

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 28th October, 1913.

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

QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT, BREACHES OF AWARDS.

Mr. CARPENTER (for Mr. Dwyer) asked the Attorney General: 1, How many complaints and breaches of awards of the Arbitration Court and of industrial agreements have been made to the department since the new Act came into force? 2, Have each of these complaints been investigated? 3, If not, why not? 4, How many breaches of award have these investigations disclosed? 5, How many actions for breaches of award have been taken by the department? 6, How many convictions have been secured? 7, Is it the practice of the department not to take action for breach of award if the breach is rectified? 8, If so, does he realise that such a practice in no way penalises the offending party, and is unjust to those who strictly obey the award?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Eighty. 2, Yes, with one exception. 3, One complaint was not investigated owing to the fact that an interpretation of an award was involved, and it was thought desirable that in such cases the matters should be dealt with by the unions concerned. 4, One hundred and one. 5, Thirty-one. 6, Twenty-one. 7, Yes; if circumstances warrant it and it is found on investigation that the breaches are not of a serious nature, and have not been committed with the deliberate intention of evading the provisions of the award or of victimising employers or employees. In cases where the breach is of a serious nature, or

where a second offence has been committed action is always taken. 8, No.

QUESTION—POTATOES GROWN AT ESPERANCE.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he aware that potatoes grown in Esperance are being excluded from shipment to Albany? 2, Is it true that there is no known outbreak of Irish blight or other disease in the potato crop at Esperance? 3, If not, and seeing that the potato supply in Esperance is rapidly overtaking the local demand, and that the produce of Esperance is excluded by lack of railway facilities from reaching their natural market on the goldfields, will he cause immediate arrangements to be made for the district to be included in the clean area, and so admit of Esperance produce being exported to Albany?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, Not to the knowledge of this department. 3, Esperance is an open port at which potatoes from the known infected areas of the Eastern States are imported. It is not considered safe to jeopardise the interests of the large potato areas of the South-Western portion of the State by permitting the introduction of these potatoes. Esperance is, in this regard, only on the same plane as every other portion of the State outside the specially protected potato area.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Regulations under "The Land Act, 1898," and Amendments. 2, Timber Tramway Permits under "The Land Act Amendment Act, 1902." 3, Regulations under "The Cemeteries Act, 1897," and Amendments. 4, Report of the Under Secretary for Lands for 1912-13. 5, Report of the Woods and Forests Department for the year ended 30th June, 1913.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH IMPROVEMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—LAND VALUATION.

Recommittal.

On motion by the PREMIER, Bill re-committed for the further consideration of Clauses 12, 13, 15, and 30.

Mr. McDowall in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 12—Objections may be made:

The PREMIER moved an amendment—

That Subclauses 2 and 3 be struck out.

In these subclauses it was provided that a deposit should be made with every objection to the valuation of any land, and that if the objection was allowed or disposed of otherwise than by reference to the court of review, the deposit should be returned. He had a further amendment to move to Clause 30, and the effect of the two amendments taken in conjunction would be that no deposit would be required to be made with any objection unless the appeal was to the court of review against the decision of the Valuer General.

Amendment passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 13—Notices of valuations to be served on owners:

The PREMIER: This clause was amended in Committee by adding at the end the words "and other particulars as provided for in Section eight." He proposed now to strike out those words and substitute other words which would make the clause more comprehensive. It would then provide that the Valuer General must deliver or send by post to every owner a complete copy of all that appeared in the register concerning the land. Otherwise only the particulars mentioned in Clause 8 would have been supplied. He moved an amendment—

That the words added at the end of Subclause 1 "and other particulars as provided for in Section eight" be struck out and the words "and containing such particulars as are set forth in the register regarding the land" be inserted in lieu.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier's explanation was fairly clear but it would facilitate matters if in the absence of reprints of the Bill the clause as previously amended were printed, together with the proposed amendment on the Notice Paper. Otherwise it was rather difficult to consider an amendment of this kind.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: A clear copy of the clause should have been placed before members. He did not think the amendment would make the slightest difference because nothing could be done unless it was done under the authority of Clause 8.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 15—Register may be modified:

The PREMIER moved an amendment—

That in line 3, after "modifications," the words "and additions" be inserted.

Mr. GEORGE: It would be considerable if besides giving the notice in the *Gazette* the Valuer General was compelled to send a written notice to any land owner regarding any modifications.

The Premier: That is provided for in a later amendment on the Notice Paper.

Amendment put and passed.

The PREMIER moved a further amendment—

That a new subclause be inserted as follows:—"(4.) The provisions of Section thirteen shall apply to and in respect of any such supplement as if it were a register, and for the purpose of this subsection the notice aforesaid shall be deemed a notice under section eleven."

This would provide exactly what the hon. member for Murray-Wellington requested that when modifications or additions were made by way of supplement, the owner of the land in question should be notified.

Amendment passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 30—Objector may appeal:

The PREMIER: The provision requiring a deposit when objection was made to the Valuer General had been struck out, and a deposit would be re-

quired only if the court of review was moved. He moved an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—“Provided that (a) Every appeal shall be brought by notice served on the Valuer General; (b) With every notice of appeal there shall be deposited with the Valuer General a sum to be fixed by regulation, not being more than ten pounds and not less than one pound, and such notice shall be deemed to be null and void unless the deposit is duly made; (c) The sum deposited shall be forfeited, returned, or otherwise disposed of as the court of review shall think fit to order.”

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It had been pointed out that the cost of an appeal in the case of a valuation for £500 or less would be heavy enough to guarantee that there would be no frivolous complaints, and when it came to a matter for the Supreme Court there was no doubt that the question of costs would deter any man from approaching the court unless he had a good case. In many instances probably, owners would not be able to make any appeal, not because of the deposit required, but because they would have to put up a substantial sum before a solicitor would take up the case. It was wrong in principle to insist on a deposit. A land owner could, without cost, discuss his valuation with the Valuer General, but if he decided to go to the court he must put up a deposit which could be forfeited at the discretion of the court. One could understand the Premier urging the need for a deposit if a man merely desired to discuss the matter with the Valuer General, as that officer's time would be valuable, but when it was a matter of paying district court, or more particularly Supreme Court costs, the Premier need have no fear but that only cases justifying an appeal would be taken to court. No difficulty should be put in the way of an appeal against an unfair valuation.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Bill again reported with further amendments.

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

BILL—UNIVERSITY LANDS.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) in moving the second reading said: Hon. members will notice by the measure now before them that it is similar to that introduced by myself and which passed through this Chamber last session, but which unfortunately did not receive the assent of another place. Since that time we have been in communication with the Senate of the University in order to decide whether they, on the one hand, or the Government on the other hand had changed the opinions contained in the measure when first introduced, but neither the Senate nor the Government have considered that there is any need for changing the policy then submitted as the correct one in the interests of the University and the State. May I explain that perhaps one could say that a great deal of history has been made since the Bill was introduced and rejected by the Legislative Council, but I am not going to weary the Chamber by going into all these questions that have been raised by certain individuals, nor do I think it wise that members should give them more than an ordinary consideration. First of all I hold this opinion most strenuously that the University we have established in Western Australia is after all a Government institution; that it is an institution while controlled by the Senate under an Act of Parliament, is at the same time an institution which belongs wholly and solely to the taxpayers of the State and we want that institution to be of value to every unit in the community, and unless we are satisfied that such is going to be the result of the establishment of such an institution, I think Parliament as the controller of the taxpayers' money have no right to find all the cash necessary for the establishment and maintenance of such an institution. It will be remembered that when the Gov-

ernment introduced the Bill for the establishment of the University it was then urged on all hands that not being a party measure the Senate should be made so democratic that it would ensure that the institution would be conducted for all time on democratic lines, that it should not get into the groove that some of the older universities in other parts of the world have found themselves, and in some places have found it difficult and in some other cases absolutely impossible to get out of. It was thought when we established the Senate that we should be doing something for all time, but it was not long before we found that with the present constitution of Convocation it was necessary to call to our assistance persons who have passed through the older universities of the world. But it was never considered that Convocation should be a body to dictate terms and conditions not only to the Senate, but to the Government of the day. Now we find that Convocation is insisting that the Senate should not move in any direction until it submits its proposals to Convocation first of all for either acceptance or rejection. Parliament never intended that Convocation should act in such a direction but should be essentially an advisory body, nothing more; that the control of the University deliberately and decidedly should be placed in the hands of a senate. When we remember that Convocation has adopted such an attitude, if we call to mind the fact that in a few years time Convocation will elect no less than two-thirds of the members of the Senate, the object we had in view will, I am afraid, be completely lost. Let me point out that in Western Australia we have a desire that the working classes shall benefit by the establishment of such an institution and we want to be certain that that institution shall be controlled in such a manner as to give an opportunity to the working classes to obtain some benefit. If the working classes are to obtain benefit to make them better fitted for work in life to those who may employ them, or if, for instance, they do not happen to be employed in

service, are not to be under an employer, to enable them to bring better educational knowledge into being which will assist materially in the wealth of the State as produced by the citizens; but if they are engaged by an employer, having passed through a university, it will assist them materially not only from their point of view but from the point of view of the employer as well. We are of opinion that the working classes should have proper representation, but unfortunately I foresee, not a possibility, but a probability that in a short number of years they will be completely excluded from any control of the government of the institution; yet they will be called on with other taxpayers to find the wherewithal for the management of that institution. So far as I am personally concerned, I shall not be a party to such a thing happening, and at the same time be placed in the position—

Mr. S. Stubbs : Can they do that ?

The PREMIER : I am pointing out that under the University Act after a given period, Convocation will elect two-thirds of the Senate and the Government one-third, with the result that as Convocation is at present constituted, made up principally of men who have passed through the older universities, and principally of men practising the medical profession in this State, even if the Government of the day appoint every one of their representatives from the industrial classes, two-thirds of the Senate will be made up of persons appointed by Convocation, and possibly persons who have graduated in other universities. That can only be altered by an amendment of the University Act. I am pointing out the position, and in doing that, my object is also to draw attention to the fact that to-day we have a Senate which we believe is representative of all the interests that we desire a university should care for, and that Senate has on two separate occasions agreed to the exchange of the lands as proposed in the Bill of last session and in the Bill now before the Chamber. Notwithstanding that fact, the Convocation, that useless limb, has moved, I may say, almost

heaven and earth to prevent the Senate of the University and the Government as representing the taxpayers, from obtaining their desires in that direction. This fact is most patent, that when a governing body has appointed a Senate to control the University it is generally recognised that once the majority has arrived at a decision subject to the whole of the Senate having given fair and proper consideration to any proposal, the minority should loyally abide by the decision of the majority, and that the minority unable to carry their way, it is the practice for the minority generally to refuse to have anything to do with that body by resigning their positions. But here we have the spectacle of just a few members of the Senate fighting this matter out from every point of view, yet being defeated by the Senate on two occasions still retaining their positions on the Senate and moving in other directions, going outside the Senate and using other places to defeat the object of a majority of a body of which they are a part.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Have they done so?

The PREMIER: They have done so. They did so on a previous occasion and they attempt to do so on this occasion. Have they not petitioned Parliament already for the purpose? That may commend itself to some in the community, but it does not to me.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Did they succeed?

The PREMIER: They did on a previous occasion. The Bill has now been twice before Parliament, it has been twice endorsed by Parliament and the Senate, yet this small minority that continues to sit, but is not prepared to take the opinions of a majority are moving in another place to prevent the Government, representing the taxpayers, doing as they desire.

Mr. S. Stubbs: If the majority say they are going to have their way, how will the minority defeat their object?

The PREMIER: Because they will defeat the measure, and it requires a Bill to endorse the action of the Senate and the Government.

Mr. Male: That shows their pluck, any way.

The PREMIER: It may show pluck, but that is not much to boast about. When any person accepts a responsible position on a governing body of an institution, and a majority arrives at a decision, most men in the community, at any rate any self-respecting man in the community, would not continue to fight the majority, and refuse to accept such majority decision, but they consider that they are entitled to remain and to be a stumbling-block in the way of the Senate going on in what they consider is the best way. The most remarkable feature about it is this: outside one or two disappointed persons looking for seats on the Senate, hardly a single individual is opposed to the transfer except medical men, and everybody knows that medical men have taken a part in this, as well as others I could mention, members of Convocation who are only recent arrivals in this State. A number of them are medical officers receiving payment from the State in the nature of a retaining fee, yet they are prepared to move on every occasion to prevent the Senate, duly appointed by the Government and never objected to by Parliament, doing what they consider in the best interests of the future of the University. As far as I am personally concerned, I only consider how it affects the taxpayer. We are desirous of establishing a university on a basis that will make good for the community as a whole. We want that university as early as possible to be established in a definite home, a permanent home. We, in my opinion, really commenced rather too soon.

Mr. Male: There is no question about that.

The PREMIER: The hon. member cannot unduly blame this Government for that, he should blame the whole of Parliament as then existing. We were not too soon in drawing attention to the necessity for such an institution, but I think we were rather going too fast when we did not first of all make definite provision for a home for such a university, with the result that to-day the University is established in temporary premises. The Government had to provide the money for the temporary premises, and also fur-

nish all the equipment which was necessary, and as a matter of fact it has found all the money for the management of the University. It is true that we have called upon the University to pay interest on the money which has been expended on the temporary buildings, but we can never get the principal back, because when the temporary buildings are done with for university purposes, they will be of little or no value except for old iron or old timber. Moreover it could never be held that such buildings could be permitted to remain in the position they are at the present time, right in the heart of the City. They must in due course be pulled down and more imposing structures be put up in their place for other purposes. However, hon. members will see that the money which has been provided for the erection of these structures has really been given to the University, and all we shall get out of that is interest. I take up this position, that as Treasurer, and as custodian for the time being of the taxpayers' funds, I am not prepared to find any additional money for the purpose of adding to these temporary buildings, until such time as the Senate and the Government with the endorsement of Parliament can decide the question of the future permanent home of the University. As I pointed out to the deputation which waited on me, what I want to do is to decide the home of the University, and then as funds become available, instead of continually making additions to temporary buildings, spend the money at the permanent site, shift the temporary premises to that permanent site, and as further funds are made available expend it where the permanent home is to be, until such time as the University will be a credit to the State and will also be of material assistance to the students. I want this question to be decided without party feeling. The leader of the Opposition is a member of the Senate and he knows that as far as the University was concerned it was considered from a non-party point of view. It is absolutely essential that such a matter as this should be so considered, but I cannot help remarking that from the point of view of the taxpayer,

and as long as I am Treasurer, I shall not permit a few disappointed individuals to call upon me whenever it is necessary for them to ask for money to do what I consider will prove a loss to the taxpayer. I am not prepared to agree to additions being continually made to these temporary buildings, because it will only mean sinking money in the ocean. I want hon. members to understand that I am not making these remarks in the nature of threats.

Mr. Dwyer: Do you object to the buildings being erected in King's Park?

The PREMIER: I am not giving one moment's consideration to that proposal.

Members: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I am viewing Perth as the capital city, and I am bearing in mind what it will probably be 50 years hence, and all the ground in King's Park will then be so highly valued that it would be most unwise at the present time to give away one foot of it, much less permit university buildings to be erected on it. In connection with the establishment of a University—and the same thing applies all the world over—students attending that institution consider that they must have grounds around it which they want to regard as sacred, and notwithstanding the plea of those who are now asking that King's Park should be made available for the University, and that the public should be permitted to have access to those grounds, I venture to say, the students would consider that the public were encroaching, and the public would also feel that they were encroaching if they approached too near the University buildings. The result therefore would be that the University would be taking a considerable area of the people's land. Let me say this also in regard to the question of the distance between the suggested site in King's Park and that recommended and accepted by the Senate and the Government at Crawley, that in a direct line it is not more than three-quarters of a mile. In fact I really believe it is even less. It is also claimed by the advocates of the King's Park site that a portion of that site near Thomas-street would only

be five minutes' walk from the tram. The site at Crawley, however, will not be a single minute's walk from the trams; the trams will pass the door.

Mr. Wisdom: When?

The PREMIER: The Government have given an undertaking that when the University is established the trams will pass the door, and I suppose if the present Government are displaced the party opposite will come into power, and will be prepared to endorse that undertaking. Therefore from the point of view of access, if the University is established at Crawley, we give an undertaking to provide tramway facilities almost to the door. I have yet to learn that there is really a desire on the part of the bulk of the people that any portion of King's Park should be devoted to University purposes when other lands are available. I cannot understand that suggestion receiving support from anyone who can look ahead to the time when the value of the University will really be appreciated by the people. I cannot believe that there are people who will say that Crawley is not ideally situated for such a purpose. The main objection raised to the Crawley site is that the grounds are low-lying and that there is not proper drainage there, and that the health of the students and others might suffer in consequence; but we have had the best advice obtainable and that advice has been quite against that belief.

Mr. Harper: What about the Shentons? They lived there all their lives.

The PREMIER: Yes, and I think they were fairly healthy people, and moreover the Shenton family lived on the lowest portion of the estate; much lower than the spot on which it is proposed to erect the buildings.

Mr. Male: Who raised the objection to Crawley?

The PREMIER: The medical profession and they are the only people who are objecting to it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Not the Principal Medical Officer.

The PREMIER: No; Dr. Saw, a member of the Senate, and other doctors have

fallen into line, and of course we know that they are the closest corporation in the world, and naturally enough the opposition from them is strong. Hon. members will be surprised when I tell them that another person who practises medicine in this State, and a member of the Senate, was appointed one of a committee to confer with the Government regarding the permanent site of the University; that was in the early stages. The committee waited upon me and they consisted of a majority of the Senate. I took the precaution to count how many members were on that committee, and satisfied myself that they were a majority of the Senate before I took action.

Mr. Underwood: The Senate could be wrong.

