

mention, on behalf of the House, that the late Mr. Piesse and his family have been associated with the public life of Western Australia for many, many years, and that he, as well as his late brother, rendered very signal service to the development of the State. Though probably he was not in agreement with many who hold similar opinions in this Chamber, he was, I believe I may say, a friend to every man, and he always pursued that course which in his opinion was most calculated to preserve and advance the best interests of Western Australia. It may be remembered of him that what he did, he did well, and with all his heart. I join with the Premier and the leader of the Opposition in expressing to the bereaved relatives and friends my heartfelt sympathy. I ask hon. members to rise and carry the motion.

Question put and passed; members standing.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, 16th July, at 4.30 p.m.*

In submitting the motion, may I explain to hon. members that it is usual to adjourn, out of respect for the memory of an hon. member whether he is a member of this House or of another place, over one sitting day. On this occasion, however, owing to the fact that the funeral will be held at Wagin and that I am informed by the leader of the Opposition that most of the members sitting on that side of the House are desirous of attending the last rites at Wagin, rendering it impossible for them to return in time to be present at a meeting of the House to-morrow, and as, further, some members on this side of the House desire to attend, we have thought it well that the House should adjourn until Thursday next. May I also mention that a special train will leave Perth this evening, reaching Wagin at 7.30 to-morrow morning and returning to Perth to-morrow afternoon, thereby enabling members to reach

the City at about half-past ten to-morrow night. I hope those arrangements will be found satisfactory, and will meet the wishes of hon. members generally. I recognise that at this stage time is very valuable; but, under the circumstances, it seems to me that we could not have done either any less or any more for the purpose of meeting the exigencies of the occasion.

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 4.44 p.m.*

### Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 16th July, 1914.*

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

#### QUESTION—STATE DAIRY FARM, BRUNSWICK.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (for Hon. A. G. Jenkins) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Has any officer of the Health Department reported on the Brunswick State dairy farm during the past two years? 2, If so, the name of the officer or officers who so reported? 3, Will the Minister lay the report or reports (if any) on the Table of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Inspector Higgs, 20th November, 1912; Inspector Berry, 12th November, 1913; Inspector Higgs, 20th May, 1914. 3, No objection to reports being tabled: they are tabled in green in file herewith.

## PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Reports of health officers on the Brunswick State dairy farm.

## ELECTORAL—SOUTH-EAST PROVINCE.

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

*That, owing to the death of the late C. A. Piesse, a member for the South-East province, the seat to be declared vacant, and that the President be authorised to issue a warrant to the clerk of writs for the election of a member to supply the vacancy.*

Question passed.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Seventh Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the 9th July.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central): I join with other members who have spoken in all the nice things said about new members, and at the same time I regret the absence of those members who had been with us so long. No doubt the greatest loss we have suffered for many years past has been the death of the late Hon. C. A. Piesse. I am sure we will all miss his stalwart figure, his kindly greetings and his charming personality. He was a man we could ill-afford to lose, a man of wide sympathy, of big ideas and of big achievements. We will all miss him very much from the House. In looking through the Governor's Speech, I, like other members, consider that some of the most important matters concerning the State have been omitted from that document. Therefore, I do not intend to go through the different matters mentioned in the order in which they are given, but will simply treat of a few matters concerning the State in the order in which I have noted them down. The first is that of the mining industry. Although the statistics for the present year are not favourable, showing as they do some decline as compared with last year, still, I have great hopes in the mining in-

dustry of Western Australia. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of travelling with His Excellency the Governor and the Colonial Secretary on the Murchison, and although I had been there on a private trip within twelve months, I noticed immense improvements in the mines at Magnet, at Cue, and at Day Dawn, and especially at Meekatharra. I am quite convinced that the output of gold from the Murchison will in the near future more than make up for the decline in other portions of the State. The prospects, especially at the Great Fingall and the mines associated with it at Cue and Day Dawn, give me great hopes of a large increase in the output of gold within the next few months. I was pleased to notice at the Great Fingall that they have established a ventilating plant something on the lines of those used in the coal mines in different parts of the world, but which represents, I understand, an innovation as far as gold mines are concerned. The result is that the miners in the deepest levels of that great mine will now enjoy fresh air. Moreover, within the last week or two the night shift has been abandoned at the Great Fingall; so that mine, instead of as in the past having a bad name for mortality, is more than likely to be regarded in the future as one of the healthiest mines in the State. Mr. Ardagh said that the present Government had done more for the farmers than had any previous Government. I cannot altogether agree with that statement. My impression is that, if he had used the word "done" in the sense of the Government having "done" the farmers, he would have been somewhere nearer the truth. Last year it was heart-rending to hear of the number of caveats lodged against farm leases, and the number of bills of sale taken over farmers' growing crops. The effect of these caveats and bills of sale was in most instances to completely destroy the farmers' credit. I am perfectly aware that the Government sent round the Commissioner for the Wheat Belt—I believe he was chairman of the distressed farmers' wheat fund—specially to collect bills of sale over the growing crops of those farmers who were in difficulties. It

seemed to me it was not at all the proper position for any Government to take up; nor have the results been at all satisfactory to my mind. I may say that the bills of sale over the growing crops were granted by the farmers to Mr. Sutton as representing the Minister for Lands, and Mr. Sutton was authorised to divide the money among the creditors of the farmers, reserving a portion for the Government by way of payment of rent, of interest to the Agricultural Bank, and for seed wheat and manure. I have before me an instance which shows how this system worked out. It seems to me the farmer referred to in this instance was reduced to a most miserable condition indeed. His wheat realised £187 1s. 5d., and out of that money the Government paid £97 to different creditors, and reserved, for the Lands Department, £49 19s. 11d.; for the Agricultural Bank £10 0s. 2d.; and for the Agricultural Department, £30 2s. 9d., or in all, £90 2s. 10d. That is to say, that practically the Government took half of this poor farmer's crop and there was nothing left for the man himself. How he has managed to live since then I have no idea. At any rate, the whole of the proceeds of this man's crop was divided among a few creditors, and the Government took practically one-half of it. I understand that this is typical of a great many cases of farmers who are in difficulties. Some 20 or 25 years ago, in South Australia, when the farmers struck one or two very bad seasons, the Government in that State advanced seed wheat. They asked for no security; they simply told the farmers, "Pay it when you can, and if you cannot pay it at all, we will write it off." The result was that those South Australian farmers were in a position to carry on their operations without any danger from their creditors. I think they might have done the same in this State. I consider that the farmers were very cruelly treated, instead of being well treated. Another way in which the farmers had been "so well treated" was the proposal last year for a land and Income Tax Bill. By that measure, the farmers would if it had become law prac-

tically have had to pay a double land tax. I consider that they are quite enough taxed already, without having any further imposition of this sort placed upon them. The Commissioner of Railways (Mr. Short) advised the Government that under the then existing freights, manures were being carried at a loss and that the same thing was occurring with regard to Collie coal. The freight on manures was raised for the farmer, but the freight on Collie coal was not raised. I do not think this requires any one to do more than just read between the lines. In the one case the miners on the Collie coal field and those interested in the field were the supporters of the Government, while on the other hand it was assumed by the Government that the farmers were their opponents. At any rate, whilst they increased the freight on the manures, to the extent that this increase realised some £30,000 or £40,000, the freight on the Collie coal was left as it was, notwithstanding the advice of the Commissioner of Railways. To my mind, Mr. President, it is a case of the grossest injustice on the one hand, and of class favouritism on the other.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They have appointed a Commission on the Collie coal question.

Hon. W. PATRICK: So far as that Commission is concerned, it will, in my opinion, only help to swell the deficit. I believe that is the only result which will be likely to be derived from that Commission. Furthermore, all that was necessary to be known about Collie coal was made known a few years ago by Dr. Jack and I consider that the money spent on this Royal Commission is simply being wasted. In reference to the land tax, the hon. Mr. Dodd said in his speech last week that he was quite in favour of abolishing exemptions. He believed that the public created what was called the unearned increment, and that consequently they were entitled to be taxed upon the natural increases in values. This unearned increment is always trotted out when land taxation is talked about. I may say that some 30 or 40 years ago I was a believer in the un-

earned increment fad myself, but I did not know anything about it at the time. While it may be just and wise to talk about the taxation of unearned increments in a country such as the Old Country, where the people are generally all engaged in manufacturing industries, and where the wealth is undoubtedly created by the congregation of people together, it is a totally different thing in a new country like this, where the people go out into the wilderness and transform land which is worthless at the outset into valuable property, and to the gain of the State in general. No man is such a fool as to take up and cultivate worthless land—because it is worthless land until the farmer improves it—until it grows into a smiling cornfield, unless he knows that the wealth that he will create will belong to him. If there had been a majority on the Government side in this House last session this additional burden would have been put upon the backs of those who are already so much overburdened. Of course Mr. President, it appears to be an idea that the primary producers create only a small proportion of the wealth of Australia. I have looked up some statistics, however, in that valuable pamphlet which was recently issued by the Commonwealth authorities to ascertain the value of the different products in Australia up to the latest date. Last year, it seems, minerals were valued at £25,629,000; the pastoral and dairy industries at £71,895,000; and agriculture at £45,753,000. In other words, the pastoral, dairy, and agricultural industries and minerals totalled a value of £143,277,000, while the value added to the natural products in the process of manufacture, was said to have amounted to £60,427,000. To show the progress made by Australia, the primary products of Australia were estimated to be worth £143,277,000 last year, and the value added to the natural products in the process of manufacture, was estimated to amount to £60,000,000. As compared with the Old Country probably that £60,000,000 would only be worth £30,000,000 or perhaps not more than £40,000,000. It is an artificial value, for

our manufacturers cannot compete with the outside world, and in fact sell all their goods to the people in Australia. That is to say, the manufacturer disposes of his goods to the primary producer, or to those who derive their incomes from the primary producer. It is worth while, in this connection, to draw attention to the tremendous expansion of the primary productions of Australia. In 1901 minerals were worth £22,000,000, whereas last year they were worth £25,000,000. The pastoral and dairy industries were worth £36,890,000 in 1901, and in 1912 they were worth £71,895,000, and the agricultural industry worth £23,000,000 in 1901, as against £45,000,000 in 1912. So that, when the Government talk about putting an additional tax on the land, they are taxing the industries from which the whole wealth of Australia, practically speaking, is derived. I think, Mr. President, that one of the problems of the future in this country, and in fact in all civilised countries at any rate, is the enormous congestion of the population in the big cities and in the towns. I believe Western Australia is just about as bad as any other portion of Australia and probably any portion of the world in this respect. At the present time the estimated population of Perth and suburbs is 106,000, and of the outside municipalities, according to the 1911 census, 143,000. That is, roughly, speaking, 250,000 people, out of a population of a little over 300,000, living in the towns. I have no hesitation in saying that it would be very much better if 50,000 of these people now in the towns were scattered about over the country. There is no doubt that this State deserves a great deal of credit for its educational system. But the educational system cannot be laid claim to by any one particular Government, because it is the outcome of the work of a number of Governments during the last 10 or 15 years. But, Mr. President, while we have free technical schools, free secondary schools, and a free university in the city, and free higher education in one or two of the large towns of the State, and in addition to these technical schools and the university we have a great public library free to the

public and maintained by the public at large, these facilities are to all intents and purposes not free for the people in the backblocks. If a farmer or a miner in the back country has a particularly brilliant boy or brilliant girl who he desires should enter into some professional career, the matter of fees is a mere bagatelle. The real cost is that connected with the boarding and lodging of the boy or girl in the city, so that the benefits of free education, so far as higher education is concerned, and of free university education and so on, are not at all equal, as between town and country, although the people in the country undoubtedly provide a large portion of the means for carrying on this great expenditure of public moneys. There is one matter I would like to say a few words about, and that is the question which has been raised in this House in regard to the carpenters' strike, namely, the question of preference to unionists. The hon. Mr. Cornell has blamed this House for that strike. He said that if it had not been for the Legislative Council—I am speaking from memory and think that that is practically the effect of what he said—the strike would not have taken place. All I can say is that so long as I am a member of this House I shall raise my voice in condemnation of the introduction of preference to unionists in any measure. I look upon preference to unionists as simply going back to the barbarous times of the Middle Ages. I do not think there is a bit of difference between telling a man that if he does not believe in certain doctrines that he will be tied to a stake and burned, and in telling a man that if he does not join a union he will not be able to work, and to earn his own living. I do not think there can be anything more hypocritical than to talk about equality of opportunity in such circumstances. The Attorney General, in an extraordinary speech made at Esperance, extracts from which I will read to the House, said that we had prevented a great many things, and that amongst other things we had prevented Parliament from passing a Bill providing for equality of op-

portunity for all. How can there be equality of opportunity if you tell a man that he is not to be allowed to work unless he joins a certain union? It is a piece of mockery. I cannot understand how any man having full possession of his ordinary senses can stand up and, on the one hand, talk about equality of opportunity, and on the other hand say "You must stand aside, you cannot work unless you join this or the other union." In my opinion this doctrine of preference to unionists, if it is not thrown overboard by the Labour party, will practically break all unions to pieces. The same sort of thing applies to the abolition of the contract system. It interferes with individual enterprise, and with individual initiative. All the great things, as you, Mr. President, doubtless know, which have been done in this world, and which have helped to build up the present civilization, have been the result of individual initiative and individual enterprise. In the last eight or ten years we have had wireless telegraphy, flying machines and similar inventions, and it is difficult to keep pace with what is being done entirely by individuals and which will always be done by individuals. There is another matter we have heard a great deal about, and that is centralisation. I consider that about the worst form of centralisation we can have has been exemplified during the administration of the present Government within recent years. I will illustrate what I mean, to show how unsatisfactory from every point of view has been this centralisation. The Minister for Works considered it wise to amalgamate all the water supplies, and we have now a big office on the other side of the railway line, where everything in connection with water supplies is controlled. Some years ago, while I was in Cue, the people there inaugurated a water supply. The water was reticulated in the main street before any other town in the State outside the metropolitan area, and this was done by local taxation. Nothing whatever was borrowed. The time came, however, when the supply was found to be too small because the price had

