

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st September, 1920.

BILL—HIGH SCHOOL ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Report of Committee adopted.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1920-21.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.40]: Before the discussion on the Estimates is resumed, I desire, with the leave of the House, to make a brief statement. Since the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure were presented to the House an award of the Arbitration Court has been delivered by which the expenditure for the year will be increased very considerably; certainly the additional expenditure will not be less than £350,000. Whatever the increase may be—its amount has not yet been definitely ascertained—it will be covered by increased railway fares and freights and increased taxation. I thought it better to give the House this information before the resumption of the discussion on the Estimates.

Mr. Troy: You will settle the country districts if you increase railway rates.

The PREMIER: We must increase something.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1920-21.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 14th September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £915:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.42]: In view of the Premier's statement regarding increased wages awarded by the Arbitration Court, I feel hon. members realise that additional revenue will have to be procured. I consider, however, that it is our duty to discuss the Estimates as they have been placed before us. The increased wages represent new expenditure of which the Premier was not aware when presenting the Estimates to the Committee, and for which therefore he could not make provision. Still, we can only deal with the Estimates for the year in accordance with the figures which have been submitted to us. In connection with these Estimates we are in the unfortunate position of not having been furnished by one solitary department with a report of the work done during the year 1919-20. There is not a single report available as a guide to members in forming their opinions regarding the expenditure of public money. I think this is the first time such a position has obtained. It has always been considered that the departmental reports should be in the hands of members by September. This

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

QUESTION—PAPER, REPULPING.

Mr. ANGELO (for Mr. Duff) asked the Minister for Mines: In view of the world-wide shortage of paper of all kinds, does it not behove the Government of this State to provide a simple plant for the purpose of repulping all waste paper from public offices, banks, insurance, municipal, military, and all other sources, so as to provide a local supply of even only the cheaper forms of paper or cardboard so much needed at present, instead of wastefully destroying same in the incinerator at East Perth?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: This matter has already received attention, and a recently formed company has for some time been receiving waste paper from the Railway Department, and is expected shortly to absorb most of the other available supplies.

QUESTION—RAILWAY STATION, YORK.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Griffiths) asked the Minister for Railways: Has any provision been made on the Estimates to carry out the promised improvements to the York railway station?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Improvements to the approaches at York Railway Station have been completed, and no further work is considered necessary there at present, nor had any promise been made in connection therewith.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Land Tax and Income Tax.
- 2, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

BILL—CARRIERS.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

year, however, possibly because the printing machines are on strike—the printers are not—we are left without any information whatever regarding the work of the various departments. It is not my intention this afternoon to deal elaborately with the expenditure for the past year. That subject was dealt with fully on the Address-in-reply, and nothing is to be gained by extending the debate in that direction during the discussion of these Estimates. We have principally to look to the future. At the same time it is necessary that we should direct our attention to one or two matters affecting the finances of the past year. The Premier dealt at some length with the prosperity of the State. With the optimism characteristic of him, he could not leave the millions out of his calculations.

The Premier: They are there, so you cannot complain.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But they would have been there whether the present Premier or any other were in office.

The Premier: Not quite so many.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The millions referred to by the Premier are millions received from the products of the labours of the community, and have not been brought about by strict economy or any special assistance rendered by the Government. But unfortunately the Premier based his statement principally on the imports and exports, pointing out that the imports of 1919-20 exceeded by so many millions those of 1918-19, while the exports had increased considerably more than the imports. Consequently, he argued, the State must be prosperous. Let us examine the position. In 1918-19 the whole of our warehouses were stocked with the products of the country. Wheat sheds and wool stores were full, awaiting the arrival of ships. Timber stacks were piled up wherever there was a sawmill. The whole of our products for the preceding year or two were in store awaiting shipment. During last year the bulk of those products were sent away. Our wheat sheds and wool stores are now empty, and our timber stacks have been considerably reduced. In consequence, the value of our exports has increased considerably, not on account of increased prosperity, but solely because of shipping having at last become available to take away our accumulated products. Apart from the increased value of our imports and exports attributable to the release of the accumulation awaiting shipment, nearly the whole of the increased value of exports and imports has been due to increased cost of commodities. There is scarcely an article imported or exported the value of which has not considerably increased during the last 12 months. Therefore, there are but few people in Western Australia who have reaped any benefit from the alleged prosperity relied upon by the Premier. It is true that a small minority has prospered by the opportunity for making increased profits. The farmer has made in-

creased profits through the increased price of wheat, and in the same way the mill owner has benefited through the increased price of timber. So, too, has the pastoralist gained by the increased price of wool. But where does the great majority of the people come in? After due inquiry the Arbitration Court has been impelled to increase wages. Why? Because there has been a large increase in the cost of commodities, and the great majority of the people, instead of reaping advantage by the increased value of our exports and imports, are really worse off to-day than ever before. That being so, the Premier is not justified in trying to lead the country to believe that there is general prosperity and that it is due principally to exports and imports.

The Premier: I have explained that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier, in his Budget speech, explained that he had received in revenue £560,733 more than he had estimated to receive. One would have thought that the Government, on receiving so much additional revenue, would have endeavoured to make both ends approximate, if not actually, meet. But we find that the expenditure exceeded the estimate by £540,608, very nearly the total amount of increased revenue. It might appear on the face of it that the Premier received approximately £20,000 excess of revenue over expenditure. But we have to bear in mind that the cost of collecting the increased revenue was very small indeed, for the reason that, during 1919-20, the revenue received from taxation, including that received from the Commonwealth, exceeded the estimate by £160,048, out of a total increased revenue of £560,733. The cost of collecting this increased revenue from taxation was infinitesimal. The staff remained the same, and there was indeed no additional expense to the country. If we deduct from the total increased revenue this amount of £160,048, which cost next to nothing to collect, we find that the Premier expended £540,608 to obtain an additional revenue of £400,685. And we are asked to regard this as good business! It reminds us of the business acumen and ability of which the electors heard so much during the Labour Administration, when the country was told that all that was required was to displace the Labour party from the Treasury benches and supplant that party by men possessed of business acumen and ability—in which the Labour party were so lacking—when our deficit would be removed, our finances become buoyant, and the State prosperous from end to end. We have evidence here that, by business acumen and ability, the Government have expended £540,608 to earn an additional revenue of £400,685! If we go on in this way our deficit is likely to become considerably greater than it is to-day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: In building up any big business you have to suffer a loss at the start.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: During the debate on the Address-in-reply several members complained that the increase in railway rates, fixed during the recess, was considerably above the amount required to pay the increased wages which the Government said were responsible for the increase in the rates. Hon. members pointed out that the Government were making considerably increased revenue from the increased rates.

The Premier: Oh no, nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister for Mines was put up to make hon. members believe that such was not the case. We told him by interjections that the Government's own organ, the "West Australian," had published the figures prior to the debate, that the figures used by hon. members were the figures given by the departmental officials to the "West Australian," and that those figures ought to be correct, since they were given in detail. The Premier, in delivering his Budget speech, said—

My colleague, the Minister for Mines, has already given a detailed explanation of the position of the finances of the business concerns generally, with special reference to the Railway Department's figures. It is not my intention to-night to enlarge on those figures.

It is true that the Minister for Mines, in this Chamber, speaking for about 20 minutes, tried to show that hon. members were wrong in their criticism. He became rather excited over an interjection by the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) who suggested that the Government were incurring a very large expenditure to earn a considerably smaller sum. The Minister declared that such was not the case, that the wages had increased by a far larger sum than that stated in the "West Australian." But, unfortunately for the Minister, a question was asked in the Council, in answer to which another Minister used figures different from those used here and different also from those published in the Press. Therefore it is difficult to discover exactly where we are in regard to the railway figures. The Minister for Mines, in his detailed explanation, used these words—

Having regard to the fact that the increased price of coal represented £32,000, and that £182,000 was absorbed in increased wages and salaries, over which we had no control, while the increased cost of material represented another £181,000—

The total of these figures amounts to £395,000. This is the reason, given by the Minister for Mines in his detailed explanation, for the increase in railway fares imposed last year. He said that we received only somewhere about £240,000 for an expenditure of £395,000. Hon. members, I think, went away fairly well convinced that the statement published in the "West Australian" was incorrect. They thought the Minister for Mines had made out a good case, and that it was necessary to increase the railway charges be-

cause of the very largely increased expenditure. But since that date we have had later information. We have had the Budget speech. The Premier, in dealing with business undertakings, used these words—

Turning from revenue to expenditure it will be seen that we estimated £2,293,873, whereas the actual expenditure was £2,586,383, an increase of £292,510. This was due principally to railways £263,302, brought about by increased wages and cost of stores.

Which is correct, the statement of the Minister for Railways that the amount was £395,000 or the statement of the Premier in his Budget speech delivered last week that the amount was £263,302? How can we form an opinion as to which is correct? The Premier's figures are later than those of the Minister for Railways, and I think members can rest assured that the Premier merely quoted the figures supplied to him by the departmental officials and that his figures must be correct. An excuse might be made that the Minister for Railways did not intend to include Collie coal, but only wages and stores. Even if allowance is made for Collie coal, the figures of the Minister for Railways are still £100,000 above those of the Premier. This shows that the department supplies figures in order to suit the particular needs of the occasion. The Minister was wrong in quoting figures for the express purpose of misleading members so far as the increase was concerned. I ask the Premier to tell us which is right. Was he right in quoting the amount as £263,000, or was the Minister for Railways right in his total of £395,000? One or the other must be wrong; which is wrong, I shall leave it to the Premier to say. I made a few remarks just now with regard to taxation. I intend to review for a few moments the amount which was accepted by way of taxation during the year 1919-20. Including the amount received from the Commonwealth, the Treasurer received £227,536 more revenue by way of taxation during the last financial year than was received in the preceding year. This revenue cost very little to collect. The amount received was £436,200 more than was received in 1915-16, the last year in which the Labour Government held office. We do not forget the rash and uncalled for statements made against the Labour party because they could not make both ends meet. We do not forget that the very reason why the members now occupying the Treasury benches were put there was in order to right the finances because the Labour party had incurred a deficit. Though the present Government received by way of taxation which cost scarcely anything to collect £436,200 more than was received by the Labour Government in their last year of office, the present Government finished up with a deficit for the year of £668,224, or about double that incurred by the Labour party during their last year of office. This increased deficit is the outcome of the business acumen and ability of the present Government.

The Premier interjected.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that the Premier would like to hear as little as possible about the increased deficit.

The Premier: No, I do not mind.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt the Premier is afraid that the people will presently realise the true position of the State's finances.

The Premier: We are not a bit afraid; we shall tell them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And the people will realise what a blunder they made in 1916 when they put on the Treasury benches gentlemen who could not keep their deficit within double the amount of the deficit incurred by the Labour party.

The Premier: It is all due to interest on your loan moneys.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I might add to the Premier's remark that a very large amount of loan expenditure on the part of the Labour Government was due to legislation introduced by members now on the Treasury benches for the purpose of trying to influence the votes of electors, which object they failed to achieve. I have not yet finished with the deficit. The total deficit on the 30th June, 1920, amounted to £4,086,705, an increase since the Labour party left office of £2,725,740.

The Premier: That is just half; you had the other half, you know.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Labour party had six years of office and, during that period, they built up a deficit of £1,360,000, while the financial geniuses who took the responsibility of governing the country on account of the lack of experience and business acumen and ability on the part of the Labour party have built up in four years a deficit of not £1,360,000 but £2,725,740. In other words, the present Government in four years have piled up double the deficit which the Labour Government incurred in six years.

The Premier: What did you contribute to the sinking fund?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All that was due to the sinking fund. I will tell the Premier about the sinking fund presently.

The Premier: You did not contribute much.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: These figures prove conclusively that the present Government have been a failure in managing the finances of the State. Where is the Press to-day? Where are the columns which they previously devoted to denouncing the Labour Government?

Mr. Lutey: They are devoted now to denouncing the Queensland Government.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no doubt that the Press, for their own honour, are to-day afraid to give the people true statements with regard to the financial position of the State as compared with the position in 1916. If they had done so, the present Government would have very little further time to spend on the Treasury benches. Some of the people are beginning to realise the seriousness of the position. The silence

of the Press is convincing them to a large extent, and I am satisfied that, in March next, there will be a change of Government.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Premier is the one white-haired boy in the world with the "West Australian." The king can do no wrong.

The Premier: What about the "Worker"?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This would not be so bad if there were any indications that an improvement was likely to be effected. We can overlook the past to a very large extent. Many of us are well aware of the difficulties which have confronted the State during recent years. Members on this side of the House realise the difficulties due to drought and war during the four years that the Labour party held office. The present Government have had two years of war and one year of peace, but they have failed to lay before us anything to indicate even the prospect of an improvement in connection with the finances of the State. The Estimates before us show that the Government this year expect to receive the largest amount of revenue that has ever been received in the history of the State. If figures are a true index, we must of necessity experience prosperity but, unfortunately, instead of prosperity, the outlook is black so far as the public finances are concerned. Though the Government estimate to receive such a large revenue, very little endeavour is being made to keep the expenditure somewhere near to the amount of the revenue. The more money the Government get, the more they will spend. They do not bother about their debts. Their debts are things of the past and eventually, no doubt, the Government will bring down a Bill to enable them to fulfil one of the promises they made to the electors, namely, to wipe out the deficit. The Government will bring down a Bill to fund the deficit, to attach it to the loan indebtedness of the State and thus wipe it out; and they will then tell the people that, though there was a deficit when they took office, a deficit no longer exists. The amount estimated to be received this year is £6,606,404 or £742,903 in excess of the amount for last year. With such a large revenue as this, should the Government anticipate ending the financial year with a large deficit? Is it right that the State should continue to have a deficit when the revenue is increasing so abundantly as the Premier's Estimates reveal? This amount of revenue will exceed by £1,687,965 the amount received by the Labour Government during their last year of office. Yet the present Government cannot make ends meet. Still the Government cannot get anywhere near to placing our finances on a sound and solid footing. If the Labour Government had enjoyed this amount of revenue when they were in office, they would have made things hum.

Mr. Pickering: Quite so!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Labour Government would have shown a surplus, and there would have been prosperity from one end of the State to the other.

The Premier: When you were in office you had a soup kitchen.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And there would have been no difficulty in carrying out the works required by our friends on the cross benches if we had received so large a revenue. We would have shown something for it. True, as the Premier interjected, we had a soup kitchen. There were thousands of people in the State at that time whom the Government saved, and the saving of those people has been the salvation of the State. We had a disastrous drought for which we had to make provision. A war was raging, which militated against the success of our work, but drought and war did not place the Labour Government in such a disadvantageous position as has been the experience of the present Government during years of war and peace. The Government expect to end the present financial year with an additional deficit of £399,707. After receiving, in round figures, 2,743,000 more than they received last year and £1,687,965 more than was received by the Labour Government, the present Government cannot keep their deficit within the limits of the Labour party's deficit in 1916, but they contemplate a further deficit of £399,707. I repeat—for we should not forget those statements which were made so frequently during the period of the Labour administration—this shows the good business acumen and ability of the present Government.

