. There is divided opinion as to what it means. To some the proclamation means that they must have the long night on Saturday or Wednesday, and that there is no option about it. If that be the case it is another innovation. When the Saturday closing came into force the shopkeepers naturally took the long night on Friday, but the position now is that those who desire to close on Saturday cannot have the long night on Friday but are bound to have it on Wednesday. Does not that look as if the Government have taken this step with the avowed purpose of forcing those people, who do not believe in Saturday opening, into the position that they must open their shops on Saturday, when it is only made optional for Wednesday or Saturday? It is possible to defer the proclamation, or to have the date of its coming into force altered until the House

has dealt with the matter. It will not take very long to do so, and if the matter is discussed it will not be a waste of time for members of Parliament, representing the public, to have an opportunity of discussing the question and, if necessary, providing for a statutory holiday. Why should we not make it mandatory that all shops close at the one time? If we have the discussion and members think it preferable that the holiday should be on the Wednesday, no member on the Opposition side, nor those members on the Government side already pledged to the Saturday holiday, will be dissatisfied. But let us have the matter discussed first. When it was first mooted it was merely a question affecting a few shop assistants, but to-day it is a burning question. Meetings have been held in the various districts affected, and they have condemned the Government for issuing the proclamation. Of course it is all very well for the Colonial Secretary to say that the promise has been made, and that the proclamation must come into force, and that he cannot go back on his word. Of course it would be rather awkward for him, but perhaps Cabinet can decide that it shall be withdrawn. Meetings have been held everywhere. Fremantle has had its meeting. The people at the meeting were an admixture of traders and shop assistants, and they were unanimously of opinion that the Saturday holiday should continue. But should Fremantle continue the Saturday holiday what will happen? If the shops are open in Perth does it not follow that the suburban people must flock to Perth to shop? Midland Junction or Fremantle cannot afford that. By all means let us put all the districts on the same footing. The Government should not consider that they have only a few shopkeepers in Perth to placate. I want explanation on this point, and so do the public at large. I was going to make a few remarks about the alteration taking place after the election. The shop assistants being the only persons affected at the early stage of what is now a burning public question, were given their Saturday afternoon and were lulled into unsuspecting and chose Gov-

ernment candidates at the elections; but now the elections are over and the Government have taken away their holiday, the remarks that are being passed on Government candidates are not at all flattering. The shop assistants consider that the Government waited until after the elections to make the change, and then decided as usual to support the big man against the small man. The Premier considered that a great deal of the success of the Opposition was due to their criticism on the meat ring, and on the proposed loan or gift of £35,000 to certain squatters in the North. I confess I made it one of the chief topics of my attacks on the Government, and I shall be glad of the opportunity of repeating what I said. The criticism on this point did good work in the country.

The Minister for Works : Do you call it a gift or a loan?

Mr. BOLTON : A loan or a gift. It was supposed to be a loan for three years; and if they could pay it back, very good, but if not we could take the works costing £70,000. It was not because of any unfair criticism on this question that the people who were offered the concession failed to take it up; it was not that the public were too safely guarded under the agreement; it was that public opinion throughout the State was entirely opposed to the loan; and I defy the Premier or the Minister for Works to give any specific instance where it was made a foremost plank in any of the contests where Government candidates sought election on the question. Government supporters innumerable—many of them were defeated I confess—were absolutely opposed to the loan or gift to the squatters in the North. One case has been quoted, an instance I intended to quote myself. On the same night that the Premier spoke on behalf of the Government candidate for Balkatta, in reply to the criticism that emanated from myself, followed afterwards by Mr. LeMesurier, he spoke for an hour about the unfair treatment he had received in connection with the loan or gift; and then he was followed by the Ministerial candidate for the seat who opened his address by saying that he was entirely opposed to the loan or

gift to the squatters. The Premier must have felt small indeed. The Premier explained last night that he would accept any suggestions for any alteration in the agreement drawn up in connection with the loan. I suggest that he should alter the provision by which he gave nearly the whole of the foreshore at Wyndham to this company.