been reduced and the demand had increased enormously. A scheme was carried out by the Government for Cue and Day Dawn by which the water was brought in from Jack's Well, some 15 miles distant, at a cost of £22,000, and a water board was appointed to take charge of the matter. This Cue-Day Dawn board carried out their work satisfactorily for eight or nine years up to the end of last year, and paid to the Government about £1,500 a year, representing interest at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and a sinking fund of 3 per cent. There was no loss shown until about a couple of years ago, when, unfortunately, the board became involved in a law suit with a firm in Perth. The board lost the suit and they went behind to the extent of £2,000 or £3,000. The Minister for Works, in spite of the protests of the people of Cue and Day Dawn, and in spite of the fact that the member for the district, Mr. Chesson, was one of the strongest supporters of the Government, and was also chairman of the water board, took possession of the scheme and this, too, in spite of the fact that the board endeavoured to show to the Government that there would be no difficulty in paying off their shortage in two or three years. The Minister, however, was obdurate, and the scheme is being controlled from Perth to-day. I will tell hon. members the result of that action. The board in Cue-Day Dawn had a revenue of about £5,000 a year—I am speaking approximately. They had been receiving over £3,000 per annum from the Great Fingall Mine. This mine was satisfied to take the water at 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons and although they had a supply of their own, they would have gone on using that supplied to them by the board. The Minister for Works, on taking possession, increased the price to the mine, and the authorities at that mine promptly replied that they would not take any more and they would resort to their own supply. What is the result? The Cue-Day Dawn people have been robbed of their property, which would have been their own in the space of a few years, and the Government are now saddled with

a loss of between £3,000 and £4,000 a year. The position is that the taxpayers generally will have to bear the burden. There has also been reference made during the course of the debate to the purchase of the Perth tramways. All I can say is that I am glad that I was one of the opponents of that purchase at that time, and the longer I think of it the more I am satisfied that the transaction was a very foolish one. One of my contentions was that the system could have been made a payable one if it had been controlled entirely by the municipal bodies. Let me tell hon. members what municipalisation means. Last year the tramway system in the city of Glasgow carried 336 million passengers and had a revenue of £1,078,000. The passengers increased during the year by 25 millions and the revenue by £70,000. The way in which that was done was, of course, by means of halfpenny sections. We could not do that here, but if we introduced penny sections I am certain that our system would bring in a greatly increased revenue. It will never be satisfactory while the present fares are levied.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: You must compare the two populations.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The population of Perth and suburbs is about a tenth of that of Glasgow, and if the fares were reduced we would expect an increased profit. The system will never show a satisfactory profit under existing conditions. No one will pay 3d. to travel a few hundred yards. Another matter that was prominently brought before the House is the price of meat. In 1911 we had 5,411,000 sheep; in 1912, 5,496,000; and in 1913, 4,418,000, and as we have been experiencing a drought in the northern parts of the State for a considerable time, the position is likely to become even worse. When the Colonial Secretary and I were on the Murchison a little time back, everything was looking very bad indeed, but I believe rain has fallen since then. The fact, however, remains that there must still be an increased shortage of

sheep. I am sorry Mr. Kirwan is not here because I desire to make some reference to the Esperance country. If I were convinced that that country was good for agricultural settlement I would vote for the construction of the railway. The land there has been settled in a way for some 16 or 17 years, but in not a single year have the returns from the cultivation which has been carried on been at all satisfactory. Last session the Colonial Secretary when introducing a measure for the construction of the line, informed members that he had been through the country and declared that he saw land there which was quite equal to the best land in the Victoria district. I have no hesitation in saying that the Colonial Secretary was convinced of that because I believe the country to look at does give one the idea of being fertile, but to say that it was equal to the best in the Victoria district is to say that it is equal to the best land in Western Australia. Last season the average result of the wheat crop in the Esperance district was 4.2 bushels and the year before it was 3.2 bushels. The average of hay last season was 8 cwt. wheaten, and 12 cwt. oaten. There are a great many places on the goldfields where you can grow a fair crop of hay, but a result like that from hay or grain will not come within cooee of paying expenses. Wheat cannot be grown unless the yield is at least ten or eleven bushels. Mr. Kirwan made a statement that what Mr. Colebatch had quoted was not fair at all, because at Grass Patch the average was somewhere about 15 bushels of wheat, and two to two and a half tons of hay. We can imagine what a miserable result would be obtained from land the average yield of one portion of which is 15 bushels. I cannot conscientiously agree to the expenditure of several hundred thousand pounds on the construction of this railway, because that is the amount which will be involved. I would not encourage people to go on that land because the results obtained up to the present show that it is totally unsuitable for the cultivation of grain. I was astonished that

there was no mention made in the Governor's Speech of the question of immigration. We know what an important matter that is. There is no use hiding our heads in the sand. Australia will never be in a satisfactory position until it has a population of 20 or 30 million people and that can only be brought about by a system of immigration throughout the whole continent. We, however, own about a third of the continent, and it is our duty to see that we pursue the policy of bringing immigrants here. I was astonished to notice all absence of reference to this matter from the Governor's Speech, because at the West Australian dinner which was held in London recently, Sir Newton Moore in speaking to the toast of Western Australia said—

I am delighted to be able to assure you that almost the whole of the 30,000 emigrants who have gone to Western Australia during my time of office have done well. I heard practically no complaints during my visit, but, on the other hand, met many people who thanked me for putting them in the way of prosperity and happiness in our wonderful country. I am sure that it will be satisfactory to you to know that there is to be no calling a halt in our immigration policy, and that I have been fully empowered by the Government to continue along the existing line.

Seeing that Sir Newton Moore has been instructed in this direction, it is extraordinary that the Government have made no mention whatever of this great question in the Governor's Speech. The hon. Mr. Allen, in his very able address, one of the best addresses, if not the best, I have heard from a new member during the ten years I have been in this House, dwelt, and rightly so, on the great importance of providing better harbour accommodation at Fremantle. I want to point out that better harbour accommodation is just as necessary at the port of Geraldton as it is at Fremantle. A tinkering policy will be of no use to Geraldton. This port, with some three great trunk lines and many smaller lines of railway, running into it, is the centre of

the second gold-mining field in the State, the port of the greatest pastoral portion of the State, and the centre of what will be quite equal in grain growing to the present best portion of the State in the immediate future. Somewhere about half a million bags of wheat were handled at Geraldton during the recent season. When I went to Northampton some ten years ago, we used to get wheat from the Greenough Flats, and anyone who has not lived in the district can have no conception of the tremendous importance of providing better harbour accommodation at Geraldton as quickly as possible. The sentiments uttered by the hon. Mr. Allen in regard to Fremantle I would repeat in regard to Geraldton. The Government ought to get the very best outside advice so that a proper harbour scheme may be carried out. There will be no danger in expending several millions sterling on the harbours of Western Australia, because there will be no difficulty in collecting sufficient revenue to pay interest on the money borrowed. It is a great pity that the Government, instead of experimenting with so many schemes, which are almost certainly doomed to failure, schemes such as timber mills, steamships, brick works, butcher shops, and a good many others which would be multiplied a great many fold, I daresay, if the Government could lay their hands on the money, did not expend the several hundreds of thousands of pounds sunk in these schemes to improve the harbours of this State. It is stated in the Governor's Speech that a Bill will be introduced to amend the Constitution. Although we have no details, as to what the Government will attempt in this direction, we know what this means; they do not propose to amend the Constitution of another place. In conversation, a few days ago, with a gentleman who sat as a Labour member in this House some years ago—I will not mention his name—the matter of the Electoral law was introduced, and he said, "My opinion is that you should abolish both Houses, and substitute a House with household suffrage. What is the good of giving the vote to a man who can put his swag on his back at any time and walk

out of the country? The man with a stake in the country is the one who should have the say." This gentleman's proposal was practically to abolish the lower House, because to all intents and purposes the present franchise of the Legislative Council is household suffrage. The hon. Mr. Kingsmill, I think, mentioned that some members of the Government had been going about the country like roaring lions, seeking whom they might devour. The hon. member did not use exactly those words, but that is what he indicated. I would like to read a few extracts from a speech made by the Attorney General at Esperance, regarding the iniquities and misdeeds of this House during the sessions in which the Labour Government have been in power. Among other things, the Attorney General said—

They have gone from platform to platform and poured forth their condemnation on all we have ever done, on all we propose to do, and on all we belong to and represent. They have cursed us as if the Labour organisation has come fresh from the inferno with the stench of "Old Nick" upon us. They have used Billingsgate—

What I am reading is surely a good sample of Billingsgate—

as well as the dictionary to denounce us in every form, and they have got the assistance of the editorials of nearly all the Press in the State. The great leading journals have polluted their columns with the filth of diseased imagination, for they have not gone upon fact. The great dailies have poured forth falsehood upon falsehood, and when the falsehood is corrected, they attack us again with the same falsehood, dished up in another form. Journalism has been prostituted in order to damn the Labour party. Great measures intended for the benefit of the State, like the Irrigation Bill, introduced for the purpose of making more fertile and fruitful the irrigable districts of the State, were unceremoniously torn up, cast aside, or trampled upon. Measures anticipating the future and bringing in industrial peace amongst men, like my Arbitration Bill,



were torn up, slaughtered on the very threshold of that institution.

The Attorney General, by the way, said that our Arbitration Act was the finest in the world.

A measure to give some power to the people to regulate legislation, like the Initiative and Referendum Bill, was waited for with relentless malignity on the very steps of that institution and clubbed to death.

This is a sample of the language which has been used in reference to this Chamber. Until the present session, members of this House have remained silent when abuse was being heaped upon them in another place and from the platforms by representatives of the Government, but it is going a little too far to use language such as I have quoted in reference to the Legislative Council. What is the Legislative Council? It represents 55,000 electors in this State: it represents all the thrift and practically all the enterprise: it represents all the taxpayers of the State. Before Federation, the Government had power over the customs, and it would have been quite a proper thing to have had a more liberal franchise for this House, because at that time the whole of the taxation was paid by the whole of the people of the State, but we must not forget that the taxation which can be imposed by the State Parliament at the present time falls on a fraction of the people, while those who run the Government represent many thousands of people on whom no taxation imposed by the State falls. We all know the Attorney General, and we take more than a grain of salt with his statements. He allows his tongue to run away with him on many occasions, but on this occasion at Esperance not only must his tongue have run away with him, but his reason must have deserted him also. At about the time when this speech was made by the Attorney General, the *West Australian* of the 2nd April stated, among other things—

What valid complaint has the Labour Party, which uses its majority brutally in the Lower House, against the searching analyses to which its measures are subjected in the Legis-

lative Council? Only in the Upper House are Bills discussed on broad lines. As a deliberative House, the Assembly is farcical; and, as many of the Bills which receive its imprimatur are immature, and even impossible, it is not a matter for surprise that the Legislative Council has, on occasion, rejected them.

As a matter of fact, measures such as the Irrigation Bill, to which the Attorney General referred, were not rejected by this House. The Irrigation Bill was amended in this Chamber, and as amended it was practically on all fours with the irrigation law in New South Wales at the present time. In that State there exists the biggest irrigation scheme in Australia, and one of the biggest in the world. In regard to the great question of irrigation, I had some experience of it in the West Indies many years ago. I have been in Australia for thirty years, so that hon. members will realise that I am referring to a somewhat distant period, but I know that irrigation, while it gives wonderful results, is a very costly process, and the proper people to consult with regard to irrigation schemes are those who are engaged in this work. One of the chief amendments made to the Bill in this Chamber was that the control of irrigation districts should be in the hands of the people who would maintain it and would have to pay for it. It would be very unwise on the part of the State, which has not too much money to throw away, to enter at the present time into any great expenditure on a matter of this kind. Up to the present, as apart from private irrigation schemes, which have been very successful in Australia, the irrigation schemes carried out by Governments in the Eastern States have certainly not proved a success. Even in the Goulburn Valley, which contains the finest tract of land in Australia, and where there is a magnificent water supply, the irrigation scheme has up to the present moment resulted in a huge loss. Only the other day in the Victorian Legislative Assembly Mr. W. Billson, the Deputy-Leader of the Labour Party, is reported to have spoken as follows:—

He considered that the Address might with advantage be amended to the effect that the Government did not possess the confidence of the House, but he felt that at the present time there would be no chance of carrying an amendment, owing to the nearness of the general elections. He did not think that the Corner party would make any movement against the Government. Dealing with closer settlement—

Closer settlement is practically a portion of the irrigation policy of Victoria.

he said it had been a ghastly failure from beginning to end. Nine of the estates purchased had proved a desolate failure, while the State was said to be losing £500 a day on irrigation.

A loss of £500 a day on irrigation! That is what the leader of the Victorian Labour Party said in criticising the Victorian Government. Now, Mr. Millington, in his speech extolled the Government for their splendid administration. I consider that the administration of the present Government has been just about as bad as it could have been. It has been characterised by big schemes, State steamers, timber mills, powellising works, implement works, and so on; and the result has been, I may safely say, nothing but reckless borrowing and reckless spending. I think we ought to take a lesson from the results of some of the experiments of a like nature which have been made in the Eastern States. Here is a little paragraph which appeared on the 2nd July in the *West Australian*—

The failure of the attempt to establish State brick works at Wonthaggi, Victoria, was referred to by the Minister for Railways (Mr. McKinnon) to-day. He said that of the £10,000 voted towards the works by Parliament, not quite £60 remained, but he was of opinion that when all of the accounts had been settled this venture of the State might represent a loss of over £10,000.

We all know the result of the State steamers. We know that those steamers lost over £20,000 during the year ended

30th June, 1913. The statement of receipts and expenditure for the year ended 30th June, 1914, showed a loss of some £19,000. We do not know anything yet about the loss on the timber mills. We cannot say there is going to be a big loss on those mills, but it does not require much of the prophetic faculty to say that there is sure to be a much bigger loss on timber mills than on either the steamers or on the implement works. The implement works show a deficit of over £41,000. I should like just to enter a protest with regard to these so-called implement works. We continually read in the newspapers about the agricultural implement works established by the State. But that is an entire misnomer. The manufacture of agricultural implements at the works is practically a side line. No doubt it is a portion of the work, but really the establishment represents a Government foundry, a general foundry where work is done for the harbour works and so forth. I have no hesitation in saying—although I do not like to be a prophet of evil—that the Government will lose a great deal more money by the implement works than even by the State steamers.

The Colonial Secretary: You supported the implement works last year.

Hon. W. PATRICK: Yes; but that is another matter. It is the administration I take exception to, the way in which the whole thing has been managed. We have now 12 months' experience of management by the present Government, and it has been of a very unsatisfactory nature indeed. One matter which is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech—and of course it is one of the most important matters of all—is the question of the finances. The statement issued the other day showed an accumulated deficit of £454,000 odd. The hon. Mr. Dodd, in his speech on the Address-in-reply, said this was due to the increases in wages granted by the Government. He spoke in much the same way as at the Bohemia Hall on the 2nd December last year. On that occasion he was speaking, I will not say in the same strain as the Attorney General, because the hon. Mr. Dodd does not use Billingsgate, but he spoke to the following effect:—

The Government had to increase wages to the extent of some hundreds of thousands of pounds in the Railway Department, the Education Department, and in fact in almost every branch of the State's activity; but their efforts to obtain the means for paying these increases had been balked by the Legislative Council.