Mr. Munsie: An ability for incurring deficits.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government estimate that, at the end of the present financial year, the deficit will have attained the large proportions of £4,486,412, a sum which exceeds the whole of the revenue received by the Labour Government during their last year of office. What is there to show for it? Can the Government point to any monumental works for which they have been responsible, or to any railways or new harbours (except a little additional work at Bunbury), or to any new water supplies? They know well that during the Labour administration water supplies were provided throughout the length and breadth of the State, harbour works were being constructed, and railways were being built to the extent of hundreds of miles.

Mr. Johnston: Those were the days.

Mr. Wilson: You were with us then.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We do not hear very much talk of business acumen and ability to-day. The Premier has dropped that.

The Premier: I never mentioned it in my life.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: His colleagues did. He represented that party, and must take responsibility for certain things for which he is not actually responsible. The Government have now made another discovery. It is necessary that our friends opposite should have an excuse for their at-

tempt to fool the public by showing that something new has transpired from that which occurred in connection with the previous administration. They have discovered that there is such a thing as a sinking fund; they are saving money and banking it. This is the deficit. "How can we expect," says the Premier, "to make both ends meet when we have to subscribe so much to the sinking fund? If we had now the amount paid into the sinking fund our deficit would be gone. The people of the Eastern States did not know we had a sinking fund until I told them about it. They pointed out to us," continued the Premier, "that we were in a bad financial way in Western Australia, but I told them we had a sinking fund, and they were satisfied that everything was right. They did not know anything about it before." Was there anything said about a sinking fund when the Labour Government were in office? Was it not stated then that the sinking fund was a just payment from Consolidated Revenue to meet an undertaking entered into with our bond holders? Was it not pointed out that to keep our State from going bankrupt this sinking fund must be paid? We would not have obtained any money at all but for the sinking fund. It is true we were the only State that had a sinking fund, but, unless the payments had been kept up each year, there would be no chance for Western Australia getting on the London market for the purpose of obtaining money with which to develop the State. What a howl there was when the present Minister for Mines, as Premier of the Labour Government, proposed that during the war an endeavour should be made to cease the payments to the sinking fund! They said, "You are besmirching the name of the State. This is confiscation. No one but members of the Labour party would bring forward such a proposition. You are breaking faith with those who lent you money." To-day we hear nothing but "sinking fund, sinking fund, sinking fund." It is like the slogan of the member for Moore (Sir H. B. Lefroy), "produce, produce, produce." The Premier is now saying, "sinking fund, sinking fund, sinking fund." He says, "If we did not pay into our sinking fund we would have no deficit." That is his sole excuse so far as the deficit is concerned.

Mr. Johnston: A very important point, too!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not an important point. It is a just recognition of an undertaking entered into by those who borrowed money in past years to carry on the development of the State. It should not be considered in the light of a set-off against the deficit. It never was considered in that light previously.

The Premier: It is a comforting thing to know that we have one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The deficit has increased during the last four years by double the amount the Government have subscribed to the sinking fund. The Premier desired

to make out a good case and make the amount paid to the sinking fund, with interest calculated, correspond with the present deficit, and has taken into consideration the amount contributed by the Labour Government.

The Premier: I made that clear; it was the interest paid on it but not the amount paid.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The amount paid and the accrued interest.

The Premier: No, not the amount paid.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He should take that factor into consideration. If it had not been that the Labour Government had to pay into this sinking fund, instead of their having a deficit at the end of 1916 they would have had a surplus of many hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The Premier: You never paid a penny to the sinking fund on your loans, I am sure.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier is not paying a single penny to the sinking fund on his own loans.

The Premier: He is on yours.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know the Premier is. He has assets against the sinking fund on those loans. The Government have no right to make this a bogey for the purpose of relieving them of their responsibilities in regard to placing our finances in a sound condition. Our sinking fund is a just claim upon the Consolidated Revenue. Money must be contributed to it, and no one knows that better than the Premier.

The Premier: Are we not doing so?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier has the answer of the bankers in London. The interest in connection with the London and Westminster Bank will show what the Government have to pay in that direction. Would it not be better for the Government to tell the people honestly and straight out what a howling mess they have made of the finances?

The Premier: It would not be true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Would it not be better for the Government to say, "We are not the genuises we led you to believe we were, and we have not that business acumen and ability that our recent pledges led you to believe we were possessed of. The financial position is worse than ever. We are unable to stem the tide." If the Premier and his colleagues would place the true facts of the position before the public there is no doubt that the electors would respect them for admitting that they were failures in matters of finance.

The Premier: I am looking up some of your figures; they are most interesting.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I also looked up some of the Premier's figures. I do not intend to take up much time in dealing with the various departments. I notice an increase in the expenditure upon the University. The University comes under a special Act. Have the Government ever consulted the Crown Law Department as to whether

there is any power to increase a vote under a special Act?

The Premier: I think we have.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier may have. I remember a case, which was tried before our courts, where similar words were used in regard to payment that are used in connection with the University Act, and it was decided by the Court that the amount mentioned was the amount that would have to be paid, no more and no less. Whether that decision would apply in this instance I do not know. If it does, this amount could not be increased unless it came under the vote of a department. If I am wrong in this the Premier can quickly ascertain the right position. Although the Government have found money for increasing by £1,500 the University grant, they have reduced the payments to the Perth Hospital by over £5,000. Those who require special attention, who are sick and who are too weak to look after themselves, are being neglected, while the University, because influential gentlemen are in charge of it, has its grant increased. No Government will ever have my vote to further increase the University grant unless the system of management of that institution is liberalised to a greater extent than it is to day.

Mr. Foley: We started the University 200 years too soon.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We started the University, but we have no say in its management. Until the system is liberalised I will never vote for any extension of the grant. The Premier's Department is also growing. It was thought that this department was only necessary as a means of exchange for the other departments. There is no work to do there, for the other departments have to carry out all the work that is required in the Premier's Department. For years past it has been considered that it was quite unnecessary to build up a large department under the Premier. Notwithstanding this, the officers have increased in number. In practising his economies the Premier should set the first example in his own office.

The Premier: We have done so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Lands Department shows a large increase in expenditure. It may be said that this is brought about through the Soldiers' Settlement Scheme, but that comes under a special vote in another portion of the Estimates. There is an increase there from £59,816 in 1919-20, to £74,366 in 1920-21. There is also a large increase in the temporary staff. We were told that this office was over-manned, and there was not sufficient work there to keep the staff employed. Notwithstanding this there is a sum of £8,422 provided for the temporary staff of the Lands Department in excess of the amount provided last year. It is time that close attention was paid to this department. I would draw special attention to the Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board and Soldier Settlement Estimates. There are no fewer than 200 officials

employed in this department. It is the largest department in the State outside the Railway Department. It is time we had a Royal Commission to inquire into it.

Mr. Troy: It is a pretty active one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It ought to be with the number of officials it employs. Has the Industries Assistance Board more work to do now than it had in 1915-16?

Mr. Troy: It has less.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course, and yet the staff is increasing.

Mr. Troy: There is the soldier settlement work.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am dealing with the Industries Assistance Board. We had an account from the Premier the other day to show how many hundreds of farmers had gone off the board. There were thousands in 1916-17 who were doing business with the department. The numbers are being reduced almost daily and yet we find that in the Agricultural Bank, which has control almost, so far as the board is concerned, there are no fewer than 197 officials. It is necessary that due inquiry should be made there, and I would advise the department to take a lesson from the State Savings Bank, which does as much business, and which has nothing like the same staff. There is one notable increase in the number of officers, and that is in the Audit Department. No doubt the appointments that have been made there are necessary; the position of the State finances is such that closer inspection than before is required. No doubt hon. members will welcome the additional staff which has been appointed there because a closer scrutiny is bound to be kept over the expenditure. I notice that the Education Department shows an increase of £41,792. At times it has been regarded as almost sacrilege in this House to refer to the expenditure incurred by the Education Department. Two years ago, when dealing with this department on the Estimates, I suggested that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the manner in which the department was being conducted.

Mr. Gardiner: It was practically promised.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was. I suggested that the commission should be composed of men who thoroughly understood the subject of education, and that its personnel should include one or two teachers. If that commission had been appointed, I am confident that the result would have meant a saving of some thousands of pounds.

Mr. Gardiner: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There will be no improvement so far as the expenditure of the Education Department is concerned until due inquiry has been made. I am not one of those who refuse to spend money on education, but what I do require is that we should see that the money is spent in the right direction.

Mr. Hudson: We want to get our money's worth.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have had my attention drawn to the fact that in many small districts thousands of pounds could be saved, and it is in directions such as that that the Royal Commission could conduct its investigations. Our Public Works Department to-day is almost dead. Its Estimates will show clearly that it is not proposed to spend anything on public works. The Minister for Mines might look into the Analytical Department. Where is the necessity for increased expenditure there? The Commonwealth, I understand, have taken their analytical work from the State Government; yet we find an increase in the expenditure of the State Department.

Mr. Pickering: There are two separate departments to-day.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Three years ago there was only one. Now we find that there is an increase of close on £1,000. The Premier asked hon. members to keep their attention on business undertakings and trading concerns, and he added that that was the weak spot. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner), when Treasurer, pointed to the trading concerns as the one bright spot. The Treasurer, to-day, however, regards the spot as a black one.

Mr. Gardiner: The steamers were earning good money in those times.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is the Premier's intention to endeavour, so far as possible, to keep the belief he has, well before the people and the Press of the State, the belief that the business undertakings are almost on the verge of bankruptcy. Hon. members will note that the Government have shifted their ground a little from the position which existed in former days. Previously we had "trading concerns." To-day we have "business undertakings and trading concerns." They are combined at the present time. It was the Labour party who started some of the trading concerns, and consequently those concerns were more liable to condemnation than the business undertakings started prior to the Labour Administration. The Premier to-day brackets them and he has no desire to support them. I have taken the opportunity to look through the figures of some of the business undertakings because the Premier has drawn our particular attention to them. I would like hon. members to look at the last page of the volume of "Hansard" issued to-day; they will there see a correction of one of the returns—that dealing with business undertakings—which was submitted by the Treasurer with the Financial Statement. For the information of members, I will refer to the business undertakings as they appear on the Estimates. The first is the Avondale Estate, which shows a surplus of £1,686. The Butter Factories show a surplus of £495, Government Refrigerating Works £51, Kalgoorlie Abattoirs—

The Premier: You did not establish any of those.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am merely putting the position before members. The Kalgoolie Abattoirs show a surplus of £1,641, Metropolitan Abattoirs and Saleyards a surplus of £9,489, the Perth City Markets a surplus of £919, and the Albany Cold Stores paid their expenses. I want an explanation so far as the Albany Cold Stores are concerned. Last year there was expended in connection with these cold stores £1,071. Hon. members are aware that at Albany an engineer has to be employed; the chambers must be kept cool, and I desire to know how these stores can be run for £400 a year. The estimated revenue is the same as last year, £400, but the expenditure has been reduced from £1,071 to £400. The Premier should certainly give us an explanation so far as the cold stores are concerned. The Moola Bulla Aborigines Cattle Station shows a deficit of £2,583. Why? Cattle are bringing a high price, and for years this station has shown a profit. Why should there be a deficit now? The previous year it showed a loss of £228. It is necessary that closer attention should be paid to this concern. We should certainly know the reason for its failure, remembering that other people engaged in this trade are making large profits. In connection with the Goldfields Water Supply, the figures given on the Estimates show a surplus of £60,386, but in the estimated expenditure there has been set aside only £24,403 towards interest and sinking fund. The footnote, however, sets out that the interest and sinking fund is approximately £177,500. This shows that there is a loss on the undertaking of £92,000. What I want to know is, who is contributing the interest and sinking fund? Are the agricultural districts contributing anything? There are the towns of Northam, Toodyay, Beverley, and York, which are supplied from this source, and there is nothing in the Estimates to show that those places are contributing anything towards the undertaking. Next we come to the Metropolitan Water Supply. That shows a surplus of £73,387, and this, like the Goldfields Water Supply, only provides for an expenditure of £97,213, and included in that amount is a sum of £33,510 for interest and sinking fund. According to the footnote, the total interest and sinking fund is approximately £76,600. Seeing that there has been provided £33,510, there would be a surplus on the year's working of £30,297. In view of that large surplus, should we not be justified in asking why the water rate has been increased by 2d. in the pound? It is the only increase, outside that of the railways, that the Government have imposed. Here is an undertaking which, according to the Government's figures, shows a profit of £30,000 and the Government have the audacity to increase the rate by 2d. in the pound. I believe in every undertaking meeting its liabilities so far as possible, but the Government should serve all people alike; they should not penalise one section for the purpose of affording relief to another. They

should not relieve the people of Beverley, Northam, and York and ask the people of the metropolitan area to contribute an additional sum to Consolidated Revenue. It is a wrong policy and it should be adjusted as soon as possible. It is unfair treatment of the metropolitan area. The next item is "Other hydraulic undertakings chargeable to revenue," and it shows a deficit of £12,067. This refers to water supply of towns and development generally, and therefore I consider that the term "business undertaking" is a misnomer in this particular case. No undertaking can be classed as a business undertaking unless the full charges are met by direct votes from the Treasury. Outside metropolitan water supply and sewerage, the Estimates do not show what interest and sinking fund are provided. As regards the trading concerns under the State Trading Concerns Act, interest and sinking fund are provided in every case. In the case of "Other hydraulic undertakings chargeable to revenue," and business undertakings generally, no doubt the surplus and a little more will be eaten up by interest and sinking fund. The State batteries have done splendidly, and it is anticipated that they will do splendidly during the current year. A State battery cannot be considered a business undertaking. In the back country its purpose is to open up new fields and to assist mining development generally. The State batteries show a deficit of £1,826. Undertakings used for developmental purposes cannot be carried on from a purely business point of view. The Premier and his friends, who are trying to condemn the undertakings from the financial standpoint, should never forget that such works as goldfields water supply, State batteries, hydraulic undertakings, and so forth, are used very largely to develop the State. What would our railways be to-day if the Government had increased fares and freights by 80 per cent., as has been done in England? We should have no deficit then, perhaps; but still we should not let the customers of our railways have the use of them—except perhaps in extreme cases in the back country, each of which should be considered on its merits—unless they pay the actual cost of the service rendered. Yanda-nooka estate shows a surplus of £2,000. The dairy farm at Claremont shows a deficit of £650, but it supplied milk and other food-stuffs to the Claremont institution of a value of £1,700. If credit were given for that, the dairy would show a profit of £1,050. However, I never looked to the dairy for a profit. That dairy was established for the express purpose of furnishing a first class milk supply for the inmates of our hospitals. The testimony borne to the good work of the dairy by the medical men of Perth, in the matter of lives saved in the Perth Children's Hospital, shows that the value of that undertaking cannot be estimated in pounds, shillings, and pence. Now I come to the State trading concerns, and I wish hon. members

to realise that these are the concerns under the State Trading Concerns Act. In every instance interest and sinking fund have been provided for these concerns on the Estimates, and the figures which I am about to quote from the Estimates are the amounts remaining, either surplus or, deficit, after provision of interest and sinking fund. When we quote figures relating to the State trading concerns, we often receive the reply, "But look at the interest and sinking fund which have to be paid in addition." Let me reiterate my statement that a Government undertaking is in an entirely different position from a private company. A Government undertaking is asked to pay a dividend from the start. A private company never pays a dividend until it has made a profit. Dividend is only interest, and interest is only dividend; they are two different names for the same thing. In very few cases indeed do industries privately established return dividends from the very start. One does not look for dividends from such industries for the first year or two. But a State trading concern has to pay interest from the very commencement, and thus it frequently happens that a State trading concern is represented as showing a loss although it is in fact returning a dividend. The brickworks show a surplus of £2,620. The State ferries show a surplus of £1,951. State hotels show a surplus of £6,095; it is anticipated that these will hand over considerably more than this amount to the Consolidated Revenue, but that is the surplus on the year's figures. The State Implement Works show a surplus of £4,530. State quarries show a deficit of £16. The State Steamship Service shows a surplus of £3,000, and expects to hand over considerably more than that amount to the Consolidated Revenue. However, on the figures contained in the Estimates the service has a surplus of £3,000. In the case of the State sawmills there is a surplus of £30,681. The Wyndham freezing works show a deficit of £103,611, but it is fair to point out that these works have only just begun operations. Up to the present the trade of the works has not been such as may be expected, and as will no doubt be realised in a very few years' time. Even the Premier, in dealing with the Wyndham freezing works, said there was no doubt that at an early date the undertaking would pay all expenses. It is only fair that the people of the State should be made to realise that Western Australia is not going to be made bankrupt over its State trading concerns. It is about time our Chambers of Commerce and certain sections of the Press realised that the statements which they have made regarding the State trading concerns are false. I would like to use a stronger term, but perhaps "false" is quite sufficient. Those false statements were made wilfully for the express purpose of condemning the Labour party.