The Minister for Works : You do not know anything about it.

Mr. BOLTON : Probably I do not, but I have tried to learn what I could from different sources. I am not tied and married to some of my officers, like some Ministers who accept any statements their officers make as gospel truth. Perhaps the Minister will deny that within 50 or 60 yards of high water mark at Wyndham there is a mountain or cliff, and that only along this narrow stretch between the cliff and the shore can the township extend, but that will be blocked because it is proposed to give this foreshore to these meat kings. I happen to be in very close touch with the gentleman who took the first herds there, and if the member for York were in his place he would bear me out if I mentioned the name. There is another point that was overlooked. Surely there could be a better arrangement than the appeal board, as I may call it, that is to be appointed under the agreement, with one member from the freezing works company, one member from the meat ring, which is the same thing, and the Treasurer. I can imagine the Treasurer in the hands of the other two on the appeal board. I can just imagine how he would fare when the majority decided against him under their own agreement. That is another thing that could be altered. I am satisfied that it was well for the State that the money was not taken up by these particular people to whom it was offered. If there is money in this freezing and canning of beef for export, those interested and having herds in the area will put their money into it and make a splendid return. On the other hand, if that is not to come about, let the Government erect and run their own freezers and canning works for export, and the coastal areas and the southern portion

of the State will be properly treated, instead of having to take what is now known, after the inquiry and prosecutions, as "chased beef." Reference has been made to the Royal Commission of one appointed to inquire into the shipping combine, another ring that we have in this State. Not much was said, not much can be said. First of all this gentleman was sent to make inquiries, but they then discovered that he could not make the inquiries as an inquiry agent, so he was appointed a Royal Commission in order that he could get the information the Government wanted. But the Government chose the wrong man. Merely giving him the title of Royal Commissioner did not put enough backbone into him to fight the shipping ring. Where is the report of that gentleman? It is due to the House and to the public generally to have his report made known so that we may know what decision was arrived at. There was a paper lost which found its way into the Press and created a furore. It was supposed to have emanated from the shipping ring themselves for this gentleman to present. As a matter of fact we know that it was not Mr. Sinclair's report, though very largely his report would have been drawn up from facts deducted from the shipping ring. There were extracts on which Mr. Sinclair would have had to make his report. The people want to know whether Mr. Sinclair's report has been fair to the State. We have no opportunity of saying "yes" or "no," because the report has not seen daylight, but I hope that it soon will, so that some discussion can take place on it. The taxpayers have to pay for the report, and if a Royal Commission was needed why were not men appointed who were able to get the information, and not one man who has been connected with the shipping people ever since he has been in the State? I do not know whether this conspiracy of silence on the Government side is to continue or not.

Mr. Hopkins: There are not many sitting on your side of the House.

Mr. BOLTON: I am content to do without the applause of members on this side. I am satisfied they are doing better

work than being here applauding me. Perhaps their applause will be united when they return with an addition to our ranks. However, I hope the conspiracy of silence is not to continue, because there are many people in the Fremantle district who have heard the rumour that there is some trouble at the bottom of the tanks in the treatment works at Fremantle. This rumour is gaining ground, and the people there are anxious for some explanation from the Minister for Works. There is a member in this House in possession of facts of considerable importance. He is not here now to tell them; but perhaps, if the conspiracy of silence is broken next week, we may have that hon. gentleman explaining some things to the Minister that should cause him to give some explanation in reply. Of course it is questionable whether the Premier will allow the Minister to make any reply. We know that if the Premier just winks to his followers not to say anything they keep quiet.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not make any reflection like that.