That is what the hon. Mr. Dodd said at the Bohemia Hall on the 2nd December last, and he spoke much to the same effect in his place in this House last week. The Premier, speaking in another place, said that the farmers owed for rents and interest, and for seed wheat with which they had been supplied by the seed-wheat board, and in respect of payments to the Agricultural Bank, no less a sum than £219,159, all of which he said was lost to the revenue of the country. So, in one case we have Mr. Dodd attributing the deficit to the fact that the Government had been compelled to increase wages and to the further fact that this Chamber balked the Government from obtaining the necessary funds to pay those increased wages; and on the other hand we have the Premier saying that the farmers are to blame for the deficit, that had it not been for the advances and remissions to farmers there would practically have been no deficit. Now this has been repeated *ad nauseum* in the papers and elsewhere. We have been told over and over again that the deficit is due to the advances made to the farmer. I do not know how much money is owing by the farmers to the Agricultural Bank, but I can say that whatever amount is owing by them to the Agricultural Bank has nothing whatever to do with the question of the deficit. The income and the expenditure of the Agricultural Bank do not appear in the returns of the State finances; they are not included in the ordinary income and expenditure. If the operations of the bank have affected the finances in any way, it would be only in respect of interest not having been paid on some of the money lent by the Government to the bank. That could certainly not be any large amount. However, I have looked through the returns of income and expenditure for the last

year which were published in the newspapers a few days ago, and I am quite unable to find where the farmers owe the Government anything of any consequence. There is one aspect of the matter which we must not forget. It has not been owing to a fall in revenue that the Government have piled up the deficit. From year to year the revenue has been increasing. In 1911-12 the Government raised £13 9s. 6d. per head of the population; in the following year they raised £14 18s. 9d. per head; and in the year just finished it comes to something like £15 2s. 6d. That is to say, there has been an increase in revenue, and the deficit has not resulted because the revenue has failed. The deficit has resulted from the fact that the expenditure has increased more rapidly than the revenue. To show that, so far as the public accounts are concerned, the deficit cannot be attributed to the farmers, one need only look at the land revenue. In 1912-13 the land revenue totalled £361,613; last year it was £378,000 odd, or £16,400 odd more than in the previous year. Those are the amounts of money that were actually received in the shape of revenue through the Lands Department. The Government have received last year from land a greater revenue than the previous year by £16,000 or £17,000. So far as I can find out, it is not expenditure on the land that has caused the deficit, because the expenditure on lands and surveys in 1912-13 was £83,150, whilst last year it was £77,556. In other words, whilst there was during last year an increase of £16,449 in the revenue, there was a decrease in expenditure on land and surveys of £5,594. Thus there was a difference of over £22,000 in favour of the revenue last year as compared with the previous year. And yet Mr. Scaddan says that the deficit can be accounted for by money owing to the Government by the farmers of this State. I say that is a libel on the farmers. I say, further, it is quite evident that every copper the Government can screw out of the farmer they do screw out of him. It is a simple matter to ascertain from the statements issued by the Government themselves how the deficit has arisen. Last year the

steamers showed an excess of expenditure over revenue of £19,255; that is to say, the outgoings were £19,255 more than the ingoings.

The Colonial Secretary: That includes interest and sinking fund and depreciation.

Hon. W. PATRICK: Those items are not included there.

The Colonial Secretary: You are speaking of the balance-sheet for the year ended 30th June, 1913.

Hon. W. PATRICK: No; the year just closed. I fully admit that the Colonial Secretary is quite right, however. The £22,000 from the previous year was a genuine statement, and it showed that the actual loss, according to a properly audited balance sheet, was £22,000.

Member: Is the balance sheet correct?

Hon. W. PATRICK: I shall not enter into the details. I am not going to say whether the accounts are correct or not. I have a right to assume that a statement issued by the Government is perfectly correct. I am referring to last year because it is during last year that the farmers are supposed to have caused this great deficit. The difference between the ingoing and outgoing to the 30th June was £19,255, and the difference between the expenditure and the revenue from the State Implement Works was £41,000. I see that there was one account which showed a small credit balance, and that was the State hotels, but it seems to me a miserable balance, only £2,000 on a business of over £30,000. I understand that an hotel keeper who has transacted a business of £30,000 and can show only a profit of £2,000 would not be able to pay the £10,000 to £15,000 ingoing which often is paid. That profit did not help to reduce the deficit very much. In these two items alone there is a sum of £60,000, and the increase in the deficit last year was £140,000, and here is £60,000 accounted for in two items alone. It is impossible in the statistics before us to arrive at the loss in other departments, because they are crowded into the item—other works and services. If we could lay our hands on the figures in connection with the tim-

ber mills, brickworks, Yandanooka estate, and a great many other concerns carried on by the Government, I think we could easily account for more than the deficit of last year. There is one matter to which attention was drawn by Mr. Cullen, and that is the question of the release of the man Bennett, a man whom the judge, when condemning, had said was unfitted to live. He was not a person who ought to be allowed to live. I do not think there could have been a greater piece of folly than the release of a man of his stamp, and that is the sort of thing that has brought about lynch law in America, and if many cases of that kind were allowed in this State, or any other State in Australia, we would soon have vigilance committees and lynch law.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is wrong in his origin of lynch law in America.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The hon. member is entitled to hold his opinion, I shall hold mine. I lived in America for some years, and I know the origin of the law, and it was the failure of justice there. A man would be sentenced to a few years of imprisonment for a serious crime. The only thing that can handle the law in America is money. It would be a very sad thing to bring about such a condition of affairs in this State, and I have no hesitation in saying that by this action the Attorney General has polluted justice at the fountain head.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West): It is not my intention at this late stage in the debate to make any very lengthy remarks. I listened to the Governor's Speech with a great deal of attention, and found some bright spots in it, at the same time I am unable to find much cause for congratulation as the member who moved the Address-in-reply or as the member who seconded it did. It is satisfactory to know that the harvest, notwithstanding the fact that the season was not as good as we might have wished, was a good one and that the production of wheat was greater than in any previous year in the history of the State. This is a very satisfactory condition of affairs, and it is also due to the Government and the Railway

Department to say that praise is due to them for the very satisfactory way in which the harvest was handled. I heard no complaints. It was anticipated months before that there would be a tremendous muddle, that the wheat would not get down and that sufficient provision was not being made, and all that kind of fault-finding, but I desire to give credit where credit is due, and I think credit is due to the Railway Department for the very satisfactory way in which they handled the harvest. There are also other causes for congratulation. We are all very largely interested in the mining industry of the State, and we find the output of gold last year was much larger than in the previous year. This means prosperity to every other industry of the State. Also, the output of Collie coal is a record one. That is an industry that perhaps many in the State hardly realise the importance of. I have seen a good deal of this industry, and I know it is supporting a considerable population at the present time, and I believe when better facilities are afforded, which I am pleased to see will shortly be provided at the port of Bunbury for bunkering, this industry will increase. The coal seems to have increased in quality, there have been very few complaints about it, and now that the demand for bunkering coal is increasing every month it is going to be a great asset to the State, and the time arises for some better facilities to be given at the nearest port, which is Bunbury, for the handling of that product as well as the improvement to the harbour for the great timber business. I anticipate that in the near future there will be a large shipment of wheat from the Eastern portion of the Great Southern Railway at Bunbury. The hon. member who moved the Address seemed to think that everything had been done well. There was no fault to find, that improvements had been made in every direction. It seems to me he did not take into consideration that we want something with which to pay the enormous debt that we have been accumulating during the administration of the present Government. The loan indebtedness has increased by 10 million pounds. We have enormous

interest and sinking fund to pay every year. Last year it amounted to £1,384,000, and that in itself is a matter for serious consideration. Naturally, we expect when we spend this vast amount of loan money that it should be on reproductive works, and not be a burden on the State.

The Colonial Secretary: Are you sure of your figures, ten millions?

Hon. E. McLARTY: I think so. It is over nine millions, that is in the statement. I stand corrected if I am wrong. At all events, the interest last year or since the Labour Government have been in power, has amounted to nearly £338,000, and that is a pretty considerable addition to the interest and sinking fund which we had previously to the Labour Administration coming into power, so that I think we ought to consider very carefully how the money is being expended, and what we are getting in return. In connection with the railways, we are all agreed, but there are many things I strongly disapprove of. I am quite confident, as I said before, that some of the Government enterprises will end in failure and disaster. I have referred on several occasions to the steam boats and butchers' shops. I have always contended that it is impossible for the Government to make any reduction in the prices, and I contend that they have not done so. They certainly have reduced the cost of freight to the shippers, and that has been a considerable help to the squatters who have been able to take advantage of it. For my own part, I regret to say it has not been a penny in my pocket, but a few have benefited by the reduced freights, and it has fallen on the taxpayers to make up the deficiency. I am one of the unfortunates who has had to put his hand in his pocket to make up the deficiency caused by the running of these boats. In the Governor's Speech mention is made of some proposal to bring about a better supply of stock in the North. I am interested to know what that improvement is to be, and how it is brought about. I am quite sure the country is in need of some stock, but how the Government are going to improve matters it is very difficult for me to understand. I may further

say with regard to the retail butchering business, I am absolutely opposed to it. I think the Government are acting in a very unfair way towards men who have been in the butchering business for years, while the benefit which the public receive is not worth considering. At the present time what is the position? The Government set about bringing down the price of stock and freights, but stock and sheep are dearer in the State to-day, I suppose, than they ever have been. The prices may have been up as high as they are to-day for a week or two, but this year has been a record year for high prices for all descriptions of stock. How are people going to sell meat cheaply when fabulous prices have to be paid for stock? It is a matter of supply and demand, and there is not the stock procurable to bring about a reduction in price. Another reason why meat must be high priced is that the production is situated 1,500 or 2,000 miles away from the centres of consumption. That in itself will always necessitate meat being at a high price in this State. I would like to see the Government, after giving it a fair trial—and I am prepared to credit them for having tried to bring about a better condition of things—close these shops and admit in a manly way that they find it impossible to carry out the intentions they had when they opened them, that they have done their best and find it is better to close the shops rather than lose any more money upon them. Thanks to the Premier, I had an opportunity the other day of visiting the karri country and the State sawmills and seeing what was going on there. An enormous amount of money has been spent in providing fine up-to-date mills and making all preparations for a large trade. At the same time I shall be agreeably surprised if the Government get back from the timber business anything like what they have expended—taking the experience of timber companies in this State, they have always had great difficulties in carrying on and it is only quite lately that they have shown a little profit. I am satisfied that this undertaking on the part of the Government will not prove a success. There is, however, this to be said: The karri country is

very rich land and a great deal of it is not being put to any use. No doubt the settlement of that country must follow the sawmills. The timber is very valuable, and there is such an enormous quantity of good marketable timber on the land that it would be a suicidal policy to lease the land for agricultural purposes until the timber is first made use of. Besides, the cost of clearing would be so great that I doubt if any of the present generation would see much settlement there, unless it follows some such scheme as the present Government have taken in hand. Travelling through that country the other day and making close observations, I came to the conclusion that if the Government, instead of building thousands of workers' homes about the City and the central parts of the State, would devote a sum of money, say, £100,000, to the clearing of small sections of that karri country, fencing the clearings and erecting small cottages—the settler would not expect so pretentious a building as the working man apparently requires in the centres of population—no doubt a great benefit would result; but to expect poor men to take up that country in its natural condition and develop it would be to rely upon a very slow process indeed. If some arrangement were made to clear the land—of course adding the price of clearing to the cost of the land—I have no doubt that large numbers of blocks would be taken up straight away. Speaking at a dinner in London the other night, the Agent General said that this country would soon be producing its own butter and sending away a surplus to the old country to help feed the people there. I am not so sanguine about it. I do not expect to see the day when we shall produce half enough to support our own people here. But one thing that would assist it would be the placing of small settlers in the karri country. If a man could go on a block down there with a few dairy cows and grow his own fodder, I have no doubt that dairying would soon be carried on there, if only in a small way. If the Government would but clear even, say, 20 small holdings for a start it would serve to test the question and show whether or not the extension of the scheme

would be justified. The land is certainly very good and is suitable for summer cultivation, and unless that district from Bridgetown to Albany is settled and made a butter producing country, as well as growing potatoes and apples and other fruits, I do not think there is much hope of butter making being carried on in this State. I feel there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in the country at the present time. Many of the people are finding it difficult to live. Dissatisfied settlers are protesting against the burdens they have to carry. I am not a member of the Country party, for I have not been asked to join, but I am with that party heart and soul in their objects. I fully believe the Country party will be a great power in this State, and I only wish they would not go on such narrow lines and try to set up a party in opposition to the Liberal party who have been working in their interests for years past. Speaking to the Address-in-reply the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. E. Dodd) said that blame attached to this House for the large deficit, and he instanced the Bill for further taxation which was rejected here last year. That was one measure for objecting to which in the interests of the people on the land the Liberal party might take credit. I contend that those people have a great deal to complain of.

The Colonial Secretary: But the Liberal party introduced taxation.

Hon. E. McLARTY: But they did not increase it. Your Government wanted to increase it. We were satisfied, and I, as a land holder myself, am not so unreasonable as to think the Government can carry on the affairs of a large country like this without revenue. I do not think the local land tax, so long as it is moderate, is going to hurt anybody; but when we find there is an inclination to increase the present taxes, when we find the Federal Government stepping in and burgling us with enormous taxes, and the roads boards everlastingly increasing taxation, we see that it is impossible for any man to hold land and develop it. If a roads board be short of money and go to the Government, what is the answer? "You must raise your valuations and increase your taxation." Do the Govern-

ment think there is no end or no limit to what the people on the land can bear? At the present time it is costing me over £100 a year for roads board taxes, and yet the Government are everlastingly writing to the board threatening that if they do not put on more taxes the subsidy will be reduced. On one occasion recently the Government deducted £20 or £25 from the amount, and when they were asked why, we were told that it was done by way of a fine because we did not put sufficient rates on the people. I think the local governing bodies are the best judges of what people can stand, and I am sure that any man taxed to the extent we are at the present time has very little left for development or extension of his operations. I feel satisfied that if the Country party get to work on proper lines they will have a great voice in this State before long. They will, at all events, bring about a more equitable form of taxation. Who pays the taxes at the present time, and who carries the whole expense of the country? Practically the few people that are represented in this Chamber. We have to bear the whole burden, and I think it is quite time we had a different system of taxation altogether. I am aware that those who have most should contribute most, but we find that the mass of the people contribute nothing at all, yet are everlastingly clamouring for heavier burdens on those already taxed almost out of existence. Like the hon. member who has just spoken, I was surprised at the absence from the Governor's Speech of any reference to immigration. If this country is going to progress and we are to continue our railway policy, we must have people to put on the land and settle the country. One of the most important things the Government can give their attention to is the introduction of as many people of the right class as they can bring into the State. The Labour party are always afraid that if we bring in immigrants they will take someone else's place, but in my opinion the more persons brought into the State the more work will there be for the labouring men to do.