Hon. T. Walker: Wilfully and maliciously.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Our total indebtedness at this date is nearly 47 millions sterling, of which amount only £1,800,000 is invested in the State trading concerns. Yet certain people and certain newspapers have had the audacity to assert day after day that this expenditure of £1,800,000 is bringing Western Australia to bankruptcy, is responsible for the whole of the deficit. The contention with regard to the deficit, however, has been dropped since attention was drawn to the sinking fund. But it was asserted that the State trading concerns were responsible for all our financial difficulties. This year's Estimates, however, show that the six State trading concerns under the State Trading Concerns Act return a handsome surplus to the Consolidated Revenue after paying interest and sinking fund. Even last year the Premier received more than he anticipated from these concerns. The Consolidated Revenue has been doing very well from them. It must be borne in mind, too, that the State has been going through a period of war. During war time very few industries in Western Australia were making any money.

The Premier: But the State ships paid during the war.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course they did. It is about time the Government ceased blaming the trading concerns for our difficulties. The Government should admit now that those concerns, with the exception of the Wyndham freezing works, are a benefit to the Consolidated Revenue. And there can be no doubt that after the Wyndham freezing works have had a fair show, and after shipping has become available to carry their products to market, those works will be in the same position as the other State trading concerns. Now I wish to offer a few remarks regarding our loans. Our loan indebtedness to-day is £46,822,000. Let me remind hon. members generally, and especially those who are comparatively new to this House, that only a few years ago it was contended by the opponents of the Labour party that a halt must be cried in this State's borrowing policy. It was asserted that the over-borrowing of the Labour party had proved disastrous to Western Australia, that for years to come it would be impossible for this State to go on the money market except for funds to complete some works already in hand. The Labour party were condemned in almost every newspaper of Western Australia, and particularly in the metropolitan Press, for "over-borrowing," for "wilful extravagance," for "waste of public money," because the expenditure came from loans. One would have thought that those who raised these cries, that is to say the supporters of the present Government, would have asked the present Government to observe the pledges made by them to the electors in this connection. But what do we find? The present Government, and their immediate predecessors, have borrowed as much as ever the Labour

party borrowed. Since 1916 this State's indebtedness has increased by £7,682,327.

The Premier: That is only half your increase.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But the opponents of the Labour party have been in office only half the time the Labour party were in power.

The Premier: No; four years.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Moreover, there is this difference, that the Labour party can point to monumental assets for the money they spent: Hundreds of miles of railway, tramways in Perth, new water supplies and harbours constructed, and works done all over the State in accordance with the requirements of the State. Go where you will, there are evidences of the work performed by the Labour Government. But what can the present Government show? Is there anything at all that they have carried out? The very railway we had under construction they stopped as soon as they came into office, and they have built none since.

The Premier: We have spent a few thousands on soldiers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is just what I wanted. Hon. members probably noticed the smiling countenance of the Premier when he said that. I want the Premier to recall the statement made in the Press the other day by the leader of the Country party in the Federal Parliament. I think he is a farmer. He said that the policy of buying out one farmer to put in another was unsound and prejudicial to the interests of the State.

Mr. Pickering: What about it when we put three or four in place of one?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Only in very few instances has that been done. It is true that the Premier has expended approximately 2½ millions on the repatriation of soldiers; but considerably over one million of that amount has been transferred from the Treasury into the pockets of experienced farmers, many of whom have since left the State. And, in many instances, inexperienced men have been put in their places.

Mr. Thomson: A lot of the farmers are very sorry that they sold their farms.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is only a statement.

Mr. Munsie: Even if it is true, the policy is a bad one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When in Plymouth recently I met one of those expatriated farmers enjoying himself thoroughly. Many of the soldier settlers are inexperienced and, instead of the State being better off for the change, it is so much the poorer. And hon. members should realise that it is not the people of the State who have to pay that indebtedness to the Commonwealth Government, but the soldier settlers themselves.

Mr. Pickering: What would you have done with those soldiers who wanted to go on the land?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would have done what was proposed from this side when the

Soldier Settlement Bill was introduced. If any notice had been taken of our suggestion, the soldier settlers would have been in far better positions to-day than they are. It was the duty of the Government to have taken the unused land adjoining the railways and not too far from our ports and, clearing that land, put the soldiers on it. Since that land is unused by its owners, it could have been resumed at the price they paid for it. As it is, we have our railways languishing for want of trade, and we have our friends outback complaining of the high railway charges. Why? Because there is not sufficient trade near the ports to permit of a reduction of railway charges for the people living outback. If, instead of spending all this money to buy out experienced farmers, we had put the soldiers on unused land adjacent to railways, we should have had a very largely increased settlement to share our taxation.

The Premier: You had the chance yourselves.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We never had. The Premier and his colleagues entered into a conspiracy to prevent us having any such chance.

The Premier: You went to the first conference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But we could not stay to finalise the scheme. We should never have bought out experienced farmers as the Premier has done, we should never have spent money as the Premier has done. It must be remembered that the soldier not only has to pay the high cost of the improved land, but is burdened with a high interest. In these circumstances it is almost impossible for an inexperienced man to make good.

Mr. Harrison: Given a few good crops, the soldiers will be out of debt in three years.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope it may be so, but I fear that some of them will never be out of debt. However, I was pointing out that the non-borrowing Government, who previously said that we should cry a halt to borrowing, have increased the public indebtedness by £7,682,327 and have nothing to show for it. It means that they have increased the debt per head of population from £109 19s. 9d. in 1916 to £119 7s. 3d. in 1920, or an increase of £9 7s. 6d., based on a population of 334,000. That would not be so bad if that was all the Government had done. But they have been blessed with this position: the Labour party borrowed close on a million at four per cent. for assistance to farmers, borrowed half a million for workers' homes, and borrowed a considerable sum for sewerage the metropolitan area and putting in house connections. This is the position as we have it from the Premier himself: The agriculturists to-day are repaying this money to the present Government and the workers' homes are contributing weekly a portion of the capital expenditure.

The Premier: Not to revenue.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: While the sewerage department is receiving back the money expended on house connections, for there was only six years in which to pay back the lot. Thus from a million to 1½ millions of money borrowed by the Labour Government and expended in those several directions is passing into the coffers of the present Government.

Mr. Munsie: And they are letting it out at seven per cent. interest.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, that is the only sign of business acumen which the Government have yet shown.

The Premier: That does not come back to revenue.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am dealing, not with revenue but with loans.

Mr. Piesse: You once accused the farmers of not paying off their indebtedness.

Hon. T. Walker: Never.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government have full control, the money is paid into the Government through the Industries Assistance Board before it reaches Parliament. The Premier said that this money does not go into revenue. I had not intended to touch on the Sale of Government Property Trust Account, but I want hon. members to realise that to-day more than ever previously is money being expended through this account on works which in the past have been carried out from Consolidated Revenue.

The Premier: I do not think so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Clearly, repaid loan moneys which ought to be earning interest are being expended on the construction of works previously paid for out of Consolidated Revenue.

The Premier: This account is not all loan funds.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Does the hon. member think that water supply has paid approximately £220,000 in one year without repayment? Look at the returns from metropolitan water supply. How much does the Premier intend to expend in regard to it? Nothing. The money is being expended as revenue, and is not earning interest. It is only a refund to the Government of loan moneys borrowed for the carrying out of certain works. However, I had not intended to deal with that phase of the question at all. The position is clear: the expenditure during the last three or four years under this account has been higher than ever before. Loan moneys have been used in a wrong direction.

Mr. Piesse: That has always been the practice.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But never previously to the same extent. No previous Government have been placed in so advantageous a position for getting the money. Generally an Appropriation Bill has been brought in and loan moneys have been transferred from one account to the other. But during the last year or so, owing to the high cost of money, this practice has been varied.

In past days there were no such institutions as the Industries Assistance Board and the Workers' Homes Board, which return large sums annually in repayment for work done from loan expenditure. The same thing obtains in connection with the Agricultural Bank. Thus, the Government have been in a happy position, but on the other hand the State has been the loser, because this money, of course, has to carry additional interest. Moreover, sometimes there is a good deal of doubt as to whether the money is really there. It has often proved to be only a book entry, in which case the cash has not been available, and so cash has been drawn from loan funds to bolster it up. The Premier was ill-advised in bringing up this question of the Sale of Government Property Trust Account, because it can be used in evidence against him and his colleagues.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before tea I was replying to an interjection by the Premier with regard to the Government Property Sales Account. In connection with the metropolitan water supply and sewerage alone close on £220,000 has been repaid, and this money has since been expended. I return now to the question of loan money. Prior to the interjection of the Premier, I informed members that our loan indebtedness had increased from £109 19s. 9d. per head of the population in 1916 to £119 17s. 3d. per head of the population in 1920, in addition to which a large amount of money from loans had been paid into the Treasury, which loans had been raised by the Labour Government.

The Premier: That is permanent capital for the board.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would not mind this loan expenditure if something could be shown for it. If there were assets which would eventually meet standing charges—

Mr. Angelo: Our railways could not be built to-day for 60 millions.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Perhaps not. I would not care whether such works constructed paid the standing charges immediately, because we know that, where a developmental policy is necessary, it is impossible for works like railways and water supplies to pay standing charges immediately after construction. There is only one work which I know of which would pay standing charges at once, and that is the railway from Carnarvon to Killili advocated by the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. Angelo: That will pay all right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is necessary to have something to show for the money which has been spent. The Labour Government were accused of having over-borrowed and were told that they had been extravagant, but all over the country we can show monuments to the work carried out by the Labour administration. We constructed hundreds of miles of new railways providing facilities to enable produce to be conveyed

to the ports and to the markets. We purchased the Perth tramways which unfortunately are not a paying concern, but I shall deal with them presently. Water supplies were constructed and a large portion of the metropolitan area was sewered. We provided water supplies throughout the country and additional harbour works were constructed.

The Premier: Where?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At Fremantle, Albany and Bunbury, and a start was made at Geraldton. When the Labour Government left office, no one could say that there were lacking evidences of public works for the development of the country in respect of the loan moneys expended. What is the position to-day? During the past three years, our indebtedness has increased by more than 7½ millions of money, in addition to the money which has been repaid to the Treasury in the manner I have described, a million or 1½ millions of money raised by the Labour Government before leaving office. Where to-day can we find anything to show for this expenditure? No new railways are being constructed; no additions are being made to the water supplies or to the sewerage connections required for the health of the community in the metropolitan area. With the exception of Bunbury where a little work is being carried out, there is no other place in the State where anything can be seen for the money which is being expended. I can only ask, as some of our friends on the other side of the House used to ask of the Labour Government, what has been done with the money?

Mr. Angelo: Two thousand soldiers have been settled.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will deal with that matter presently. There is no evidence that this large amount of money has been properly spent or that it has been spent to the advantage of the State. If the Premier and his friends, when on the platform in March next, are asked to point to what they have done, they will not be able to point to one work.

The Premier: I shall make out a balance sheet for you.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It might be like some of the Premier's figures.

The Premier: My figures are all right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government cannot point to one work of any magnitude for the large increase in indebtedness which has taken place during their term of office. Why, the so-called extravagant Labour party were never in it with the present Government! They could not have come from the same school. For the money expended by the Labour party, there are assets in existence. For the money spent by the present Government, there is nothing to show. That being so—

The Premier: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I trust the Government will re-consider the position, and will endeavour to show something for their

expenditure. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) seemed anxious to remind me of the soldier settlement scheme. The Premier was able to point to only this one thing as something that the Government had done. This is the one ewe lamb of the Government. Members should note the smile of satisfaction on the Premier's face when anyone refers to the soldier settlement scheme.

The Premier: It is something anyhow.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So far 3,151 soldiers have been placed—I shall not say settled—on the land.

Mr. Thomson: Some of them are doing very well, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of that number 1,838 have been placed on purchased farms.

Mr. Piesse: That is not a large proportion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is not it?

Mr. Munsie: It is over 50 per cent. of the total.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It means that the Government have bought out 1,838 farmers and put other men in their places.

The Premier: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is the actual position.

The Premier: No, it is not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier will probably retort that soldiers have been settled on repurchased estates. I want members to note the difference between repurchased estates which are one thing, and purchased farms which are quite a different thing. Repurchased estates are intended for subdivision. Consequently a few more men have been placed on repurchased estates than were on them previously, but the 1838 soldiers to whom I referred have been settled on individual farms and not on repurchased estates.

Mr. Pickering: From which only one settler went?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The Government have purchased about 48 estates.

Mr. Harrison: Is 1,838 the number of soldiers settled or the number of farms purchased?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The number of soldiers placed on individual farms which have been purchased. On the repurchased estates, 343 soldiers have been placed. I want the member for Toodyay (Mr. Piesse) to note these figures—on individual farms 1,838 soldiers have been placed, and on repurchased estates 343 soldiers have been placed. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) has referred on more than one occasion to the number of farms thrown open by the Agricultural Bank. On Agricultural Bank holdings, 112 soldiers have been placed. I do not know whether they have to carry the whole of the liability of those holdings or not.