Mr. BOLTON: I did not know it was a reflection. Nobody has spoken from that side except the Premier. Are we to bob up one after another on this side of the House? If so, of course we can do it. Recently a bridge has been half-built across the Swan on the main road from the port to the City. There has been temporary bridge after temporary bridge there. The old bridge, known to most members, got into too bad a state to be used, so that a temporary bridge was constructed to last for a certain time. It has lasted six times as long as that. It was intended to be a temporary bridge for two years, but it has lasted as such for twelve years. And then a proposal was made to connect the North side of the river with the Fremantles by tram, and the cutting down of the bridge. A certain sum of money was given by the Government to the North Fremantle Council with which they were to do the work of cutting down the bridge, the council to provide any further sum needed. On the completion of the work the suggestion was

made to widen the structure and to make a vehicular bridge, for the lower one was unsafe for traffic. I am going to confess at once that I was not present at that picnic in a cab when arrangements were made, so I can assume a good deal; but it appears that after some correspondence a sum of £2,500 together with the old bridge were handed over. I do not know to whom and no one did know, and that the work was to be gone on with of widening the bridge. It is contended by some that an undertaking was entered into to complete the work for £2,500, but I am given to understand that this is absolutely incorrect, and in saying this I am empowered to voice the views of others.

The Minister for Works : You are empowered to do that ?

Mr. BOLTON : The mayor of North Fremantle empowered me to state that the rumour was absolutely incorrect.

Mr. Davies : I was there when the agreement was made, and they guaranteed to do the work.

Mr. BOLTON : Do you say they guaranteed to do the work ?

Mr. Davies : Yes.

Mr. BOLTON : They knew very well that it would be impossible to do the work for £2,500, but it was understood that they should do what they could with the money given them, and then should look to the Government for an additional sum to complete it. The member for South Fremantle himself has explained to me that it was well known the work could not be done for the money. Both the Government and those who had to do the work were fully aware that it would be impossible to build it for £2,500, but it was thought better to make the best use they could of the amount and look to the future to provide the balance. A board was appointed to manage the expenditure of this money. Previously to this the council had entered into a tramway scheme on their own account, and the cutting down of the bridge under Government supervision was taken in hand. Instead, however, of the North Fremantle council doing the work, under the supervision of the Government, a board

was appointed, and rather a big one. What result was achieved either for Fremantle or East Fremantle ? When the board was created the North Fremantle council carried a resolution saying that as the board was to have control of the funds they would have nothing to do with it. The East Fremantle council carried a similar resolution, yet we find that the board was composed of the mayors of East Fremantle, North Fremantle, and Fremantle, and one councillor from each municipality. Nothing has been done on the bridge for the past two or three months, and it is now in a half-finished state. The bridge for the vehicular traffic is positively dangerous, and the Minister will hear me out in this if he obtains reports from his responsible officers.

The Minister for Works : It is not dangerous.

Mr. BOLTON : It is not safe. It is in a half-finished state, and already the sum of £2,500 has been spent on it, and the Government should have completed the work without all this delay. Supposing the board had entered into an undertaking to complete the job they would have been unable to do so, for, as the Minister well knows, they would have no power to borrow money with which to do the work. Again, the municipalities cannot use their money for the purpose of completing the work, so that the only alternative is for the Government to come to the rescue with the money and see that the work is completed properly; why they have not already done so is a mystery.

Mr. Gordon : The Government have generally to pay for everything.

Mr. BOLTON : The hon. member's district is connected with the City by a much better bridge than ever was across the Fremantle end of the river. The only thoroughfare between Fremantle and Perth is the bridge to which I have just referred, and yet the Government will not take action to complete a decent one there or even to pay for a secondhand one. It is a case of penny wise and pound foolish to allow that work to stop as it is at present, for there is timber lying idle, the work is held up, and no advantage can be gained from the bridge for the sake of the expenditure of another