The PREMIER: That committee said they were unanimously prepared to recommend Crawley as the permanent site, subject to certain land on the north side of the Fremantle road being acquired for the purpose of professors' residences, which would remove any possible objection to danger from the point of view of the establishment of the University on low-lying ground. I said the Government were prepared to consider the question and not a single voice was raised by that majority of the Senate. In fact they all endorsed it, and in order to prevent an undue rise in values, the Government went quietly to work and secured the land the committee required at a cost of over £2,000. Immediately afterwards Dr. Saw began to object and the other person to whom I have referred endorsed that objection, and went around canvassing and secured a reversal of the previous decision. I do not want to be placed in a false position; I have no feeling whatever against those persons who hold a different opinion in this matter. Everyone is entitled to his opinion, but I hold the belief strenuously that the Bill which was agreed to by the Senate and the Government is in the best interests of the University, as well as the State. Since we last considered this matter I wrote to the Senate in order to show that I was not doing anything unfairly in connection with this matter, and I

pointed out the necessity of arriving at a decision. I wrote—

The Government, while adhering to their previously expressed opinion, that Crawley is the most suitable site, are not desirous of doing anything which savours of compelling or forcing the Senate to accept that view, whilst it is holding a contrary opinion; but if it is to be accepted, the Government think that a Bill should be again introduced to Parliament with that object in view, so that all buildings for the future utilisation of the authorities of the University of Western Australia shall be erected on the finally selected home of that body, as distinctly agreed between the Government and the Senate. I have come to the conclusion further, that until this all important outstanding matter is adjusted (as it should be) I, as representing the general taxpayer, am not warranted in granting the desired assistance in a piece-meal manner.

I see no reason to change my opinion since I wrote that letter, and I want to tell the House we are providing to-day from general revenue a sum of £13,500 per annum for the management of the University, and over and above that we have found a considerable sum of money for the erection of the temporary buildings in Irwin-street. Not only have we done that, but we have also gone to the further expense of shifting public and other offices from that site, and in some cases we are paying rent, and all this for the convenience of the University. I claim we have done everything possible for the purpose of assisting the establishment of the University on a basis that will ultimately redound to the credit of the State.

Mr. S. Stubbs: So you have.

The PREMIER: Now the Senate comes along with a further request that we shall provide this year £2,500 for additional equipment, £2,975 by way of a further subsidy, and £9,000 for additional temporary buildings, and this sum is to be expended on the temporary site in the heart of the city.

Mr. S. Stubbs: You have done too much already.

The PREMIER: We probably have, but I think we have done all that can reasonably be expected of us. There are a greater number of students applying for admission than we ever expected would be the case, but if things are going to continue on this basis I believe there will be even a greater demand than at the present time, and I want to see the money that we must expend in the way of assisting and maintaining that institution expended on a permanent basis, and if we do that the £9,000 which is wanted will not be thrown away, so that the question of the site must be determined, and as far as the Government are concerned they are not prepared to ask Parliament to consent to the University being established in King's Park. If any private member can get a majority in this Chamber and in another place to agree to a portion of King's Park being handed over to the University, of course we shall not be able to object; but so far as we are concerned we shall not agree to anything of the kind. Another objection has been raised and it is that, as the University had certain endowment lands granted to it by previous Governments it should not for a moment agree to the transfer of a single acre. My answer to that is this, "Very well, if you want to use those endowment lands for the purpose of the University, if the Senate so desire, they may utilise them without the Government objecting." There is nothing to prevent the Senate from establishing the University on any lands they hold. They do not require any permission from the Government or Parliament to do it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They require the money though.

The PREMIER: All they require is the money, it is true, but I would infinitely prefer to come to Parliament and ask for £20,000 with which to put up permanent buildings on a permanent site, than to ask Parliament to agree to a further expenditure of £9,000 on buildings that are going to be worth nothing, except as old iron and wood, in the near future. On the other hand, I claim that the proposal is that we should give them land which has been purchased by the Government with the general taxpayers'

money, land known as Crawley estate, in lieu of land granted to them by way of endowment, and, after all, they are not giving up one acre of land but what they are getting full value for. As a matter of fact, I claim that we are giving them something more than the value as existing to-day for the land we are accepting from them, and, furthermore, I want members to appreciate this fact, that if it can be successfully claimed that the endowment land was given for the purpose of maintaining the University, the Senate should use that land instead of coming to me, as representing the general taxpayer, almost every week of their existence, for further land and more funds for the purpose of carrying on when they are doing nothing whatever with the lands given them as an endowment.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What can they do?

The PREMIER: We are prepared, at least, to give them more than equal value of other land upon which they can erect a permanent home, on a site which the majority of the Senate long ago agreed to as the most suitable for the purpose, in exchange for other land of somewhat less value, but which the Government will be able to utilise for other purposes. If it can be held that the exchange is not fair, I for one will not be a person to insist upon anything unfair in that direction, but that claim has never been raised. The only objection raised against Crawley was that from a health point of view it was not satisfactory, and a second objection was that the Senate should not give up a single acre of their endowment lands. I am not asking them to give up a single acre. All I am asking is to make an exchange of land they hold for other lands that we hold, and until they do that I am not prepared to find additional money for the purpose of establishing university buildings on a temporary site.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Is Crawley not required as a park?

The PREMIER: No. Already we have King's Park adjoining the Crawley estate. All that we require in the way of a general park is provided by King's Park, but what has been accepted by the Senate, and agreed to by the Government,

is that a certain portion of the foreshore on the eastern side, and a fair amount of land on the southern and south-eastern portions of the estate shall be a Class A reserve, and it can be utilised by people who desire to camp along the river. We are taking sufficient of the foreshore for the use of the public who desire to utilise the river and camp on the banks, and it will be made a Class A reserve. As a matter of fact, we purchased portion of the Nedlands Park estate in order that the University lands might extend further back on to higher ground. We have done everything possible to meet the wishes of the Senate, who have twice agreed to the proposal which is now being submitted to Parliament.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

The PREMIER: The hon. member may have his opinion, but he is not infallible on these matters, and I would rather accept the judgment of those specially appointed.

Mr. Underwood: You want to make it exclusive.

The PREMIER: There is nothing exclusive in the proposal.

Mr. Dwyer: Place it in the centre of the City.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Perth cannot see the metropolitan area beyond the Perth town hall, but I claim that Crawley is more central for the whole of the metropolitan area than the Perth town hall.

Mr. Dwyer: No.

The PREMIER: I claim that it is, and as the south side of the river is opened up—

Mr. Dwyer: -Oh no.

The PREMIER: Evidently the hon. member cannot foresee the tremendous expansion that must take place in the metropolitan area in the next 25 years.

Mr. Underwood: It is going north.

The PREMIER: It may be going north, but it must go south eventually, and I want the site of the University to be considered with regard to this fact, that it is to be utilised by the people for all time, and it must be approachable from all points.

Crawley is a site approachable from the south side of the river when we have the State ferries further extended, and also approachable by tram from any point of the City or suburbs, and, in my opinion, it will be an ideal site for the University. Apart from my own opinion, however, I want Parliament to see the wisdom of accepting the advice of those duly charged with the responsibility of establishing and controlling this University in its initial stages—I refer to the present Senate.

Mr. Dwyer : This Bill does not bind them to any site.

The PREMIER : That is so. The Senate may accept that land in exchange for other land held by them, and still establish the University somewhere else, but I want hon. members to understand that the object of the Senate and the Government in making this exchange, is to fix Crawley as the site, and if this Bill passes and becomes law the Government and the Senate will undoubtedly take immediate action for the purpose of utilising Crawley as the permanent home of the University. So far as I am personally concerned, there is not the slightest doubt that if we want to see the University extended, we must first come to a decision as to its permanent home, and I know of no better advice to follow than that of those gentlemen charged with the responsibility of advising on such a matter. The Senate has twice decided this issue in favour of Crawley, without any influence being brought to bear by the Government, and in those circumstances I ask Parliament to accept the best advice that is obtainable on this matter. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) : I rise to second the motion. I find myself quite in accord with the Premier in regard to this measure.

Mr. Foley : We will have to inquire into this.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Perhaps a little later on I will not be in such accord

with him, but so far as this Bill is concerned I quite agree with him that it is time the question of the permanent site for the University buildings was settled.

Mr. Underwood : Why do they not go on with their own plans?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Because they consider that the ground they are after is better.

Mr. Underwood : Convocation do not.

The Premier : Who are they ?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Senate are the body appointed by statute to control all matters in connection with the University. The Senate initiate legislation and Convocation are only supposed to review legislation, and if they deem it necessary, make recommendations. They can send statutes back to the Senate, but hon. members will see in the Act there is a method provided by which, ultimately, the will of the Senate shall prevail, subject, of course, to the Parliament of the State. That, briefly, is the position, and, therefore, I can quite understand that the Premier feels somewhat aggrieved that certain action has been taken by the body known as Convocation to endeavour to prevent the will of the Senate being carried out in this respect. Nevertheless, we must not forget that Convocation have a perfect right to voice their opinions, and if they disagree with the action of the Senate, I do not know that they should on those grounds only be called upon to resign, or refrain from taking any further interest in the institution.

The Premier : I did not make that reference in regard to Convocation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Even if we apply it to the Senate, members are in a similar position to members of the Opposition in this House, and whilst we oppose most strenuously, at every opportunity, measures which we deem to be detrimental to the welfare of the people generally, we do not consider it necessary to resign our positions.

The Premier : Of course not, but suppose such a thing happened in Cabinet ?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : I should think that the Premier would dismiss the

dissentients promptly. If his colleagues disagreed with him he would say, "There is only one course; you must resign," The Premier would go on and his colleagues would resign. But that position does not apply to the Senate. The Senate are there to legislate and conduct the affairs of the University in the same way as Parliament is supposed to control the affairs of the State.

Mr. Dwyer: Convocation the Upper House?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They are something similar, according to the wording of the clause which confers their powers, but Convocation elects two-thirds of the Senate; one-third of the Senate is nominated by the Government of the day. The Premier fears that sooner or later Convocation will take absolute control of the Senate. Well, that was intended in the statute, and I do not know that we can take any objection to that position when it comes about. It will take a number of years to come about because only three members retire each year; one is again nominated by the Government and two are selected by Convocation, and it was hoped that in time Convocation would represent to a considerable degree graduates and undergraduates who had qualified in our own University, so that two-thirds of the Senate would be representative of those who had passed through the University of Western Australia.

Mr. Dwyer: But they are not so represented at the present time.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They are not, I admit that. The bulk of them have qualified in other universities and are admitted by a statute of the Senate. I agree with the Premier that any member of the Senate who waited upon him as one of a deputation, and practically pledged the Senate to the terms of the exchange which was ultimately adopted, should loyally stand by the arrangement made, but, notwithstanding that some have evidently gone back on the attitude they had at first taken up, I want to remind the House that the Senate have again considered the matter and reaffirmed by a substantial majority the

original arrangement. Now we come to this position. The Senate on two occasions have practically voiced their opinion that this exchange of land should be made to the Government, and that we are getting a fair deal. It does not matter to me whether there is £1,000 or £2,000 one way or the other. I am satisfied that we are getting a *quid pro quo* and practical value in the Crawley site, which it is proposed to take in exchange for the endowment lands given up. That being so, we come to the question as to whether the site is suitable or not, and surely if the Senate, the governing body of the University, after thrashing this matter out for over 12 months, have by a majority come to the conclusion that the Crawley site is the best site they can select all round, then I think Parliament ought to be satisfied, as a reasonable assembly, that those who have no axe to grind—

Mr. Nanson: Some of them have. Some members want to get the Subiaco land and put workers' homes there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There is a suggestion that a portion of the land should be used for workers' homes.

Mr. Nanson: That is the purpose of the exchange.

The Premier: Is that an axe to grind?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I would hardly call that an axe to grind; it is a public cause, and a laudable one, if we look at it from that point of view. The Government, having pledged themselves to workers' homes, naturally look about for the most convenient site so far as that object is concerned, and if they can get from the University endowment lands suitable land, I am not going to object. I think it is a laudable object and if we can serve both the University and the workers' homes scheme, what objection can there be to it?

Mr. Dwyer: How was opinion in the Senate divided; how many were for Crawley?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: A pretty good majority, I think.

Mr. Underwood: Then it is a poor old Senate.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then we have the position which the Premier explained, that Convocation have set their back up against the action of the Senate. I contend that in this matter, as well as in legislation, the Senate's will ought to prevail. Convocation can send back suggestions and recommendations as they think fit, and as was originally designed under the Bill, and if the Senate, after mature consideration of their suggestions, declare in favour of their own original intention, then the Senate's will ought to prevail. It has been argued that we should get a portion of King's Park, but this matter was thrashed out on more than one occasion, and I remember the consensus of opinion was that King's Park should be left intact for the purpose for which it was originally granted. Of course, if we could take a portion of King's Park without interfering with the purpose for which it was originally granted, I do not think anyone could object. But personally I object to University buildings being placed near to the Thomas-street portion of the park, away from the main thoroughfare. If the University has to go into the park I would like to see it where the ground rises overlooking Crawley, so that we might use the Crawley land as well. I have seen no land with the manifold advantages of the Crawley University site. People seem to overlook the fact—

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Will the hon. member for Pilbarra be quiet, as I am not listening to his senseless objections, and his constant interruption while I am speaking is unbearable. People seem to forget that we are not out to establish, for instance, an enlarged school. We are out to build an up-to-date and modern university, and a university town. There are not only to be educational buildings, but we are to have professors' buildings, teachers' homes, and hostels, in connection with different denominations, eventually built around the University, in order that their young men and women may be trained for entrance into the University later on. I hope to see a big town erected around this University ultimately,

and, therefore, to start the institution on 40 or 50 acres would be absurd. It has been pointed out that in older countries they have had to abandon universities in order to get a larger area of ground, and I have been informed that in Brisbane, where the Governor was turned out of his home to make room for the university, they require to-day 200 or 300 acres at least three miles from the General Post Office, because they find they cannot carry on the university on the site originally selected. We ought to take warning from that. We have been enabled by this arrangement to obtain 160 odd acres and there can be a diversion of the Fremantle-road around the buildings if they are erected at Crawley. We will then have University buildings at least 30 feet above the water level, and professors' residences still higher. If anyone contends that this would be unhealthy I would point out that in that case one-half of Perth must be unhealthy because it is not more than 30 feet higher than the level of the Swan River. It is not possible, however, to point to any university in Great Britain with a better site. There they seem to court a water frontage. Who can over-estimate the advantage of the Swan River to the University for all time, to have a water frontage like that where the students can have access to the river at all times for swimming, boating, athletics, etcetera? It seems to me we cannot lightly pass over the advantages that must be gained by having access immediately to that river from the University.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Thousands of the general public are in the habit of picnicking there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The whole of the river frontage is to be reserved, I believe, and some five chains of the frontage will, I believe, be kept so as not to interfere with the University and the University will have the advantage of that frontage, as well as the general public, and their boating houses and swimming houses can be erected there. With regard to the temporary buildings, I agree that if we can start away with a permanent home at once it ought to be

done rather than spend a further sum of money at Irwin-street. I do not see how we can possibly get the permanent building of the University under way and completed in sufficient time for the work of the University to be carried on satisfactorily during the next two or three years. The University having been started in rather a large way, and the number of students having far exceeded the number that was anticipated at first—an estimate of some 70 or 80 students was made for the first year and we have over 200, and they are likely to increase largely—this being the case, I consider it is the duty, not only of this Chamber, but of another place also, to realise that any stoppage now in the provision of the necessary facilities of housing for our University will be detrimental to the interests of the rising generation, those to whom we look to take an active part in the administration and progress of our country in the near future. I hope the House will agree that the old-fashioned idea that we can put a university in the centre of a town is exploded. We know that university buildings are in the centres of old cities in the homeland and elsewhere, but they would be very glad to get outside if they could acquire the necessary land. It is much better to have our University concentrated in one position with plenty of land around it, where we can have the hundred and one buildings necessary erected on a proper scheme, than to place buildings in the centre of the town and to have the professors' houses, the hostels, and other adjuncts spread throughout the town. Seeing that the Government have met the Senate fairly, or as fairly as we can estimate, in the matter of exchange, and that the Senate by a considerable majority have affirmed the desirableness of the exchange, I hope this House will support the Premier and pass the measure, which I understand is exactly the same in its terms and conditions as the Bill which we passed last session. If this be settled, I do not think we need bother our heads as to what Convocation may say. After all is said and done they have no legislative powers, and whether they oppose the Crawley site

or not, once the exchange is made and the land becomes the property of the University, that is of the Senate acting for the University, there is no reason why structures should not be proceeded with immediately.

Mr. Dwyer: Convocation's views deserve consideration, surely.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They have had consideration. We knew when considering this matter the other day that Convocation had decided against it and had decided to petition Parliament, but does the hon. member attach more weight to Convocation than he does to the Senate? Would the hon. member attach more consideration to an outside body than he would to the decisions of this Chamber, for instance? I think not.

Mr. Green: He has a wrong sense of proportion.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I think he has. It may be his way of looking at things, but it is not mine. I consider that the Senate, which is the responsible body, having decided, we ought to endorse the proposals of that body—although I am one of them—pass this measure, effect an exchange and get to work at once. If we do not do that we are likely to make a failure of our University in the first few years of its life. It has already cost the country a considerable sum of money and is likely to cost considerably more. This year we ought to have £3,000 or £4,000 additional income granted to us by Parliament. We cannot look to anyone else but Parliament to vote the money to carry on the work. In the first instance a statutory amount was provided, and it was anticipated that as the years went on and the University grew Parliament would vote the sums which, in its discretion, were deemed necessary to the work of the University. I second the motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): I desire to oppose the measure for the reason that I consider Crawley is not a suitable site for the University. After all, I think it is desirable, seeing that the University is going to cost hundreds of

thousands of pounds before we are finished with it, that we should put it on the most suitable site, put in on a site which will suit the greatest number of the people of Western Australia. It is the people of Western Australia who have to pay the cost, and we should endeavour to place the institution in such a position that the greatest possible number can avail themselves of the advantages of a University education. There has been some considerable argument—I suppose it was argument—in regard to the powers of the Senate as opposed to Convocation. It seems to me that the powers of the Senate are just about equal to the powers of members of this House, and that the powers of Convocation are equal to the powers of the people of Western Australia. It is absurd for the leader of the Opposition to attempt to say that Convocation has no right to speak or object or interfere in any way whatever. As a matter of fact, he may as well say the electors of Sussex have no right to advise him or protest against any of his actions.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Convocation is a very elusive body.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Senate is worse; seeing that it is elected by Convocation it cannot be much better, anyhow. The position is that the Senate has decided by a small majority to erect the University buildings at Crawley, and to get the Crawley grounds they are prepared to give away what, in my opinion, is one of the most valuable assets which any University can possibly have, namely the lands at West Subiaco.