The Premier: No, they have not.

Mr. Underwood: In some cases they have.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: These Agricultural Bank holdings, on which 112 soldiers have been placed, are Government property and, if the soldiers are not burdened with an increased amount due to the over-advances

made by the Agricultural Bank, there can be no objection to this arrangement. Out of the 3,151 soldiers settled, 181 have been placed on Crown lands, so that we have approximately 500 new settlers and no more.

Mr. Pilkington: The object of the scheme is not to get new settlers, but to settle the soldiers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The object is to advance the State.

Mr. Pilkington: No, to settle the soldiers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It would have been far better for the soldiers as well as for the State if the money had been used on lands adjoining our railways, that is, on land which is not being utilised at the present time.

Mr. Thomson: Whether of good or bad quality?

The Premier: And never mind about the soldier?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier should not attempt to draw me off on a side issue. The land adjacent to our railways should have been improved for the soldiers.

The Premier: Why did not you say so?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If this had been done we would have had an additional number of settlers.

Mr. Harrison: Would such land have suited the soldiers?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know of some places where soldiers have been settled, which places have been given up again.

The Premier: At Esperance?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, not at Esperance; but we must expect some cases of this kind. It is all very well for the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson), the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) and the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) to interject that some of these men are sorry they sold their holdings.

Mr. Thomson: So they are; I will prove it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They might say so. This land has brought an increased price, and the soldiers have to pay, in addition to the cost of the land, a large amount in interest. Many of the soldiers are inexperienced men. They are going on the land with the burden of this increased cost and of the heavy interest they will have to pay.

Mr. Harrison: You are wrong there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not one of those who say that anything is good enough for the soldiers.

Mr. Harrison: Nor does anyone else.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier, in his Budget, stated that we have ten million acres of land ready for settlement.

The Premier: No, I did not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Forrest interjected that the Premier had not got it.

The Premier: I did not say it either.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Suppose that some of this large area had been improved for the soldiers. The work in all probability would have been done at less cost than the amount of 2½ millions which the Government have spent in this direction. Nearly a million of money has gone into the pockets of many

people who are not in the State. There is no doubt that the policy carried on by the Government has not been in the interests of Western Australia. Mr. Hill, leader of the Federal Country party, is correct when he says that it is an unsound policy which should be abandoned as soon as possible. I want to see increased settlement and not curtailment of settlement. I want to see, also, new farmers established on the land, instead of seeing farmers go off the land in order to get money for their properties and make room for someone else. That will not assist us to pay off our large deficit and interest and sinking fund.

Mr. Thomson: Why should a man not sell his farm if he wants to?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He might do that, but should not do so to take advantage of the funds provided for the purpose of settling soldiers on the land.

Mr. Thomson: You are making a great mistake about that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let them sell their properties in the open market. The money is advanced to increase the wealth of the community and of Australia as a whole. The policy of the Government is detrimental to many soldiers on the land.

The Premier: You should have kept your surveyors on to make ready for this settlement.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier was in office nearly 18 months after the Labour Government went out. He followed the previous Government for two years, and he has been Premier for the last 18 months. I will say for the Premier that he has done something.

The Premier: I was 11 months in office. I was not Minister for Lands.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: During the term of office of the Labour Government war broke out.

Mr. Underwood: This Government have done nothing; the previous Government did it all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier claims that he has done the work. Who is one to believe?

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Lefroy Government arranged for the money.

Mr. Underwood: And appointed the staff the Premier has now.

The Premier: That is not so.

Mr. Underwood: What rubbish!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When Ministerial supporters have done arguing amongst themselves, I will go on.

Mr. Underwood: I am not a supporter.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier announced his public works policy, and thought that about 100 miles of railway per annum was nearly as much as the Government could construct. This shows a change in the policy of the Government, for they have not attempted to do that much during the last four or five years. I do not think there is any probability that the Government will introduce any new railway Bills this year.

The Premier: We will show you.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was fishing for that.

The Premier: Why did you not ask straight out?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because the Premier would not tell me.

The Premier: I named the railways the other day.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want hon. members to carry their minds back to the year 1911, when the Premier was a Minister. Dozens of new railways were introduced before Parliament was dissolved.

The Premier: Not dozens.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Bills for railways in almost every part of the State were introduced as a vote catching scheme.

Mr. Piesse: No, they were all justified.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member was not there, so he does not know. These railway Bills passed through both Houses of Parliament. The public did not like the idea. They saw through the scheme, and did not believe in the introduction of railway Bills to capture votes. The Government were defeated by an enormous majority, the largest majority ever known in the State. Those who were defeated acted in the same way as some of my friends in Queensland acted. They went about endeavouring to prevent the Labour Administration from getting money with which to construct the railways that were passed during the regime of the previous Government.

The Premier: That is not true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is true.

The Premier: It is not.

Mr. Munsie: It is true of the party, but not of the Premier.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government will go to the country in a little while. The Premier has announced a number of railway projects that he intends to bring down.

Mr. Thomson: You should take courage by that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would remind the Premier of some of the railways which he will be called upon to build as part of his 100 miles of railway per annum. There is the Esperance-Northwards railway, the Katanning-Nyabing railway, the Pinjarra-Dwarda extension, and the Boyanup-Busselton railway. With regard to the last mentioned line, three months prior to the last general election a start was made with the work of clearing. I have heard recently that work has been started there again. There is a general election coming on soon.

The Premier: I will withdraw the 100 miles and make it 500 miles.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The line was started in this way just prior to the general elections in 1917, and stopped when the elections were over. The Government also have the Yillimining-Kondinin extension, a portion of which has been built. In 1919 an Act was passed for the extension of the Wyalcatchem-Mount Marshall railway. According to the Premier's programme, it will take three years

to build the railways already authorised. Unless it is to catch votes, what necessity is there to introduce any further railway Bills this session?

The Premier: I will make it 500 miles.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier will have a difficulty in getting the money for that mileage.

Mr. Munsie: He is vote-catching again.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: How is it possible for any further railway construction to be carried out for the next three years? It will be time enough to introduce new railway Bills at the close of the next Parliament.

The Premier: We will show you.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope it is the intention of the Government to carry out the promise to the House that railway construction would be carried out in rotation according to the order in which railway Bills were passed.

The Premier: It was a very foolish promise.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Parliament does foolish things sometimes, and the Premier does many. I do not want the Premier to burden us, when we cross over to his side of the Chamber next March.

Mr. Munsie: We will be there all right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not want the Government to send to England, or go to the Eastern States, for the purpose of preventing the party on this side of the House from getting the money to construct the works passed by this Parliament.

Mr. Thomson: You are an optimist.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt we shall be rushed with new railway proposals.

Mr. Underwood: The next Government need not go on with them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: According to the Press there are proposals for the extension of the tramways in the city and suburbs. I hope the Government will not be so mad as to start such a proposition now. I will never vote for the construction of a mile of tramway in Perth at the present juncture. It is impossible to construct tramways just now on account of the price of rails.

The Premier: The same thing may be said of railways.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are cheaper than tram rails. There is no necessity to extend the tram lines in Perth at present. It is possible to construct three miles of railways in the country at the cost of one mile of tramways in the city. If members of the Country party agree that money should be spent on the Perth tramways, which are losing money, and afford additional tramway facilities for people who settle in the metropolitan area, at a time when railways are so badly needed in the country, they will be consenting to something that will be detrimental to the interests of country people. In his Budget the Premier showed that the tramways had made a profit last year. If we take the figures which he gave to the House, it is clear that the tramways showed a loss.

The Premier: How do you make that out?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In his figures the Premier provided for the expenditure and the revenue, the amount paid for interest and working expenses, and the amount paid to local authorities, but not a shilling was provided for sinking fund. The tramways cost over £600,000, or nearly £700,000. If two per cent. is allowed for a sinking fund, what does this amount to?

The Premier: Make it five per cent. and it will come to a lot more.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government should not provide less than a two per cent. sinking fund for the tramways, and they have provided nothing for depreciation, which represents a large amount. The Premier says the profit was £4,100 odd, but allowing two per cent. for sinking fund we find that a sum of £13,000 should have been provided to meet that amount. Where then is the profit? The people of Perth are anxious for a reduction in tramway fares. If the Government publish in the daily Press that they have made a profit of £5,000 or £6,000, it is natural that people should demand reduced fares and that they should get the benefit of the profits made, so long as the tramways are paying their way. Instead of there being a profit, however, if we allow all the standard charges, we find there is a loss of £8,000. I hope the Premier will take this into consideration and look carefully into the matter. I am not sure whether, under the Tramways Act, tramway extensions have to come before Parliament or not. But tramway rails have never been higher in price than they are at the present time and they cannot be got in Australia.

The Minister for Mines: What an astonishing attitude you are adopting.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am taking an attitude which is correct.

Mr. Griffiths: You are asserting that the £4,000 profit should be an £8,000 loss.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: After allowing two per cent. for a sinking fund. We cannot afford at the present price of rails to make any further extensions.

The Minister for Mines: You have not taken into account the sum of money set aside for belated repairs, £10,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If we did not provide more than a two per cent. sinking fund at Fremantle we would be bankrupt.

The Minister for Mines: You do not call that a tramway scheme down there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a sound scheme.

The Minister for Mines: It is a question of convenience in the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And it is a question of convenience in Fremantle as well.

The Minister for Mines: But you have only three lines down there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a small system, and on that account it is more expensive to work. The larger the scheme the cheaper it is to work it.

The Minister for Mines. That is an argument in favour of making the Perth tramway system bigger.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Not when it will not pay to do that. The Government cannot afford to pay £6,000 a mile for extensions.

The Minister for Mines: It will not cost that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It will cost that, and we cannot afford it.

The Minister for Mines: You want the workers in the metropolitan area to walk.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I repeat we cannot afford it.

The Minister for Mines: None but workers will be served by the extensions.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN. The Government should as far as possible make the services pay for themselves. With regard to farmers' produce, we know that the prices have never been better, and we are aware that farmers are making a good thing out of their produce at the present time. Why, then, should we carry fertilisers over the railways at a loss to the State of £63,000 per annum? That was the figure which the Premier gave us by way of interjection.

The Premier: When did I say that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is here on record. Considering the high prices the public have to pay for commodities, and realising what the farmers are getting for their produce, why should the State be taxed to such an extent in connection with the conveyance of fertilisers over the railways? It was all right to do that for newly settled farmers, but a great number now are well established, and have done very well indeed on the land. It is unjust, therefore, to continue to carry fertilisers at a loss. I believe also that Collie coal is carried over the railways at a loss.

The Minister for Works: Not for the Collie companies.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At a loss to the State. It is known to-day that Collie coal has the reputation of being the best steaming coal in the world, and it is the cheapest as well.

The Minister for Works: Do not praise it too much or up will go the price.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But it is not dear at Fremantle.

Mr. Underwood: It is dearer than Newcastle coal to put on a ship.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not.

The Minister for Mines: It is dearer at the pit's mouth.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not dealing with the pit's mouth. I am dealing with services rendered by the Government. The Government do not own the coal, they only carry it.

The Minister for Mines: And we burn it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And the Government are carrying coal at a loss. Why should the Government make a loss in supplying the shipping companies with a commodity like coal at a rate cheaper than it can be procured at in any other part of the world? Why should not all the articles which we export be made to contribute to some extent to the revenue? The farmers are

getting 13s. and 14s. a bushel for wheat when it is being exported, and they should pay a wharfage rate just as is paid on minerals that are exported. If things were bad I would not raise this question, but the position is anything but bad so far as farmers' produce is concerned, and we must look around to see which direction we can raise revenue. If the member for Pilbara wanted to send a ton of copper away it would cost him 1s. 8d. to get it over the wharf, but if he wanted to send a ton of wheat it would not cost him a penny. We are looking for money; therefore, why not impose a wharfage rate on wheat?

Mr. Munsie: So is the farmer looking for money.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But the farmer is doing well whilst the country is drifting towards bankruptcy, and the people are being unduly taxed so that the deficiencies may be made up.

Mr. Griffiths: What about the awards in to-night's paper?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those awards are made on account of the increased cost of commodities. The worker does not derive any benefit from those high awards. Why not impose a tax on the land? Why not wipe out the exemption?

The Premier: Why do you not wipe out the farmer?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have no desire to do that. When the farmer was in that position that he needed assistance, the Labour party did all they could to assist him. There are men who have lately gone on the land, and who are in exactly the same position as some of the others were in when they were in difficulties some years ago. But because a man is just starting to work the land, that is no reason why he should not be assisted. The man who has been on the land for years and who has made good does not require assistance.

Mr. Thomson: Is he getting it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes.

Mr. Munsie: He is getting it through his fertilisers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is costing the country £63,000 for the carriage of fertilisers, and the farmer has no wharfage dues to pay, while minerals have to pay 1s. 8d. a ton. We should make a fair and equitable charge for services rendered, and the Government should remodel their taxation proposals in such a way as to obtain another £300,000 or so a year.

The Minister for Mines: From land tax?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: From the whole lot, fertilisers, Collie coal, harbour dues, etc.

Mr. Thomson: Do they have to pay harbour dues in the other States?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes.

Mr. Thomson: In which States?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will tell the hon. member to-morrow. It is only fair that in our present condition all services should be paid for. I can only say—and I say it with regret—that the Government's method of

financing during the past four years has been a complete failure.

The Minister for Mines: Every Government has failed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The present Government have not lived up to the reputation that they boasted of. The Minister for Mines was all wrong when he was associated with the Labour party, but at the present time he is supposed to be one of the smartest men we know of, and, by the way, I heard it stated the other day that he was likely to associate himself with the Country party, because they have promised him the leadership.

The Minister for Mines: I am still waiting for them to come along.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No man has been abused more than the present Minister for Mines between the years 1911 and 1916, and of course those who were associated with him as well. It was pointed out that he was devoid of business acumen and business ability.

The Minister for Mines: That is my saving grace.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The people were told that so often that they came to believe it, and as they thought the present occupants of the Treasury bench were endowed with special genius they decided to put them into office. Everything then, of course, was expected to run smoothly. What did they do? They carried out one promise in the first year they were in office, and that was to make the deficit disappear by funding it. Then they proceeded to build up a deficit which in four years, became twice as big as the deficit for which the Labour party were responsible in six years. I want the Government to tell the country straightforwardly what an utter mess they have made of things.