Hon. F. Connor: And they want preference for unionists.

Hon. E. McLARTY: So far as preference to unionists goes, I feel much as Mr. Patrick expressed himself this evening. I hope that if any such principle come before this House it will meet with the same fate as it met last time. It certainly will so far as my vote is concerned. I agree with the Country party that the price of land is too high. A great deal of our land is poor, and if we could get people to go upon it, clear it, cultivate it and develop it, the first cost, the selling price, should be the last consideration. The conditions imposed on conditional purchase land are very reasonable and fair. Their only object is to force some men, who have not the inherent industry, to carry out certain necessary work. If these conditions are faithfully observed the original price of the land could be made much lower in many instances than it is at the present time. I noticed that after the Irrigation Bill was set aside last year the Minister for Works at once stopped the irrigation work at the Harvey, giving as his reason that the Legislative Council would not pass the Bill. Lately, however, a number of men have been put on again and are proceeding with the work. It seems extraordinary that because the Bill was rejected the Minister was compelled to stop the work. Why on earth did he not keep on, seeing that he had the same authority then as he has at the present time? Yet, as I say, the men were put off, and now they have been put on again and the Minister is going on with the work at a pretty rapid rate. According to the Speech there are a few Bills to be introduced. In respect to railway construction, I have always been an advocate of its extension, and most of the projected railways will have my support. The extension of the Dwarda-Narrogin line is highly desirable. I took a very great interest in the Bill for that line and I had a good deal to do with the carrying of it through. I was twitted at the time with having a little land in the hills and wanting a railway to enhance the value of that land. As a matter of fact, the railway did me some injury by cutting up my land, but I am proud to say that

the railway has since proved to be perhaps the best paying line in the State. When it is extended to Narrogin it will be of great benefit to the people down the Great Southern. At the present time timber is being railed 200 miles, whereas when the railway is completed from Dwarda right through to Narrogin, this distance will be reduced to 40 or 50 miles.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. E. McLARTY: Before tea I was referring to the construction of proposed railways before the House last session. In my opinion it would be for the development of the Great Southern when this connection is made between Dwarda and Narrogin, and also between Darkan and Wagin. This will bring the people of Narrogin 28 miles nearer to Perth by way of Pinjarra than the present line from York. Of course to people living west of Narrogin it would be an immense advantage, more so than to people on the Great Southern railway. I know very little about the country through which some of the proposed railways are to be built, but I have no doubt they are all necessary; and when more particulars are placed before this House I hope I may be able to support each of them. With reference to the Esperance railway, this is an old acquaintance. I see it is introduced again this session, and I shall do exactly as I did last session, and vote for the railway. I shall do this because I believe in de-centralisation. I have no doubt myself that in that great extent of country there must be some good land available, and I am not going to take the responsibility of telling the 50 settlers who are domiciled down there that they do not know their own business, and that I, who have not seen the country, think the line will be a failure, and that the land is not fit for cultivation. I intend to leave those settlers to judge of the question themselves. If the country is to be utilised it can only be



put to its full use by means of railway communication. I do not intend to labour the question now, but doubtless will have an opportunity of going into it when it comes before the House later on. With regard to the very small production from that part of the State, namely, half a ton of hay to the acre, and four bushels of wheat, I presume that is produced without any fertiliser whatever. In fact, I do not know how people can get fertiliser there at all. My experience is, and I own a good deal of land myself, that I should not know how to get half a ton of hay to the acre on my land without fertiliser. The whole of the country, taking the land along the Great Southern—and I have been down there this week, and took the opportunity of viewing the land on the way—without fertiliser, would give very little better results in the way of production than the land at Esperance, in my opinion. Of course there are richer patches which might give a fair crop, but, taking the land generally, and basing what I say upon my own experience, I am quite certain that hay and corn growing would be an utter failure if it were not for the use of fertiliser. For that reason, I am not prepared to condemn that country. I do not even know what methods of cultivation have been adopted down there. I must, therefore, allow the people to be the best judges, and to know their own business best. There is a great extent of country, and it would be marvellous to me if there were not some fair proportion of it fit for cultivation. Several railways will, I understand, come before the House, when I will deal with them. I wish, however, to refer to a remark made by the hon. Mr. Dodd, when he said that through the action of this House in not passing increased taxation last year, we were to some extent responsible for the heavy deficit. I do not know whether it made very much difference after all. Very soon after the Bill was rejected by the House a fresh valuation seems to have been made on the lands. I do not know by whom this was made. The first intimation I had of a new valuation was when

I received a demand from the State Land Tax Department calling upon me to pay £130 0s. 7d. I thought that was a very fair contribution upon my part, and that if we had not passed the Bill in question we were being got at in some other direction. No sooner had I paid the State Land Tax Department this amount than a demand was made upon me by the Federal Land Tax Department. They sent a man crawling round the country and spying out the land, and professing to be a judge of land. He may have been a judge for all I know; I do not know very much about the man. But he came armed with instructions that a fresh valuation should be made, and the result was that they wanted me to pay £80 in addition to what I had paid to the State department, and I had to pay it. That was the respectable sum altogether of £210 that I had to fork out for a new valuation. I suppose that there are hundreds of instances like mine. I would like to know when there is going to be some finality in regard to these taxations.

Hon. J. Cornell: I would like to change places with the hon. member.

Hon. E. McLARTY: The people never know when they are going to stop. I supposed that when I had paid my land tax that I should be clear for the next few months, but that was not so. Not only that, but they go back for four years and call upon me to pay the difference between what I have already paid and the amount of the new valuation, that is, the value placed upon the land by the Government authorities. It is a hard case. I do not know who the individual is who could put any actual value upon anybody's land. In my case I bought some small town allotments, the upset price of which was £25. The Government valuation is £50. In some instances the valuations have jumped from £50 to £100; in others from £100 to £150, and others again from £150 to £200. I do not, of course, know, if I ever wanted to sell, whether these valuation would be reached, or anything approaching them. On the value of rural lands there is no man living who can judge of the different con-

ditions in this State. We have a gentleman living far up on the Midland railway who was sent down south for the purpose of making an inspection and making valuations. He went over a good deal of the country certainly, and I think he was a very fair and just man, and a good judge of land values, but I contend that the conditions in the south are so vastly different from those in the north that he could not possibly arrive at any approximate idea as to what the values of the lands are. Only last week I had occasion to travel out some 40 miles east of Northam. I really felt that I knew very little about the land there. When I got into that country I found it was altogether different from the land upon which I had been living most of my life, and I think it would be very hard indeed for me to say what this land was worth. I formed an idea, however, that there was a good deal of agricultural land and land suitable for wheat growing, but I could not presume to go there and set myself up as a judge, and place any value upon the land. The Federal Land Tax Department, however, send a man round. He goes to a place and asks you what the value of the land is. You tell him 10s., and he says it is worth £1, and you have to go to the Supreme Court if you wish to appeal against the decision. How you are going to prove that your opinion is right as against his, I do not know. A great deal of land is certainly not worth the amount at which it is valued. I hope there will be some finality in this matter, and that we will know soon what amount of taxation we have to pay, and that definite values will be placed upon the land. It appears that the Taxation Department can run up the values of land for taxation purposes as much as they like. Nobody knows what one has to pay. The whole position is most unsatisfactory, and I am not surprised at the strong protests which have been entered against it. I have nothing further to say, except to express my pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): As one of the old members in this House, I must say something in support of the Address-

in-reply. I regret, Sir, that two members of this House whom I had the pleasure of sitting with, have passed away. I refer to the late Hon. R. W. Pennefather and the late Hon. C. A. Piesse. Their loss to this House is a distinct one, and their loss to the country generally is greater still. I think they were two very excellent members of any Legislature, and that the whole of the community must agree that this is so. I want briefly to say that I am sorry for the absence of two members who sat right behind me. I refer to Mr. Moss and Mr. Connolly. I think their loss too is a distinct one, particularly in the case of Mr. Moss, both to the House and to the country. But against that we have the fact that there are certain new members who have come to this House. I have listened with great pleasure to the speeches of some of the hon. members who have not long been here, and who are even new to politics and particularly new to this House. I am pleased to welcome them here, and I am sure that what they say and what they do will be of benefit to the country. It is rather hard to talk very effectively or to be very gushing anyhow, to a House such as we have here just at present. I should like to say, referring to the Speech, that it is, in my opinion, quite commonplace. Two appointments since the last meeting of the House have been made which meet with my approval. The first is the appointment of Mr. Justice McMillan to the position of Chief Justice, and the other is the appointment of Mr. Justice Northmore on the Supreme Court Bench. I think the Government are to be congratulated upon having appointed these gentlemen to such high and honourable positions. I think the Government will not be sorry, and neither will the country be, for these appointments. Speaking generally, I wish to refer to the fact that the whole of the business of this State, according to the Speech, as far as the finances are concerned—I mean the whole of the banking business—has been transferred to the Commonwealth Bank. That in itself may be a good thing. I am not going to dispute it. But I would ask hon. members in

this House to remember that there were financial institutions in this country which, before the advent of the Commonwealth Bank—before the Commonwealth could write their name to a piece of paper and say it was money—which could have been availed of. I do not know that it would be absolutely an unmixed blessing when the time comes for the whole of the business to be transferred to the Commonwealth Bank. The question of workers' homes has been discussed frequently. I am in favour of workers' homes. I am in favour of helping the man who is prepared to show his bona fides in the country, and to settle in it, but people must be able to say that they have something which belongs to them. That is the basis of a country's prosperity. But I would like to point out that there are greater ideals to be brought before this country, even before workers' homes. It is all right to provide homes for the people who deserve them, provided the country can afford to do so, but let us make a comparison between the people who, practically speaking, came here yesterday or the day before, and the people who have been here thirty years, those people who have been established in the far North, and who have had no consideration. I am in favour of workers' homes, but I am also in favour of giving consideration to the people who have developed the resources of this country by going with their lives in their hands into the far interior, and devoting the best portion of their lives to the opening up of the back blocks. They are the people who have a right to consideration, as well as those who are practically newcomers, and who are being given workers' homes on either the freehold or leasehold system. We are told in the Governor's Speech that a Bill is to be introduced to provide for constitutional reform. What is constitutional reform? Perhaps the Colonial Secretary will enlighten us when he speaks. I certainly want to know what it means. We are told also that the Irrigation Bill is to be brought down again. That was before us last session, and certain suggestions were made in regard to the measure,

which another place would not accept. Then it is proposed to introduce a Land Act Amendment Bill. I do not know to what that refers. It has me completely puzzled. I thought that the Minister for Lands had finished everything in connection with land reform when he framed his famous regulations, which nearly burst up the whole country, and which certainly stopped development. I will not discuss the Initiative and Referendum Bill; I am opposed to that absolutely. I am not opposed to railway construction, so long as the finances of the country can stand it, and so long as everybody gets a fair portion. We have heard a lot of talk in another place about what this House has done in connection with Bills, and we are told that we are opposed to the wishes of the people, but let us go a little afield and look at what is happening in the Federal Parliament, where Bills more material than any which have been brought down here have been submitted by the House of Representatives to the Senate, and thrown out by the Senate. Another place has not a good word to say about the Legislative Council of this State, and not a bad word about the Senate. Here we do our best to try and see that bad legislation is not passed, but the Senate does not consider anything; it simply says, "Because you will not be with us, we will throw out all legislation which you submit to us." I merely bring this forward as an object lesson which this House might study. It boils itself down to this, that the Senate and another place in this country are not taking their responsibilities seriously. What are they doing? They are simply listening to the words or ideas of a few people who constitute the Trades Hall party, of not only the State but the Commonwealth, and they are told by caucus what they have to do.

Hon. J. Cornell: How does your party do it. By mental telepathy?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I do not belong to any party; I am a member of a non-party House, and I can talk as a non-party man. The hon. member is guided absolutely by caucus.

Hon. J. Cornell: I own up to it; the hon. member will not.

Hon. F. CONNOR: There is a new party coming into existence in this State, known as the Farmers and Settlers. I welcome that party to this House. I think their advent in politics will be of use, but I think they are a little bit previous, and I warn them, or perhaps I should not say warn them, but they seem to have the bit between their teeth before having been broken in, and it is a fair thing that they should take advice from older politicians and not try, as they are doing now, to go the whole hog. Their time will come. I want to get down to practical stuff in connection with what I have to say. I notice there is one paragraph in the Governor's Speech which says "My advisers have continued to give special consideration to the requirements of the North-West, with the result that the buildings, jetties, and tramways generally are now in a good state of repair, while water supplies have been extended and improved." Is that the policy for the North? Is that what the North is going to get from this Government? Ten millions of loan money have been expended lately here, and what has been done for the North? Nothing. The North has been positively ignored. The heart of this State, when most of the hon. members in this House at present were not in Western Australia, was the backbone and the hope and salvation as it turned out, of this State. Yet, in the Governor's Speech, if you please, we find these words—"The future of the meat trade in Australia, and particularly in this State, has engaged the careful attention of my advisers. Plans are now being matured by which the stock-raising industry in our Northern districts will receive encouragement without endangering the interests of consumers within the State." If ever there was a bald statement made, it is that statement. It is a statement without meaning—yes, it has a meaning, and it is this, that this Government will not do anything except what the people who are right close by them, and can give them votes, will ask for. That is what the statement means, if it has any meaning. Mr. Millington said,

and I agree with him, "I think those who have listened attentively to the address delivered must conclude that each and every industry in the State has been attended to." That is another bald statement, because nothing has been done for the North, for the people who have borne the heat and burden of the day, before even my friend the Colonial Secretary was a member of Parliament. Absolutely nothing has been done, and I thank Mr. Cornell for some of the remarks he made in addressing this House when he proclaimed that the North was neglected. The main issue so far as I am concerned, as a representative of the people of the North of Western Australia is, has the North any rights? Have the people there the right to say "We want certain things done, because we are taxed and we pay out taxes." If they have, then I as a representative of the North will say "Give us our rights, because up to now we have not had them." I would like to point out to hon. members who are comparatively young in politics this fact, that the far North of Australia was the salvation of this State, not only in regard to the pastoral business, but more particularly, may I say, in connection with gold mining. In the early days, I am speaking of the year 1886, when I was in the North, the one feature of Western Australia which made the outlook for the future at all hopeful was the discovery of gold in the Kimberleys. I say without hesitation that we would have no goldfields now if it had not been for the early Kimberley days and the pioneers who found gold there and subsequently in the Eastern goldfields. Therefore, I ask, why should we be ignored? Why should not the North have some say and receive some consideration in connection with the distribution of the finances?