The Premier: To whom are they giving them?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As opposed to the Senate they give the lands away to the people of Western Australia, which is in their favour and which is the only possible reason I can see for the Premier entertaining this project for one second.

The Premier: Where did they get the lands from?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know that they got the lands from anybody in particular. Possibly they got the lands from the blackfellows, who wanted to go further back. I appreciate the Premier

and the Ministry in this regard, that they know they are making a good deal for the people—not for themselves—in respect to these lands. But in my opinion they are looking at the immediate present and not at the future. After all, the West Australian University is an institution of Western Australia, and it does not seem to me advisable to take advantage of it even for the benefit of a scheme for workers' homes.

The Premier: Nobody claims that we are taking advantage of it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Premier has not claimed it, but he is pretty confident that he is right, as, of course, he usually is. The leader of the Opposition has attempted to argue that because a majority of the Senate has decided in favour of Crawley, Crawley must be the site, irrespective of consideration of the opinions of anybody else at all. I have just pointed out that Convocation has a perfect right to object to the actions of the Senate. Later on they will, no doubt, when it becomes a question of such importance, remove senators who are in favour of Crawley and elect others in favour of other sites for the University. It is absurd for the leader of the Opposition—in my opinion, of course, which he takes not much account of—to argue that because the Senate has passed this measure Parliament should pass it and everybody in Western Australia should accept it. I would like to point out the peculiar position of the Senate. On the one hand we have a number of senators who desire to have a University in Western Australia similar to those in other places, such as Oxford and Cambridge, and other useless institutions which are absolutely exclusive except to the children of people who have considerable bank balances, and which exclude absolutely any person who degrades himself by manual work. That is the position.

The Premier: We do not want that here.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, but there are several members of the Senate who desire to bring it about.

The Premier: And more in Convocation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And on the other hand we have representatives of the Government, men on the Senate, who are in favour of the Government's proposals, who neglect the idea of the University in their desire to get a good deal for the workers' homes proposition. There we have the peculiarity that has brought about the recommendation of Crawley. There can be no other reason, in my opinion, for those representing the workers on the Senate to attempt to shove it down in Crawley, an out-of-the-way corner of Western Australia, when it could be put in a prominent place where workers' children can go to it. I do not intend to go into the question of the inaccessibility of Crawley more than to again point out that notwithstanding the Premier's assurance that we are to have a ferry running from Applecross to Crawley—

The Premier: I did not say that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is a proposition that is unlikely—

Mr. Lewis: They are running now.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, they run now, and in my opinion they will be running just as regularly 20 years hence, which will necessitate scholars from South Perth going right away up to Coode-street, crossing to the end of Barrack-street and taking a tram down to the University at Crawley. There is no more chance of a ferry than there is of the Opposition getting into power.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Then in ten months' time we will have the ferry.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is a fairy tale. As I have pointed out previously, on the south side of Crawley we have a river, and a wide river, without any means of crossing it except at long intervals where ferries are placed. These ferries are sure to be placed where the traffic is greatest, and that will not be at the University. Below Crawley reserves have been made for the Old Mens' Home and other things, and it is advisable that reserves should be kept along that beautiful river. On this side we have King's Park occupying practically the whole area between the City and the University.

The Premier: On the westward of Crawley there is sufficient land privately owned.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There may be sufficient land on the westward, but I have my doubts. However, I will allow you that in. It will place Perth nearer, but we have more than Perth to consider. We have all the suburbs of Perth to consider. That is what I want the Premier to bear in mind. And there are other people besides those who could possibly get down to Crawley. There are all the people in Western Australia, and it is, in my opinion, necessary that we should have the University as near as possible to a railway station. After all, railways constitute the best method of travelling in Western Australia and, to my mind, will remain so. There have been many sites suggested, and in my opinion the best possible site for the University is this block of land opposite Parliament House. It is the most beautiful site, perhaps, in Australia. It is the crowning point in our City and seeing that the University is to be the crowning point of our education I think we could well put our University on that site. We come to the question of area. What we require in a university is an area sufficiently large on which to teach the students. Once we get outside that we go outside the reasons why the people of Western Australia should pay for the maintenance of a university. The people of Western Australia should not be asked to pay for the sports grounds of any particular class of individuals.

The Premier: But they do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The people of Western Australia should not be asked to pay for swimming baths for any particular class of people.

The Premier: But they do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They should not be asked to pay for the cricket ground—

The Premier: But they do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Bowling greens—

The Premier: But they do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Tennis courts, or anything of that description.

The Premier: But they do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Premier continues to assert that they do pay for these things. If they do they are doing something they should not do. There is no logical reason why they should continue to do it or why they should increase an absurdity. There is another point of view; there is that exclusiveness. I have tried to point out in the House that the best education any man can possibly get is that which he can get in the school of life. Inside of college walls there are many things—

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Before tea I was pointing out the difficulties the students would have to get to a university to be established at Crawley. I do not think it is necessary to go into further details on that question. It must be apparent to every citizen who knows the geography of the City that Crawley is a most inaccessible site, and it must also be apparent to the citizens of Western Australia that this University which is free to everybody in Western Australia, should be in the most accessible place in which it is possible to erect it. There was an interjection to the effect that there was a ferry service from Applecross to Crawley. During the tea time I found out that that ferry runs during holidays.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is run every day.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The information I have is from a resident of the locality, and he assures me that the ferry runs on holidays and that is about as often as many of the Senate of the University desire common working people to be at the University. The leader of the Opposition is of opinion that we should build up a University town and that it should be something beautifully exclusive, and, as a matter of fact, it would arrive at this: that the people of Western Australia would be paying for the upkeep of an institution which was established for the benefit of a few neatly selected people, whose parents had considerable banking balances. I would just like to ask the House to imagine for a moment

or two the howl of indignation we would hear from all over the metropolitan area and particularly from representatives of the workers if we proposed to remove the Perth Technical School down to Crawley. We can all imagine the indignation meetings which would be held, and the motion which would be passed in this House condemning such an idea. It would be pointed out that the school was for the benefit of people who for a great part are employed during the day time, and that it would be necessary for them to occupy as little time as possible in getting to that school, and yet the position of our University is that it is only after all a higher technical school, and the idea of this Parliament passing that measure and providing the money for carrying on the institution was that the whole of the people of Western Australia should be able to attend the University. Just one word or two in regard to the question of playgrounds. I have stated before, and I desire to reiterate it, that in my opinion the people of Western Australia did not intend, when providing a University, to provide exclusive playgrounds for university students. It has been stated that the older cities found their areas were not large enough. That is to say, they found that the working people were encroaching upon them and that their students were being, in their opinion, contaminated by even being within the sight of working people. I would point to this fact, that the University of Adelaide, which has perhaps done as much for the education of the people of Australia as any university on this continent, does not occupy, I think, five acres of ground. It is right in the city of Adelaide, and is convenient to all people, and there has been no complaint whatever in regard to the area in Adelaide. There is another point of view, that we teach our children in the State schools; we teach them again at the Modern School, and we bring them along to the Technical School. All these pupils can go and get their recreation where they most desire and pay for their grounds, and I would like to ask why should we, the workers, pay for exclusive pleasure grounds for a select few

who are going to attend the University ? I may pertinently ask this question in regard to my own son. I have a son learning to be an engineer. If he wants to join a cricket club, a football club, a rowing club, a lawn tennis club, or any other sport, he can so do where he likes, and if he does not desire to join, he need not do so. It should be so in regard to the University pupils. In conclusion, I want to say I consider the failure of universities, and I claim they have failed, has been owing to the fact of the exclusiveness which has surrounded the pupils of the universities. In my opinion, it is necessary not only to know the dead languages and the ideas of dead men, but it is absolutely imperative to success in this life and in order to be most useful in this life, to know something of the immediate present, and to know something of the people of to-day, and I would like to say there is ample warrant for Henry Lawson's reply to his cultured critics when he said—

I leave you alone in your cultured halls,
To drivel and croak and cavil,
Till your voice goes further than college
walls,
Keep out of the tracks we travel.

On motion by Mr. B. J. Stubbs debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1913-14.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 16th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Male in the Chair.

Vote—His Excellency the Governor, £1,701.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex): The Premier has told us that during his recent visit to London he was received loyally on all hands from His Majesty the King and the Secretary of State for the Colonies downwards. This must be a matter of extreme gratification to all the people of Western Australia. The King will no doubt be pleased to know when he reads the Premier's Budget Speech that Mr. Scaddan has made a public acknowledgment of His Majesty's loyalty. I always thought, that it was

the duty of the subject by word and deed to show loyalty to the King, but in this, perhaps, I am somewhat mistaken. I hope, however, that the Premier's undoubted loyalty to the person of His Majesty may receive a fillip if that be necessary by the gracious example which His Majesty thought fit to show him on the occasion of his interview. Notwithstanding this great honour which the King has shown to our Premier, it is my duty this evening to criticise fearlessly the Budget which he has delivered, and although I approach the task with some diffidence I will endeavour to do so without being unduly awed by the announcement which the Premier has made. The Premier also told us that he was sure the opportunities afforded him of speaking during his visit must have tended to dispel to some extent the misunderstandings and misrepresentations respecting the administration of a Labour Government. He went on to say that our financial advisers and men high up in the commercial world had assured him that they were perfectly satisfied with the manner in which he had placed the affairs of the State before the English communities on the many occasions when they gathered together to listen to him. I am quite satisfied, and have no doubt of the approbation of the financiers and commercial men of London who assured him of their satisfaction with his speeches, for we do not know from the cabled Press reports sent out during that visit that the Premier was all things to all men on that occasion. When before the financiers he assured them that capital had nothing to fear from a Labour Government. Did he not want to borrow some of their capital? When before the commercial men, "Give us your surplus population," he cried, "in order that we may give them of our land." When before a socialistic gathering he told them that the workers of Great Britain had nothing to defend and so he encouraged their loyalty, and when in the presence of His Majesty I will be bound he bent the knee and kissed the hand just as any other loyal British subject ought to do.

Mr. George: That is something we can approve of, anyhow.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I approach, as I said, with some diffidence the criticism of the Premier's Budget, as delivered a week ago, and I must confess that each time he has delivered his Budget, and each time I have had the honour of criticising it—this being the third occasion—I have approached the duty with feelings of amazement and bewilderment at his strange finance. His long speech extending over some three hours, seemed to me to be a history of incapacity and disregard of the fact that sound finance is the basis of our national prosperity. I cannot help feeling that we are comfortably sliding down the hill of our national existence, and that we are sinking deeper and deeper into debt owing to the administration of the finances of this State by my friend who has delivered this Budget. I have taken occasion during the past few days to refresh my memory from previous utterances, not only of the Premier, but also of his colleague the Minister for Lands, and I notice that the Attorney General has made it unnecessary for me to refresh my memory with regard to his utterances because he has been on the flute in his usual language at no less a centre than Randells, just recently, and he said there, "A member of Parliament becomes a veritable Aunt Sally for everyone to shy at." I shall be accused of shying at my friends opposite during the course of the evening. The Attorney General went on to say "Apart from this misrepresentation"—hon. members should mark the word "misrepresentation"—"there was no other weapon which could be effectively used against the present Government. If fairly attacked they could meet their opponents with logic; if their words were challenged, they could cite them on sound arguments and a record of facts." I am going to give them a little bit of logic to-night, and I am going to cite my friends on facts which I think it will take them all their time to counteract. Returning to the utterances of the Premier and the

Minister for Lands, I can sum them up as a wholesale condemnation of the methods now adopted by the present Government. For instance, speaking on the Budget in 1910, the Premier, who was then leader of the Opposition, called upon Parliament to say that the Estimates must not be submitted an hour later than the month of August. He said Parliament should direct that the Estimates ought to be brought down every year not later than August. To-day he claims that he has fulfilled that promise by bringing his Budget down one day earlier than he did last year. He declared that the control of the finances by Parliament was a mere farce. Is it anything more to-day? He said then that the finances of the country were absolutely controlled by six Cabinet Ministers. What is the position to-day? Do six Cabinet Ministers control the finances or do the finances control the six Cabinet Ministers? It is hard to say. It appears to me that the latter is the position. They know not where they are. He criticised my loan expenditure pretty severely, and stated that in five years I had increased the indebtedness of the State by the enormous sum of £11 7s. per head of the population. To-day the Premier has acknowledged having in two years increased the public debt by £12 6s. 8d. per head of the population. He condemned utterly the expenditure of the proceeds of the sales of Government property and declared that they should be devoted to the redemption of loans, as the bulk of the money was loan moneys originally expended in this State. What has the Government done in this direction? The Premier prophecied bankruptcy, and dramatically asked where it was all going to end, and finally he said, "I want all classes to know that the policy of the Labour party is the one that will save the people from financial disaster," and the deluded people believed it. Do they believe him to-day?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Yes.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I think not.

Hon. J. Mitchell : They know him to-day.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The Minister for Lands on the same occasion said that I was still permitting things to drift, and still waiting for the inevitable turn up of affairs. I wonder what my friends opposite are doing, whether they are not waiting, Micawber-like, for something to turn up. He said "The question of sound loan expenditure which is regarded as the first essential of good financial administration has been repeatedly broken." I will show how my friends have remedied that state of affairs. He took me to task for the expenditure of £56,000 from the sale of Government Property Trust Account, and said it had been condemned by our own financial authorities. He said the expenditure of £100,000 on roads, bridges and public buildings, and £15,000 on surveys from General Loan Fund should have been made from Consolidated Revenue, and in speaking on the question of loan indebtedness per head of the population, he claimed we should cast aside my figures and accept the Statistical Department's return as accurate, notwithstanding that the unexpended loan balance had been taken into account. The Premier on this occasion not only deducts unexpended balances but claims he is justified in deducting moneys borrowed for the Agricultural Bank and workers' homes purposes, and I am not altogether disinclined to agree with him, at any rate I do to the extent of the unexpended loan moneys. The Minister for Lands, condemned my Government for utilising loan moneys for public buildings, roads and bridges, and he said not only did we spend money on these works, but also spent it on doubtful items under the headings of development of agriculture and development of mining. Indeed, he was absolutely opposed to receipts from land sales going into Consolidated Revenue at all; but where are they going to-day? Into the Consolidated Revenue every time, and every penny they can get. He finished up by saying that he warned us that sooner or later some other system would take the

place of our railways and that all the assets would disappear when, he said, we would still have our debts, and that the only thing that was certain was the debt and that those debts were as the brook—likely to go on for ever, and that we and our children would continue to pay interest, and our children's children would continue to pay interest to the money lenders of to-day. The Minister for Lands was not only emphatic in this direction, but he also said he protested against this system of finance which he held was so detrimental and unsound, and he would continue to protest against it so long as he sat in this Chamber. I want to know how his Government have carried out these ideals. Have they adhered to their party platform pledges during the two years they have been in office? If one thinks for a moment of the deeds of omission; if one thinks of the money expended on these different works, which they condemned only two short years ago, we can only class them as political hypocrites and humbugs, and we can only say that, wittingly or unwittingly, they have humbugged the people. Take the Premier's Budget Speech of the 13th December, 1911—the first one delivered by him in his capacity as Treasurer in this Parliament. On that occasion when he announced a shortage on the year's transactions of £104,000, he said that with an anticipated normal season next year, and close attention to administration and the adjustment of the finances through the ensuing period, he fully anticipated that the Government would be able to make up the leeway before the end of the financial year. Yet the Premier finished the year with a deficit of £121,000. When delivering his second Budget in October, 1912, and forecasting a deficit of £288,000, he was not quite so optimistic, notwithstanding that he still had full confidence in his administration and his ability to cope with this incubus, the deficit. He said "I am not ashamed of the deficit, the prospects of a glorious season are practically assured, and with our usual good harvest in the succeeding year, I venture to predict with some de-

gree of certainty the extinction of the deficit within 24 months." We are now eight months off the expiry of that 24 months, and he finished up last year with a deficit of £311,000, and last week he told us that he anticipated an accumulated deficit of £446,000 at the end of the present financial year. And forsooth, he did not talk anything about the careful administration of our finances; he did not tell us that he would be able, within a given period of two or three years—if he remains in power—to wipe out the deficit, but in passing he remarked that we should rely upon the natural recuperation of the State and the exercise of strict economy to bring the incomings and outgoings into line. He did, however, hold out this hope. Those of us who perhaps might be inclined to take his words for granted can foresee that given a fair run of good seasons, and with the increased activities of our State enterprises, an improvement in the finances must eventuate. He finished up by saying, however, "I see no prospect of reducing the deficit this year." I am not inclined to agree with him when he says that something must occur. The financial position in any country is that which is occasioned by the administration of the man at the helm, and the financial position of a country is not a haphazard thing which may come or go by good luck or ill luck as the case may be. It is something that someone has to work out, to adhere closely to a given policy to bring about the desired result. The only thing, therefore, that we can agree with is, I think, that the Premier has not the slightest chance of reducing the deficit this year. Rather, I should say, is there a strong probability of that deficit being increased as I will show later on. To sum up the position briefly: we have it that the Premier has failed utterly to bring his Budget in not later than August. He still maintains that Parliamentary control of the finances is a farce. If the six Cabinet Ministers do not control the finances of the State, they ought to, and to my way of thinking they not only control the finances but they seem to do what they like with them. They still continue the iniquitous principle of ex-