£2,500 or £3,000, or whatever is required to complete the work. Surely this work should be done. North Fremantle suffers considerably, because through that town comes the principal traffic from the port to the City. All the through heavy traffic goes over the roads in that municipality, and yet the North Fremantle council have to maintain the road, notwithstanding the fact that along the boundaries for more than half the distance are the University endowment grounds and the railway reserve. No rates are collected from either of these properties, and, unfortunately, the municipality is not paying their way. A few weeks ago a considerable sum of money had to be spent in order to regrade the road so as to assist in sewerage development, and it is not right that they should be hampered with the trouble over a bridge which is in a half finished state and at present hung up, all for the expenditure of a paltry £3,000. In the long run the money for this work must come from the Treasury. In the Speech the only reference to the dock is in connection with harbour improvements. Why was not a fixed sum put down for the work of the dock?

The Minister for Works: You have the Loan Bill.

Mr. BOLTON: And there is a whisper from a little bird that the sum of £50,000 is to appear thereon for the dock. I hope if such is the case arrangements will be made to strike it off the list altogether, for it is nothing more than tiddly-winking with the matter to place a sum of that sort on the Loan Estimates; it would be of no use whatever. It is not showing any sincerity with regard to the carrying out of the work.

The Treasurer: Who is the little bird that provided this information?

Mr. BOLTON: He will squeak later on. It would be wise for the Minister also to give an explanation as to whether the Claremont lighting work is the success it was thought to be. There are also rumours with regard to this work.

The Treasurer: Oh! rumours.

Mr. BOLTON: This is the place to bring up rumours, so that they can be disproved, if untrue.

Mr. Gordon: Bring facts.

Mr. BOLTON: I am of opinion that this rumour will be proved to be correct. There has been a good deal of discussion in the House and outside of it in regard to this question, and not much satisfaction has been forthcoming with regard to it. It would be well for the Minister, without waiting for a question, to make a statement to the effect that everything is satisfactory in connection with the lighting scheme. If he does this it can be referred to at a later date. I think he will find it very difficult to make such a statement.

The Minister for Works: The work is perfectly satisfactory, and has exceeded expectations.

Mr. BOLTON: Then the expectations must have been very modest ones. Certainly it has not come up to the expectations of most people.

The Minister for Works: You can find what the expectations were by referring to *Hansard*.

Mr. BOLTON: During the recent electioneering campaign it was said by the Minister for Mines that the Labour party had made absurd statements as to sweating on the railways. Mr. Gregory in referring to this said that he had made careful inquiries.

Mr. Gordon: He is not hear to answer what you say.

Mr. BOLTON: And twenty men on this side of the House intend to make it lively for him if he does come back. I do not think, however, he will ever appear in this Chamber again. The Minister on the occasion to which I have referred said he found that one old man had been working for 6s. 6d. a day. This statement of his has been published. The question has been before the House, and it has been frequently said, both in the House and in the country on the hustings, that members consider 1s. an hour is the lowest wage that should be paid to any man in the service. Would it surprise the Treasurer to know that, according to the railway return presented to the House this week, 328 men receive less than 8s. a day. Not one of these men is a junior, not one a waiter or a conductor, who are paid lesser wages for a particular pur-

pose, and yet 328 are receiving 6s. 6d., 7s., and 7s. 6d. a day. In that number I do not include 184 engine cleaners who are paid less than 8s. a day, but who, I hope, will soon receive that sum. Notwithstanding these facts, when the House is closed, Ministers are allowed to tour the country in their motor cars, and say that all the statements made in Parliament by members of the Labour party to the effect that sweating is going on in the railways is bunkum, and that after careful inquiry it is found that only one old man is in receipt of a wage less than 8s. a day. A similar return was attached to the report of the Commissioner of Railways last year, and when the return was held up to the Ministers in support of the contention that sweating was going on, they were silent. The same return is provided this year, and gives the figures I have just quoted. Perhaps now Ministers will readily admit that 328 men are working in the railways for less than 8s. a day. Possibly they will not mind admitting it now, for there is not an election in sight so far as they know. While the revenue is falling off and there is great retrenchment taking place, a growing tendency is exhibited to dismiss or retrench men from certain positions and to re-employ them. This has led to a deal of dissatisfaction. This accounts for the very large increase according to the official return of what is known as "casuals" who are taking the place of the permanent hands. In these cases where men have been retrenched they are at times re-employed at a lesser wage. By this means the service of the hands is broken, and they lose the privileges they would be entitled to receive owing to their previous years of service. This is a most despicable practice for any Commissioner to adopt, and it is more despicable even for the Minister to agree to such a proposal. Well, Mr. Gregory has been the Minister for Railways, and that is the cause of the trouble. No fewer than 300 men have been retrenched from the workshops, and there have been employed 245 casual hands. The position is that the same men go back to the work. I know of cases of men living in North Fremantle who in-