Hon. R. J. Lynn: What about the State steamships?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I will come to them later. It is the people in the North of Western Australia who are to be thanked for the development of our gold industry which has made this State the great State which it is. These developments afterwards enabled people to go

upon the land and to engage in the agricultural industry. The whole thing rests upon the beginning of the gold industry in the Kimberleys in 1886. Very little consideration has been given to this portion of the State, seeing that it was the means of the whole of this State being opened up. Before the advent of many hon. members in another place and in this place it was necessary that certain things should be done to develop this country. Few of the present sitting members were in Parliament when many of these works were initiated. Almost before the payment of members there was a band of men who were not afraid to look forward and who determined to open up this country. They built railways, water schemes, and harbour works; they built the great Eastern Goldfields water scheme and the Fremantle harbour works. This was before many of the present members entered Parliament and cried about details of small Bills. I am sorry that the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. E. Dodd) is not in his seat. I think he is intensely earnest in what he says and honest in every opinion he expresses, but his ideas are too small. His ideas concern the details of an Irrigation Bill or a Mines Regulation Bill, or something of that kind. These things will not open up this country or make it grow or bring it into prominence before the rest of the world. The people in the early days built railways, harbours and water works and helped the goldfields in every possible way. They constructed schools, public buildings, hospitals, and roads and it was done by a mere handful of people, 70,000 to 80,000 in number and not more. We have listened to hon. members of yesterday, mushroom members I call them. They spoke about the great development and what they have done, but they forgot that greater men went before them, men before whom they should bow down and to whose opinions they should give consideration. Modest as I am, may I be permitted to say that I was one of those early members. Western Australia, in common with the rest of the Commonwealth, must live on its export trade. All the discussion regarding free trade and protection is mere piffle; all the talk about the Country party and

the cheapening of commodities is piffle; we must encourage export and I want to educate the Colonial Secretary somewhat as to how, why and where he can help to make this a great country. The country should have been opened up and its resources developed. This has not been done and it is not being done and it will not be done. This is a calamity for Western Australia. We are allowing one of the greatest estates which we possess, to slip out of our hands. We are allowing the Federal Government to walk all over us and to clean us out and to close up one of our best ports. There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the price of meat; it is one of the main issues before the people at the present time. In this connection the Government have done their best. In their unwisdom and ignorance they rushed into certain propositions which will not bear the light of ordinary commercial understanding. They were warned, by myself among others, regarding the enterprises into which they were rushing. They rushed into the purchase of steamers and a whole lot of other things, but the steamers represent the principal undertaking. To make that scheme a success the Government required to be only statesmanlike, but they have not even an ordinary politician in their clan; there is nothing statesmanlike about them. They are allowing one of the finest provinces to be wiped off the slate as far as Western Australia is concerned, the noble port of Wyndham, and to be wiped off the slate by Port Darwin, a port which is not entitled to be the outlet for that country. Any practical cattle man or any man connected with the business of growing meat could tell the Government this. Port Darwin, however, is walking in and taking out of our hands what would be of immense benefit in many ways, not only in connection with the cheapening of meat, but also in connection with the development of the northern portion of this State. There is country to the extent of ten million acres lying idle and it is better country than has yet been taken up. I am referring to Brockman's country. He opened that up and explored it and proved that it contains better pastoral propositions and better watered

country than has yet been taken up. This country would be taken up if it were proved that the Government were in earnest in the matter of giving facilities to pastoralists so that they would be able to handle their produce, but this has been neglected by the present Government. The Government have rushed into the purchase of steamers. I will tell them how they can make their steamers a success. The only question is whether it is not now too late. The Federal Government have arranged with an English syndicate, the Union Cold Storage Company, represented by Sir William Vesey, who is at present in Australia, to erect freezing, chilling, boiling down and canning works at Port Darwin. Port Darwin is not the place for these works. The place for them is at Wyndham. Wyndham is the natural port, and cattle could be walked on the hoof into the works. There is not another natural port to compare with Wyndham, and yet the Government have allowed the Commonwealth to get in ahead of them, notwithstanding that the question has been brought up so often. Two years ago this month I made a long speech in which I showed where the Government were losing ground and in what way they could recover lost ground and add a new province to the State. This was by instituting at Wyndham or Derby a small Chicago and conserving to this country what is now going to a port which has no right to it and where the natural conditions are opposed to the success of the scheme. We should have had some influence in the direction of securing consideration to the industry in order to help the development of the Northern portion of this State. I do not want to go into figures. The hon. Mr. Patrick cut the ground from under my feet when he quoted figures to show that up to the 30th June, 1913, £22,813 had been lost on the State steamers.

The Colonial Secretary: You did not take the Treasury returns as a basis. You are quoting the year before last.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I gave you the date—to 30th June, 1913.

The Colonial Secretary: Yes.

Hon. F. CONNOR: On the audited accounts there is a loss shown of £22,813 for that year. To the 30th June, 1914, the present year, there is not an audited account. When the account is audited, I am afraid, a great deal more loss will be shown. However, what it does show is that there has been a loss of £19,256. That is a total of £42,069.

The Colonial Secretary: Those were the Treasury figures. They do not show the profit and loss account.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Here they are now, and they are published. I will not go into details over them, but those are the published returns.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The Treasury returns are approximately correct.

Hon. F. CONNOR: They are not approximately correct, and that is the trouble. The hon. gentleman who leads in another place has told us a lot of things. I do not want to cut them to pieces, but his figures are awfully funny. He says the Government have reduced the freight on cattle from £4 to £2 10s. As a matter of fact, the rate at present charged on the Government steamers is £3 6s. from Wyndham.

The Colonial Secretary: It is £2 10s.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Very well; I will take that as correct. I discussed that in reply to an interjection by the hon. gentleman in this House, when I said that £4 included some of the charges which he now says are between the £2 10s. and the £3 6s. Does the hon. gentleman follow me? I do not think he does. I do not think he wants to. Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise.

The Colonial Secretary: I know what quotes we got.

Hon. F. CONNOR: That rate of £4 included fodder and attendance. I say it did include those charges. I am not merely thinking this; I know it. The hon. gentleman who leads a party in another place, has told us that every Kimberley grower—it is the small grower he is talking about—who shipped 750 head of cattle had £1,500 hard cash put into his pocket by the Government. Supposing the hon. gentleman's figures are

right, and that he has reduced the rate by 30s., how does that prove that a grower in shipping 750 cattle saved £1,500? The whole thing will not hold water. It is all the greatest possible piffle. People should not take it seriously; but, unfortunately, outsiders who do not understand the subject take those figures seriously. I will give the Colonial Secretary the figures of his own Government.

The Colonial Secretary: Is that the *Hansard* report?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes; but I am not reading *Hansard*. I am quoting from some notes I made myself. I will read the statement given—

The Premier: As a result of the service we have actually put £1,500 in hard cash into the pockets of every Kimberley producer who has shipped 750 head of cattle.

Hon. J. Mitchell: How do you make that out, at 10s. per head?

I do not know, and neither does the Premier. The Premier continued—

I am giving the figures. As a result of the service we have actually put £1,500 hard cash into the pocket of each Kimberley producer who has shipped 750 head of cattle.

That is the tale. It is all on the same basis as when the Government tell us they have reduced the price of beef. Before I sit down I will prove that the Government have not reduced the price of beef. But we will get past this stage now, because it is all not worth talking about. Nobody really believes in it. The Minister may tell me; but I know; I am in the game; I know what he does not know. I tell him all this talk about the reduction in the price of beef is the greatest possible piffle, and not worthy of being repeated to sensible men.

The Colonial Secretary: You say we are selling the beef too cheap.

Hon. F. CONNOR: So the Government were, and they will find that out. The hon. gentleman will find that out when he comes down to the facts, when he goes into the accounts of Yandanooka. That is a nasty word, is it not, Yandanooka? The Government will find that they are selling too cheap. They put cat-

tle on the Yandanooka estate at a price at which the cattle cannot be made to pay when they are put off again. I shall not enter into some of the details that I could go into in connection with this matter, because I might be giving away secrets. Mr. Holmes might be able to back me up in that; but I will pass it over, if the Colonial Secretary will allow me. Of course, if he desires particulars, I will give them. Now, is Yandanooka paying? Yandanooka is an estate bought for the purpose of subdivision, to enable the people of this State to settle on the land. That purpose has not been carried out. The estate is used now for the purpose of putting cattle on it and taking them away from it again. Some of the cattle are not too good, and most of them are very bad; and certainly the price paid for the cattle which have been put on Yandanooka plus the cost and the railway freights and other things, makes the price realised when they are brought down to the North Fremantle markets and sold an unpayable one. Taking into consideration interest on the money paid for the purchase of the station, and the expenditure involved in the upkeep of the station, there is no doubt that this particular proposition shows a decided loss. I would like to know from the Minister where that loss is going to be put. Will it be debited to loan account, or will it be debited against the profits made in the three butchers' shops, which are killing between 20 and 24 bullocks per week between them, not enough for one small wholesale butcher? There is interest to be paid, and there is a loss in trading. Certainly there is a loss in trading in connection with the cattle supplied to Yandanooka. I have proved that clearly. Further, there is interest and there are working expenses in connection with that £140,000 scheme. I say that transaction, taking the cost of cattle put on the estate, and the amount received for them after they were sold, absolutely shows a loss. I will prove that right up to the hilt, if necessary. Next as to the price of meat, which comes into this argument more or

less. We are told that the Government have reduced the price of meat to the people here. I do not say that they did not reduce the price of meat in one or two particular shops. They may have done that. But who benefits by that? A few people in the metropolitan area. But who pays for it if those people in the metropolitan area are getting their meat cheaper than they should get it, at lower prices than the meat is worth in the open market by auction sale? Who pays for that? The people generally, and in particular the people of the far North, who get no benefit whatever in return. I want to hinge all my remarks on the fact that I am here as a representative of the North of this State to try and get some justice, which up to the present the North has not been able to get. Will the Colonial Secretary tell us whether in computing the cost of the delivery to the 2,000 people, say, who receive this cheap meat in Perth, the cost of the abattoirs at Kalgoorlie, of the abattoirs at Midland Junction, and of the abattoirs and sale yards at North Fremantle has been included? Is that cost debited against the profit made in the meat shops? And while I am on that question I would warn the hon. gentleman that as far as Midland Junction abattoirs are concerned I do not think they will ever operate, because no drainage has been provided in connection with them. The people living in that district have their common law rights and their ordinary rights, and they say that once the Government commence operations there will be legal troubles. However, that is a matter in which the Government must look out for themselves. I believe, further, that the Government put those Midland Junction yards on railway ground—ground which the Railway Department now claim, and to which I think they have a right. I was going to speak about all this cheapening of meat, and I am sorry to see that the Colonial Secretary has gone away.

Member: Things are too warm for him.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I was about to refer to the question of the distribution of meat. This talk of the cheapening of

meat to the people boils itself down to the fact that in the whole of this State three Government butchers' shops are operating, one in Perth, one in Fremantle, and one in Subiaco. I do not know which is the Subiaco shop, but I suppose it is the football barrackers' one. Now, this is an extraordinary thing—and I know what I am talking about—that the whole of the meat distributed in the butchers' shops belonging to the Government of this State pans out at from 20 to 24 bodies a week. That is the turnover for the whole of the three shops; and that is not sufficient, or not more than sufficient, to make a success of an ordinary small wholesale butcher's establishment. The whole of the output of the butchers' shops run by the Government is not more than sufficient to carry on, or show a profit for, one butchery doing 20 to 24 bodies a week. Does the whole of the State benefit by that? I do not think it is so. I think a few people who go to the shops here benefit. Instead of 2,000 benefiting, I would say only a fourth of that number benefit; say, 400 or 500 people; no more. Then we must take into consideration that these Government shops sell absolutely for cash and that they will not deliver. I do not think that is fair trading. If the Government butcheries went all over the State, and gave everybody in the State the opportunity of buying meat at those prices, it would be different. But it is not fair trading to establish just two or three shops by way of proving the proposition of the Government, and to establish those shops right up against men who are battling their way and who have not the finances of the country at the back of them to meet any deficit that crops up. I do not think that is fair trading. As a warning, I would ask the Colonial Secretary to take into consideration the fact that we are about to lose in this State one of its greatest assets, namely, the distribution of the meat necessary for the people of the State. Take, for example, New Zealand. In the Dominion you will see meat works dotted all over the country, and although they have there only about 20 millions of sheep each year,



they distribute to other parts of the world from four to five million lambs and mutton. There is an example which this State should follow. Even to-day, in face of the fact that there are all these meat works dotted all over New Zealand, bigger concerns are being put up on co-operative lines. We should have something like that here. We should have some assistance in the far North to grow meat for the people. Up to the present we have not had that assistance. We can take also Queensland. Ten or 15 years ago Queensland was in a state of very great depression indeed. The people there connected with the pastoral industry were in a very bad state. However, the Government assisted private enterprise to establish meat works, with the result that Queensland has prospered. We have the possibility of being able to rival Queensland and New Zealand. I wish it to be clearly understood that I am only trying to bring home to the Government the fact that they have missed the 'bus, or nearly missed the 'bus; that it is possible for them yet to retrieve the situation; trying merely to bring home to them the fact that if they will assist the people to get a water supply at Wyndham, the people there will be able to find their own way afterwards. It is not yet too late because, although Port Darwin, by the fact that an agreement has been entered into with an English company, has the first say, still they have to build their railway to get out and bring their stock in. There is yet time to retrieve the situation. There is yet a hope that we may save that province to this State. It would indeed be a political sin and a calamity generally if we were to lose it. I wish to bring that home to the Colonial Secretary, and I ask him to try to save the situation, to try to conserve to this State a great industry which is about to be lost to it, if the Government do not take the necessary steps. I ask that it should be paramount in their ideas; then afterwards, when we get these measures brought before us, the Irrigation Bill, the Mines Regulation Bill, and new railway Bills, we will rush them along and pass them through for the Government. But, first of all, the Government must remember the people who were the

first to open up the resources of the State—I was one of their representatives 20 odd years ago in the Parliament of this State—and I plead here and now that some justice shall be done to the district I am referring to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): It is almost unnecessary for me to say that Mr. Colebatch is a keen critic, a close reasoner and knows exactly what weapons to select from his armoury when engaged in conflict with an adversary. That is a proposition which I think all will admit who have had Parliamentary experience of the hon. gentleman. On top of all this he is an uncompromising opponent of the present Administration. But, if the case made out against the Government by Mr. Colebatch is the best that can be put forward, then I and my colleagues have every reason for gratification. The attack was a singularly weak one, and it was quite evident that Mr. Colebatch was suffering from a poverty of material. Much of the material he used in the course of his address will not bear a critical examination, or even a superficial inspection. There are several counts in the indictment he framed against the Government. The Workers' Homes Board will not advance money—for what purpose?—to buy jerry built houses; but prefer to add residences to those already erected. Freights on fertilisers have been raised. The Perth tramways are being run at a loss. The mining industry has not had a chance. The gold yield has gone down for the first five months because of an industrial trouble at Youanmi last month; because of that, the only industrial trouble in the mining industry which we know of, the gold yield has gone down. The sleeper contract has been bungled. The Government are selling meat too cheap. The Minister for Education has framed an obnoxious regulation. Immigration has fallen off. We have increased the public debt by £20 a head. The State Savings Bank profits have decreased. Our exports have dropped. Imports have enlarged. The selection ballot and pledge—adopted not only by the Labour party but also by the Country party, two representatives of whom we have in this