pending the proceeds of the sale of Government property on public works instead of in the redemption of loans, and, as I will show, they still continue the pernicious habit that they have condemned time after time of expending large sums of loan money on roads, bridges, railways, and doubtful items of agriculture and mining development. Notwithstanding their loud protestations they are still taking every penny from the sales of land into public revenue and treating it as such; they are still piling up the national debt, only at a greater rate than ever before, and they are still creating a huge deficit which the people of Western Australia will groan under for many years to come, and we are told to rely on the recuperative powers of the State, together with the State enterprises which are being rashly embarked upon by a majority of members in this House through the Government, and we are told to depend upon these two adjuncts to pull us safely out of the financial mire they have allowed the State to drift into. The Premier seems to me like a poor unfortunate fly in the spider's web; he buzzes round here, there, and everywhere, and he mistakes the noise he is making for strength and ability to get clear of the entanglement. Eventually he gets caught, he buzzes all the harder, he gets caught still further and finally he is overwhelmed in the meshes of the web, the spider springs forward and sucks his blood, and then casts him forth as carrion. The Premier is entangled in the meshes of the web of finance, and it will not be long before the people will terminate his disastrous career and allow somebody else to restore order out of chaos, financial stability out of instability, and put the ship of State on a fair way to a prosperous voyage in the interests of the people as a whole. The present Minister for Lands in 1910 referred to the *Statistical Register* and claimed that the only fair comparison in connection with our indebtedness was on the basis of indebtedness less, of course, the sinking fund and the sinking fund only. He maintained that loan moneys in hand which had been already borrowed and earmarked for certain works should also,

in order to make the position as bad as he possibly could at that time, be taken into account. Let me compare the six years of the Liberal Government with the two disastrous years I have referred to under the Labour Government. In the six years from the 30th June, 1905, to the 30th June, 1911, the public debt under the Liberal Government increased from £62 17s. 3d. per capita to £73 10s. 1d., an increase of £10 12s. 10d. For the two years just ended, from the 30th June, 1911, to 30th June, 1913, the public debt, according to the *Statistical Register*, increased from £73 10s. 1d. to £85 16s. 9d. per head, or a total increase in the two years of £12 6s. 8d. Had that happened for the term of the Liberal Government's six years we would have had an increase, to put us on a level with the case of our friends opposite, of over £36 per head of the population. The Labour Government, notwithstanding their platform as to non-borrowing or limited borrowing, have borrowed over six millions of money in the two years and the people are naturally asking what has been done with that money. I myself at times have been startled and amazed and have wondered what has become of the 6½ millions of money which our friends have borrowed within the short two years. We only borrowed between six and seven millions during the whole time of our occupancy of the Treasury bench. We built railways certainly, far more than have ever been built since, and we showed where money had been economically expended, but the difficulty with the present Government is to know where the money has gone and the people are asking every day in the streets—"What has become of the millions these people have borrowed on our behalf?" I have done my best to unravel the mystery, I have delved into the public accounts and I have gone into the Auditor General's report, so far as we have it up to last year, and the result of my inquiry shows this position approximately: I do not presume to say that the figures are infallible, but they are near enough for comparison and to give us some idea as to what has become of the money. The

present Government started two years ago with a balance of Loan moneys in hand of £1,040,000. According to the public accounts—I think the amount is rather more—they have raised loans amounting to £6,081,000, making a total of £7,121,000. They had, or they ought to have had in hand at the 30th June last, £1,104,000, so that they have expended over £6,000,000 in the two years they have held control of the finances of the State. I find that on railways they have expended £2,768,000; on the Perth trams, £497,000; Harbours and Rivers, £309,000; Water Supply generally, exclusive of the Goldfields Water Supply, £264,000; on the sewerage, £253,000; on State batteries, £38,000; development of the goldfields, £99,000; development of agriculture, no less a sum than £846,000; roads and bridges, £79,000 (mark that item); public buildings, £200,000; immigration, £70,000; steamships, £100,000; ferries, £5,000; milk supply, £4,000; sawmills, £43,000; brickyards, £1,121; workshops and pipe works, £2,200; hotels, £17,000; workers' homes, £150,000; and Boya quarry, £2,600. I mention these items because they are interesting and we want to know how this money has been dispersed. The large item on railways, 2¾ millions of money, was principally expended on rails and fastenings, £458,000; rolling stock, £657,000; land resumption, £316,000; additions and improvements to open railways, £403,000. Deducting these items from the total expenditure we have about £900,000 which has been expended on new railways exclusive of rails and fastenings. Does it not strike one at once to ask what has been the cost of these new railways? We know that some 250 odd miles of line have been taken over by the Working Railways during the last financial year. We do not know exactly the position of the works the Government have in hand. We know that in the first year of their administration 250 miles of railway was taken over, but it is impossible for us to find out exactly the position of the works completed and in hand until the Minister for Works gives us that information. At

any rate, it must be apparent to everyone that the cost of construction of our railways under the day labour system has gone up enormously, and I think the sooner we have the ordinary returns placed before the House showing exactly what the cost of building railways is, the better it will be and the people will be able to see what the cost of the work has been. Now, in regard to State steamships, I want in passing to know why we have not received the accounts of that enterprise. I want to know why the Government abandoned the Royal Commission which was appointed to inquire into the whole of the working of that service, why they did not allow the commission to fulfil its duty under the terms of its appointment and bring in a report either favourable or unfavourable, according to the evidence which had been given. I want to know with regard to the other State industries, when we are going to have the pleasure of buying some new plant for our enterprises. We have a mania for indulging in second-hand plant. We have purchased second-hand steamers, second-hand ferries, second-hand plant for the implement works which are to be a great factor in the revenue to be collected during the balance of this year; and second-hand plant for the brickyards, and I think members will agree with me that is just about time the State had the advantage of some modern and up-to-date plant in order to give these enterprises even the faintest chance of success. The enormous expenditure under the heading of Agricultural Development is mainly accounted for by increase of capital of the Agricultural Bank, £260,000; seed wheat, £55,000; Clearing roads, £37,000 in the year 1911-12 and during the past year some £27,000 was expended by the Works Department; Surveys, £115,000; tanks and wells, £152,000, and clearing for settlers, £38,000. It must be noted here that the seed wheat, which the Premier claimed some 18 or 20 months ago was the cause of almost jeopardising the financial stability of the State, has after all been taken from loan money and did not affect his Consolidated Revenue and

expenditure one iota. It is well within the memory of all hon. members and most of the people that the Premier claimed that the assistance he was giving to the settlers in this direction was the cause of his increasing deficit, notwithstanding that I mildly protested on that occasion that the probabilities were he was using loan funds for the purchase of this seed wheat. Then we find that the surveys expenditure, which should go ahead each year by leaps and bounds, has been reduced by one-half as compared with the year 1911-12. During that year the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) spent £174,000 and last year only £41,000 was expended. Everyone knows how much depends upon the surveying of our lands, the cutting up of our agricultural areas and properly defining the blocks so that those who come to our shores to settle on our lands may have the fullest information and every opportunity of making a success of the lots they undertake to cultivate. We know full well that the policy of my friend the hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) was scouted by our opponents. They said he was going out too far east, that he was endangering the future of the settlers, who were settling beyond a sure rainfall. They stopped operations and hung up the settlement of the land. They interfered with one of the main functions of a policy of progress which had done so much for this country during our term of office. They did not prepare sufficient land for the settlers who were coming to this State, and thus we had this effect obtained, that the land revenue which ought to have gone on increasing by leaps and bounds year by year is now almost at a standstill, as there is very little difference this year and the last, and thus the advancement of our country has been enormously retarded. I admit at once that great strides have been made by those who were settled on the land prior to the last two years. They have increased the area under cultivation, and have largely increased the output from the land they have cultivated, and thus we are to-day receiving an enormous advantage from the efforts of the Gov-

ernment of which I had the honour to be the head for the time, and especially from the efforts of my friend, the hon. member for Northam, who was always such an enthusiast on this question of land settlement. He has been condemned time after time by members of the present Government for having jeopardised the existence of people by sending them too far east, but we do not hear much complaint just now of people having been sent too far east. With the prospects of a bountiful harvest staring them in the face, the complaints have ceased, except so far as our friends can use the statement as a political charge against the administration they have succeeded. I have here a plan of land surveyed and cut up on the lines laid down by my colleague when he was in power. Nothing has been altered; the system is exactly the same and this estate, Totadgin, which was thrown open for selection the other day, is further east than any land which my Government surveyed or opened for selection. Shall we say at once that it is only a subterfuge? They stopped surveying land; they stopped throwing it open so long as they could use it to discredit their opponents. Directly there is a good season, the rains have come, and the crops have grown beautifully, they throw open land still further east than the Government we belonged to suggested or did. Consistency is a great virtue, but I am sorry to say in my opinion it is unknown to the present Ministry, for I look into these figures once more to see what they have done in regard to carrying out their platform in connection with the expenditure of loan moneys, loan moneys which were not to be expended on anything in the shape of a non-productive work. I find that on public batteries—which of course the Premier will claim are productive, in which I agree with him to some extent, but which were condemned by his colleague, the Minister for Lands on one occasion as being non-productive—they have spent £39,000. On roads and bridges, for which I was pilloried time after time, they have spent no less a sum than £79,000 out of loan funds; on public buildings £200,000, and from sales of Gov-

ernment property, which is the proceeds of expenditure of loan funds, £58,000; so we have a total of £376,000 expended by our friends contrary to their creed, contrary to their platform, and contrary to their pledges, and we must add the deficit also, because that deficit is found from loan funds. On the 30th June last it amounted to £311,000, making a total of £687,000 that these hon. gentlemen have spent from loan funds—much more than we ever did—contrary to their professions and contrary to their platform. The Minister for Works will, of course, boast an expenditure from revenue on roads and bridges and also buildings. He will also tell us he has expended large sums, much larger than we ever did. I turn to the Estimates and roughly taking out the amounts, I find that in 1912 £101,000 was spent apparently from consolidated revenue. I find that in 1913 £118,000 was thus spent on roads, bridges, and buildings and like works. I find that two sums were expended for re-construction of Fremantle wharf, amounting to £35,000, making in the two years a total expenditure under consolidated revenue estimates of £254,000 for these works, which ought always, and everyone will admit it can be done, be carried out from revenue. But if we admit my contention, which I hold must be admitted, that the deficit is taken from loan funds—it is only money borrowed by way of overdraft—then we find that every penny spent during the past two years on roads, bridges, school buildings, hospitals, including the renewal of the Fremantle wharves, and all the grants to roads boards, and even the salaries of the Public Works Department, has been paid by these gentlemen out of loan funds. No attempt has been made to practice what they preached. There has been a total disregard of the principle enunciated by the Minister for Lands that the first essential of good financial administration was the sound expenditure of loan moneys. The Government property trust account, which I have stated is from loan funds, for 1911-12 has some very interesting items. Bridges and buildings appear of course prominently for the main portion of the money ex-

pended and accounted for, £22,000. Salaries are nearly £2,000. There is a little item of wood blocking a street at Fremantle £80, and I do not want anyone to forget that the depreciation on the dredge "Parmelia," amounting to £181, was also provided from this money, so we find that depreciation on machinery, on a dredge, was paid for by our friends opposite from loan funds. With regard to the Premier's calm suggestion, that we should depend upon our State enterprises and the recuperative forces of the country in order to overcome our financial difficulties, it is interesting to note what money has been expended on these enterprises during the past few years, indeed since their inception, and I have taken the trouble not only to find that out but also to analyse the estimates of revenue and expenditure to ascertain how much we may expect from our State enterprises, and to what extent the Premier is justified in asking us to depend upon them in order to reduce or remove this deficit. I see that he estimates to get £199,000 during the remainder of this financial year from the saw mills, and he estimates that the expenditure to earn that £199,000 will be £177,000. In his quarries the Premier estimates to get £8,000, and he is going to spend £7,500. The brickyard is going to earn £1,400, and to spend £1,400. The State steamers are to earn £83,500 and to expend £86,700, so that in our State steamers, although we cannot quite balance the ledger yet, we are evidently not going to have a repetition of the £20,000 or £30,000 loss which is to be shown, I presume, on last year's operations. In the implement works we are during the remainder of this year to have a revenue of £70,000, and an expenditure of £64,500. In the stock account of Yandanooka we are to have a revenue of £19,000, with an expenditure of £15,000. Meat sales are to be accountable for a revenue of £35,000, which is hardly in keeping with the public expressions that one reads in the Press of the operations of the Fremantle meat shops. We are to expend in the purchase and shipment of live stock £15,000, and in the supply of retail establishments £11,000. Fodder, abattoirs, and sale yards account

for an expenditure of £2,000, incidental £2,000, and our ferry service is to bring us in £5,500 with an expenditure of £3,600. The tramways are shown with a revenue of £115,000 and an expenditure of £111,000. If we add to the expenditure the interest, which has been worked out to a fractional part of a pound, we find that the total expenditure, including £9,150 interest on same, is to be £505,850 against a revenue of £536,400, so evidently there is a paper balance to credit of £30,000, but that paper profit is already hypothecated to keep the deficit down in the estimates the Premier has submitted, and be it noted that there is nothing allowed for depreciation, which would far more than swamp up the estimated profit even if it be there. With the experience of our State Steamship Service one is justified in being somewhat sceptical of these estimates being reached, and when we have before us day after day stated in the Press the results of similar enterprises in other portions of the Commonwealth, I think the people will take the estimates and the operations forecasted with regard to these State departures with the ordinary grain of salt, and will discount the figures considerably. In New South Wales the other day there was a statement published which showed some remarkable figures. From it we see that the total capital expenditure on the enterprises there amounted to £204,699, gross earnings £213,114, expenses (including interest) £211,634, and the loss on their total enterprises was £2,599, with a gain on the other side of £4,079, or a net profit of £1,480 estimated on a turnover of nearly a quarter of a million. Is any business man going to tell me, or to convince the people of the State that, with figures of this description, we are bound to be satisfied, that we can safely rely on the efforts of our State enterprises to adjust our finances? Are they not more likely to come to a honest conclusion that these State enterprises are going to drift this country deeper and deeper into debt, in fact, that sooner or later we shall have to get rid of some of them before we can square our ledger at all? I wish here

again to ask when are we to get the accounts up to date for these undertakings? Are we not entitled to have this balance sheet of our State steamers? Is it a justifiable excuse that the Auditor General has not yet audited the accounts? Has there not been plenty of time? I rather disbelieve that excuse. I would like to know whether the Auditor General has the accounts in his hands at the present moment. If the Auditor General, as I stated before, cannot audit these accounts quickly, within a month after the close of the financial year, then I say ordinary commercial auditors ought to be engaged on these commercial undertakings, in order that Parliament and the country may know the true position. I can congratulate the Premier on his estimates of revenue for last year. He came in his total result very near, indeed he almost struck a balance, as it happened; that is, he arrived at something like within £300 or £400 of the total estimated revenue which he had put before Parliament. But the public should remember that in doing this he annexed that £30,000 from the Fremantle Harbour Trust Account and that that enabled him to square the estimates of revenue. This, I again repeat, is a sum of money which was placed in the hands of the Fremantle Harbour Trust for a special purpose. It was levied on the vessels visiting our port during several years past in order to pay the interest and sinking fund on special work, more especially the dry dock, and the only purpose that he could safely put that money to when that dry dock became a failure was to use it in part repayment of the loss which had been incurred. I say the Premier is wrong, that he did an unjustifiable thing, an illegal thing, if I may term it such, when he annexed that £30,000 in his extremity in order to make his finances look as sound and as well as he possibly could on the 30th June last. The Minister for Works tells us in passing that had he had his Public Works Committee we would have been saved the disaster of the expenditure on a graving dock. But it seems to me this is one of those extra-

gant expressions which Ministers have cultivated the habit of utilising to hoodwink the people, to give them a wrong impression, to try to induce them to believe that by some act of theirs they are going to set everything right, and that the management of the finances of the State, the administration of the departments, is going to prove the salvation of the country. Let me also point out that not only did the Premier take this £30,000 which he had no right to touch, but also that numerous accounts have been paid this year for liabilities incurred prior to the 30th June last. I cannot approach this subject without referring to the Premier's scathing denunciation of myself in this direction, when he assumed office. Indeed, I should not have mentioned it had it not been for the unfair attitude he took up on that occasion. Who can forget his vile charges against me shortly after he assumed office, that the credit balance, the surplus of £13,000 at the close of the financial year ended 30th June, was faked, that the accounts had been purposely put off, that payment had been suspended for several months after the close of the year, in order that we should have credit for this fraudulent surplus? He was aided and abetted by the eloquence of his friend, the Attorney General, who had no language too strong to apply to my acts; and he had so little respect, and has still, I am sorry to say, for veracity, that speaking at Randells the other night he stated that on assuming office they had to face a legacy of debts from their predecessors. I want to show, as I showed then, but evidently not conclusively as far as my friend is concerned, that what took place during the year 1911 has taken place even to a worse degree and is taking place to-day, under the administration of my friends. During that year payments were made out of revenue amounting to £53,000 during the first four months of the new financial year, that is, up to the 21st September, 1911, which were incurred prior to the closing of the preceding financial year. Out of loan moneys, £80,000 was paid, making a total of £133,000 out of revenue and loan which ought to have been set-

tled, if the accounts could have been got in, prior to the closing of the financial year. The Premier declared he was going to stop this sort of thing, that he had issued instructions, and that it would not happen again, he would see to it. Next year comes along and I find in the Auditor General's report that payments were made after the close of the financial year ended 30th June, 1912, from revenue amounting to £52,000, and from loan £132,000, or a total of £184,000, as compared with the £133,000 of the previous Administration. And this notwithstanding the special instructions which were issued by the Premier to stop such an unholy state of affairs. I ventured on that occasion to mildly interject that he would find that the system of accounts was established, and that it was impossible to get every account in and paid prior to the closing of the financial year. And here I have proved, notwithstanding that he denounced me as being worse than a rogue, of having faked my balance, here I have proved that he, with all his determination, was unable to do as well as we did in this respect, and that he carried more into the last financial year than we carried forward on the termination of our office in 1911. And let me say in connection with this matter that there was about a fortnight longer period taken into account for the payment of these amounts during the year he complained of than was the case during the year 1912, when he had control. Now let us briefly glance at the estimated revenue for the forthcoming 12 months. I notice that it is to be increased by £796,000, as compared with the previous 12 months. This large increase, which must seem pretty enormous to any outsider, is principally accounted for by the new trading concerns. They account for, at any rate, half a million of the amount, and it is interesting for us to know whether we are likely to get the revenue which has been estimated from these trading concerns. I have not in my mind the slightest doubt that the estimate from the sawmills for the six months, nearly £199,000 is over-estimated. It seems to

me that with the mills not prepared to run to-day and not likely to be in full working order for several months yet, it will be an absolute impossibility to get a return of £200,000 in a short six months, more especially when the back end of that six months runs into our winter season. I understand there are no appliances for log hauling, etcetera, and in one mill not a house has yet been erected for the convenience of the men to be employed, and that in other respects the work is very far backward. So I think we may safely conclude that the Premier in his anxiety to balance is putting a too sanguine estimate on the amount to be got from the sawmills. In referring to this matter I am reminded of the arbitrary attitude of the Minister for Works, who, as we know, is a strong-willed gentleman, and takes the bit between his teeth on the slightest provocation. A big tank for powellising had been constructed in Perth and was being despatched to one of the mills. It was suggested, and indeed asked by the management, that this tank should be despatched to the mill in sections and there be rivetted up in place. However, the Minister for Works in his characteristic manner vetoed any such idea. No, the tank must be completed in Perth and sent along ready to be put on its foundations and go to work. It went down all right until it struck a bridge somewhere in the south-western district and they found the tank was too high to be got under the bridge. The result of the Minister's arbitrary interference in the practical management of the construction of these works was that the tank had to be rolled off the truck, skidded under the bridge and reloaded on to the truck before they could get it to its destination.