The Minister for Mines: Do you think the country would have to be told it to recognise it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Open confession is good for the soul. If the Government will act honestly the people will respect them, and the only way for them to act honestly is to make this admission, "We wrongly condemned the Labour party and while we hoped to make an improvement, we have to admit that we were unable to do so." There is not the least doubt the people already realise the mistake they have made. The Estimates introduced this year show no evidence of that careful consideration which they ought to have received. In view of the fact that for this year a larger revenue than has even been known in the history of the country is forecasted, the Government should have been prepared to finish up the financial year without any deficit whatever.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [8.16]: There are one or two matters referred to by the last speaker on which I should also like to touch. The member for North-East Fremantle has

accused the Government of subsidising the people in the country to the extent of £60,000 per annum in the shape of reduced fertiliser rates. I do not think it can be doubted that it is good policy to lower the fertiliser rates, since we know that the use of fertilisers increases the productivity of our soils by at least 50 per cent. To put it another way, if our farmers were prevented from using fertilisers, the production of the wheat belt would be reduced by at least one-half. Land which without fertilisers produced five or six bushels to the acre, is now producing 10 or 12 bushels with the aid of fertilisers. The policy of the Government in the matter of railway transit is to return empties free of cost. Now, is it not equally good policy for the Railway Department to grant a small concession with regard to transport of fertilisers when they know that their traffic in the shape of products from the soil will thereby be increased 100 per cent.? The thing speaks for itself. Is there a business house in Perth that would not take on such a proposition? Then there is the question of soldier settlement. Unquestionably the policy of the present Government has been all in favour of the returned soldier. He has not merely had the opportunity of treating for one improved property, but has been given his choice of several improved properties in various stages of development. Moreover, in many cases the returned soldier has had the advantage of a walk in, walk out proposition, with plant and implements and horses and everything required for a going concern. This year some of the returned soldiers who have been on properties for only two seasons will find themselves on velvet. The explanation is that some of our farmers who are growing up in years, and in some instances have lost sons at the Front, have been giving up farming, and returned soldiers have come into such properties. Within four miles of my own farm there is a property which is being worked by the widow of a returned soldier in conjunction with two returned soldiers brothers. Another property I know of, formerly worked by one man, is now being worked by two returned soldier brothers. I know also of another property, worked by only one man before, that is now being worked by two returned soldiers. Thus the statement that 1,800 returned soldiers have been settled on farms does not mean that they have been settled on 1,800 separate farms; but it does mean that with regard to land settlement our returned soldiers have been placed in a position which is unequalled in any other Australian State and, I believe, in any other part of the world. In that respect the returned soldiers have been faithfully served by the present Government. I regret that I was prevented from hearing the Budget speech last week. It is not my intention to go through the figures submitted by the Premier, but I may draw special attention

to return No. 14 furnished by the hon. gentleman, the return dealing with trade, production, population, etc. I may also refer to a remark of the "West Australian" on the Budget speech. The remark was that the Premier did not intend during this session to impose any additional taxation, but that he would depend on the development of the State generally and of the various industries in particular for pulling through with a deficit of about £400,000. I am aware that this afternoon the Premier referred to the necessity for imposing additional taxation. My view is that the people engaged in trade and commerce ought to shoulder some of the responsibility, as well as the farmer and the primary producer.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Will you support a tax on unimproved land values? You cannot get at those people otherwise.

Mr. HARRISON: We have had brokers and speculators dealing many times with cargoes coming to this State, and putting an extra profit on them every time, and the consumers in this State have had to pay those extra profits.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How will you get at those speculators?

Mr. HARRISON: By an income tax that is both increased and graduated.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That must apply to everyone.

Mr. HARRISON: I admit that, but the tax represents no difficulty to anyone who has the income. If a man has not the income, he will not be called upon to pay the tax. The higher the tax imposed, the higher would be the ability to bear taxation. Personally I should like to be paying a big income tax. I would not mind paying dividend tax either. Income tax and dividend tax to my mind represent the best method of raising revenue.

Mr. Green: What about a tax on unimproved land values?

Mr. HARRISON: The income tax should not enter into trading relations as regards profits. The tax does not accrue until after a trader has done his business, and therefore it should not enter into business calculations for the following year. Unfortunately, I believe, it is the practice of traders to put on an extra profit in order to meet income taxation. That should not occur. Here is a point with regard to which I may utter a warning to industrialists. If traders pay their employees higher salaries or wages, they pass on the increased cost to the customer. And who is the customer? As a rule it is the salaried man. The purchasing power of the salaried man has become decreased, and he is in no better position than before. It is really like a dog chasing its own tail. The further the increases go, the worse will the position become. One cannot have a debit without having a credit somewhere else. In bookkeeping, if one gets a debit on one side, there must be a credit on the other side.

Hon. T. Walker: That is logic.

Mr. HARRISON: If I owe the member for Kanowna something, where does it come from?

Hon. T. Walker: If you owe me something, you are able to owe me something.

Mr. HARRISON: The fact is that we are travelling in a vicious circle and are getting no further forward.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you see the end of it?

Mr. HARRISON: The end of it is increased production. If the man receiving increased pay gives more for that increased pay, there will be a result.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It may not be possible to give more.

Mr. HARRISON: Very good. Then the higher return must be obtained by some other means. Someone else has to furnish it then. Where are we getting to? We are not getting into any better position. Return 14, to which I have referred, shows where this State gets its wealth from; and we are not getting it from the quarter to which I have just referred. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that our increased revenue is not due altogether to expansion of trade, but partly to the higher prices realised by the turnover. The prices of various goods that were held here until shipping became available rose considerably meantime, and thus the return from those exports was larger than it would have been under normal conditions. Wool exported in 1919-20 was valued at £3,937,000 as against £1,952,000 for the previous year. There was an increase in both quantity and price during 1919-20.

Hon. T. Walker: Are you not confusing price and value?

Mr. HARRISON: I said "quantity and price." They both enter into the consideration.

Hon. T. Walker: But price does not mean value.

Mr. HARRISON: Price represents value. Wool is more valuable to this State when it has been exported and the money which it represents is returned for it.

Hon. T. Walker: But price and value are two different things.

Mr. HARRISON: I shall not enter into that question. Our gold production, unfortunately, is going back. Of timber there have been scarcely any shipments at all. Now I come to the figures of area of land under cultivation. That area has increased, and according to the statistics published in this morning's newspaper is still increasing. The increase amounts to 20 per cent. On going into return No. 14 one recognises that nearly the whole of our increased prosperity has come from the primary industries. We have in this State no secondary industries that assist our export trade. In fact, the products dealt with in the secondary line are now largely handled by our various State trading concerns. That brings me to a State

trading concern from which I think better results should be realised than we are getting to-day. The State Implement Works have been in existence for a number of years, and the sole agency for those works has been given to a certain firm. The results are not what they should be. There is something wrong. Last year we imported agricultural implements which could have been manufactured by the State Implement Works to the value of £86,000, made up of £57,000 representing Australian goods and £29,000 goods from overseas. If we had someone to assist the manager, Mr. Shaw, much of this importation might be obviated, for we could ourselves supply the bulk of these implements if the farming community knew exactly what is being made at the State Implement Works.

Mr. Jones: There must be something wrong with the agents.

Mr. HARRISON: It may be the fault of the agents or of the implement works.

Hon. T. Walker: Or of the farmer himself.

Mr. HARRISON: The State Implement Works would be well advised to carry out my suggestion of two years ago, and send an expert into the country after every machine with the object of learning whether that machine was doing its work just as well as were the imported machines. In the event of a machine not working satisfactorily that expert should be able to show the farmer how to adjust it to meet the local conditions. If we had such an expert travelling through the country, learning where machines failed, and showing the customer how to adjust the machine, the sales would be largely increased.

The Minister for Works: Where have the machines failed?

Mr. HARRISON: I do not say they have failed. Some of them have done good work. But how is it that we have annually £57,000 worth of agricultural implements imported from the Eastern States?

The Minister for Works: We did £126,000 worth of trade last year, which was the largest annual output.

Mr. HARRISON: You should have increased it.

The Minister for Works: We had neither the men nor the material to increase it.

Mr. HARRISON: The trade of Western Australia is worth having, because not only has the landed cost of the imported article to be met, but there is also a further percentage for distribution, which as a rule is calculated at nearly 30 per cent. There is a fine margin for the State Implement Works!

The Minister for Works: We could not get material at any price.

Mr. HARRISON: At all events, that has not obtained right through the piece. The farmers should patronise the State Implement Works and, on the other hand, the works should be prepared to meet the requirements of the farmers. I know what the duties of a selling agent are, I know also

the duties of the people to the State, and I know what should be the duties of a manufacturer to his clients.

Hon. T. Walker: You are the leader of a great party; yet you have never said so much for them as you are saying for us now.

Mr. HARRISON: Land settlement is developing very rapidly. Surveyors have been through the North-West and have worked also from Merredin down southwards. There is there a very large area of land, some of it of first class quality. I believe it will be taken up and that the selectors will do remarkably well. Even now the wheat districts offer better opportunities than some of the other portions of the State. I feel satisfied that with the increased price of butter there will be a rapid development in butter production, and that in the near future Western Australia will be an exporting rather than an importing State. The only thing required is an increased number of people who are willing to leave the towns and take up legitimate work.

Mr. Thomson: They won't do that while they can get seven guineas a week for driving a cart.

Mr. HARRISON: If such wages are given by judges sitting in the Arbitration Courts, who do not seem to realise the position of those who have to pay such wages, it can only end in a collapse of the primary industries. It is all very well at present, while we are getting top prices for our wheat and other commodities, but there is nothing to warrant a continuance of this condition for a long period. We hope that the high prices may be maintained, if only to allow us to meet these obligations. Unquestionably the only way by which to redeem the State is to encourage valuable work. There are too many in this State living on the game.

Hon. T. Walker: What game?

Mr. HARRISON: Living on their wits. Take our mines: Between the prospector and the legitimate investor, how many are there who do nothing but live on their wits? Look at our amusements, the racing and the trotting: Between those legitimately employed in affording pleasure and recreation to the citizens who require such amusement, how many are there who do nothing and who are of no use to the State? Again, in all our lines of business, how many are there in excess of requirements, agents, brokers, and others similarly engaged?

Hon. T. Walker: What would you have them do? They cannot all go farming.

Mr. HARRISON: They are living as parasites on the backs of the producers. If we require to develop and progress, these men ought to be pushed into something reproductive.

Hon. T. Walker: Who is going to push them?

Mr. HARRISON: It can be done through co-operative work and co-operative energy. That would be one way of getting rid of

them. Unless something is done, the State cannot continue to meet its obligations. The more quickly the people recognise that they must do something, the sooner shall we come out of the slough of despond and make our revenue and expenditure meet.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [8.40]: A glance at the Estimates shows that we are in a position similar to that of the Federal Government, in that we have a buoyant revenue. But a further investigation will show that, apart from incomes and outgoings, there is a pretty big fly in the ointment, as will be seen when we notice the resemblance between our own State and the Federal arena in respect of the outgoings. In both Federal and State activities, unfortunately, there seems to be a growing tendency for those outgoings to continually increase, and to outstrip the income. I do not intend to get into analytical "holts" with the Budget figures, for no good purpose could be served.

Hon. T. Walker: I think it could. I wish you would get into grips with them.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: One can reserve one's efforts in that direction until the items are reached. It is all very well for members to be filled with optimism and hope and faith. Optimism is not going to carry us right through. The Premier, at Herne Hill the other day, stated that, given 50,000 additional people, we could afford to let the deficit look after itself. This, no doubt, is right, but when the Premier speaks in this light and airy fashion of the expected newcomers, we should like an assurance that every effort is being made to prepare for their absorption. The other evening I attended at the town hall a meeting of the Westralian Products League. Some time previously I had joined that body, feeling that if we could follow out the ideas of the league, great good would accrue. A little while ago I saw in the "Daily News" an article headed "That Eastern Drain." The reference was not to anything down East Perth way, but to the Eastern drain upon our finances in respect of those things which we could grow or produce for ourselves. In June last we sent away £676,780 for articles imported from the Eastern States. Hon. members will say that all this is not new, that it has been brought up time after time. I think the oftener we bring it up and direct attention to it, the better for the State. The Government Statistician provided figures showing that for boots and shoes £41,675 was sent away. Yet we export thousands of hides every year and have tannic acid in various forms waiting to be utilised. We have all the raw materials and all the facilities for supplying our wants, and yet only a fraction of the footwear required in this State is being manufactured locally. The other evening I had a very interesting conversation with the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), who pointed out shoes that were

being made locally at a very moderate price as compared with the price of the imported article. Yet it appears that people will insist upon having footwear from America, or from the Eastern States, or from Stafford, or from some of the other manufacturing centres of the old country. Apparently our locally made articles are not good enough for them. I listened with the greatest interest to the addresses delivered at the meeting in the Town Hall, when it was advocated that the people of Western Australia should be patriotic and should support the goods made in this State. I had the pleasure of introducing to the Premier a deputation who asked not for money but for sympathy and help, which the Government could give to such a movement. It is therefore, especially opportune to-night to emphasise the importance of supporting the league which is conducting an education campaign to convince the people of this State of the need of buying locally made articles; and of retaining in the State the three-quarters of a million of money which month after month is being sent away to purchase goods which can be produced here. Let members think what the expenditure of this money locally would mean in the way of increased activity. Think what it would mean if we manufactured locally the £41,000 worth of boots, which at present we import every month! Think what it would mean if we produced the £43,265 worth of butter which in the month of June was imported from the Eastern States! The leader of the Country party (Mr. Harrison) said that our importations of butter would soon be cut off. The sooner they are cut off the better. When we realise however, that so recently as the month of June £43,000 was sent to the Eastern States to supply Western Australia with butter, it seems that we must still be some distance off supplying our own requirements. Biscuits and confectionery of a quality equal to anything produced in Newcastle, Sydney or Melbourne, are being made in Western Australia; yet in June we sent over £20,000 to the Eastern States for articles of this description. We import dried fruits. Mr. De Garis, a most enterprising man, visited this State recently. We require someone with similar enterprise to push the sale of our own dried fruits, wine, and fresh fruits.

Mr. Troy: Are you a prohibitionist?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am not. If we had someone of Mr. De Garis's capacity in this State, we should soon cut out this monthly bill of £8,485 now paid to the Eastern States for dried fruits. We can grow some of the finest fruits and can produce raisins, sultanas and currants equal to any grown elsewhere, and it is remarkable that we should be sending such a large sum to the Eastern States for these commodities. We should be supplying our own requirements in jams and jellies. It seems necessary to urge the outside public to be patriotic and to support our local industries. Recently I heard the wife

of a member of this House state that "this products' league wants us to buy local rubbish, rather than Jones's jam."

Mr. Thomson: The local industries pay rates and taxes here and Jones does not.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We can produce the fruit and carry on the industry just as well as it is carried on in the Eastern States; yet we continue to import tons of rubbish—to use a vulgar term I would call it mush. Nothing should appeal more to the people of this State than the idea of turning our locally grown fruit into jams and preserves and retaining this large sum of money in the State. A great development has lately taken place in the bacon and ham industry, but so recently as June last £10,984 was sent to the Eastern States to supply our requirements of these commodities. For milk we sent away £19,000, and for one month's supply of potatoes £12,482. So one might continue right through the list. In that month we sent out of the State three-quarters of a million of money for goods which could easily be produced here. I deem it my duty to specially direct the attention of members to the existence of this league, which has as its motto "My country first."