Chamber—are excrescences on the Constitution. And last, but I suppose not the least, the members of the Ministry have exploited the leasehold lands of the Crown. It will thus be seen that the hon. gentleman was at his best, and did not hesitate to introduce the personal element in order to give a finishing touch to his attack. With regard to the statement that Ministers have exploited the leasehold lands of the Crown, if they have been doing so they certainly have not been exploiting the conditional purchase lands, which was done by some of our predecessors. And when I make that remark I intend no reflection on those gentlemen. They had a perfect right to do so, provided that they did not utilise any information not available to the general public. With regard to the statement made, I may say that Ministers did—it is well known; they made no secret of it—select pastoral areas in the State. But where did they go? To far distant Eucla, a rabbit and dingo-infested locality, and they took up pastoral land. They have no security of tenure whatever; the land can be resumed at any time by any Government without one penny compensation being paid, except for improvements that are in accordance with the law. This land was open for selection for years. It was taken up years ago and abandoned, and the same opportunity of securing it was available to everyone else in a similar measure as it was to Ministers. Mr. Colebatch touched on the increased rate on fertilisers carried on the Government railways, and Mr. Baxter also alluded to the same matter. The reason for the action of the Government will be found in the report of the Commissioner of Railways for 1913. The Commissioner wrote—

Fertilisers are carried at  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per ton per mile—a rate which, I believe, is without parallel in Australia. It was introduced in November, 1907; the grounds for its adoption being the encouragement of wheat-growing, and the development of new agricultural areas. It was said then that the fertilisers would be carried in wagons which otherwise would run empty to the country

to return to the coast laden with wheat; that it was necessary in order to induce the more general use of fertilisers, and so increase the yield per acre; and that the low freight granted would foster the prosperity of the agricultural industry, and thus in other directions add to the revenue of the Department.

The Commissioner then showed that the fertiliser traffic had not been arranged as expected, and that for the year 1912-13 only 62,184 tons of fertilisers were hauled an average distance of 170 miles, at a loss to the State of £27,594.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is there anything about the rate on coal in that report?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will touch on that later. I think all who give this matter impartial consideration will agree that it would be unfair to the general taxpayer that this state of affairs should continue. The increased rates represent no great burden to the farmer. It is estimated that a 5-ton truck of fertiliser is sufficient for 150 acres. The increased rates are as follows:—For 50 miles, 3s. 9d. per ton, or 1.50d. per acre; for 75 miles 5s. 4d. per ton, or 2.1d. per acre; 100 miles, 6s. 3d. per ton, or 2.50d. per acre. From these figures it will be seen that the increases range from  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per acre, according to the distance hauled. The average yield in connection with last season was 12 bushels to the acre, and on that basis the maximum increased cost per acre, owing to the imposition of fertiliser rates that will enable haulage to be carried on without loss, would be one-fifth of a penny per bushel. The old rates meant a positive loss to the department, and the new rates imposed by the Commissioner of Railways will leave no margin of profit. The expenditure on working railways in Western Australia is heavier than is the case in the Eastern States owing in some measure to the high cost of fuel and water. The interest bill also is increasing rapidly in consequence of the enormous—

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Cost of construction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The expansion of railway construction in this

State through the agricultural districts. The net result of the operation of the spur lines through the agricultural districts for 1912-13 was a loss of £47,878. Now, the Government are desirous of assisting the struggling farmers in every possible way. They have shown that they are so desirous in a practical manner since they have been in office. But the rate enjoyed previously in connection with the carrying of these fertilisers was not only enjoyed by the struggling farmer but also by the old established farmer who was in a perfectly satisfactory position to pay for value received. We were carrying these fertilisers at a loss for the old established farmer who had thousands of acres under cultivation and who was in a position to pay the Government for the value of the services rendered to him by the railways of the State. Mr. Colebatch has alluded to what he called the attitude taken up by the Premier with regard to the increase in the fertiliser rates and the increase on the freights of Collie coal. He stated that a deputation of coal miners, the political supporters of the Government, had waited on the Premier, that the Premier had received them and promised that the matter would be referred to a Commission, but that on the other hand, the farmers who had desired an interview with the Premier in regard to the imposition of fertiliser rates had had their request refused. The request was refused, that is quite correct, and it is the only portion of Mr. Colebatch's statement which was correct. The deputation which waited on the Premier was not a deputation of coal miners, and it was not made up of supporters of the Government. It was a deputation of the mine owners who were hostile to the Government and the Premier did promise to get a Commission appointed to go into the matter.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: They got a reduction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As to whether the increased rate should be reduced, a proviso was made. The Government would not even make the concession of a Royal Commission until the mine owners had agreed to supply the Government and the Government depart-

ments, including the tramway system, at 4s. a ton instead of 6s. a ton as they had tendered. The coal rates are not so unprofitable to the railway system as the fertiliser rates. Coal rates are  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton per mile, whereas fertiliser rates are  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per ton per mile, the lowest in Australia, if not in the whole world. The hon. gentleman also commented upon the regulations under the Education Act in regard to scholarships, and stated that the principle was a rotten one. I can say this, that if it is a rotten one, it is a principle which has received endorsement throughout Australia. At any rate, three Australian States have acted upon the same principle. The position is this, that until this year candidates of the secondary schools at which these scholarships had never previously been held were not allowed to compete. Some restrictions had to be imposed. The Government proposed to make a concession, but at the same time they had to exercise some degree of caution. At the suggestion of the headmasters of the secondary schools, who were met in conference by the Director of Education, it was decided to make the scholarships open to all with an income limit if the latter was thought necessary.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Are you aware that the headmasters unanimously deny that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I was not aware of that. This statement which I give to the House was made by the Director of Education. The action taken, at any rate, was in the interests of the non-State schools which previously had received no recognition whatever in the matter.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Every one of the headmasters denies this.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It must be remembered that the State high schools are still free and that this is equivalent to a scholarship covering a term of years, and all who are admitted can even now receive their education free, but if the income is in excess of £250 a year the Government refuse to supply them with free board and lodging. In New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland such scholarships are open only to

children of parents with a limited income. In New South Wales the total income must not exceed £200 or £50 per annum for each member of the family; in Victoria it must not exceed £250, whatever the size of the family. In Queensland it must not exceed £156 per annum or £50 for each member of the family. Our regulations in this connection are more generous than exist in any other of the Australian States.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Why did you not put the regulations on the Table of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Colebatch had sneered at the references in the Speech to the profitable working of the Perth tramways. I think, however, the hon. gentleman was speaking without his book. For the eleven months of the year the earnings from the Perth tramways were £107,495. The operating costs, including rolling stock and expenditure on the track, outbuildings, and £9,166 spent on repairs, amounted to £65,479, leaving a balance of £41,016. The interest, of course, has to be debited against that, but there is no need to provide for depreciation. The asset is not only fully maintained, but is even enlarged out of revenue. There is no necessity, consequently, to make any provision for depreciation. The track is kept in order, and if any rolling stock is required it is purchased, and so right along the line. He says that the "purchase of the trams was the first specific act of centralisation that can be charged against any Government." It is very hard indeed to take the hon. gentleman seriously or to discover how he arrives at such a conclusion. Of course we will be prepared to admit that the City must benefit indirectly to a very considerable extent from the fact that the trams are nationalised, but that is not a proposition which will be accepted by the hon. gentleman for one moment. It is very strange indeed, if this was an act of centralisation, that it was opposed in this Chamber and in another place by every member who is representing the City in either House.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Oh, no!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not only was it opposed, but it was character-

ised as confiscation and described as daylight robbery. There was even an attempt made by Mr. Sommers to bring Mr. Molloy here to the Bar of the House in order that he might protest against the robbery that was about to be perpetrated. This House gave its sanction, however, to the measure which was introduced by the Government, although Mr. Colebatch endeavoured to kill the Bill by moving that it be read "this day six months." If the purchase of the Perth tramways was an act of centralisation, the first specific act of centralisation which has been committed by any Government in the State, this House lent its approval to the deed. We now come to the question of butchers' shops. Mr. Colebatch stated that 1,500 people were getting cheap meat and that 300,000 were paying for it. The tune, however, has altered very much since this matter was first discussed in the Legislative Council. Twelve months ago hon. members ridiculed the idea that the Government were selling cheap meat. They stated that we had not brought down the price of meat a fraction of a penny in the past. Now it appears that the cheap meat has arrived at last. It is said that we are selling it at a loss. Certainly, for three or four weeks last year we were actually selling at a loss of about £30 a week, but we have soon pulled ourselves together. The idea of the Minister for Agriculture, who controls this particular department, is to preserve uniform prices throughout the year. He has done so, and highly successfully too. It is stated that because the price of mutton is high at the present time, the State steamers have failed in achieving the object for which they were bought. But everybody should know that the State steamers were not put on to bring down the price of mutton in particular, but especially to bring down the price of beef, and they have fulfilled that object. They have brought down to the metropolitan area a considerable quantity of meat since they were put on.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: To the beef buccaneers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will deal with that presently. With regard to

the State steamers. I think that the remarks of Mr. Holmes are sufficient reply to all criticism which has been indulged in in connection with this particular enterprise.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you mean my remarks on the administration?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I feel that no Government which will ever get into power in the future will dare to take off these steamers. Mr. Holmes's arguments in reference to the proposal are, in my opinion, unchallengeable. He stated that the producers of the North-West were as much entitled to consideration as the producers of the South. When we come to consider that in order to assist the agricultural industry this State is prepared to suffer a loss of something like £48,000 a year in connection with our agricultural railways, and surely when this question of providing these small producers in the North-West with facilities to bring down their stock to market is also considered, criticism should be silenced. What was the position before the State steamers were put on? No small holder had an opportunity of getting his stock to market direct. Everyone was considered a small holder who was prepared to ship no more than 3,000 head of stock. He who had less than 3,000 head of stock to ship was regarded as a small holder. Consequently he could not get any accommodation from those who were running the ships. Unless he was prepared to send down 3,000 head of stock in five or six different shipments, the steamship companies had no time for him whatever. All that has, however, been removed. The State steamers have been put on, every accommodation that was necessary has been supplied to the producers in the North. Some of Mr. Holmes's statements were inaccurate, but I propose to deal with these later. In regard to the Esperance railway, I am only making brief reference to it now. I shall have ample opportunity at a later stage of going fully into the question. There is a Bill coming down and it will be necessary for me to introduce it. Members will no doubt express their feelings in

connection with that project and I shall have an opportunity of replying to them. There is no doubt that the official reports supplied by the Registrar General require to be dealt with. If these reports were a sure indication of the value of the district as an agricultural producer I do not think it would be possible to justify the undertaking. I can assure the House, however, that these figures are absolutely misleading through no fault at all of the statistician. Mr. Colebatch supplied figures which I accept as correct, as to the extent of land in the Esperance district, under cultivation. His figures showed that there were 1,574 acres under wheat, 2,117 under wheaten hay, 41 under oats, and 279 under oaten hay, making a total of 4,011 under cultivation there. I deny that there are anything like 4,011 acres under proper cultivation throughout the whole of the Esperance area. I was down there last July and got into touch with a great majority of the producers in that district. I saw many farmers, and those I did not see I got information about, and from my observations and from what I could glean, I can say that there are not more than 700 acres of land in that district under proper cultivation, as we know it in the other agricultural districts of Western Australia. At Grass Patch I saw 160 acres under proper cultivation at Mr. Thompson's farm; I saw 200 acres cultivated by Dr. Richardson, and also 200 acres cultivated by his son. I saw 10 and 20 acres at different places cultivated in the best possible manner, and in every instance where proper methods were adopted the crop was everything that could be desired. With regard to the crops of Dr. Richardson and his son, and Mr. Thompson, I had not seen any like them in other districts of the State. If hon. members would only give the matter a moment's consideration, they would come to the conclusion that there was no likelihood of such a large acreage as that mentioned by Mr. Colebatch being under cultivation there. There are 56 settlers all told in that agricultural area, and that number includes the owner of Grass

Patch farm. If all the 56 settlers cultivated their land it would mean an average of 71 acres each in order to make up the 4,011 acres quoted. The thing is preposterous. In many instances very large areas have been merely scratched, but as for cultivation, there is nothing approaching the area quoted. The procedure adopted is that the land is mulled, and while live roots are still in the soil, the ground is merely scratched over and no fertilisers are used. It costs £7 a ton to get fertilisers to this part of the State, so that hon. members will see the impossibility of using them there. As these areas have been merely scratched over, the statistics furnished to the Registrar General and which are read by members of Parliament and the public, are misleading and will continue to be misleading.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Will you submit details when you bring down the Railway Bill?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am prevented from doing so. All these returns are confidential and cannot be made public. If I were in the position to supply members with the information in regard to the individual crops, I would probably be able to clear the atmosphere in an effective way. But even according to Mr. Colebatch's figures—