Mr. Taylor: It got there all the same.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, at a cost, and the hon. member has to pay his share of that cost. It just shows where these practical Ministers fall in when they attempt to interfere with the subordinate officers who are controlling the practical part of the administration

of the department. Now I turn to the amount which the Premier reckons he is going to get from his implement works, these works which were established with great *eclat*. We have had the history of the search for a suitable site, which extended over six or seven months, when the claims of Bunbury were pitted against the claims of Fremantle, when the Honorary Minister's electorate secured the victory and Bunbury was discomfited. We have the history of the despatch of our experts to South Australia in order to buy holus bolus a second-hand plant from works which had become bankrupt and was sold off and we know that this plant is now being erected at Rocky Bay at considerable cost. We are told that we are to look to the trading enterprises, that £70,000 is to be derived from these implement works and from implements which must be sold on terms if they are to compete with the private merchants during the next eight months. When I point out that the *Statistical Register*, the bible of the Minister for Lands, sets forth the value of the implements, agricultural, horticultural and viticultural, imported into the State for the eight months ended 31st August, 1913, at £44,000 one naturally begins to wonder where the Premier is going to get his £70,000 for implements from. The increase in railway revenue depends largely of course upon the increase in the tariff and in the same breath may I say by the carriage of the railway material for the Trans-Australian railway. I would like to remind the Premier that an increase in rates usually decreases traffic and, therefore, I think, taking all these matters into consideration, we are justified in the conclusion that the deficit which the Premier has stated cannot possibly be less than £460,000 odd is more likely to reach the higher figure of half a million of money, and I would like to ask him to let the House know, and take the country into his confidence as to what he is going to do with this deficit. Is he going to let it go on accumulating and be a drag on the Treasury, to hamper his operations, or is he going to fund it? Is he going to issue debentures?

Mr. S. Stubbs: Going to hand it to the Liberal party.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I expect that is what the Premier is going to do; he is hanging on till the end of his term and then it will be a case of "Hang the deficit! Let my successors do what they like with it." To-day the responsibility is his, and the people of Western Australia are not going to be humbugged any longer. They want to know what he is going to do and how he is going to handle the deficit.

Mr. George: He can do nothing.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I have on many occasions pointed out that it is the duty of the Government to show some attempt to square the ledger. Whilst I frankly admit there has not been the slightest attempt shown since our friends took office, we naturally turn to the expenditure items of the revenue in which we are more concerned, to see what they propose to do. The increase in expenditure over last year is to be no less than £741,000, and again this is largely due to the new trading ventures, and of course also to our railways, but the Attorney General is accountable for a considerable increase in expenditure. He wants some £14,500 for general elections and for a local option vote. With regard to the general elections I think perhaps that coming events are casting their shadows before, and I would like him to take us into his confidence and let us know when we are to have the general elections.

The Attorney General: That is for the Legislative Council elections.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It will not cost £14,500 for Council elections. I thought the Attorney General was providing for general elections and anticipated going to the country.

The Attorney General: It is only another mistake of yours.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then the Attorney General ought to provide for them because they are bound to come in a very short period, and so the mistake is his, and the deficit is to be increased by the cost of the general elections. The Education Department shows an increase

of £43,000. We have made education as free as possible, but it is the duty of the Government to provide the money, not to take the credit for reforms effected by increasing the deficit, and not to take credit for expenditure of what ought to be expenditure out of revenue when it is made from loan funds, and banded down to posterity. It is questionable whether under such circumstances the Attorney General is justified in abolishing all the fees, for instance, at the Technical School. It is questionable whether he ought to take credit for abolishing the fees, small though they were, at the Modern School. In the present state of the finances it appears to me that the Minister has no justification for abolishing these small fees and taking credit for having made schools, which are only utilised by less than one per cent. of the population, absolutely free. We have not been parsimonious in regard to the education votes in the past. Parliament has always been generous and voted large increases. For the year ended 30th June, 1912, we voted an increase of £30,000. In the succeeding year we again voted a further increase of £34,000, and this year we are asked to go still one better and vote a further increase of £42,000. We expended in 1912 £36,000 more than we did in the previous year; in 1913 £38,000 more, and we are asked to expend in 1914 £42,000 or an increased expenditure of £116,000 on this one department alone for a population of something like 320,000 people at the outside. Are the Government justified in piling on the expenditure even in a department such as this, and making the small population that we have carry this burden regardless of any true spirited economy in the administration? The total estimated expenditure this year amounts to £320,000 which is equal to £1 per head of the population and I venture to think that there is no other State in the Commonwealth that will show an expenditure proportionate to that. Yet without the University, of which we have heard so much recently is to be comparatively starved, and no mention has been made in the Budget Speech with regard to the

additional amount required for equipment, £2,500, and for current expenses, £3,000, which was practically promised by the Premier. The Premier mentioned it this afternoon during the discussion in regard to the Crawley site and the Bill he had just previously introduced, but this is money which is badly wanted to carry on the University which they boast, and justifiably boast, is practically free, and we cannot get it, notwithstanding that we are expending a sum of £320,000 on our general educational facilities. I am sorry to have to say that we have numbers of complaints that schools are not being provided where the children are; that we have complaints, members have told me in their several districts, that school buildings are not being put up and that schools are not being enlarged in accordance with the demand of the numbers of pupils using them. I want here, whilst talking on education, to refer once more to the retiring allowance which was drawn by our friend, the member for Swan (Mr. Turvey) when he left the Education Department. The hon. member drew some £79, I think it was if my memory serves me right, and the Premier, when I directed his attention to it and told him it was wrong, defended this retiring allowance paid to the hon. member and said it was the ordinary retiring allowance in accordance with the provisions operating in the Education Department. Since then the Premier has not thought fit to correct that statement. I queried it at the time and told him I did not think there was any such system in the Education Department, and that teachers retiring of their own accord were not granted a retiring allowance to my knowledge. The Premier disputed it. Since then there have been applications made from others, notably Mr. Dyer at the Capel. He had to retire from the department owing to his eyesight failing, a position I think that would claim the sympathy of most people. He could not continue his duties as school-master because his eyesight was failing and he claimed and asked for a retiring allowance. It was refused. He pointed

out the hon. member's case, and wanted to know why he should be treated differently, especially in view of the Premier's statement in this House. The Director of Education wrote and said—

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, and to inform you that the Premier's statement was made in mistake. There is no regulation authorising a retiring allowance of this kind, and the instance in question was treated as a special case in which there were special circumstances; consequently I am unable to arrange for any such allowance as you request.

I can quite understand it was a special case and that there were special circumstances when a gentleman desired to retire from the service to nominate as a Labour candidate, but I call upon the Premier to see that justice is meted out to all those other servants of that department, or if he has made a mistake, to claim a refund from the hon. member for Swan, who has received the money under a wrong impression. Another teacher, Mr. Parker, of East Cannington, has also applied for a retiring allowance. He wrote to the department on the 22nd September, 1913, asking to be notified as to what retiring allowance he would be entitled to in the event of his leaving the service at the end of the present year or early next year. He has not left the department, but he is going to leave, and he received a reply as follows:—

In reply to your letter of the 22nd inst., I have to inform you that were you to resign at the end of the year you would not be entitled to any retiring allowance.

Mr. Parker wrote again—

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 24th instant. May I be permitted to state that a decided anomaly exists between your reply and the remarks on the same subject made by the Hon. the Premier during a discussion that took place last year in the Legislative Assembly of this State, when the matter of a retiring allowance for the present member for Swan (Mr. P. J. Turvey) was under discussion. The Hon. the Premier then assured the

House that every teacher is entitled to a retiring allowance, and I have not yet heard that he has acknowledged that he was in error. Acting on this assurance, and the fact that a retiring allowance was paid to Mr. Turvey, whose length of service was considerably less than mine is, I humbly beg that your reply to mine of 22nd instant may be reconsidered.

The reply he received was—

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 26th instant, and have to inform you that I have nothing to add to my communication of the 24th idem. Then Mr. Parker took up the cudgels and wrote to the Minister on the 7th of this month as follows:—

On 22nd ultimo I wrote to the Director of Education asking what retiring allowance I would be entitled to in the event of my leaving the service at the end of the present year or early next year. I received a reply dated 24th ultimo to the effect that I would not be entitled to any allowance. I then referred him to the retiring allowance paid to Mr. P. J. Turvey and the Hon. the Premier's remarks in the House on the same subject, and was informed by the same officer that he had nothing further to add to his former communication. On page 3680 of last session's *Hansard* one is led to expect that he will be treated similarly to Mr. Turvey. Apparently, so far as the Chief Inspector of Schools is concerned, I can expect no further enlightenment on this subject. Under the circumstances, Sir, I have no other course to pursue than to beg that you will be so good as to inform me what retiring allowance I can expect at the end of the year or on 31st March next; or what reasons exist as to why I should be treated differently in this matter to the present member for Swan (Mr. Turvey).

There is a note at the foot of the letter that a reply has not been received. I bring this matter forward in order that right may be done to this officer and others who are similarly placed. I demand on their behalf justice, and expect the Minister for Education to look into these two

cases, and others that may be brought under his notice, so that justice may be done on the same lines, and that they may be treated as fairly as Mr. Turvey was treated when he left the department for the purpose of becoming a candidate for Parliament. If not, I shall have to endeavour to use other means to bring about the desired effect.

The Premier: Another threat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There is a difference between a resignation and being retired.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There will be something more than threats, as the Premier will find out. He has been accustomed to bluffing but he will find out that that will not act all the time. The people may be humbugged for a certain time but they will not be humbugged all the time. I turn to the Works Department and find there that there is an estimated increased expenditure of £181,000, and nearly all this is accounted for by the State enterprises under the Minister for Works, the Boya quarry, the brick works, and the sawmills, less £34,000 in connection with the Fremantle workshops. A part of this has been transferred from the Public Works Department to the Agricultural Department. The much vaunted subsidy with regard to main roads within the metropolitan area, under the Traffic Bill, amounts to, according to the Estimates, £1,400, and, in addition, there is the estimated amount of £3,800 to be collected in the way of fees which are to be charged under that measure. One wonders in passing why we should have gone to so much trouble in agreeing to a measure of that description, providing special legislation to create a new department which is bound to cost the country a considerable sum of money, merely for the purpose of expending £1,400 plus £3,800. It seems to me that we are getting into the habit of creating departments under any and on all occasions, departments which are bound to go on increasing the cost of administration and to make it more and more impossible for the Premier to handle the deficit which is now assuming such great proportions. With regard to water supply, sewerage and drainage, the Premier

announces a deficit, that is in connection with the metropolitan section thereof on last year's operation of £4,438. This, he says, has had to be financed from general revenue. It is just as wrong to take the profits of this department to the credit of revenue as it is to finance the loss of that department from the general revenue of the State. An explanation is necessary as to why a department which has paid its way for many years past, and handsomely paid its way, should now begin to show a loss. An explanation is demanded and ought to be given as to why the Consolidated Revenue of the country should bear any loss whatever in connection with a department which is purely in the interests of Perth. The estimated revenue this year is £107,000 and the expenditure, including interest and sinking fund, £101,000, leaving an apparent balance of £6,000, which reduces the deficit on the general Estimates by that amount. This is equally wrong, as I have pointed out, and I here insist that all our State trading concerns should be kept absolutely separate from the general Estimates of revenue and expenditure; they should be shown under headings of their own. To include them in the general Estimates is misleading and can only create confusion as to the true position of affairs. It abnormally inflates the revenue and makes it difficult to compare the expenditure. What conclusion can we come to in regard to the accuracy of the Premier's Estimates? There is one thing we cannot get away from, turn as we may, and take whatever possible view we like, and it is that the deficit stares us in the face as a monument of incapacity. To keep this down even to the sum of £450,000 at the end of the present year it will be necessary that extra revenue shall be raised. Now let us consider how it is proposed to raise this extra revenue. First of all, the citizens are to be made to pay the cost of all services rendered by the Government to them, we are to have an increase in railway freights, more especially on coal, and later on on timber, and above all things an increase on the railage rates on fertilisers, which the struggling settlers use to help on the growth of their crops.

We are to have an increase in the tariff of the tourist resorts at Rottnest and the Caves and the Premier assures us that this increased tariff will not be sufficient to make these places unpopular. We are to have an increased income tax, an amendment of the Act, at any rate, which will bring in increased revenue. The Stamp Act is also to be amended and the Premier hopes to get £19,000 from these two proposals. But what about the increased railway rates? The Premier proposes to increase the rates on Collie coal, for instance. It is an industry in which, I admit, I am now interested pretty considerably, but, fortunately for me, this proposal will not affect me very much. But how about the companies with contracts to bunker steamers for 12 months or 18 months ahead? Does the Premier think it will be a laughing matter or a fair thing to put up the railage to the extent of 4s., as proposed by the Commissioner for Railways, on coal which is supplied under contracts made for long periods ahead? Does he think he can pass this matter off lightly, and that he will encourage the industry and keep those people out of the bankruptcy court who will be bound to continue to supply the coal regardless of the rate he is going to impose upon them? Has coal not some claims upon the fair consideration of this Parliament and this Government? Has not this industry done something to increase the prosperity of the country; has not the industry in its own way been the means of providing a subsistence for a considerable population? Yet we have this casual announcement, laughingly made, and our protests jeered at, that the Government are going to do something to strangle the industry which has proved beneficial to a degree to Western Australia. Then what about the timber companies, or the timber hewers, if you like to go to their own class that they specially represent in this House with their contract for sleepers? Does the Premier propose to increase the railage rates on those contracts, and increase the loss which is already being incurred by carrying out those contracts? If he is going to carry out his principles honestly, as he claims he intends to do, why does he

not increase the rates on public batteries, which have been losing money year after year, and in connection with which the total loss now amounts to £400,000? This system has been losing every year something like £10,000 even on working expenses. Is he going to raise the rates on the steamers which have proved so disastrous and which up to the present have cost the country nearly £40,000 in loss alone and £105,000 in capital expenditure. Is he going to increase the rates for services rendered by the steamships to the State? He cannot do that and he knows he cannot because he has not a monopoly there. Whereas after attempting to charge less than the other steamers he is now charging the full rates, and he knows that he cannot go a fraction beyond the freight of the other companies. Then what about the settlers? They are to be charged a paltry increase on their fertilisers. The farmers and settlers, as I have often said, have been humbugged by the eloquence of the Attorney General, who holds his arms up to heaven and says how sympathetic he is towards these poor struggling people, and they are the people who are to have the railage charges on fertilisers increased in order that they might be assisted in their operations! Not only that, but we are promised an amendment of the land tax, so that the exemptions and rebates these people now enjoy shall be swept away. Did any one ever hear of such foolishness, such criminal neglect of the interests of the people? The rebates and exemptions are to be taken off and the improved land is to be taxed on the same level as the unimproved land. There will be no encouragement. The industry of the struggling artisan is to be taxed, notwithstanding that he may have slaved for years to acquire his block of land and build his home on it. The exemption under the income tax is to be raised to £250, in order, I presume, that friends of the party opposite may escape some measure of taxation out of that enactment. It is an infamous proposal. Every man has the right to pay some proportion of this great debt which the Premier has created in the State, and I should like to remind him that the majority of the settlers are

unfortunately worse off than the artisan who can claim his £4 or £5 a week at his trade, and with all these proposals, these suggestions of adding to the revenue by increased taxation, these unfair imposts upon our struggling industries, we are to be faced with a deficit of nearly half a million at the end of the present financial year. I pass away from that position with the words I think I am justified and fully justified in saying, that every Budget delivered by the Premier fills the people of this State, and myself also, with more amazement and more bewilderment at the devious ways he has adopted in handling the finances, and which the people must eventually pay for heavily. He said he wanted to assure Parliament that in regard to the State Savings Bank they never had approached the stage of signing an agreement to hand over the bank to the Commonwealth. I am glad to have this belated statement from the Premier, and to join with him in resisting any unfair encroachment, as I have always done, on our State Savings Bank. If a wrong charge has been made in the past, which he complained about in the Press and elsewhere, it has been due to that stupid secrecy of the Government of which the members of the Government are past masters. It must be within the memory of every citizen of the State that the Minister for Lands, when acting-Premier, visited Melbourne only a few months ago, and it was openly reported that he was going over to Melbourne to negotiate for a final settlement in connection with the transfer of the State Savings Bank. It was commonly thought he had received instructions from the Premier in London to that effect, and these reports were never contradicted by any Minister or by the acting-Premier on his return from that visit. I hope with the Premier that arrangements will be made for the State to retain the Savings Bank which has done so much for us; a bank which has not only given our people an opportunity of exercising thrift and saving their earnings, but which has always provided the Government of the day with an accumulation of funds which they could wisely borrow, at a fair