Mr. Troy: Australia first?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Western Australia first, Australia second, Britain and the Dominions third and the outside world last. During the war over 200 new industries were started in Australia. Some of them were of considerable importance and are now employing large numbers of people. They represent a considerable outlay of capital, and offer a field of employment for many of our returned soldiers and sailors. That forward movement has been confined almost entirely to the Eastern States. In Western Australia there has been very little development in the way of new industries. Some two years ago, while visiting Sydney, I made inquiries from the then Treasurer, Mr. Fitzpatrick, who supplied me with a list showing the new industries started in New South Wales. It will be said that the Eastern States had war moneys to spend and had almost unlimited capital to work upon. It is true that they were enjoying the cream of the war expenditure, while we in Western Australia got nothing more than the crumbs from the table. It is interesting to note the variety of new industries which were started in that State during the war. While we were stagnating, and while we were retarded in our efforts, largely on account of the war and the lack of funds, the people in New South Wales availed themselves of the golden opportunities presented to them. However, there is all the more reason why we should now try to conserve our industries and encourage a greater volume of output, in order to cut off this Eastern drain to which I have referred. This list comprises textiles, machinery for carding, finishing, gilling, wool yarn, agricultural machinery, a canning plant at Lecton irrigation area, motor cycles, collapsible tin and lead tubing

and caps for tooth paste, stamped metal handles and fittings for cabinets, roll top desks, phonograph cabinets, steel works, coke ovens and the by-products benzole, solvent naphtha, carbolic acid, crysilic acid, naphthaline, creosote, disinfectants, distilled tar, railway axles, extraction of oil from timber, metal badges, asbestos roofing and building material, an asbestos mine opened, roofing tiles, fire bricks, fibro cement roofing, reinforced concrete, white lead, paint and varnish works, boot factories largely extended, saddle trees, woollen goods, a new loom built, woollen and silk hosiery, linen goods, mungo—the waste produced in a woollen mill from hard spun or felted cloth or from tearing up old clothes used in making cheap cloth, mechanical orchestras, sewing machines, wood and tin toys, children's tricycles, bottles, watch cases, rabbit traps, horse iron, linseed oil, bronze and copper work, chemicals, perfumery, confectionery, meat extracts and tinned vegetables. That list shows the enterprise which has been displayed in the Eastern States during recent years, and it should certainly give us heart and encouragement to follow in their footsteps. The Premier has expressed his sympathy with the league, and his anxiety to help it. The league has asked him not for financial aid but for sympathy. If householders showed sympathy with the league by supporting locally produced and manufactured articles, they would be doing a great deal towards stopping this Eastern drain and would retain in this State for the support of additional population here, the large amount of money which is now being sent to the Eastern States. Members may not regard the league as being so important as I consider it is, but I trust that when the people of this State read their copies of the "West Australian" and the "Daily News" to-morrow, they will have their eyes opened to this opportunity to help their own State by supporting locally made goods, provided manufacturers do their part by supplying articles of the best quality. Certain remarks were passed this evening with regard to railway freights and superphosphates. I am sorry the member for North-East Fremantle is not here. Those areas which are producing hundreds of thousands of bags of wheat to-day, some years ago were considered impossible from the wheat-growing standpoint. In conversation with an old farmer in Kellerberrin years ago I was informed that this was not considered to be a wheat-growing district when he began farming. It was only by the introduction of superphosphate, by early seeding, by using early varieties of wheat, and by fallowing that wheat growing had been made possible there. Occasionally wheat could be grown, but only at long intervals would it come to a head. For three seasons out of four the wheat would not mature. I have seen places where, without the use of superphosphates, the wheat had grown perhaps two or three inches high with an ear about a quarter of an inch long, and alongside, where the super had done its work, there was to be seen wheat from 4ft. to 5ft. 6in. in height with full ears.

It is evident that superphosphate has made possible an industry which would not have been in existence to-day but for that commodity. As the leader of the Country party has pointed out, other countries consider that there should be concessions in regard to returned empties. Anything that will increase the carriage of goods on the railways is a good proposition. In New Zealand superphosphate is carried free. The agriculturists there are far-seeing enough to know that it pays them in the long run to do so. I do not think there is much ground for cavilling at the carriage of superphosphate at a slightly cheaper rate than perhaps some hon. members would like to see. One has only to look at what the farmers have to pay in increased rates in other directions to realise that if they obtained a concession in the carriage of superphosphate they are paying out on other lines in the same way that the rest of the community is doing. Any concession there might be on the carriage of superphosphate would be far outweighed by the additional burdens imposed upon the farming community, burdens which no doubt will continue to increase, because a large proportion of the £336,000 to which I have referred will come from the country districts. I desire to see secondary industries encouraged and expand. I also want to see the natural industries of the State, which are not of a parasitic growth, but the natural outcome of the development of the primary industries, also go ahead. Without quoting the figures mentioned in the Budget, I wish to give the House a few simple statistics. With regard to the industries of Western Australia, for the past 12 months the agricultural industry has turned out a value equal to 27 per cent. of the whole. The pastoral industry has turned out 26 per cent., and the mining industry 14 per cent. The dairying, poultry, and bee-farming industries are responsible for four per cent., and forestry and fisheries five per cent., while the manufacturing section is responsible only for 14 per cent. It is evident that there is a big field for the development of our manufactures, in flour mills, for instance. It is a good idea to keep the bran and offal, and the phosphatic acid which remains with it, within the country. Rather than send away wheat in its unprepared state we should have mills here, whether co-operative or any other form of mill, export our flour, and keep the offal in the country. In this way we shall do good, not only to the producer, who will get better value for his produce, but also to the dairy farmer, the pig raiser, and those who keep stock generally, by making available to them a fair proportion of the offal at a fair price. Although the Western Australian manufacturing districts are only contributing 14 per cent. of the total value of the production of the State, the value of Australia's production per head of the population was slightly higher than that of the balance of the Commonwealth. It is pleasing to note the energy of the member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) and the member for North Perth (Mr. Smith) on the question of

woollen mills. This project is worthy of the best support the Government can give it, as well as the support of people who have money to invest. Those hon. members have been most assiduous in their attention to this particular development, and I hope before long to see woollen mills operating in Western Australia. In the other States they were started under less favourable opportunities than present themselves in Western Australia to-day. Woollen goods are being turned out in Onkaparinga, Geelong, Marrickville, and Tasmania, where they are producing rugs, blankets, and other things equal to anything produced elsewhere. We have the material in Australia, and there is no reason why the quality should not be of the best. I hope it will not be long before the necessary buildings are put up, and mills are turning out these lines in Western Australia, so that we can keep our produce within the country, and render it unnecessary for money to be sent abroad for this class of goods. At present we send our wool 12,000 miles overseas, have it made up, and brought back again with 100 per cent. added to the price. This sort of thing also applies to hides. I should like to draw the attention of the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) to a paragraph I came across the other day. I believe that in the rivers of the North-West there are crocodiles or alligators. That hon. member is indefatigable so far as the North-West and the Gascoyne are concerned, and I thought I would bring this paragraph under his notice to see whether he could do something to encourage the industry foreshadowed in the newspaper cutting. A gentleman wanted a new pair of brown shoes, and went to his bootmaker about them. The bootmaker suggested crocodile leather as being most up to date, the cost of such a pair of shoes being four guineas. The bootmaker lifted down a roll of leather and spread it before his customer and said that it was ordinary cow skin made into imitation crocodile leather, and treated to make it look scaly and "crockish." The bootmaker laughed when his customer asked for real instead of imitation crocodile leather, and assured him that all the crocodile leather shoes in Australia were made of this imported stuff. He said, too, "If you will get me a real crocodile I will buy it from you." The article concluded—

There seemed something queer about it in a country that grew the beast unaided—if one shipload was brought from the North, and tanned, the footneeds of every modish miss in Australia would be honestly supplied; and then how about supplying the rest of the world?

The question then asked might well apply to our leather industry generally. Is it lack of enterprise or faultiness in our tanning operations, or the lack of good tanners that have brought about this position?

Mr. Brown: Shortage of crocodiles!

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I would suggest to the member for Gascoyne that it would be a fine thing to have real Gascoyne crocodile skin mementoes to sell to the passengers who went through on the steamers.

Mr. Smith: Do you suggest the hon. member should go out shooting crocodiles?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I asked a question in the House the other day with regard to wire netting supplies. I was informed by the Premier that owing to the excessively high cost and inability to obtain large quantities, only small lots were being purchased and supplied for fencing in water supplies. The Honorary Minister also gave me this astonishing answer to another question. I asked him whether inquiries had been made from the big manufactories which had been started in the Eastern States as to prices and supplies, so that consumers might secure cheaper supplies of this very necessary commodity. He replied that the department were so wide awake that it was known that works were being established in the Eastern States. The member for Williams-Narrogin interjected that the works had been moved from Parramatta Road Sydney, to Newcastle, and were only about two feet high. This struck me as extraordinary, seeing that when I was at the works two years ago they were turning out wire netting. I was assured by the manager, too, that they would be shortly in a position to supply the needs of Australia. Further than that, Mr. Massey Greene, in the House of Representatives two months ago, stated that within four months from that date the works would be able to supply the needs of Australia. Only this week I had a letter from Lysaght's saying—

You are quite wrong in supposing that we had moved our works to Newcastle. The Lysaghts that are starting work there is the company to which I refer above, and it is putting up works for the manufacture of sheet iron; corrugated and otherwise. This company has no connection with my company whatever. There is some question of another wire netting works starting at Newcastle, but from what I hear actual supplies from such a source can still be considered as in the dim future. In regard to my own company, we have considerably increased our output since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and although we are not yet quite turning out netting to the maximum capacity of our factory, we are able to supply all the netting we are asked for. As a matter of fact at the present moment we are just about at the end of our orders for rabbit netting and looking out for custom. During the last year or two we have made considerable strides in the manufacture of wire and it is through the increased output of our mills that we have been able to correspondingly increase the output of wire netting. I have recently been regularly supplying the New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian Governments and

have offered to supply the Queensland Government with anything required within reason.

The Premier and the Honorary Minister were correct in saying that the price was prohibitive, but was any serious attempt made to find out whether supplies were available. These people state that they have been supplying the needs of the Eastern States, but we here are informed that we cannot get any wire netting.

The Premier: Your question was answered.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: But I like my questions answered in something like a reasonable way. A matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Attorney General is the question of submitting an amendment of the Hire Purchase Act. I have already referred to hardships which have been inflicted on certain people in connection with the purchase of machinery on terms, and I have cited a case where one individual paid £96 on a harvester, and because he fell behind in his payments, he had the implement taken away.

Mr. Smith: By the State Implement Works?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No. I have submitted a copy of the Act to the Attorney General and I would like to hear from him or from the Premier that legislation on similar lines will be introduced.

The Attorney General: Have you considered the effect of it?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: If I paid £96 for an implement and then had it taken from me without getting any credit for the payment I had made, I should consider a distinct injustice had been done to me. The direction in which I wish to see legislation introduced is that if a vendor becomes again possessed of an implement, other than a binder, the original owner shall be given credit for it if a re-sale is made, less of course reasonable expenses incurred in bringing about that further sale. The man who had to give up the implement should certainly get something like a fair thing for it. We can imagine the effect of a farmer losing an agricultural implement in the middle of harvesting. Not only is an injustice done in a case such as that, but the unfortunate individual is subjected to great inconvenience and loss. I trust the Attorney General will see his way to introduce legislation so as to make the position of those who purchase implements on the hire system more secure than it is. I have already referred to the efforts which have been made by the members for North Perth and Canning in the direction of establishing secondary industries. It is gratifying to know hon. members are moving in this direction as well as in the direction of bringing about bulk handling of wheat. It is pleasing to find the member for Gascoyne, in season and out of season, advocating the principal needs of a portion of the North-West. Other members, too, are awakening to the importance of the establishment of industries and only to-day a question was asked on behalf of the member for Claremont (Mr. Duff) in the direction of bringing about the

repulping of waste paper. It is a matter of congratulation that the House is recognising the needs of the country and that it is beginning to realise also that there are potentialities which are capable of being developed. When we reach the Agricultural Estimates, I hope to learn from the Minister in charge of them what it is proposed to do in connection with the agricultural college. The Minister promised to lay on the Table of the House a report dealing with this question, but so far nothing has come to light. Then when we reach the Railway Estimates, I shall expect the Minister to tell me something in connection with the crops that are burnt by the sparks from his locomotives during the dry season. We have heard a good deal about the efficiency of the new spark arrester, and I hope that when it is fixed to the locomotives it will be completely successful. I did intend to say a good deal more but I do not propose to weary the House any further beyond expressing the hope that every effort will be made to foster the already established industries, and that everyone will regard it as a sort of gospel that he must preach that all must purchase goods manufactured in this country. Only to-day the member for Swan and I were gazing at the window of a grocery store and we failed to locate anything that was of local manufacture. If we declared that we would not purchase anything that was made outside the State, we would soon bring about increased activity in many ways and there would be in the State the circulation of a great deal of money which for so long has been going out of the State and still goes out of the State, a sum of money which runs into £600,000 per month.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.25]: I hope that hon. members will avail themselves of the opportunity to express their views with regard to the Budget as presented by the Premier. What I have to say will be said as briefly as possible because there is no need for me to reiterate the figures which have been so ably put before hon. members by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). I must congratulate that hon. member upon the study he made of the Budget and on his clear explanation regarding the comparisons between the administration of the present Government and that of the Labour Government of which he was a member. We know that the position of the State is best determined by the condition of its finances. If we are financially solvent, we are in a sound position. If we are badly off financially, the outlook is not good, nor is the community so happy. We know that the deficit amounts to over four millions, and that although the Premier has prophesied a surplus on this year's operations and a reduction in the deficit, there is now a likelihood that that hope will not be fulfilled. Although there is a possibility of our getting high prices for some of our commodities, and that there is likely to be an

increase in the earnings of the business undertakings operated by the State, other things may arise to alter the complexion of affairs. This afternoon the Premier intimated that he proposed to raise the railway rates because of the new Arbitration Court award. The previous speaker said that we had a buoyant revenue, but I would point out that the buoyancy cannot be permanently maintained. A number of factors have naturally assisted towards that buoyancy, and will assist this year and probably next year, but those factors will not operate as the years go on. Now is the time therefore for the Treasurer to take the opportunity to put the affairs of the State on a satisfactory basis so that when high prices cease and lower prices operate again, we shall be able to face the future with some certainty. Our buoyant revenue is due entirely to the fact that our products have been bringing very high prices in the world's markets. We have received a very high price for our wool, a high price for our wheat, and a high price for our timber; and since all this money has been returned to this State, it has been subjected to taxation. The income tax has been increased, and the revenue received from income tax has been a considerable amount during the last year. During the same period the railway earnings have risen. All that revenue has considerably augmented our funds. But that sort of thing is going to end. In my opinion there is no doubt that we are living in a state of unreal prosperity. There is an air of prosperity throughout the land, but to my mind it is not real, not sound. City lands are bringing high prices to-day, and so are country lands, and large amounts of money are changing hands. There seems to be any amount of money in the pockets of the people for the purchase of goods and commodities. Little value is attached to money to-day, because it has little purchasing value. In former days we prized a pound, but we do not prize it so much to-day, simply because it goes nowhere. In my opinion our prosperity is very unreal. It will last as long as the Commonwealth Government can raise loans to be expended by the States in soldier settlement and in building war homes and in cashing gratuity bonds. While that sort of thing is in operation the State is all right, because plenty of money is being expended. But that time is going to cease, and when it does cease, and when our wool and wheat bring normal prices, as they will in a few years when all the other countries of the world are producing as they were before the war, then the real position of this State will be determined. It is due to whatever Government may be in power to so arrange the finances of this country as to provide for the time when there will not be the same amount of money available for taxation as there is to-day, because there will not be the huge earnings there are to-day, although the interest on the war loans will have to be met and