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: They are not my figures, they are official figures.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am throwing the responsibility on the hon. gentleman.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I refuse to take it; they are the Registrar General's figures.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member submitted them, and I accept them as correct, and I believe they are. According to those figures, during 1912-13, 2,672, acres were under cultivation, and last season the acreage was 4,011, an increase of 65 per cent. in one year. Does it not show that these settlers have some confidence in the district, when, though this House has repeatedly refused them the railway

which they desire, to enable them to carry their produce to market, they have gone on increasing the acreage under cultivation? At any rate, it is clear that they have increased it by 65 per cent. in one year, according to the figures supplied by Mr. Colebatch, and which I believe are correct. Mr. Colebatch appeared to favour the through line. He did not say so exactly, but many who are not aware how he voted in connection with the project previously might be apt to come to such a conclusion. When we brought down the Bill for the construction of the railway before, the hon. member voted against it. I am not in a position to say whether he spoke against it; at any rate he showed his opposition to the proposal. His remarks with reference to the isolation of the land I do not propose to stress. At the same time they show a narrow spirit, and if the principle contained in the contention were acted upon, it would mean that we should confine the development of Western Australia to areas already in touch with the railway system. Then the hon. member went off like a Maxim gun in reciting the iniquities of the Government. He said that the Government had increased the public debt to the extent of £20 a head. They may have done that, I have not taken time to go into the matter, but if they did, the Government did so largely with the approval of the hon. member himself. The Loan Estimates are submitted to this House once a year, and I have seen hon. members examining them very carefully. I have heard criticism of the policy of the Government, and of their proposed undertakings, but, perhaps in regard to State enterprises, I do not think that during the past three years there has been any adverse comment on any of the other undertakings which have been submitted by the Government to this House for its consideration. I admit that not only the hon. member but other hon. members have shown strong opposition to the trading enterprises of the Government, but the money spent in connection with these enterprises is merely a drop in the

ocean. The total amounts to something like £241,000, and it has been said that the Government have raised something like £10,000,000.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: You are not out of the wood yet.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am pretty well certain and I can justify my statement, that Mr. Colebatch and other members would have increased the public debt considerably more if they had been afforded an opportunity to do so. We find evidence of that last session in various ways, and in speeches made in the debate on the Address-in-reply. If we accepted the proposals of hon. members of this House, the public debt would not only be increased £20 per head, but it would have been increased something like £40. To give hon. members an idea how the public debt had been increased, I will furnish a few items—only a few—I have not had time to go into the matter thoroughly. The workers' homes were responsible for £529,000; railway extensions for £3,400,000. Is there any objection to these proposals? Everyone is in favour of workers' homes, and everyone wants railways, and when I rose in my place to move the second reading of Railway Bills last session hon. members said that there was no necessity for speeches.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Not if we are getting value for our money.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Perth trams were responsible for £500,000. The Legislative Council approved of the purchase of the tramway system. On immigration—and it is said that we have done nothing in this direction—we spent £200,000. The Agricultural Bank—there is no objection to this institution, surely—was responsible for £621,000, while, in regard to the State implement works—and I am sorry to see that we have lost one ardent supporter in Mr. Patrick—we spent £40,000. Water supplies and sewerage were responsible for £681,000, and the Fremantle harbour for £201,000. These are only a few items, but they show what we are doing in order to develop the material re-

sources of Western Australia. The total amounts to £6,170,000. Then there is the development of agriculture. A huge sum has been spent in that direction, as well as in the development of mining. Mr. Colebatch said in regard to immigration that we were drifting, and that the other States had been doing more. Let us see what the other States did in the 12 months ended 31st December, 1913. These returns are made up for the calendar year, since when I do not think any returns have been made available. In that period Victoria introduced 12,146 immigrants, New South Wales 9,861, Western Australia 7,708.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: It is since then that I spoke about.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Queensland 4,758, and South Australia 2,759. When we come to consider the population of Victoria and New South Wales, and also consider the size and population of Western Australia, members will see in proportion to the population we have done vastly more than any of the other States.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: But it is since then that I refer to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was a lull in the first quarter. The second quarter showed an improvement. The lull was not due to any action on the part of the Government. I was going to read to members an extract from the speech made by Sir Newton Moore, the Agent General, at the West Australian dinner, but Mr. Patrick has saved me that trouble. Sir Newton Moore stated definitely that he had not been asked to call a halt in regard to immigration, but I will admit that, owing to the betterment of the industrial conditions of the Old Country, there has been difficulty in getting immigrants. Another reason is that there were certain arrangements made with the Eastern States. They proposed to fall into line with us, but the promise was not adhered to. There is another reason why the introduction of immigrants into Western Australia has not been on the scale which hitherto obtained. Reference has been made to the fact that our Savings Bank deposits are

decreasing. Everyone expected that, and everyone knows the reason for the decrease, and Mr. Colebatch better than anyone else. There is competition by the Federal institution at the present time. That is solely responsible for the decrease. It is not due to any action of the present Government or any feeling of insecurity. It is simply and solely due to our monopoly having been supplanted by the establishment of another institution to compete with that already in existence. Again, as compared with 1911 the hon. member stated that exports are decreasing and imports are increasing. I point out that the exports in 1911, which the hon. member took as his basis, because the previous Government were then in power, included a very heavy export of gold to India in connection with the Durbar. The decrease is due to less gold and specie being exported in 1913 than in 1911. During 1911 our exports totalled £10,606,863. Of this, gold and specie represented £7,019,967, leaving the balance £3,586,896 for general merchandise. In 1913 the exports totalled £9,128,607, of which gold and specie represented £4,370,263, but general merchandise amounted to £4,758,344. We exported general merchandise to the extent of £1,171,448 more in 1913 than in 1911, but in gold and specie we went back. This may be due to business exigencies or to the inscrutable designs of Providence, but certainly the Government are not to blame. The increase in the export of general merchandise of £1,170,000 shows that the country is prosperous under the present Administration. The true indication of the permanent wealth of a country is its export of general merchandise, and it will be seen from the figures that during the last three years our exports in this direction have increased beyond all anticipations. The reason for the increase of imports is very obvious. We have been carrying out a very heavy public works policy. It has been stated that we have borrowed ten millions of money; this is news to me. We have borrowed a considerable amount, but we have been carrying out a public works policy without parallel in the his-

tory of the State for a similar period. We have been introducing large quantities of material, quantities far in excess of anything imported previously during a similar period. And not only has the State been making heavy importations in this respect but the Federal Government also, in connection with the construction of the Trans-Australian railway. There is one solitary item apart from rolling stock and machinery, namely jute goods, the increased importation of which since 1911 amounted to £153,000. The hon. Mr. Colebatch should be about the last to complain regarding the increase in imports in consequence of his attitude in connection with the Irrigation Bill, the object of which was to make this State self-contained. If that Bill had become law when it was introduced by the present Government three years ago, we would be well on the way to provide a remedy against these heavy importations of food-stuffs which should be produced here. Another complaint is that there has been a decrease in the acreage of land taken up. We admit that this is so, but there has been more bona fide settlement. The boom days when land was sold at excessive prices, regarding which the hon. Mr. Carson and Mr. Baxter so loudly complained last week, are over. Instead of the speculator and the land-boomer being in active operation, the bona fide settler is going on the land. To-day we are suffering from the effects of the system introduced by a previous Government, and we have to bear the burden of the consequences which have followed.

Hon. J. Cornell: St. George's Terrace farmers have become a thing of the past.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I appreciated very much the tone of the remarks of the hon. Mr. Holmes. They were framed in a spirit which is all too rare in this Chamber, in my experience. I quite expected that he was a champion of the State steamers, because I had read in the *Carnarvon Times* the report of an interview he gave on the day after his election, in which he stated that his advocacy of State steamers had induced many of the electors to vote in his favour. The hon. member had



three or four opponents, but all of those gentlemen were in opposition to the enterprise.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They want the steamers, but they want them run properly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If that is so, the reporters could not have given a correct account of their meetings, because from my reading of the reports they were strongly hostile to the State running a steamship service, and if they were all in favour of it there must have been a strange inconsistency somewhere.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The trouble is that the steamers are not run properly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The arguments of the hon. member in support of the service are unanswerable. I have given my reasons, and it is not necessary to repeat them. Previous to the establishment of this service, Port Hedland producers received no consideration whatever from the shipping companies. The Kimberley district trade engaged the whole of their attention. I think this is perfectly correct, and I am making a statement which figures will prove to be accurate. In 1911 only 500 head of cattle were shipped from Port Hedland, but in 1912, when the State steamers came into competition with the other vessels, 6,000 head of cattle were shipped from that port. The result is that private enterprise in this district will be encouraged, and the same applies throughout the Kimberleys, and it will before long result in large tracts of pastoral country being taken up by private enterprise. I must offer an objection to one of the statements made by the hon. Mr. Holmes. He stated that our steamers are carrying almost solely for large holders. This is not a fact, and I can prove it. We have accommodated every small man who has applied for space to date. Several small men have applied and have been provided with accommodation. I admit that there are instances where small men have secured space and have afterwards sold their bullocks to large holders, and the mobs have come down apparently as belonging to the large holders. But

this is a matter which does not concern the administration of the department. Had we not placed the steamers in the trade, the producers would not be able to sell their stock to the large owners at the prices which they now obtain. The hon. Mr. Holmes made a general statement and I will give a specific reply to it. This year we are carrying stock for Bridge, Brennan, F. Taylor, Alex. Dunbar, M. J. Durack—who has no connection with the firm of Connor, Doherty, & Durack—Robt. Sexton, Chas. Newman Boothy, McDonald Bros., Farquharson, Mortimer Kelly, Gordon Buchanan, Holmes Bros., the Stock Department, and the Aborigines Department. These are all small owners. The large owners for whom we are carrying—this information is taken from the books of the State steamship service—are Elder, Shenton, and Connor, Doherty. We are bringing down 7,800 head for the small holders, and we are bringing 1,819 head for the large holders. I fail to see how it can be maintained with any degree of accuracy that we are running the ship to bring down cattle for the large holders of stock. I may say also that the number of cattle offering this season is considerably larger than we can ship, and a strong recommendation was received from the acting manager that we should charter a vessel in order to accommodate the producers of the North-West. After giving the matter a great deal of consideration, we came to the conclusion that it was not wise to charter, and that if there was a necessity for another vessel the best thing the Government could do would be to buy one.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Give them freezing works and you will not want to buy any more steamers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Holmes referred to the mortality among the "Kwinana" stock. It is certainly true that heavy mortality occurred during the first two trips. It was a very hot summer in the North, and the cattle were unable to stand it. We started the season much earlier this year than last. During the first trip the cattle were very greatly overheated and were all "tonguing" when placed on board, and

some of them actually died in the yard. The master of the vessel protested against shipping cattle in this condition, but the shippers insisted on him carrying out his contract. Since then the weather has been normal. On her last trip, this steamer brought down 780 head and there was no mortality. On the previous trip she brought down 716 head and only two head died. The "Western Australia" has made two trips recently, and was free from mortality. I wish to compliment the hon. Mr. Carson on the tone of his speech; it was pre-eminently fair. He advocated the bulk handling of wheat; the Government have already taken action in this connection, and a board were appointed to thoroughly investigate the matter. The board's recommendations are now under consideration and definite steps will be taken on the return of the hon. Mr. Bath from the Eastern States. The hon. gentleman complained of the high prices charged by the previous Government for land to settlers in the dry areas. The Government have had this matter in hand and before very long they will announce their policy. I may say that the Government are thoroughly in sympathy with the agitation for the reduction of prices. Meanwhile none of these farmers who appear to be entitled to consideration and who have been recommended by the board as worthy of recognition, will suffer hardship in any shape or form if they can be legitimately assisted by the Government. The hon. member stated that the State hotels were not paying, and the hon. Mr. Patrick said that only £2,000 profit had been made last year. It is surprising to me where hon. members obtain such information.

Hon. W. Patrick: It is in the return.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member stated that no interest or depreciation had been charged. The hon. Mr. Carson made this statement throughout his election, and it is altogether inaccurate. The gross profits of the Dwellingup and Gwalia hotels during 1912 and 1913 were £3,725 and £2,091 respectively, and the net profits were £3,208 and £1,318 respectively. A bal-

ance sheet was laid on the table of the House last year, but I daresay it was not examined by those hon. members who have criticised the State hotels. At any rate they appear to have very little knowledge as to where to find out the financial position of the hotels.

Hon. W. Patrick: I quoted from the latest returns.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not only is provision made for interest on capital but for depreciation and for the re-payment of capital. After making all these debits, a very substantial profit is shown. Besides this, every convenience in the way of accommodation is afforded in connection with the hotels, and the money is provided out of revenue. The Government are not anxious to show a big profit in connection with the running of those hotels. Mr. Lynn pointed out the necessity for some definite scheme being decided on in regard to harbour improvements at Fremantle. That is a matter which must be definitely settled before very long. The Government fully realise the position. It is a very big question, and a wrong move may prove disastrous to the State. The House, I am quite certain, does not expect the Government to rush into one or other of the schemes which have been proposed, without Ministers being first thoroughly satisfied that the scheme will be a success. The matter has been giving us very serious thought. When we find one representative of the Fremantle district in this House, the hon. Mr. Lynn, tending towards one scheme, and then find the hon. Mr. Allen practically denouncing that scheme and pointing out the dangers which may follow if that scheme were adopted, when gentlemen who have so much experience in connection with Fremantle as a port and a harbour express such diverse opinions, the Government have a right to be cautious.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: But we have not expressed diverse opinions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In such circumstances obviously it is necessary that the Government should be very careful with regard to any move they

make. At the same time, the matter is one which cannot be very long delayed, and the best possible method should be followed in order to arrive at finality. The deficit has been commented upon, and to judge from certain speeches one might come to the conclusion that this State had never had a deficit before. The Moore-Wilson Administration built up a deficit of £46,000 until it reached £385,000; and it took them six years before they could show a surplus on paper. They showed that surplus through their action in not paying £53,000 worth of accounts which ought in justice to have been dealt with by their administration—a fact which, I am assured by the Treasurer, was commented upon by the Auditor General at the time. Now, the deficit can very easily be accounted for. It was foreseen. Certain steps were taken by the Government which rendered the deficit inevitable. It was due in no sense to maladministration. The Government deliberately increased the salaries of public servants and extended the time for the payment of land rents. The arrears of land rents amount to £150,000, and in strict justice we should be given credit for that amount by any person who attempts to criticise us in connection with the finances.

Hon. W. Patrick: But there are always arrears of land rents.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: These are arrears in consequence of extensions of time granted by the Government.