remuneration to the bank, for legitimate public purposes. To return to the Collie coal question, I welcome the Royal Commission, the appointment of which the Premier has forecasted. I think that Royal Commission should not only inquire into the whole question of our coal industry but should also inquire into such acts of our new Steamship department as the despatching of a steamer to South Africa with timber, to dock her there to be cleaned and straightened and overhauled by black labour, and to bring back a full cargo of Natal coal to Western Australia. We have our State enterprises, and that democratic Ministers should go out of their way to prostitute their platform, go out of their way to compete with the industries of the country, go out of their way to utilise the vessels which have been badly bought with public money to bring to our shores produce in the shape of fuel which we can equally well produce here, I cannot understand—it passes my comprehension. I hope they will learn something in this connection and that the rumours of vessels having been sent to Singapore—which evidently frightened them—for their annual survey, will not be repeated, that they will set to work to remedy the evil in connection with our dry dock construction and give docking facilities at Fremantle in order that in future we may have not only our State steamers, but other vessels coming to our port, docked and repaired and overhauled in the harbour of Fremantle instead of having to send them elsewhere. The dual control of the Fremantle harbour and the State steamers must meet with the condemnation of all business men, and the statements made by the Colonial Secretary from time to time in the Press, that this is a splendid arrangement which will be of advantage to the State, can hardly be accepted as conclusive by those who know better from experience gained. He stated the other day that inter-State steamers obtained their clearances on credit, the same as the State steamers, and that the State steamers had no preference over privately-owned steamers. Whilst I give him every credit for having

issued instructions that no preference whatever should be given, it is hard to believe that the officers of the Harbour Trust will not on occasions, even inadvertently, give some preference to their own steamers over those of private companies. The interstate steamers do not receive the same consideration in regard to their clearances. It is true they do not pay their dues, but they have to put up a deposit of money in a bank, and if that be exceeded they have to make it good, which is the same thing. They put up a sum of money, the same as is done in regard to the railways, in a bank to the credit of the Harbour Trust, and get the accrued interest on that deposit; but the Trust has to draw on the account, so it amounts to the same thing as paying cash over the counter before the steamer actually leaves the port. The State steamers do not do that sort of thing. They have to trade on the credit of the Government, and they can go on trading and financing and leaving their port dues unpaid, if we have a neglectful department, as long as the management wishes. I do not wish to labour the question of the State steamers. They are in themselves, in their journeyings to and fro, and in what we hear as to their operations, practically an open book, with the exception of the audited statements of the result of their operations. We can all, I think, fairly well see what the tendency of these steamers is, and what their ultimate destination will be. Brought out to help the small cattle-grower and the consumer of our State they have utterly failed in their projected policy, and I have only to draw attention to a statement by the Minister for Lands in this House three months ago to prove that at any rate he recognises the position even if the Premier and his other colleagues do not. Speaking with regard to the Bovril Company's contracts, that is, the purchase of cattle from the Bovril Company on behalf of the State, and referring to the matter of small holders or cattle-growers in our Northern districts, he said:

We found we were not meeting with that response which we had expected

from those whom we were desirous of helping. We determined that the space. That is, the space in the steamers.

should be utilised, and determined also that we would have the cattle available for the consumers here. In accordance with this we purchased some cattle in order that these objects might be attained. We purchased them at a satisfactory rate—and let me tell the hon. member that the other party to the agreement would like to terminate it to-morrow if we were willing. The deal was a good one, and it was made in order that we might obtain our supplies and fill the steamer's space.

In spite of that, the rumour goes that the Government are at the present moment trying to cancel this good agreement. It is stated on the best authority that one shipment of cattle brought down under this excellent agreement, which the other party wished to get out of, was found so risky, so far as pleuro was concerned, that they were sold at £4 per head, and that cattle brought down in the same vessel from an adjacent district were purchased by the Government for £6 to send up to Yandanooka, and that 500 head of cattle were recently landed at Geraldton and travelled through the flats to Yandanooka, notwithstanding that these cattle came from a pleuro and tick-infested district, and were shipped at Wyndham; that the steamer was ordered into Geraldton and the cattle were landed there regardless of the danger to dairy herds and other clean cattle in that district and, may I add, contrary to regulations, unless those regulations had been altered, in respect of which I have no knowledge. Now the Premier referred at some length to his visit to England, and to the knowledge he had gained, which he trusted would be of service to him on his return. He will pardon me for saying I hope it will be of some service to the State. I have not the slightest doubt it will be of service to him, and that the knowledge which he gathered in his travels, and the numbers of large undertakings and railway systems which he inspected in Europe, in Great Britain and in America, must have en-

lightened him considerably as to the enormous power of private enterprise as against the paltry, puny, efforts we are putting forth here at the present moment in the shape of State enterprises. In regard to the purchase of Savoy House, I should have been very much better pleased to see arrangements made to house all the State officers in one building with those of the Commonwealth. This, the Premier explains, cannot be because adequate accommodation has not been provided. Under the circumstances I have no doubt this purchase—of which, as a matter of comment, we have not any details yet; we do not know what it has cost, as the Premier has not told us—will be a satisfactory arrangement. Savoy House is well placed, and it goes without saying that a State of the magnitude of our State requires constantly to be kept before the British public if we are to have a constant, steady, influx of immigrants from the motherland, which will be the upbuilding and making of this great State. The Premier's dissertation on tramways and tramway plant, the new power station and the electrification of railways was most interesting; but his quotation from a letter from Mr. Stoneham, the director of the Perth Tramway Company, was certainly amusing, if not wise. He read a letter from Mr. Stoneham, and it was so good that I think it might be re-read this evening. Mr. Stoneham, referring to Mr. Scaddan's purchase of the tramway system, said—

There cannot be the slightest doubt that your Government have done a marvellous stroke of business for the State, and if the purchase had been delayed a few years hence, or the price had been settled by arbitration, you would have had to pay a much larger sum without the accruing benefit of the immediate extensions which you are now enabled to carry out; and I am sure you feel justly proud of having obtained so good a bargain.

This was the seller to the buyer. Well might the member for West Perth interject "bosh!" A system of back-scratching which can carry no con-

viction to the public as to the benefit of the bargain which has just been made. But what the people want to know is when the service is to be improved; when are the fares to be reduced in accordance with the anticipation they were led to form when the bargain was first announced; when are the tickets to be again sold on the cars instead of an extra penny or two being dragged out of the poor worker who has not the time to purchase them at a railway station or some other place; when are the extensions to be made, and when are we to have the improvements? The track is disgraceful, the trams are overcrowded, and we are paying through the nose to-day, as we always have paid, for the service rendered. The same thing applies to the ferry system. Where is the improvement in the ferry service between Perth and South Perth, and where is the reduction in fares? We have mention of these things and promises made, but no result, and the people are getting tired. The new power station, which is a work of great magnitude, according to the description given to us by the Premier, has never been in detail put before the House; except the casual mention last year that more power was required, we had no details of the scheme submitted to us. Yet Parliament has control of the expenditure of all public funds, including loan funds! The Premier told us that four contracts have been let in London totalling £188,000 and other contracts are being let which will bring the total up to £283,000. I have no recollection of the sanction of Parliament being obtained for this expenditure, and where does the control of Parliament come in? Why were tenders not called locally? I asked certain questions with regard to this matter, and the Premier replied that the urgency of the work was the principal reason. I do not believe in this time-worn excuse that urgency is sufficient justification for a Government privately placing £300,000 worth of contracts without giving the local people a chance of tendering. It is true that perhaps the bulk of the machinery may be special, but there is no reason why the local houses should not have had a chance of tendering for the machinery if they were ready to

do so. But, allowing that that is so, it is also true that there is a mass of iron work and steel work which could have been manufactured locally in connection with the new station, but which will now have to be imported owing to the private contracts which were let by the Premier on his visit to England. Let us hope that the hopper wagons which he told us are to be constructed will be built locally; let us hope that those men in our midst who are out of employment to-day will have a chance of getting some return from the large expenditure of loan moneys on these and other works. Of course the Premier will tell us that we have not got any unemployed, but unfortunately his ardent supporter, the member for Kalgoorlie, has been lately masquerading as one of the unemployed in the city, and he stated emphatically that he found very little work was to be got. I want to see our own factories supported, and the extermination of the individual by State enterprise stopped. We import food stuffs to the tune of two million pounds annually, and the Premier has referred in eloquent terms to the necessity for developing the South-West. In this we can all agree, but does he expect that the people will come here and invest their capital and energy in providing wants of that description even, when they are faced with the possibility, nay the probability, that within a very few years, if the present Government remain in power, they will start some enterprise to compete with them? The falling-off in the approvals of homestead farms, 965 last year as against 1,290 in the previous year, and the reduction in the number of conditional purchases are not encouraging. Each year these figures should go ahead increasing enormously, but the dire and baneful effects of the leasehold policy which was promulgated by the present Government, and which they say to-day they have not put into force, are being felt in the State, and the regulations which the Minister for Lands so foolishly adopted, are showing their results in the falling-off in these applications and in the settlement of the land. The Premier's remark with regard to the South-West being to-day immune from Irish

blight, and his well-deserved boast that we in Western Australia are now in a position to export these potatoes to other countries, is the best tribute of praise that he could give to the action of the ex-Minister for Lands, the member for Northam. It was Mr. Mitchell's policy, for which he was maligned, not only by the ordinary Labour opponent at the time, but by members who occupy the front Treasury benches, and the Premier's admission is a refutation of the damnable charges spread about during the last election that the prohibition of the import of potatoes to that portion of the State was due to the alleged fact that he and I were largely interested in potato-growing. The information the Premier gave with regard to the Norseman-Esperance district shows conclusively the need for caution, and justifies the action which the Opposition took with regard to the proposed rash expenditure of a huge sum of money on railway construction there. The Premier says that the Agricultural Department is supplying settlers with different varieties of wheat for trial in that district, and he is arranging for tests to be made in a reliable manner. The season was unpropitious last year, and consequently the crops are limited—just what we have been trying to convince him of for the last two years, that he requires reliable tests before the State embarks on a large expenditure of money in that district, an expenditure amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds. It is strange but true that these gentlemen who have condemned our policy in season and out of season are to-day carrying out that policy, but, of course, carrying it out in a much worse form than we could have done. The Works Department is dead or asleep, notwithstanding the boast of the head of that department, a vain boast, as to the speed of construction of railways, which is not borne out in fact.

The Minister for Mines: Are you really so bad as all that?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member feels it and is squirming, and he will know more about it later on. The report of the Commissioner of Railways shows that 255 miles of new railway was handed over in the financial year ended

the 30th June, but that 255 miles included the Port Hedland-Marble Bar line of 114 miles, which was well on towards completion when we left office. Yet the Premier and his henchman the Minister for Works, are never tired of saying that they are constructing railways twice as fast as any previous Administration had done. For the year ended 30th June, 1911, when our policy was just getting into working order, we handed over 231 miles of new railways, and in the next year our friends only handed over 222 miles, and this year 255 miles, including a railway we had practically constructed, 114 miles in length. We are told that we are to have no new railways this year. A railway from Busselton to the Margaret River, which has been promised on two occasions by the Premier—he promised that a Bill would be introduced last session, and later he promised that it would be introduced this session—is to be cast aside. But I notice he is still making promises. At Wagin the other day he promised that an eastward line towards Lake Grace would be constructed, and in reply to a deputation said that they need have no fear as a Bill for the construction of that railway would be the first passed during the next session of Parliament. Which promise is the Premier going to keep? Is he going to give me my railway, which he promised two years ago would be the first for which a Bill would be introduced, and for which no Bill has been introduced yet, or is he going to give the member for Wagin his railway to Lake Grace? The Premier is still humbugging and hoodwinking the people, and playing one section of the country off against another, and none of them will get any railways during his term of office. These matters are amusing when one refers to them in the House. One cannot help seeing the humour in the audacity and impudence of the Minister's excuses, but this is a serious matter to the settlers, who cannot get their produce to the market, and who, notwithstanding that they have a good season before them, are faced with a falling market and low prices for their produce. It is no laughing matter for

them to be put off with promises, and not get those railway facilities which make all the difference between their making a success of their operations, and perhaps having to face the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy or assign their estates to the Agricultural Bank. Harbour extensions at the outports have been neglected ever since the Government took office. Bunbury is in revolt. The council there have given the lie direct to their member, a public meeting is to be held, and he is to be made to toe the mark and answer for his statement in this House that the present Government have done more in two years for the Bunbury harbour than any other Administration during the last 25 years. Geraldton is going to revolt on the 15th of next month, because the people there have been neglected, and Albany next year will follow suit. Instead of works performed according to promise, plans have been prepared, so they say, and further promises are made. These non-members surely have been accustomed to raising the wind by flying kites, issuing promissory notes and as they became due issuing further promissory notes. They promised when they took office, they are promising to-day, and by Heavens, they will go out of office still protesting and promising. At Geraldton it is estimated that some 400,000 bags of wheat are to be exported through that port this season, and no provision is being made to handle that traffic at the port. Shippers tell me that they will be absolutely unable to handle it. At Albany we know that the steamers cannot get up to the town jetty safely. I was there the other day in the "Riverina" and the captain assured me that there was only six inches of water underneath the vessel. I met a skipper of a larger boat on another day, and he told me he could not possibly get to the town jetty. Yet no dredging is being done, and the efforts of the Government, notwithstanding the indictment that has been lodged against them from the birthplace, Bunbury, still seem to be concentrated and exhausted in the central portions of the country, the metropolis and the port of

Fremantle. Now it is neither right nor fair that our outports should be neglected. It is neither right nor fair to expect people of this State to go on depending upon promises which have not been carried out, and which no effort has been made to perform. It is not right to expect the people of the State to be satisfied with the fact that our public debt is increasing and increasing enormously, beyond all reason and all bounds, that our deficit shall go on piling up, and that it will be calmly left to some future Administration and to posterity to pay the bill. It is not right that we should neglect our primary producers, the activity of whom is the basis and foundation of the prosperity of the whole of our country. It is not right that we should go on making statements that our moneys are well expended when we know that our principles, or at least the principles of my friends opposite are deadily opposed to the systems they are adopting and which they condemned others for following. What are we doing to-day to assist the activity of our primary producers? Our mining industry which the Minister for Mines claims so much for, will be restricted by legislation and impossible conditions of employment, if a measure which was introduced here the other day be carried. Our farming industry is being assisted, if you please, by increased taxation and increased railway rates, to say nothing of the pet patent medicine regulations of my friend the Honorary Minister, which were cancelled in obedience to the mandate of the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): A pity you did not take some of them.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And in passing, may I point out to this House and the people of this country the peculiar methods adopted by the Government. They gave their promise to the Legislative Council that if they disallowed these regulations the Government would cancel them. The Government did cancel them, but not content with that, they put up their Whip to move a motion in this House that an address be presented to

His Excellency the Governor to have them reinstated. Did ever anyone hear of a Government stultifying themselves to that degree, actually doing something which belied the promise which was given and which was accepted in good faith by another place? So we are helping our farming industry by increased taxation and increased railway rates. Our timber and coal industries are also to be assisted in the same way and in addition they are to have the helpful fillip of State competition. Our cattle industry is being assisted by neglecting to provide chilling works at Wyndham and in doing that surely permitting the Federal works, when established at Port Darwin, to divert the trade from the northern portion of this State and the Northern Territory to Darwin. Every industry is directly hit at with perhaps the exception of the pastoral industry, and that may be accounted for because my hon. friends have lately joined its ranks. The whole country is to suffer by reason of State speculative enterprise. Land settlement is being retarded and I am sorry to say immigration is being restricted, and yet we are told by the Premier to trust to the recuperative powers of the country which we are doing our best in many directions to kill. Two years of effort, gigantic effort, on the part of my friends opposite—

Mr. George: It has made them bald, anyhow.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And what have those efforts resulted in? They have resulted in borrowing over six millions of money which the Premier tells us he has had no difficulty in spending—squandered would be nearer the mark, as I have proved in many directions—at a cost of something like 5s. per cent. more than the loans during our period cost during the lifetime of the loans resulting in approximately an excessive cost for our borrowings of £600,000 paid out in interest during the lifetime of the loans more than we paid out for a similar amount. Their gigantic efforts have resulted in a deficit of nearly half a million of money, have resulted in prostituting their platform pledges and jettisoning

to a large extent their party policy. The baneful influence of a caucus-ridden, trades hall-dominated Government is to be seen all around. The old adage, "Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride it to death," has been exemplified. The Premier has mounted his financial steed and is riding to his doom.

[Mr. McDowall took the Chair.]

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan, in reply): I am sure that other hon. members present have been interested in the remarks by way of criticism of the Budget by the leader of the Opposition, and that interest has been equally shared by myself. I noted that the hon. member had not proceeded far before he said that consistency was a commendable virtue. I followed him fairly closely during his remarks and I find that he was only consistent in his inconsistency. He first complained that the present Government had expended rather more than was wise of loan funds and then he concluded his remarks by flying a kite, a term which he himself used, by playing off to all the different parts of the State, in complaining that we have not provided in the two years we have been in office a quarter of a million of money for Albany, a similar amount for Bunbury, a similar amount for Geraldton and the Lord knows how much for freezing works and chilling works in the North-West. He also complains that we have been responsible for bringing about a deficit. One would imagine, after listening to the hon. member, that if he had ever been in charge of the Treasury, he had closed every financial year with a surplus, but everybody in the State knows quite well that one of the largest deficits that the State ever groaned under, to use his own term again, was built up by the hon. gentleman himself.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Certainly not.