State loans will have to be renewed. Then, in my opinion, this country will touch bottom. That time is going to arrive in a few years. I am not in the least influenced by the unreal prosperity now apparent. It is not real, and it will not last. The Government in power ought to provide for what is going to happen in the not distant future. This year the revenue will be buoyant again, because of the money which the producers will receive and which will be subject to taxation. Moreover, there will be bigger earnings from wool and wheat and timber. This year will be all right if we get the prices expected. But, in my opinion, unless we look ahead and try to reduce the deficit and provide for the future, the time is coming when we shall be in a position of extreme difficulty, because of reduced earnings due to normal prices. While our revenue will be reduced, the interest on our loans will be just as heavy, and moreover our loans will be falling due. I repeat, therefore, that our present prosperity is largely artificial. I do not deny for a moment that the man on the land is having rather a good time, especially the wool grower. But the time of normal prices must return, and then we shall know the real position of Western Australia. I wish to say a few words regarding railway rates. The Premier intimated this afternoon that railway freights and fares shall be further advanced. Let me repeat the warning I have already given the Premier and the Government, that if they increase railway rates any further, particularly rates on the commodities required by the people in the back country of Western Australia, that back country will cease to exist as a producing factor. There is no doubt about it. It was brought home to me when I was in Meekatharra early this year. I observed the conditions of the workers there, and I say those workers cannot possibly exist and carry on their industry if the railway rates on necessary commodities are to be raised and the price of those commodities still further increased. These people living 600 miles from Perth have to have the whole of their requirements carried over the railways, and the industry in which they are employed is now working on the barest possible margin of profit, and cannot exist if railway rates are further increased. Let me tell the farmers' representatives that will be a very bad thing for this country. If the gold mining industry is injured, as it will be injured by further increases of railway rates, it is going to be a very severe setback for Western Australia as a whole, and the farmer will feel it also. The workers in the gold mining industry will be compelled to ask for higher wages, because they will not be able to live on their present wages; and as a result the industry will close down. If the Government raise the railway rates, they will be doing it with their eyes open. A Government with the interests of the country at heart will look

around and find other means of raising revenue than that of always putting the burden on the unfortunate primary producers of Western Australia. Perhaps I shall be asked, what can the Government do to make good the loss on the railways? I will offer one or two suggestions. Why not increase the income tax, particularly on incomes over, say, £2,000 a year? To-day, when £1 has not the value which 10s. had a few years ago, the incomes of a great many people are considerably increased. I suppose there are five times as many people now receiving £2,000 a year as there were before the war. If a heavier income tax were imposed, by which the person receiving £2,000 and over per annum would be taxed reasonably, then the revenue of the State would be considerably augmented. There are many people to-day receiving £1,000 a year who were not making £500 a year before the war. The big prices of wheat and wool and other commodities have given many people considerable increases.

The Minister for Mines: But not net increases.

Mr. TROY: Not net; but, still, the incomes are considerably in excess of those which they received a few years ago. That is one way in which the revenue could be augmented, and it is far better to do that than to increase railway rates, which action will, in my opinion, kill the back country. Take, for instance, the men spoken of by the leader of the Country party, who speaks in a certain way but rarely acts in that way. The hon. member asked, what about the big business interests in the cities? I have spoken about those interests frequently. I have here a report of a meeting of the Perth Chamber of Commerce, a meeting at which Mr. Pilkington was present and spoke. That gentleman commended the president upon the excellence of the report, and said it would be a good thing if all the members of the Government could be induced to read the report, and, although that might be asking too much, could also be made to understand it. I do not know whether Mr. Pilkington's remark was intended to be sarcastic; but here is a body of men meeting in committee and giving gratuitous advice to the people generally, and to the Government more particularly, as to how the country should be run. This is a body of men who do not act up to their obligations to the State as they should do. They are good at giving advice, but where do they come in as regards contributing to the revenue of the country? The leader of the Country party said that we were moving in a vicious circle. In saying that the hon. member was merely mouthing a foolish statement made from time to time by people who want to excuse what is going on not only in this country, but throughout the British Empire. We are not moving in a vicious circle. The people are chasing after the high cost of living, and the money is pouring into the pockets of people engaged in commercial

activities in the cities and the seaport towns. There is the position. Those people do not contribute very much towards the primary industries of Western Australia, nor do they contribute to the revenue of this country as they should do. They may speculate a little here or there in land, but primarily their business is importing or exporting; that is to say, they are taking their toll on all that is imported into this country and all that is exported from this country. They pay no railway rates. They may pay dividend tax or income tax, but in neither respect do they pay any more than any other individual in the community. Very often they pay less, and what they do pay, the people pay for them. It is up to these gentlemen to pay their quota to the revenue of this State and to assist in the development of industries in the back country, industries which are responsible for the existence and prosperity of the towns. That is what is wrong with Western Australia and with the whole of Australia. For five long years the merchant has had Australia by the throat. Let people say what they like about profiteering. The "Bulletin" and other newspapers have printed the balance sheets of importing and manufacturing firms in the Eastern States, showing enormous profits; and what has occurred there has also occurred in Western Australia, though in a lesser degree by reason of the smaller volume of business in this State. These people have not contributed their quota at all. Here we have a Government with power to make them pay their quota, but the Government prefer to put the burden on the primary producer. I speak as one who represents the people engaged in the primary industries. I claim to be a truer representative of the primary producer than a lot of those who pretend to represent him but whose actions are by no means up to the level of their professions. There was a time when the Minister for Railways would have voiced the same principles as I am expressing now, but he is associated with a party who are not prepared to carry out the policy which we on this side believe to be in the best interests of Western Australia. And neither are the Country party prepared to carry out that policy. They will go a certain distance, but they will not go the whole hog; and that is my objection to them. They come into this House and pretend they are acting in the interests of the primary producer, but they will not, unless forced to do so, follow such a policy to its logical conclusion. I say this with all due apologies to the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), who, at least in speech, is one of the whole-hoggers. The majority of them are not, and that is my objection to them as a party. I have no objection at all to them as individuals. It always arouses my indignation to think that these importers and exporters can sit in the cities and ports and make such enormous profits while taking very little risk indeed. Not one of them will

give credit to a man unless he has good reason to believe that the man is sound. They pay no harbour dues, no customs duties. They pass these things on to the community. Increased harbour dues and higher customs duties do not affect them, as they can pass on the increases. They are the people who give gratuitous advice to the Government as to how the country should be carried on. I have never had much regard for the professions of these people. If there is one body in the community which deserves less consideration than any other, it is the body of men constituting the Chambers of Commerce, many of whom are merely birds of passage. I remember a gentleman, W. E. Moxon, who was President of the Perth or Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and from time to time gave gratuitous advice to former Governments of the country. He was the chief spokesman of the Chambers of Commerce in his day. He lived here but a few years, and then went to Queensland; and he is giving gratuitous advice to the Government of Queensland now. Possibly he will be removed to Victoria, and in that case no doubt he would be found advising the Victorian Government. He had not a solitary interest in this country. He could give us advice as to the running of a country in which he had no interests, except that he was the agent of a company whose head quarters are in another State. These are largely the gentlemen who represent the Perth Chamber of Commerce, who are responsible for supporting in this State and in the Federal arena Governments which are always laying burdens on the primary producer, and at the same time mouthing principles to the contrary. Then there is the question of land tax. Twelve months ago I sold a property in Perth. Yesterday I could have got an advance of £200 on the price I had previously accepted. All properties have largely increased in value, not only in Perth but also in the country. Yet there is apparently no desire on the part of the Government to increase the land tax, by which the people living in the city would pay their quota to the State revenue. City property holders do not pay increased railway rates, for they are not engaged in primary production. As I pointed out on the Address-in-reply, the amount received in revenue from land tax last year was £1,000 less than that received 10 years ago, notwithstanding the enormous increase in land values. City people, the value of whose properties has been increased by the expenditure of money in the country and the development of our primary industries, escape their fair share of taxation. There are many means of raising revenue. In Queensland and in New South Wales the State Governments have public trustee departments. In this State the work is carried on by the West Australian Trustee, Executor and Agency Company, Ltd. It is a very good business, and the company makes large profits. The Government do all bankruptcy, probate and intestate work, and there is no

reason why they should not undertake this trustee work, as in Queensland and New South Wales. It is naturally a Government business, for who could be better trustees for the individual than the State Government? The funds of their clients could be invested, just as are the Savings Bank funds.

Mr. Smith: We have had some shocking examples of how the Government manage business concerns.

Mr. TROY: Shocking examples of how officials, not the Government, manage such concerns. There has been no shocking example of how the Government Savings Bank is run.

Mr. Smith: The Government Savings Bank may be run at a loss, for all we know.

Mr. TROY: Nobody doubts the financial position of the Savings Bank. What has been done with the Savings Bank could be done by a public trustee department operated by the Government.

Mr. O'Loghlen: It is in operation in New Zealand.

Mr. TROY: Again, we are told by members of the Country party that we ought to eliminate waste, that everybody ought to be usefully employed. The Chamber of Commerce tells us the same thing, advises us to force out into the agricultural areas those who are not doing a fair day's work. In view of this, why do not the Government introduce State insurance? Queensland has made a great success of the enterprise. In Western Australia we have 40 insurance companies operating, each with a richly furnished office for which a high rental is paid, and each with a numerous and expensive staff. Fancy 40 such companies living on this small community of 334,000 persons! Strange to say, although we are told that the presence of these 40 companies means competition, they all, even to the Westralian Farmers, charge the same rates. I commend to the Government, and to the leader of the Country party, by whose grace the Government remain in power, the opportunity here presented for forcing out into the primary industries a body of useful, intelligent men, who, no doubt, would do a great deal of good in the country, while the State would be able to successfully carry on their business in the city much more cheaply than it is done at the present time. I am convinced that if the Government want revenue they can easily get it. There are undertakings now controlled by the Chamber of Commerce which the Government could very properly operate. But apparently the Government, when wanting money, have no policy other than saddling the unfortunate primary producer with further burdens. Yet they have the impudence to pretend to those people that their one care and thought is for primary production. That is what is wrong, and I do not think the Government will put it right. I should like to hear the Attorney General on the question of the establishment of a public trustee department.

Mr. Smith: Do you think the other side would put it right?

Mr. TROY: They would make the attempt.

Mr. Smith: You had a chance before.

Mr. TROY: And the success of our efforts is evidenced by the fact that the Government to-day are reaping a harvest in the shape of largely increased revenue from undertakings initiated by the Labour Government.

Mr. Smith: Reaping the whirlwind.

Mr. TROY: No, reaping the harvest. What does the Minister for Mines say?

The Minister for Mines: Oh, do not wake me up.

Mr. TROY: I do not doubt that if this party were to come into power again to-morrow, and were to introduce State insurance, the "Sunday Times" would be the first to misrepresent them. We should have in its columns, under scare head lines, the most alarming reports of what was happening in Queensland.

Mr. Smith. On the contrary, the "Sunday Times" would take out the first policy.

Mr. TROY: The Premier declared that a good deal of the industrial unrest is caused by the high cost of living. He said that if we all agreed to get down and work for 12 months we should put the State right.

Mr. Pickering: Do you not think there is something in that?

Mr. TROY: I admit it. But the reason for the industrial unrest is that the people engaged in laborious work, in the very best work in the country, are finding great difficulty in making ends meet. They are alarmed by the fact that their economic position is unsound, that they cannot make provision for themselves and their families. No man knocks off work for fun.

Mr. Pickering: Oh!

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you know of an instance?

Mr. TROY: A little while ago I had an opportunity for seeing the domestic conditions of some of our workers more clearly than ever the hon. member for Sussex has been able to do. I visited the homes of men engaged in what, from a health point of view, can only be described as the worst industry in Western Australia. In Meekatharra I went to the home of a man and his wife and four children. The man had cut out tobacco, sauces, jams and other like necessities, while the mother had patched and repatched the clothes of herself and her children till they were threadbare. If I had not seen these things, if I had been altogether removed from the industry for a number of years, I, too, like the hon. member, might have been inclined to discount such a statement as I am making. I saw this man going to work every day, and I divined that his wife knew by his pallid face that he was steadily contracting miner's disease. How is it possible for the minds of those people to be other than agitated and distressed? That is the position of numbers in the back coun-

try to-day. I want to say this to the member for Sussex—

Mr. O'Loughlen: I do not think it is worth while.

Mr. TROY: He may be able to do something in the council of his party. To-day the farmers are demanding for the wheat-grower export parity for wheat.

Mr. Brown: They will never get it.

Mr. TROY: I hope they never will. I am not more unselfish than others. I grow wheat myself, but I do think that the farmers will be more unreasonable and selfish, and the Country party not playing the game in demanding export parity for a commodity so essential to the well-being of the people. If the price of bread is raised to 1s. per loaf, thousands in this State will not be able to purchase it. Wages must go up, and industries must close down. All that is required for the local consumption of Western Australia is two million bushels. The few bushels to be contributed by each farmer to that local consumption will not make him much richer or poorer. At 7s. 8d. per bushel for local consumption the farmer is getting a fair thing for his commodity.

Mr. Smith: Especially since it is guaranteed.

Mr. TROY: I have heard members of the Country party say that the farmer is entitled to the export parity, that export parity is paid for coal. But it is not. Even if it was, it is not so essential to Western Australia as is the loaf.

Mr. Pickering: We do not hear much sympathy for the fruit growers.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We are with the fruit grower and the poultry farmer, too.

Mr. TROY: The price of 7s. 8d. a bushel is a fair one for all the wheat required for local consumption, and no farmer can say to the contrary, because that price gives more than a fair balance over the cost of production, even though the cost of production has increased.

Mr. O'Loughlen: When the Premier announced the 5s. a bushel guaranteed, he got more cheers than the Prince.