Hon. W. Patrick: But you had the same revenue all the time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We should have had this revenue in the Treasury chest. Under ordinary conditions, we would have had it. We might have had it if we had pressed the farmers for it. The farmers would have found the rent if we had pressed them; and in that case the deficit to-day would have been reduced by £150,000. Further, the Government deliberately increased the salaries of railway employees by £212,074, of the police by £25,384, and of the teachers by £38,000. That is up to date, and makes a total of £425,458. Those four items alone account for the deficit of to-

day. I listened to the hon. Mr. Cullen's speech, and there is very little indeed in that speech calling for a reply. The hon. member confined himself mainly to generalities and abuse. His principal stock in trade appears to be vituperation, with side-lines in the shape of funny anecdotes and parables. He stated that there had been a blight over the State for three years, that Ministers were incompetent, that they were worse, that they were corrupt, that they were in office just to serve their supporters, that they were malicious, that they injured public servants from spiteful motives. No proof at all was furnished by the hon. member—it was unnecessary; Mr. Cullen's *ipse dixit* should be considered all-sufficient. Mr. Cullen flings about aspersions without any attempt whatever at justification. Then with unparalleled effrontery, I say, he stated that this House can realise the non-party ideal. Just imagine Mr. Cullen approaching the consideration of any questions submitted by a Labour Government with a calm and unbiassed judgment! There has been a curious development in connection with Mr. Cullen's speech. It was delivered on the afternoon of the 7th instant in this House, and on the morning of the 8th instant the *Great Southern Herald* published a supplement purporting to be a report of the hon. gentleman's address. In that report, however, Mr. Cullen was made to say things that he never uttered at all. There is a series of specific statements, a sort of dialogue—it was intended to be a dialogue, but it had been mutilated, I suppose, in the course of transmission by telegraph. I daresay it was telegraphed to the *Great Southern Herald* by some enterprising reporter late at night. The report contains a series of specific statements which I am sure must have been news to every hon. member. The Minister for Works was pictured as travelling through Wooroloo, and then there was a graphic account of an interview the Minister had with the men employed in the erection of the sanatorium. The important subject discussed was smoke-oh. Very amusing indeed. I will just read a few sentences. This is supposed to be what Mr. Cullen stated in this House—

In illustration of Ministerial pandering to the union bosses, it was only necessary to cite the Minister for Works at Wooroloo. The unionist foreman had given the men four smoke-ohs on full pay per day. The men modestly asked that over and beyond these "sit down" smoke-ohs, they, as good supporters of the Government in office, should be allowed to smoke all the time. This was too much even for unionist foremen, and the men downed their tools. The Minister for Works said he would go up himself and settle the dispute on the spot. He did so, and he took up as his helper the secretary of the union, who was part and parcel of the whole trouble. When Mr. Johnson met the men they satisfied him that they could do just as much work with their pipes in their mouths as they had done without them.

And so on. Most interesting, but certainly not a correct report of the proceedings which took place in this House.

Member: That is what he ought to have said.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It may be what the hon. Mr. Cullen intended to say, but in the course of his remarks here he certainly made no reference whatever to this interesting episode. Now I wonder very much whether the hon. gentleman has any ground of complaint against the reporter who telegraphed this speech to the *Great Southern Herald*, which newspaper, I believe, is owned by the hon. gentleman himself. Evil-doers, as a rule, shun the light; but the gentleman who telegraphed this report seems to seek the limelight, because he posted a copy of the supplement under cover of an envelope to every member of Parliament, I believe, and probably to every public institution in this State. It seems to me that in the interests of the House a search should be made for this culprit, and that every effort should be made to discover him. When discovered he should be expelled from the gallery, because the presence within the precincts of the Chamber of a scribe with such a fertile imagination is a menace to the peace of hon. members. Now, if the accusations made by Mr. Cullen are true—I mean the accu-

sations to which I have previously referred, as distinct from what is stated in the supplement—if the Government are corrupt, then Mr. Cullen should have the courage to say so outside, on the public platform, or in the columns of his newspaper. Up to date he has refrained from taking this course. But under cover of privilege he makes statements which he knows very well no one can call upon him to prove. If he has the courage of his opinions, he will say outside what he says here. If he wishes to make statements which would possibly form the subject of a prosecution under the Criminal Code, he should be prepared to make them outside, or else remain silent. Again, with regard to the Collie-Narrogin line, we have another of the characteristic remarks of that hon. member. He says—

The Government exempted only one line from the terminal charge, and that line serves their supporters—the Collie-Narrogin line.

That is incorrect, and Mr. Cullen must have known it to be incorrect. All the main lines have been exempted from the terminal charge. They always were. District charges were only raised on the Narrogin-Darke section when it was purely an agricultural railway, and when its traffic was purely for the requirements of the local settlers. When, however, the line was completed to Collie, the whole became a main line for the general use of the State for the purpose of the carriage of coal and timber. The fact that the line was laid with 60-lb. rails ought to be conclusive evidence that it is a main line, for no line laid with 45-lb. rails is regarded or treated as a main line in this State. Next, the hon. Mr. Cullen had the audacity to chide the Government for not re-introducing the Plant Diseases Bill. When I stated that I felt the House had rejected the measure last session, he pooch-pooched the idea and said it was nothing of the kind. On looking up *Hansard* I find that an amendment was moved "That the Bill be read a second time this day six months." However, the amendment got no support and the measure went into Committee. Then Mr. Cullen himself moved "That progress be reported," and

in consequence of that the Bill was shelved. Sir Edward Wittenoom and others, including Mr. Holmes and Mr. Connor, have strongly supported the erection of freezing works at Wyndham. I may say that it is a matter of which the Government have not lost sight. They have been giving the subject serious consideration for some time past. But there is one aspect of the case which I am sorry was not dealt with by those who urged the necessity of establishing freezing works at Wyndham, and that aspect is the position held by the pastoralists who control a large number of the stock in that district. It would never do for the Government to erect freezing works at Wyndham and place themselves at the mercy of three or four holders of stock in that part of Western Australia. Very large expenditure would be involved, and unless some very definite agreement could be arrived at, and, further, unless it could be shown that the proposition was practicable, it would, in my opinion, be unwise to spend money in the erection of the freezing works. If there is a way out of the difficulty, if those who advocate the erection of the works can show that the undertaking is justifiable, that the works can be kept going for at least six months of the year, and that there will be no difficulty in regard to dealing with the large holders of stock in that country, then I think they will receive a large amount of sympathy, and more than sympathy, from the Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If you get a guarantee that they will support it, will you erect it? Sympathy is no good.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Sympathy always goes before action, and the Government have been more than sympathetic, because they have acted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But the Federal Government have gone a good deal further.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The difference between the Federal Government and our Government is that every move the Federal Government makes is published to the world. On the other hand, when we make a move we say nothing about it.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Because it is not worth mentioning.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Baxter doubts the soundness of the claims of the present Government to be the friends of the farmer. I certainly expected some recognition from that hon. gentleman, who comes here as a representative of the Country party, and I did think he would be one of the first to admit that the Government had done a great deal for the agriculturists. There is the £150,000 I referred to as arrears of land rents, and there is the interest owing to the Agricultural Bank, £67,879. These people have not been pressed. Then there are arrears for water supply, £12,000, and seed wheat and fertilisers, with other direct assistance, £90,506, or a total of £428,385; and not one word of recognition from the representative of the Country party. Every farmer in distressed circumstances who has approached the Government has got sympathy, consideration and relief. It was rather ungenerous, then, for Mr. Baxter to speak of the losses on the State steamers which help the small pastoralists in the North, when we have done so much to help the agriculturists down here.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is not Mr. Baxter's fault; he takes his instructions from caucus.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Patrick has spoken on a subject in connection with which he addressed the House last year, and to which I replied; yet the same old bogey is trotted out again. Mr. Patrick said the Government have "done" the farmers, and in support of that proposition he refers to what the Government have done relative to the supply of seed wheat and fertilisers, and what they have done in order to secure the repayment of the money which belongs to the State. He asserted that caveats are lodged against leases and that bills of sale are taken against growing crops. And why not? Why should not the Government take proper security for any money they advance to the agricultural or the mining or any other community? I am surprised indeed to hear

Mr. Patrick, who is a shrewd business man, give utterance to the statement that the Government should take no security at all for any money they advance in this direction. He must remember that we are dealing with loan moneys borrowed from the British investor. What would be thought if we acted on the principle suggested by the hon. member and it got abroad that we were handing out fertilisers and wheat to Tom, Dick and Harry, without taking any security? We would be denounced by all hon. members, and rightly so, if we acted as the hon. gentleman recommended. Although the caveats are lodged against the leases, and bills of sale taken over the growing crops, the credit of the selectors, insofar as the Agricultural Bank is concerned, is in no way affected. I got that information from Mr. Paterson last year. When it is a Government bill of sale or caveat, or when it is any form of assistance rendered by the Government, it is not taken into consideration by the Agricultural Bank in estimating the value of the security. Then the hon. gentleman referred to the question of harbour accommodation at Geraldton. He said that a tinkering policy will be of no use for Geraldton. I agree with that. We do not want any tinkering policy, and I do not think the present Government will adopt any tinkering policy. It is the only Government which has seriously tackled the question. Just prior to the last general election, when hon. Frank Wilson went up to Geraldton, a deputation approached him and made a request in connection with the harbour works; but Mr. Wilson treated the whole thing as a joke. As soon as the present Government came into power they realised that it was a serious question, and had soundings and surveys made of the harbour, which took a considerable time; and as soon as the surveys and soundings were effected the people of Geraldton expected a harbour by return of post. But a great deal of consideration had to be given to the question. There was a number of schemes and, as in the case of the Fremantle harbour, they all had

to be carefully and cautiously considered. I can assure the hon. member that as far as the question of harbour works for Geraldton is concerned, the Government are fully alive to the situation, and before long a scheme will be adopted which will meet all the necessities of the situation.

Hon. W. Patrick: I hope you will remember the size of the steamers trading there.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman, in addition to being a shrewd business man, is an accomplished accountant, and it surprised me very much that he should take the Treasury returns as indicative of profit and loss. He said there was a deficit of £40,000 on the implement works. That would be astounding indeed if true. The figures are correct, but they do not represent the real state of affairs.

Hon. W. Patrick: They are all we have to go upon.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman should not comment on the situation until he has something safe to go upon. We have some 500 men down there, and there have been heavy importations of material and supplies, in order that the works might be carried on for a time, extending over several months; and, apart from that, everything sold from the works is sold on long terms. The Government are giving credit to the farmers, and, seeing this, how can the returns appear in the Treasury figures, which deal only with financial matters? The hon. gentleman should wait till the balance sheet comes down.

Hon. W. Patrick: That is too long to wait.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then he will be in a position to decide whether there is a profit or a loss. But to publish to the world that there is a deficit of £40,000 on the implement works is very unfair. It will get into circulation and be believed. The financial situation of the works has been grossly misrepresented by the hon. member. He is in good company, because one of the leading newspapers was led astray to the same extent.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is your duty to put the House and the country right.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The accounts have to be made up, books have to be written up, and audited by the Auditor General; and when all that has been done a balance sheet will be submitted. It was very amusing to hear members claiming that the result of the Legislative Council elections reflected the will of the people and should be taken as indicative of the doom of the present Administration at the approaching general elections. Disaster may threaten the Government, but I contend that the Council elections furnish no safe guide. My colleague, the hon. Mr. Dodd, showed the great progress which the Labour movement had made in regard to the Legislative Council. This progress has made it possible, as he pointed out, for a Labour candidate to run within eight votes of a gentleman of Mr. Allen's ability and popularity. The progress is very marked indeed. Ten years ago a Labour Government were in power in Western Australia and there was only one pledged representative of the Labour party in this Chamber; now there are five. But, owing to present conditions, the Labour party have no hope of gaining a majority in this Chamber, and while those conditions remain, responsible Government will be a farce so far as this State is concerned. For one thing, the franchise is confined to a privileged section. But there is a worse evil, namely plural voting. It is possible under that system for a member to be returned to the House without having the confidence of the residents of the province which has elected him. As a matter of fact, some of these elections have been controlled and dominated by the absentee vote, by the vote of the capitalistic class, who hate the Labour party like poison. Two years ago, when I sat for re-election, I discovered to my great surprise no fewer than 290 absentee voters on the roll. At one of the polling booths 233 postal votes were recorded. Of these, 161 were for my opponent, and the vast majority came from the metropolitan area, and the southern districts, while 71 were for me, and most of mine came from

within my own province. During the recent province election I visited Kalgoorlie in connection with Mr. Millington's candidature, and I discovered there were 200 absentee postal votes to come in from the metropolitan area. While such a system obtains members cannot reasonably claim that Council elections are a reflection of the will of the people, or even of the people resident in the province which returns the member. The Assembly elections are the only safe guide. Mr. Carson said that only one Assembly election had been held since the general elections. That is not a fact; there have been four. The Government have been successful in three, and the Liberal party won the other seat, but I am of the belief that they will not retain it very much longer.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Not if you get the Geraldton harbour going in time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom stated that I had ridiculed the members of the Legislative Council. I am not given to ridicule as a rule, and I certainly indulged in no ridicule on that occasion. I pointed out several socialistic projects which certain anti-socialistic members of the House had warmly recommended; but I forgot all about the State freezers at Wyndham, for which Sir Edward Wittenoom is an ardent advocate. Next time I go to Geraldton I will be able to add to the list which I supplied on that occasion the proposed State freezing works at Wyndham. Other members of this House have spoken and expressed their views. I have not dealt with all of them. Some of the speeches I have merely touched upon and others I have not referred to at all. I can assure hon. members that no discourtesy is intended. Indeed, in some cases my omission in this case may be regarded as a token of appreciation. I have listened to those speeches very carefully and have found them both interesting and instructive. I can assure hon. members that in realising my duty I have come to the conclusion that I am not here to carp and cavil at or to quarrel with hon. members because they happen to hold different views to myself. I am here I

think to supply explanations to members so far as I am in a position to furnish them and to the best of my ability, and to remove misconceptions which may have misled hon. members and caused them to draw wrong conclusions.

Question put and passed: Address adopted.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 28th July, at 4.30 p.m.*

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 10.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 16th July, 1914.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED

By the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin): 1, By-law No. 15 of the Municipality of Geraldton, 2, By-law No. 112a of the Metropolitan Water Supply.

### QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR FACILITIES.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Works: 1, Are the Government aware that the Fremantle harbour was taxed to its utmost capacity during the recent wheat season? 2, In view of the natural

increase expected this year, what steps are being taken to provide adequate accommodation and facilities for handling the next wheat harvest? 3, What is the total number of men now employed in connection with works to provide such increased accommodation?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, On rare occasions there were more ships awaiting berths at Fremantle than there was accommodation for, but this is by no means an uncommon circumstance in the ports of the world. 2, An amount of £20,000 has been authorised to be expended on alterations to the railway lines on the North Quay and the provision of stacking areas. Orders have been placed with the Agricultural Implement Works for the manufacture of four (4) additional wheat loaders, and quotations are being obtained for six (6) additional pedestal loaders. A small commencement has been made with alterations to lines. The scheme provides for the handling of 48,000 bags of wheat a day. 3, About 20 men at present besides those employed by the manufacturers of machinery. In addition to the above, some 233 men are employed in extending the North Quay westwards and in dredging the harbour, which form a material part of the extension of the harbour.

### QUESTION—LAND TAXATION, VALUATIONS.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Premier: 1, Can information relative to valuations for land taxation purposes be obtained from the Commissioner for Taxation on payment of a fee? 2, If so, what is the fee and the usual procedure to obtain this?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Land Tax Assessments are, by Section 45 of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, open to inspection on payment of the prescribed fee. 2, The fee prescribed by Regulation 49 is one shilling for the inspection of entries relating to any one taxpayer. On payment of this fee the documents are produced for inspection.