stead of being transferred from one branch to another were given notice of dismissal. I remember a specific instance of six men receiving notice. They went to see the Commissioner, or one of his officers, and tried hard to get employment again. One of these men had been only 14 years in the service, while the man who had seen the least service had been in the department for nine years. They were, however, turned out on the world, as they were no longer required. Later on they were told they would be re-employed. They asked that if re-employed their time in the service should count, so that they should not have broken service, and they were verbally told that their time would not be considered as broken, but would be looked upon as constant service. They went away and were then drafted one by one on the permanent way in different centres. It was not long, however, before most of them were again walking about the City out of work. They went to the new work for a week or two, and were then told by the ganger in charge—some small tinpot individual—that their services were no longer required. Under the rules those gangers have no power to dismiss or to take on hands, and it shows the unfair treatment which was meted out to these men, that instead of being transferred from one department to another, they were dismissed for only two or three days so that they should lose the privileges which they had gained by their long and faithful terms of service. After a while they were again given the "sack" by a ganger. It is most unfair treatment, but it goes to show how it is there are so many more casual employees to-day than there were last year, and fewer on the permanent staff. I should think that the Tender Board and other departments had had enough of casual hands. Even in the workshops it is far better to have experienced men, men who are permanent hands, than to make continual changes, and to have the casual hands learning what the other fellow knew. Some of these casual hands have had nine or ten years' service, sometimes in different departments, and it is not right for the de-

partment to take advantage of these men and deprive them of privileges which are accorded to the permanent hands. I hope that one of the Ministers will direct the notice of the Attorney General to the statement made by the member for Pilbara, who stated that the gentleman who has occupied the position of mayor of Midland Junction, voted at the Pilbara election. It will be a peculiar thing if, when a reply is given to questions that were asked by a member of this side of the House, as to prosecutions that will take place in the cases of those who illegally voted in the last Menzies election, the name of the gentleman who occupies the position of mayor of Midland Junction is not included. If what was said about the mayor of Midland Junction is true, he should be prosecuted with the rest, because the Judge's ruling as to habitation will apply in his case, as his place of residence was Midland Junction. If the Government are not going to answer these charges, they can have half a dozen Royal Commissions to inquire into them. The statement which came from the member for Pilbara is one that the Government dare not let slip by without notice. The Chief Electoral Officer will know through the Press of the statements that have been made, and he will know what course to follow. While on the subject of the Chief Electoral Officer I can compliment him on the work he has done since he has taken over the control of the Electoral Department. He brought the rolls into a state of as near perfection as possible. They were a credit to him, and to those who were employed under him, and he must be proud to know that there were electorates wherein votes were recorded to the extent of 80 per cent. of the voters of the roll. Not quite so much was said this time in the form of a whine and cry about Federation. I just want to point to two things, which it would be well for the Ministers, anti-labourites as they are and always will be, to remember, that the Federal Labour party has done more for Western Australia than any other party. Sir John Forrest's party, the State "Frights" party or any