Mr. TROY: Regarding the balance of the wheat available for export, I hope the farmer will get all he possibly can for it. There was a time in Western Australia when the position of the farmers was as bad as it possibly could be. At that time the people of the State had to come to their assistance with the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds. If it had not been for the people of this State standing behind the farmers and assisting them in this way, at least 20 per cent. of the farmers would not have been able to hold on. They have been able to hold on by virtue of the fact that the people of the goldfields and the towns and elsewhere stood behind them, and advanced the money and kept them, on their holdings. Has any body of men ever been so well treated? There was much criticism of the Industries Assistance Board, but I can say as one who was reared on the land in New South Wales during the pioneering days that the farmers never received such support

as our farmers in Western Australia received. They were provided with water supplies, seed wheat, and superphosphate and an allowance of 9s. a day to maintain them on their holdings, so that they might be able to build up homes and competences for themselves. It was a wonderful policy, and it was made possible only by the fact that the people of the State stood behind the Government who were responsible for the policy, subscribed the money and paid the interest on it. Now, the farmers' day has come; but we should never forget that we shall have bad seasons again and, when they do come again, it is only a step from affluence to poverty for many of them. In New South Wales last year it was necessary to assist the farmers. South Australia has had to assist her farmers time and again, although they have had many periods of prosperity. I am not a philanthropist, but the difference between 7s. 8d. a bushel and the export parity on the few bushels which would represent my quota to the home consumption requirements of the State would neither make nor break me. I hope the Premier will announce a fair and reasonable price for wheat required for home consumption before the farmers get into their minds that they are going to receive export parity for it. If the Premier does this, there will be very little opposition from a majority of the farmers of this State. The farmers are not unreasonable men. A few of them might complain and a few might write to the papers; but if the Premier makes an announcement early, he will save a lot of trouble and a lot of industrial turmoil. If the Premier raises the price of wheat to the price being paid overseas, thousands of people will be unable to buy the loaf. Wages, too, will increase, and this will mean that many of our industries will be compelled to close down. I appeal to the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) from the motive of personal safety, to advise his farmer constituents to make a temporary loss for the greater good of the whole of the community.

Mr. Pickering: I had a motion before the House for a reduction of the tariff and no one supported it.

Mr. TROY: That was a waste of time. This House has no voice whatever in connection with the tariff.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why did not some of your 13 colleagues support you?

Mr. TROY: The hon. member knows this House has no power to deal with the tariff. If we had passed such a motion, the Federal Government would have laughed at it. The hon. member had his opportunity at the last Federal elections. I told all the people I addressed that the raising of the tariff would be one of the means by which the Federal Government would raise the necessary revenue to enable them to pay interest on the war loans and to meet their obligations. I knew it was coming. The hon. member had his opportunity then. Why did not he send in members who were pledged to oppose any increase in the tariff? Let those who were responsible for the present state of affairs accept the responsibility. I had no voice in

it, save that I did my best to warn the people of what has happened. Regarding the overseas party, it is a most unsound proposition to ask for export parity for any commodity produced in Western Australia and required for home consumption. If this principle is to operate, the people here will be no better off than those who are living 15,000 miles away and are dependent on our produce. Our people might as well be living in Germany, Austria, France, Italy, or any other country, because the fixing of the export parity will be tantamount to asking them to pay as much for the commodity as if they were living 15,000 miles away.

The Premier: Oh no, it would be exclusive of freight.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are charging here freight as well, except on flour.

Mr. TROY: There ought to be some consideration for the people living in the country where the commodity is produced.

Mr. Pickering: I wonder if the "Sunday Times" will reduce its charge for advertisements.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In view of the number of advertisements, that paper ought to be distributed free of cost.

Mr. TROY: The people living in this country should enjoy some advantage in respect to the commodities produced here. The workers of this country are being asked to produce, produce, produce, and they know that the greater proportion of the commodities they produce is sent overseas, and that of what remains they are charged the highest price possible for their requirements. There is no encouragement for them to produce under such a policy as that. They ask—"What is the use of producing? We are producing millions of pounds worth of wool, wheat, butter, and other commodities, and still we are suffering under the ever-increasing cost of living." We can well understand their standpoint. The workers must be considered. While we want all the money we can get to pay our taxation and particularly interest on our huge war debts, we ought at the same time to provide for the people in this country their living requirements at a reasonable cost. Moreover, if the export parity is insisted upon, it will mean a bigger handicap in the procuring of labour in the agricultural areas. The man who works for the farmer gets his commodities at a reasonable cost, but if the price is to be increased the farmer will be unable to get his clearing done so cheaply or his fencing so cheaply.

Mr. Pickering: He does not get it cheaply in any case.

Mr. TROY: He does.

Mr. Pickering: What, fencing wire?

Mr. O'Loughlen: In clearing and fencing the contractor is provided with mutton at a cheaper price than that for which it can be purchased elsewhere.

Mr. TROY: Yes, at 5d. or 6d. a pound, because that is one of the conditions of the contract. Any man working on a farm is

entitled to receive his requirements at as low a price as possible. That is the policy which should operate in the State generally. I am having some clearing done at the present time, and the man engaged upon it obtains the mutton he requires at 5d. a pound. I get my wheat gristed, and the man gets his flour at the cost price. I meet him in this way, and it pays to meet him. This should be the policy of the State. If it were the policy of the State, there would be less industrial unrest, because the men engaged in producing would feel that they were producing for themselves as well as for the rest of the people. I wish to explode the fallacy that, by carting fertiliser over the railways at a loss of £20,000 per year, the Government are embarking on a good business proposition. The same argument, if it were sound, might be applied to every other item carried over the railways. If the Government make a loss of £20,000 on any article carried over the railways, how can it be contended that it is a good business proposition? It is not more reasonable to cart a commodity at a loss for one section of the community than for another section of the community. No doubt the Government embarked upon this scheme of carrying fertiliser cheaply in order to give primary industries some advantage, but no man could possibly claim that it is a good business proposition. It might be called a good business proposition if the Government could see their way to grant the same concession to everyone else but, if they did so, they could not expect the revenue and expenditure to balance.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is good for development.

Mr. TROY: I do not think so. Next year we shall have to pay 15s. a ton more for our fertiliser. I know that the Government are bringing down some rock for the fertiliser companies at a great loss to the railways. The community get no advantage from that. In my opinion the companies are making an unnecessary charge by increasing their rates from year to year. Here is an opportunity for the Government to step in. After the Government bring down rock at low freights—rock which is to be converted into fertiliser—and give cheap freights to the farmer, the companies make the profit. I guarantee they are not operating at a loss. This is where the Government are making a mistake; this is where the trouble occurs. The Chamber of Commerce is quite satisfied that the State should carry on those operations which involve a loss, so long as the Government leave the profitable concerns in the hands of private enterprise such as the Executor Company, the Western Australian Bank, the Chamber of Commerce, Mt. Lyell Company, and Cumming, Smith, Ltd. They are quite satisfied so long as the good things are left in their hands, but, in the general interests of the country, that sort of thing is bad indeed. The Government are criticised for the losses in-

curred. We are told that the Government are not business men, that they do not show business ability. Immediately they do show business ability they are told that they are out for their pound of flesh, and that they should be generous. This is not an aid to good government. The Government are not allowed to show business ability at all when they are compelled to carry on the business of the country in the most unbusinesslike manner possible, and when the profitable business of the country is in the hands of people represented by members on the Government side of the House whose support is lost immediately the Government attack the interests they represent. This country cannot progress under such conditions. The Government will bring about national suicide if they increase the burdens upon the primary producers to a greater extent than exists to-day. I warn the Premier that if the railway rates go up the mining industry will be exterminated.

The Premier: The wages have to be paid.

Mr. TROY: Let the Premier tax the merchants in the city and make them pay their quota.

The Premier: They will not pay taxes. They pass them on all the time.

Mr. TROY: If the Premier would compel them to pay a stiff income tax they could not pass it on altogether. I would confiscate any income that exceeded a certain amount. How could a merchant pass on the tax if his income or profit could be confiscated so far as any sum exceeding, say, £5,000 net was concerned? It would not pay him to pass it on.

Mr. Davies: He would not make that in the second year.

Mr. TROY: It would not pay him to do so. Consider the helpless attitude of the Premier. He says, "These men will pass on any taxation." The business man passes it on, we are told, and cannot be taxed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The worker has to pay.

Mr. TROY: A measure should be introduced by which these men can be compelled to pay their fair quota of taxation. Any increase in railway rates will utterly cripple the back country.

The Premier: People must pay for the services rendered.

Mr. TROY: An increase in railway rates will mean higher cost of living in the back country, and this in turn will mean another demand for increased wages. The industries cannot stand it. The wheat grower, who will get 10s. a bushel this year for his produce, will be able to stand it, and the wool grower will also be able to pay it, because his costs are not very heavy. The mining industry cannot stand it. This question was brought under the notice of the Minister for Mines on the Murchison recently. It was stated in Kalgoorlie that the small increase asked for would kill the mining industry. What is the use of preaching about the development of our great gold mining

industry when a policy of this sort is put forward? It is mere talk and humbug, and there is no sincerity in it. The policy proposed by the Government will ruin Western Australia. Once the mining industry goes down, it will not very readily prosper again. We are told by the Premier that there is a shortage of labour in the gold-mining industry. Of course there is, Cue Meekatharra, Youanmi, and other centres being striking examples of this state of affairs. Men are being advertised for at £1 per shift at Payne's Find, but they cannot be secured. Most of the men engaged in the industry are falling into ill health and have no desire to remain in it. Once they leave, they will never go back. The only reason why they stay is because they have been so long connected with it that they are afraid to break with it. Many men who come to the surface cannot do a day's work on the surface for at least some time, and they have not got the wind. Once they break with the industry, they will break with it for good. Their wives are most anxious that they should do so, because they see their husbands going to an early grave. They are also most anxious that their children should not embark upon the industry. If the Premier overburdens the industry it will have to close down, and, when people leave it, they will not return to it. They would not go back to it now if they had other occupations found for them. It is a most unhealthy industry, and one which I would never ask a friend of mine to embark upon.

Progress reported.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [10.22] in moving the second reading said: This is the sort of Roads Closure Bill that we have almost every session. On this occasion two of the roads proposed to be closed are in Fremantle. No doubt the member representing that district will know all about them. Every session we have to close or alter the line of some road in Fremantle. It is evident that some foresight was wanting in years past on the part of the local authorities, or we should not have been troubled as we are now.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was no subdivisional plan.

The PREMIER: In Fremantle there is a square known as Queen-square, not very far from King's-square. The whole square has been placed on the plan as a road way. It is in fact registered as such. It is now proposed to alter that. For instance, Parry-street will continue through this square. There are four small blocks which form a square, the sides of which run east and west, and north and south. These roads will not be interfered with. The block which forms the square will in future not be registered as a road.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are gardens now.

The PREMIER: I know, and they will be set apart for garden purposes. The fact that they are gardens and not roads has caused us to make this alteration, to which there can be no objection.

Mr. Smith: Where is the plan?

The PREMIER: We have a plan here.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is a dangerous corner for traffic there.

The PREMIER: Even in Fremantle it is hardly necessary to have a road seven chains broad, which is what the road is at present.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is very dangerous there. There is a school on one side and a sharp corner on the other.

The PREMIER: I know. I am submitting this proposal at the request of the Fremantle Council. It is ridiculous that this land, which forms a square, should be registered as a road. It is also proposed to grant a proportion of Philips-street at North Fremantle to the British Imperial Oil Co., in exchange for a portion of Lot 47. The portion of the road to be closed is a portion of Philip-street. At present it runs over a sand hill, and is useless as a road. In exchange for this, portion of Lot 47, adjoining Lance-lot-street, is to be given by the British Imperial Oil Co. This is being done with the approval of the North Fremantle Council and will have the effect of improving the road. The third proposal is to close a public right of way in the Uduc repurchased estate. The estate has been bought and subdivided, with the result that the right of way is not needed. It does not serve anyone, and was merely a right of way set up on the original subdivision. When the estate came into the hands of the Government, the right of way had to be closed to fit in with the other subdivisions. There can be no objection to this. The fourth proposal is one in which hon. members will probably take some interest. It refers to the closing of a road passing in front of the present Supreme Court buildings. I will lay on the Table of the House a litho. showing what is intended to be done. There is a road running between the Treasury Gardens and some of the foreshore which has been improved. The ground is fenced in and there is a road running for about 200 yards into a dead end. At present there is a continuation of the road but it is not a public road. The road I am asking the House to agree to close merely runs for 200 yards past the Supreme Court building.

Mr. Munsie: The public will not be able to use it at all as a road.

The PREMIER: It cannot be used now, because it runs to a dead end. The public are permitted to go along the foreshore where there is a gravel track, but it is not a public road. It is not desirable that public vehicles should have the right to pass by the Supreme Court buildings in any case. We will not allow the road to be used. There is no reason why heavy traffic should go over

it, because there is plenty of room for it elsewhere. The closure of the street will not interfere with the traffic, which will merely be diverted to another road near the water. The plan will show what is proposed and in what manner the traffic will be deriated.

Mr. Smith: What is the reason for closing the road?

The PREMIER: The reason is that it runs into a dead end.

Mr. Smith: We do not close all roads that run into dead ends.

The PREMIER: I am sure the House will agree to close this road. It is necessary that there should be quietness near the Supreme Court.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is this a Government road?

The PREMIER: No, it is a public road 200 yards in length.

Mr. Smith: Have there been any complaints about noise?

The PREMIER: There have been complaints. We only propose to close this road to heavy traffic, not to pedestrians. The portion which is at present a road will be added to the gardens, which will thus have their area extended to that part of the fore-shore now being improved. The grounds are largely used by the general public, and will be of considerably greater value for recreation purposes. The road has only been used so far by motor cars and brewers' carts.

Mr. Munsie: Did the brewers' carts use it to supply the Supreme Court with beer?

The PREMIER: If hon. members have any doubt about the wisdom of closing the road I would like them to visit the locality and see what is going on there. I am sure they will be satisfied that the enlarged grounds will be an advantage. The only inconvenience will be that caused to those who formerly drove over the road with heavy vehicles.

Mr. Foley: Black Maria will have to go a bit further.

The PREMIER: Of course quietness must be observed in the vicinity of the Supreme Court. There were complaints a little while back about the noises that were going on in connection with a Fair which was held on the grounds in the vicinity of the Supreme Court.

Mr. Smith: Those Fairs will continue just the same from time to time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Tell us about the other road referred to in the Bill.

The PREMIER: I have referred to four.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are five proposals in the Bill.

The PREMIER: I shall lay the plans on the Table of the House and when the Bill is in Committee I shall give hon. members any further information they may desire.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.38 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 22nd September, 1920.

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

QUESTION—WHEAT FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION.

Mr. TROY (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister: What quantity of wheat was required for local consumption and seed in Western Australia last year?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: I am not in a position to answer that question without notice.

QUESTION—LAKESIDE FIREWOOD COMPANY, HAULAGE.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How much is the Lakeside Firewood Company paying for the use of Government engines to haul firewood from Lakeside to Kamballie? 2, What revenue, if any, were the Government receiving for the use of the line when the company was using its own engines?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The company now pays 7d. per ton on firewood hauled, being 3d. per ton for the use of the Government engine. 2, Fourpence per ton on firewood hauled.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, High School Act Amendment.
Returned to the Council with an amendment.

2, Building Societies.
Transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

To permit overdrafts.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.40]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, the provisions of the Agricultural Bank Act, 1906, should be amended in the direction