The PREMIER: And the only reason why the deficit was stopped on that occasion was that the then Premier, now Sir Newton Moore, summarily dismissed him from the Treasury and took charge of it himself, and now the hon. member

as leader of the Opposition comes along and begins as a schoolmaster to attempt to teach others what he himself was unable to accomplish. I have previously stated, and I repeat it here that under the circumstances and under the conditions which have prevailed during the last two years, I am not ashamed of our deficit. I stated on the public platform, and I repeat it here in the presence of hon. members and our financial genius opposite, that the deficit is one that might have easily been avoided and I could avoid it easily enough even now, but the avoiding of that deficit would have brought such chaos that it would have taken longer to get out of the difficulty than to adjust the finances now. After all, there are a few individuals in the State and only a few whose overdrafts at the bank if put together would amount to more than the deficit existing in the State at the present moment. I could mention the names of mining men who may have something in the nature of flimsy security, but nothing in the nature of the security which the State gives its bondholders, who have an overdraft of £30,000 at one bank. I could mention the names of others in other forms of business who have similar overdrafts, and if the overdrafts of the municipalities whose security is not comparable with the security given by the State to its bondholders, were added, they would probably amount to a sum equal to the deficit in the Treasury. The deficit in the Treasury is merely a matter of calling on loan funds to tide us over a difficult period, and to compare the period through which we have passed during the last two years with the period of my friend and his deficit when he boasted of a record season, is absolutely unfair. As I stated previously, remembering the conditions, I am not in the slightest degree ashamed of our deficit, and I claim that it is because we boldly faced the position and refused to be worried about such criticism, or so-called criticism as we have heard to-night, that we allowed the deficit to be built up and continued for another term that the State is likely to reap in a harvest that will compare more than favourably with anything that has been previously experienced in the State: it is because we have

permitted people who would have gone into the bankruptcy court and left the State for good, and not only have left it but given it a bad advertisement, and have allowed them to remain on their holdings and to recover from the depression they have passed through in common with the State as a whole. The hon. member in his capacity as leader of the Opposition is of course entitled and expected to criticise, but what sort of criticism of the financial policy have we had from the leader of the Opposition to-night. For want of something better he has had to drag in the payment of a few pounds to the hon. member for Swan (Mr. Turvey) when he retired from the Education Department. The hon. member has had to drag in a number of letters written by the Education Department to retiring teachers or persons desirous of retiring from the Education Department. Is that a criticism of the financial policy of the Government?

Hon. J. Mitchell: There is a principle involved

The PREMIER: Is there any financial principle involved? It is purely a question of administration, which can be more effectively dealt with when the department's estimates are under discussion. So far as concerned the hon. member's cheap sneers at my visit to the old country, and my references to the manner in which I was treated there, let me tell the hon. member that I have never bent the knee to any living person. I paid due homage in person to the King as head of the Empire, and I think I am entitled to mention that he treated me as the head of this State, and so did the Secretary of State for the Colonies, as one would expect the head of this State to be treated, but I do not forget that when in London I was representing the whole of the people of the State, and on some occasions made utterances which, if they had come from the leader of the Opposition, would make people think the hon. member was off his head, for the simple reason that we have different principles at heart. Some of the cable references I have already denied, and have done so in the presence of the leader of the Opposition, and for that gentleman to repeat them as he did to-

night, notwithstanding that I gave them a point blank denial, only shows what sort of a person he is at heart. When a person aspires to the position of leader of the Opposition, and some day to be Premier of the State, and will continue to make misstatements, though he must know, if he is prepared to accept the denial which I gave him, that they are misstatements, then he is only asking for that which he deserves, and which he will probably obtain again. I have previously made an explanation with regard to the statement that while I was going to the capitalist in London and telling him he had nothing to fear in regard to Western Australia, I was telling the worker he had nothing to defend. I claim that the capitalist has nothing to fear in regard to Western Australia if he is given fair opportunity for the investment of his money, and I pride myself on having, when in England, persuaded certain capitalists to invest money in the dairying industry, and I believe it will pay them and pay the State as well, but I did not go to London merely for the purpose of telling the capitalist he could do well here, but to let them know the position we were in, faced with the expenditure of an enormous sum of money for the purpose of developing our great areas, and I am pleased to say they appreciated the facts that I put before them, so that we obtained money on better terms than some of the other States and New Zealand, notwithstanding the comparisons made by the leader of the Opposition in connection with loans raised by his Government.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You made a comparison yourself.

The PREMIER: Everyone knows that the condition of the money market was totally different when we raised our two million loan from what it was when loans were raised by previous Governments, and I want to state that when the leader of the Opposition heard I had raised this money on the terms I had, he congratulated me on having made a good deal, and now, with the object of misleading members and the public, he refrains from making such a statement, in trying to make it appear that we paid more than was necessary for the moneys we raised on

that occasion. We deliberately borrowed money for the purpose of carrying on the development of the State at a period when we might easily have avoided the expenditure of a great deal of that money, and we did it because it was essential that further capital should be brought into the State to prevent chaos similar to that which arose in other States when they passed through a similar period. It is an easy enough matter to adjust the finances if one has no regard to the consequence of doing so. I claim that bringing that money into the State at the period we did prevented that chaos, and we are recovering so speedily as a matter of fact, that in a year or two it will be forgotten that we passed through that trying period. No one knows better than the hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) what a trying period we did pass through, but for political reasons and for party purposes he and others refrain from drawing attention to it. So far as doing what we proposed at the last elections is concerned, where we have failed is not because of the lack of a desire to accomplish it, but because our friends opposite have used another place to prevent it. When we talked about adjusting the finances, we said at the elections that, notwithstanding the condition of the finances, and whether there was a surplus or a deficit, the conditions of taxation should be altered, and we endeavoured to bring about that alteration, but our few friends opposite publicly proclaimed "Thank God for an Upper House." In that place we are given to understand they know no party, but our friends opposite had sufficient influence to prevent anything being done which was likely to bring credit to the present Government. I mention this for the purpose of showing that while we have not raised revenue in directions which we thought possible, it has not been because we have not attempted to do so, but because another place has prevented us for party purposes. The only reason why we have to increase railway rates is because the hon. member for Northam insists it should be done.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I insist!

The PREMIER: Yes. On the one hand you say, "Adjust your finances" and

on the other hand we are told that if we do it we must not increase the charges on services. Then we have had by compulsion of the Opposition a party view, not only by members here but those in another place which has compelled us to increase our charges on our railway services.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We balanced charging the same freight.

The PREMIER: I had a return which showed how frequently they did; they generally balanced, but the balance was generally on the wrong side. The genius of finance now sitting in Opposition was retired from the Treasury because he continued to build a deficit year by year, and consequently that he proposed to charge fees in the primary schools. Contrast that with the policy of the existing Government. We want to educate our children from the time they enter the schools until they pass through the University, and we do not want to place a bar upon that education by charging fees in our primary schools. We caused the public to rise in revolt against that proposal until the hon. member had to withdraw the regulations. We have gone a step further by abolishing the fees in our secondary schools and in regard to the University as well. The leader of the Opposition said it was questionable whether we were wise in abolishing the fees in the secondary and technical schools at such a period. I can tell the hon. member that we were not going to wait to bring about these benefits, which were essential. If we go out we will go out having left behind us a record, notwithstanding the objections we have had to face, of having given the people the benefits for which they have cried for years past. We knew that when we gave the railway employees a minimum wage of 9s. a day we would have this howl that we have had from our friends to-night. When we abolished fees in our technical schools and our school of mines we had exactly the same howl. Our friends opposite want to build up in this community, in the matter of education, a privileged class, and we are going to break it down irrespective of what it costs. If we are to continue in office to-day to do the will and whim of our friends opposite, I am pre-

pared to get out at any time, but while we are here we exist as the Government for the purpose of dealing fairly with men in different parts of the State whom we never see, the men in the back blocks country, rather than men who live about the Palace hotel, and we intend to continue that policy. The hon. member was magnanimous in agreeing with me that it is not fair to add the amount of money we have raised for the workers' homes and the Agricultural Bank to our public debt. and, as I said when delivering the Budget, this money was on a totally different basis from money for which the whole of the State has to accept responsibility for finding the interest and sinking fund charges. In connection with the workers' homes and the Agricultural Bank the charges are simply passed on to those who obtain the benefits of that money, whereas the expenditure of loan money, generally speaking, is distributed among the whole of the community and the responsibility is theirs. The hon. member, however, while stating what I have said, forgot to deduct this money and he was also wily enough to make reference to the amount of money which had been expended by the Public Works Department and set it against our deficit, and then said we had not spent a single shilling in the Public Works Department apart from what came out of loan money. The hon. member forgot that he had a deficit and we find that his deficit in one year exceeded the total expenditure on public works by about £15,000, he having actually drawn on loan money for the purpose of carrying on the administration of the various departments. The hon. member showed his sympathy with the education of the people, and complained of the increased expenditure of the Education Department and tried to make it appear that that increase was due to increased expenditure in our secondary and technical schools. As a matter of fact, that increased expenditure is almost wholly due to the increased number of schools in the agricultural and mining districts, brought about by the increased number of scholars, and very little is due to the increased expenditure in connection with our secondary or technical schools.

And in the very next breath, while complaining of that increased expenditure, the hon. member complained that we were not building a sufficient number of schools. Did the hon. member propose that we should build schools in the agricultural or outback districts and not support them; that we should merely put up the school building and say, "Look, there are the bare walls, get all the education you require from them." Of what use would these schools be without providing for an additional teaching staff? All this means increased expenditure. The only possible way of keeping down the expenditure in the Education Department is by refusing to grant educational facilities to the children outback. But, notwithstanding the condition of the finances, we will always agree to do that which is our duty. We have just as much right to provide teaching facilities for the children who are in the outback areas as for the children in the metropolitan districts, and wherever these facilities have been required we have given the necessary assistance in the way of building schools and providing teaching staffs. Our friends opposite, when they come into power, may stop granting these facilities, but we certainly will not.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There are complaints to-day.

[Mr. Male took the Chair.]

The Attorney General: Nonsense, you inspire them.

The PREMIER: There is the inconsistency of our friends opposite. On the one hand they complain bitterly against an increase in the Education Department, but if they only turn up the Estimates they will find that the increase is almost wholly due to the extra number of teachers it has been found necessary to employ in the new schools. The leader of the Opposition was, I think, slightly unruly—although coming from him I did not take any exception to it—when he referred to Ministers sitting on the Treasury bench as political hypocrites and humbugs. The hon. member ought to have a fair knowledge of what constitutes a political humbug, for he

has only to refer to the recent utterances of a member of his own party to find that his Liberal supporters look upon him as a political hypocrite and humbug, and it is said that there is no better judge of such people than the man who himself possesses those qualities. Thus I have no reason to take exception to his remarks. Besides, the hon. member was Premier for a term of 12 months, and thus he has a fair knowledge of what it is to be surrounded by humbugs and hypocrites.

Hon. J. Mitchell : A marvellous reply, this.

The PREMIER : The hon. member also said that, notwithstanding our oft repeated boast that we had constructed more miles of railways during our term of office than any previous Government, such was not borne out by facts, and he quoted the mileage of railways handed over to the Commissioner during the last 12 months, as compared with the 12 months of his term of office, and he said that, although there is shown a slight increase in the mileage, there has to be taken into account that this increased mileage included the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway of 100 miles in length. That appears very well on the face of it, but the hon. member forgot to mention that we have under construction, and almost completed to-day, nearly 300 miles of railways, in the Wickepin-Merredin and the Wongan Hills-Mullewa lines. I again assert, and challenge the hon. member to dispute it, that the actual mileage of railway constructed during the last two years easily out-does anything accomplished by his Government. It is not so much what has been handed over, as the mileage which has been laid, and we have exceeded their previous record by 50 per cent.

Hon. J. Mitchell : Give us particulars.

The PREMIER : The hon. member can get all the particulars he wants when we reach the departmental vote. I am merely saying that I challenge the hon. member to disprove my statement. Then, on the other hand, the cost of construc-

tion by day labour has not gone up enormously, as the leader of the Opposition asserts. The difference is that our friends opposite constructed railways on the cheapest possible method, while we to-day are handing over railways to the Commissioner on such a basis that the Commissioner can work them at once, without additional expenditure. When the previous Government handed over railways to the Commissioner, that officer had to apply to the Treasury for money to enable him to make those railways safe for working.

Mr. Lewis : And men lost their lives on them.

The PREMIER : Yes. This extra cost had to be borne by the Commissioner, and thus we are continually increasing the capital cost of most of the existing railways built by our predecessors. So long as they had the rails down, that was good enough for them and they boasted of the mileage which they had constructed. We have a different object in view. We want to make the one cost cover the whole charge of putting a railway into a safe working condition, and provide facilities which are essential for the proper use of the line. That is what we are doing to-day, although it means a slightly increased cost. In the long run, however, this policy means a saving of thousands of pounds. I can tell the leader of the Opposition that almost immediately after we assumed office we had a request from the Commissioner of Railways to at once provide £55,000 for the purpose of making the Dowerin-Merredin line safe to run trains over at a speed exceeding eight miles an hour. The Commissioner was almost in that position that he felt inclined to refuse to run trains over the line, which had only just been handed over to him, and that was one of the cheap lines which was built by our predecessors, a line which was of practically no use. We are still running trains on that line to-day at a speed very much below that which is essential for the expeditious handling of the tremendous amount of wheat now being grown along that route, and that is the case although we have spent a lot of

money on it. The leader of the Opposition made a reference to surveys for lines in different parts of the agricultural areas, and he said that these surveys should go ahead by leaps and bounds. We could go on surveying as our friends opposite did, irrespective of whether they would be of advantage to the State or not. Notwithstanding the denial of the leader of the Opposition, I claim that there are scores of men in the State, Liberals too in principle, who are strong in their condemnation of the former Minister for Lands, the member for Northam, for having sent them out miles and miles, without the possibility of obtaining railway facilities for many years to come. This gentleman sent out people to the fringe of the rainfall belt, which he must have known was a dangerous policy to follow, and when he knew that no provision for water supply could be made. Those people who now are able to wash their clothes only once in every two months, and to wash their faces about twice a week, are blessing the policy of the member for Northam. The policy of the present Minister for Lands has resulted in, perhaps, not the same acreage being taken up as was the case when our predecessors were in office, but in people going on land that is safe for farming.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Further east.

The PREMIER: I do not care about further east; the hon. member knows full well that land surveyed ready for selection has been withheld, and in similar circumstances we will withhold it again. We are not going to be accused of sending people out to those areas just so that we might boast of the area of land which is being taken up, irrespective of the damage which is likely to be done to the people taking up that land.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You are talking nonsense.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows that his administration in that direction was all nonsense, and he appreciates the position when he is brought face to face with it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Oh, talk sense.

The Attorney General: Take your gruel kindly.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition boasted of the policy of the member for Northam in settling all this land and making all the surveys about which we have heard, and what it means to the State, and, when referring to the proposed increase in freight on fertilisers, said he could show us that many of these people in the far eastern agricultural areas were poorer to-day than many men who were earning a weekly wage. But why is that the position?

Hon. J. Mitchell: They are trying to make homes for themselves.

The PREMIER: They have tried to make homes to take their families to and live under reasonable conditions. The member for Northam sent them there without any promise at all for the future, merely so that he might boast about increased figures and show in the pamphlets which he distributed the area of land which had been taken up. These people are all now grieving because they believed what the member for Northam told them. The leader of the Opposition referred to the expenditure of the last two years and he mentioned in his remarks what had been spent on the strengthening of the Fremantle wharves. I have a pretty vivid recollection of some of that money, if not the whole of it, being spent by our predecessors and charged to Suspense Account, and carried on. I will admit that, under the circumstances it was the correct policy, but the hon. member should have been fair enough to mention the fact.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What are you complaining about?

The PREMIER: I am complaining that the leader of the Opposition knows that this charge against Consolidated Revenue was to pay off the Suspense Account, which was built up by the previous Administration.

Mr. S. Stubbs: How much was it?

The PREMIER: About £20,000, but I am speaking only from memory. Reference was also made by the leader of the Opposition to the State enterprises, and he said that we would have to wait until

the people got rid of the present Administration before it would be possible to adjust the finances, and that then we would find that we would have to get rid of the State enterprises to do so. That is a pronouncement which I have been asking the hon. member to make for some time. I want to know what attitude our friends opposite would adopt in connection with these enterprises. Do they propose to immediately dispose of the State steamers if they get an opportunity; do they propose to close down the State implement works if they get an opportunity; do they propose to close down the State saw mills if they get an opportunity? I could go on enumerating a number of other enterprises which we have been continuously asking our friends to make a pronouncement upon, while they have studiously avoided doing anything of the sort, contenting themselves merely with general criticism.

Mr. O'Loghlen: It is easy to be a destructive critic.

The PREMIER: Of course it is.

Mr. Wisdom: It is easier to be a constructive idiot.

The PREMIER: The hon. member made some reference to the estimated revenue from State saw mills. The hon. member will know that if we do not reach our estimate of revenue we will not reach our estimate of expenditure.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You did with the State steamers.

The PREMIER: I am referring to the criticism of the leader of the Opposition in regard to the estimated revenue from State saw mills, and I say that if the estimated revenue is not reached neither will the estimated expenditure be reached, and so the position is not affected. But I am assured by those who ought to know that we will reach that figure, subject to payments to be made by the Commonwealth before the end of the financial year. Then there was some reference to the action of the Minister for Works in sending the powellising plant down on trucks and not in sections as desired by somebody, and that some difficulty was experienced in getting them through certain bridges. I understand that the

Minister for Works made inquiries before arriving at a decision; that he did it on the advice of those who ought to be in a position to advise him that these tanks could be got through all right. After all, the difficulty was of a slight nature, and they are still sending down tanks made up in almost a similar manner. The hon. member also made reference to the estimated revenue from the implement works; but he forgot to inquire as to whether the whole of the £75,000 was to accrue from the manufacture of implements. Had he done this he would have discovered that we are including in that £75,000 the Fremantle harbour works, which accounts for something like £40,000. It has been put under one management, and operated on one set of books and is shown as one item. If the estimated revenue is not reached the estimated expenditure will not be reached, and so the thing will adjust itself. The hon. member says it is the duty of the Government to attempt to square the ledger, but that not the slightest attempt had been made by the present Government.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What about the balance-sheet of the State steamers?

The PREMIER: The hon. member has the statement before him; figures in connection with the State steamers under circumstances which, had his Government been in power, would not have been presented to the House.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There never would have been any steamers.