other party that has been in existence. In the new Federal Ministry which was formed only a day or two ago, two portfolios have been allotted to representatives of Western Australia. No other party in the Federal Parliament were able to do this. I take it now that it will not be necessary to submit to this House the resolutions which were carried at the Conference of Premiers. If they are presented, I think they will not be welcomed with that smile even by Ministers, that would have been the case if the new Federal Ministry had been differently formed. As Western Australia has two Ministers in the new Cabinet, it shows that the Labour party have done well by Western Australia. At the Federal Labour Congress held recently, the financial proposals were gone into thoroughly, and it was conclusively proved even to the Ministers, that there were amongst the members of that congress sufficient brains to tackle the financial problems. A suggestion was adopted by congress, but it got no further. It was the best suggestion financially that Western Australia has ever had, and I would point out, now that the Labour Government is formed in the Federal House, that when the financial problem is being discussed in Parliament as it was in that Congress, and adopted by Congress, the Labour Government being now in power, it is more than probable that such financial proposals will emanate from those people as will suit this State. I do not believe in Unification, although I admit we are being driven to it by the present Government's conservative methods. I still have this to remember, that after all the Premiers' Conferences and all the pleasure trips, nothing has yet been suggested that can equal the suggestion of the Labour Congress to keep the finances of Western Australia in their proper State.

The Treasurer: You have not studied the position.

Mr. BOLTON: I can understand this that all the Premiers who attended this conference are all anti-labour; and because they are anti-labour it necessarily follows that they would hardly accept

the proposals of a Government that was admittedly kept in power by the Labour party. In view of that fact, they may speculate as to what this Labour Government may propose for Western Australia. I am prepared now to leave in their hands the destiny of the finances believing that a fair deal will be given to Western Australia; and if it comes to Unification or Federal rule I consider we shall be better governed by that same party than by the present State Government.

On motion by *Mr. Ware* debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 17th November, 1908.

	PAGE
Papers presented	104
Coronation Picture, a Gift	104
Question: Transcontinental Railway, Prospecting along Route	105
Committees for the Session	105
Address-in-Reply, second day	105

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, "Electoral Act, 1907."—Rules of the Court of Disputed Returns. 2, Report of the Chief Harbour Master for year ended 30th June, 1908. 3, "Roads Act, 1902."—By-laws of the following Road Boards: (a) Toodyay; (b) Melville; (c) Ashburton; (d) Upper Gascoyne. 4, Goldfields Water Supply.—Balance Sheet for year ended 30th June, 1908. 5, Government Savings Bank.—Report for 1908. 6, "Audit Act, 1904."—(a) Orders in Council under Section 35: (b)

Amendments to Regulations. 7, Lands Department.—Report for 1907-8. 8, Government Savings Bank.—Annual Balance Sheet, etc., for 1908. 9, Report of the Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools for 1907. 10, Land Titles Department.—Report for 1907-8.

CORONATION PICTURE, A GIFT.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs): On the opening day of the session Sir Edward Stone, the Lieutenant Governor, expressed a desire to present an historical engraving to the Council, and I ventured to promise on your behalf a thankful acceptance of such a generous gift. Your pleasure will be increased when you hear from Sir Edward's letter the interesting and kindly feelings which prompted his graceful act.

Perth, 16th November, 1908.

My dear Mr. President,—I have much pleasure in presenting to the Legislative Council a subscription print etching of the Coronation of H.M. King Edward VII., after the State picture painted by Edwin A. Abbey, R.A. It is particularly gratifying to me to be able to do this, in view of my association with the old Council as Clerk, and afterwards as a nominee member. Believe me, sincerely yours, (signed) E. A. STONE.

The Hon. H. Briggs, President Legislative Council.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): I may be permitted on behalf of this House to express our thanks to the Lieutenant Governor for the handsome gift of the historical picture, and I have much pleasure in moving that the President be requested to write to the Lieutenant Governor expressing the thanks of this House for the gift of the picture representing the Coronation of His Majesty, King Edward VII.

Hon. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion. It comes with peculiar pleasure for me to be able to do this, in view of my old associations with His Excel-