The PREMIER: Another evidence of inconsistency on the part of our friends. It was all a part of the policy of our friends to run steamers to the North-West; that much they had definitely promised. Now, from the statement of the hon. member, we see that they are political hypocrites and humbugs, and there would have been no State steamers notwithstanding their promise.

Mr. Wisdom: Not steamers such as these.

The PREMIER: And the member for Claremont, by some of his statements in connection with the meat ring, contended that such a ring was in existence, and de-

clared how he himself would go about the task.

Mr. Wisdom: Chartering.

The PREMIER: Yes, chartering.

Mr. Wisdom: If necessary.

The PREMIER: Now he says "if necessary" For unblushing hypocrisy and humbug commend me to the member for Claremont.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You ought to withdraw that.

The PREMIER: I am only repeating a statement previously passed without any objection whatever being taken to it. I did not propose at this stage to further discuss the question of coal freights, or the proposed increased freights on fertilisers, but evidently the leader of the Opposition has been giving some consideration to the question of coal freights and decided that an increase of 3s. or 4s. per ton was warranted. That is the amount he mentions, whereas I did not mention any amount, and under these circumstances the leader of the Opposition could not well quarrel with us on that point. Evidently he thinks that is a fair increase. So far as fertiliser freights are concerned he brings in the old bogey of the position of the struggling settler. The struggling settler is, of course, the only person who uses fertilisers. Such progressive and prosperous settlers as the member for Northam, who crops a fair number of acres every year, are not struggling settlers and therefore do not use fertilisers. However, we must continue to carry fertilisers at a loss in order to assist the wealthy settlers who are in a position to be able to pay the cost of services rendered in that direction, if at the same time we are going to give consideration to the struggling settler further back in the agricultural areas. The leader of the Opposition has never lost an opportunity of using the struggling settler for the purpose of covering up his tracks. When we talk of the land tax, only the struggling settler is affected at all, and not the rich land-holder in Perth drawing enormous rents from city properties. It is the struggling settler in the back-blocks when it is increased freight on fertilisers. It is not the struggling settler who crops 4,000

acres and rides round to inspect it once a month on a valuable horse, but the poor struggling settler who takes five years to get 200 acres under crop and who will use in that time about as much manure as would cost him £5 in freight. The hon. member will use about five times that quantity each year and he is the struggling settler to assist whom the general taxpayer has to put his hands in his pockets. Imagine the struggling settler, employing labour to crop 4,000 acres and take off a fair amount of wool from the sheep running in the paddocks with no other protection than a wire fence, calling upon a man struggling without any railway facilities at all to pay something by way of taxation to relieve him of this awful burden of paying a reasonable amount to the railways for carrying his fertilisers. The argument is all right from their point of view, but when you show that it is not merely the struggling settler but someone else who has the advantage and that it is the settler who is paying for the rich farmer—

Hon. J. Mitchell: How?

The PREMIER: Because he provides it by taxation.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What taxation?

The PREMIER: The hon. member apparently does not know. The hon. member knows that if the finances are to be adjusted someone has to find the wherewithal to do it; and I am not prepared to continue to ask the struggling settler or the prospector or the man slaving for a few shillings a day in the metropolitan area to find the wherewithal to carry fertiliser for the rich farmer at reduced freights. If the hon. member is prepared to do it he is welcome, but we are not prepared to do it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The struggling settlers provided £20,000 a year on the spur lines.

The PREMIER: Yes. The late Government had so much consideration for the struggling settlers that they imposed a special rate on them. They left alone the established settlers along the older lines, but the struggling settler who went on to new areas had to pay a special rate of a shilling per ton on his produce and a shilling per ton for every bit of machi-

nery be required on his farm. Yet those are the hon. members who are wrathful at the idea of increasing the freight to be paid by people who are already near to our ports and are able to pay for the service. I like these people who talk about their concern for the struggling settler; but when it is boiled down it can all be summed up as being worth nil. One remark made by the hon. member showed his character. He stated that it was hard to believe that the staff of the Harbour Trust would not give undue preference to the State steamers because they happened to be in control of the steamers for the time being. The hon. member cannot trust anybody in the community, and yet he wonders why no one in the community will trust him.

Mr. George: He will not trust you.

The PREMIER: He has good reason for not trusting me, because he knows that I am always in opposition to his pet schemes for benefiting the few at the expense of the masses. There is one other point that will interest the member for Northam. The leader of the Opposition stated that my remark that the south-western portion of the State was free from Irish blight was a magnificent testimonial to the member for Northam for his action in restricting the importation of potatoes during his term of office. Of course the leader of the Opposition forgot to point out, and for obvious reasons I omitted to mention, that notwithstanding that result being a testimonial to the member for Northam, we might have taken credit to ourselves for having considerably modified his regulations and still kept the South-West clean, and whilst keeping the South-West clean we did not unduly impose a hardship upon the consumers in districts that could not be afflicted in the slightest. That is the difference between the testimonial to the member for Northam and the one that could be given to the present Government. We modified the hon. member's regulation and the price of potatoes was reduced by 150 per cent.

Hon. J. Mitchell: How did you get them down 150 per cent.?

The PREMIER: Very nearly that, anyhow. They were reduced from 5s. per

stone to 8d. a stone, which is about 90 per cent. However, the difference is just this: that the artisans for whom our friends opposite are always so much concerned are able to obtain potatoes to-day where previously they had to do without them and feed on sugar beans.

Mr. George: How was it done?

The PREMIER: By an alteration of the regulations, which, while bringing about a reduction in the price of potatoes, still kept the South-West clean.

Mr. George: Did you allow imported potatoes in?

The PREMIER: Yes, but that did not affect the South-West in the slightest. I have nothing further to say except that the remarks of the hon. member reminded me of a funeral wail. He could find no good in the country he had adopted. While he was in charge of the Treasury benches, everything was all right and this was a magnificent country, but I venture to say there are greater evidences of the people being happy in the State to-day, taking them as a whole, than ever previously in the history of the State.

Mr. Broun: Imagination.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows a lot about that. He knows there are greater evidences of the people being happier and contented than there were two years ago. If he will move about the agricultural districts and attend the shows where the farming community congregate, he will find the people looking happy and contented, notwithstanding the trying period they have been through. And he must see in the metropolitan areas, where the artisans are congregated, and especially in that magnificent spectacle yesterday, the same evidence of contentment. It shows that notwithstanding the fact that there is a deficit in the Treasury we are administering the affairs of the State very satisfactorily from the point of view of making the people happy, and of knowing what to do and doing it in spite of the criticism of our opponents. I claim that the evidence on the Estimates this year is a tribute to the fact that we have faced the position boldly, knowing that we had to face criticism, knowing that there is this big

difference between the parties in regard to private enterprise and State enterprise, and have brought about a result which redounds to the credit of the Government and the State as a whole. Notwithstanding the difficulties they have passed through, the people are to-day more prosperous than they have ever been previously, and the prospect of the future is brighter than ever before. In view of those circumstances there is little in the criticism of our opponents that can be taken notice of except one or two points that relate to departmental administration but do not affect the finances as a whole. Having regard to the fact that I presented to this House last year a truer estimate of our financial position than was ever presented previously, it may be accepted that I have presented an equally true statement this time. And notwithstanding that we would have to face criticism as to the loss on the running of our State steamers, I insisted that that loss should be shown. Compare that with the action of our friends opposite, who, year after year, brought down their Estimates showing a profit on the State batteries, but just as regularly the year closed showing a loss. On this occasion, however, I have taken the courage, as I did on a previous occasion, to attempt to show the House and the country what I believe to be the true position of the finances at the end of the financial year, and I am prepared to take the responsibility of saying that those estimates in every detail are as accurate and as honest as it is possible for a man to present them to this Chamber.

Mr. GEORGE moved—

That progress be reported.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to point out that it has always been our custom to treat the discussion on the Estimates the same as the discussion on the second reading of a Bill. When the Minister has replied, it has usually been the custom to close the discussion, but I must admit that in our Standing Orders there is nothing to support that. Standing Order No. 118 states:—

No member may speak twice to a question before the House except in ex-

planation or reply or in Committee of the whole House.

I find nothing in our Standing Orders to conflict with that, and, therefore, I must rule that if an hon. member desires to speak I must give him permission to do so.

Motion (progress) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	12
Noes	24

Majority against .. 12

AYES.

Mr. Broun	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Layman

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Munie
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Price
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Lander	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Walker
Mr. McDonald	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. McDowall	Mr. Underwood

(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): I would like by way of explanation to say that when the Premier rose, I thought it was with the idea of moving the adjournment.

Mr. Bolton: You could have asked him if he was closing the debate.

Mr. GEORGE: I want to tell hon. members what my views were.

Mr. Foley: Do not hold an inquest.

The Premier: How could I have moved the adjournment of the debate?

Mr. GEORGE: The Premier as leader of the House could have moved that progress be reported. I desire to tell hon. members what I thought, whether they believe me or not. I do not care a twopenny-halfpenny hang whether they believe me or not. The leader of the Opposition has pointed out that some

years ago—and until three years ago, I was out of the House for several years—it became a sort of agreement between the parties that when the Premier or the Minister in charge of a measure replied, that closed the discussion.

Mr. Taylor: It is only customary.

Mr. GEORGE: At the same time the Standing Orders do not recognise that at all. However, I want to point out to the Premier that he has been charging this side of the House with being hypocrites. I suppose that is a certain amount of license—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Is this in order?

Mr. GEORGE: As the leader of the Opposition was allowed to term hon. members on the Government side of the House humbugs and hypocrites, I want to say that as far as the fertiliser charges are concerned—

The Premier: What is the subject of your discourse?

Mr. GEORGE: Mr. Chairman, will you restrain the Premier? The Premier charged this side of the House with being hypocrites because they were speaking of fertilisers and in order to give an example point out that the hon. member for Northam—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): On a point of order, I would like to ask whether the hon. member is in order in discussing this point?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot reply to the Premier unless he is replying in connection with the Estimates. If the hon. member's point is leading up to the general Estimates, he will be in order.

Mr. GEORGE: My point is to show where the deficit is.

Dissent from Chairman's ruling.

The Premier: I desire, Mr. Chairman, to take exception to your ruling. It has been a custom which has been recognised as a rule and as a standing order that a decision given by a previous Chairman of Committees should never be questioned, and it has been laid down that after a Minister has replied on a question it should not be open to debate. For the

general discussion to continue now is absolutely opposed to the whole practice of the Assembly in discussing the Estimates since we have had Responsible Government and this House has been in existence.

Mr. George: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Bolton: I will swear it has been the practice for ten years.

The Chairman: As my ruling has been disagreed to, I will report the matter to the Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. McDowall) took the Chair.

The Chairman having stated the dissent,

The Premier: The point I desire to make is that I have been a member of this Chamber for something like ten years, and during the whole of that period it has never been questioned, when discussing the Budget generally, that when the Treasurer replies the general discussion closes. I think the leader of the Opposition himself will agree that that has been the custom and it has never until now been questioned. Any misunderstanding which exists in the mind of the hon. member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) has nothing to do with the conduct of the business of this House. We have to decide the conduct of the business of this House not for to-day but for all time. I would like to draw attention to a previous decision given by a Chairman of Committees (Mr. Daglish) in 1909. The then Minister for Works had replied on the general discussion and Mr. Heitmann rose to speak. The Chairman then called, "What item?" and the following remarks were made:—

Mr. Heitmann: I wish to speak generally.

The Chairman: The Minister has replied and the hon. member cannot pursue a general discussion.

Mr. Heitmann: We are in Committee.

The Chairman: The practice of having a general discussion is only following the practice that has grown up for some years, and which the House decided recently should be followed, and that practice has been the same as that prevailing when the House is not in Committee, namely, that any member

has the right to speak before the Minister replies on the general discussion, but only once.

Mr. Heitmann: It was not my intention to wait until the Minister had spoken before I spoke. I will speak on Item No. 1.

The Chairman: The general discussion takes place on the first item. The hon. member can now only speak on the item so far as it relates to the officer and his salary. The hon. member cannot speak on the general question.

The item was then called, "Principal Medical Officer and President, Central Board of Health, £950." That is a practice which has never been questioned by the Committee until now.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It is against the Standing Orders.

The Premier: It may be as it appears in the books, but the practice of the Chamber becomes just as binding. In this direction it has been the practice since we have been a deliberative body and until now has never been questioned. All I desire to add is that I regret the question should have arisen now. It may of course for the time being suit the convenience of our friends opposite, but no one knows better than they that it is inadvisable to change a custom which has been in operation ever since we have been a deliberative assembly, just because, for the time being, it suits their purposes. I would again draw attention to the decision of the Chairman in 1909, which I have just read, and I would repeat that that has never been questioned by one side or the other.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It must be admitted, of course, that a custom has grown up in this House that the reply of the Treasurer closes the general debate. That is the custom, but at the same time I recognise that it is contrary to our Standing Orders.

The Attorney General: Not contrary.

Mr. George: Absolutely.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The question you have to decide is whether we have to adhere to the absolute reading of the Standing Orders, or whether we shall adhere to the custom which has grown up

for several years past, that the reply of the Treasurer in this case, and that of a Minister in a general debate, shall conclude the general discussion.

Mr. Dwyer: Under what Standing Order was there a general discussion on this item?

Hon. Frank Wilson: We can speak in Committee as often as we like. Standing Order 118 says, "No member may speak twice to a question before the House, except in explanation or reply, or in Committee of the whole House."

Mr. Dwyer: But under what Standing Order have you a right to a general discussion on the first item of the Estimates.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Under Standing Order 118.

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. Frank Wilson: In Committee a member has the absolute right to speak as often as he likes. The custom is, I admit, that the general debate on the Budget, or on any department, will be closed as in the case of an ordinary motion, in the full House after a Minister has replied.

Mr. Dwyer: They are both honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

The Premier: If this point is good, another point would be equally good, that an hon. member cannot discuss on the vote "His Excellency the Governor" matters of a general character. The question before the House is, the vote "His Excellency the Governor."

Hon. Frank Wilson: I admit that.

Mr. George: But we never discuss it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I have admitted that the custom has grown up that the general discussion on the Estimates arising out of the Premier's Budget shall cease when he replies.

Mr. Taylor: And the Standing Orders on that are silent.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Absolutely silent, but the Standing Orders are explicit in regard to discussions in Committee. We have not only Standing Order 118, but there is 372, which says "In Committee members may speak more than once to the same question, so long as they do not repeat themselves." But the custom has undoubtedly been that we should close the

debate with the reply of the Minister. I regret that there has been a misunderstanding.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What do you suggest?

Hon. Frank Wilson: The Government are in charge of the House and I am not here to suggest anything. If I occupied their position I should be prepared to state what the House should do.

The Attorney General: I think the leader of the Opposition has correctly stated the position, that this matter of custom is not affected by our Standing Orders. But I want the hon. member to admit further that if it is not affected by our Standing Orders it is not contradictory to, or absolutely forbidden by, the Standing Orders. As a matter of fact, the whole thing so far as our Standing Orders are concerned is not covered or contemplated. If we were governing this discussion by our Standing Orders we could have spoken on nothing but "His Excellency the Governor," and it would have been the duty of the Chairman of Committees to have called everyone to order who exceeded that attitude. The whole thing is a custom which the House has built up for itself, or made a law of permitting that on the first item there should be a departure from our Standing Orders, that is, in doing something not contemplated by the Standing Orders, of the mover giving a second reading speech and others following with a second reading criticism.

Mr. George: But we are in Committee.

The Attorney General: Then the hon. member would have no right to speak beyond the latitude of the item.

Mr. George: But I have the right to reply to anything that has been said.

The Attorney General: Not if it is out of order. The Chairman can call the hon. member to order at any time for exceeding the latitude of whatever item is under discussion. The whole thing is a departure from the Committee business covered by the Standing Orders. The first speech is a second reading speech, a general discussion, which is not permitted by the Standing Orders on any item. The hon. member can show me no Standing Order that says there may be a general debate on the whole matter relating to the

life of the Government. Therefore, the Standing Orders do not affect the point; we have to be governed by our custom which has become the law under this Parliament, and of other Parliaments of the Australian States. It is the custom in all the Australian Parliaments that when the mover of the first item has replied the debate shall be closed, and to be consistent that must be the ruling of the Chair to-night.

Mr. George: I quite understand that a custom has grown up but at the time when I was a member of Parliament in the old Chamber, the custom was not such as the Attorney General has stated it to be since the inception of the Parliament, and in that I am borne out by the experience of my friend. If we admit that after the Minister has replied it is impossible for members to offer criticism, we are getting on dangerous ground indeed. Very often a member on one side of the House or the other may question an item, his opinion may be reliable, or it may not, and it then falls upon the Minister to reply. The Minister's reply may not be satisfactory and it is then within the province of the individual member to continue the debate, and it is for that particular reason that Standing Order 372 has been framed. I agree with the Attorney General that if we were only discussing the first item it would be impossible first for the Premier to deliver his speech, which is required in connection with administration of the business of the State, and, secondly, for the leader of the Opposition to reply. My only regret is that I misunderstood the attitude of the Premier. Had I thought that his reply was going to close the discussion I should have interrupted and moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Turvey: He waited long enough for you.

Mr. George: The hon. gentleman perhaps understands that we naturally expect some member on the Government side to reply to the leader of the Opposition. In the old times it was the custom for Sir John Forrest to wait till every member had spoken. It must have been quite patent to the Premier that members on this side were ready to continue the dis-

cussion, but we felt it was only right that some reply to the leader of the Opposition should be forthcoming from some member on the Ministerial side. However, it is useless to go on in regard to that. I will bow to the practice of the House and uphold it as far as I can. I am not likely to make this mistake again. It arose from the circumstances I have described. Had I thought that I was not to have the old right to follow the Premier I should have interrupted his speech, which I did not want to do. However, as far as I am concerned, the matter is now ended.

Mr. Taylor: I have been in the House fourteen years and I well remember the procedure adopted in such cases. It has been generally understood that when the Treasurer replied the general discussion on the Estimates closed. As a rule the general discussion lasts over some days, and never before have I known the Treasurer reply to the leader of the Opposition on the same night. There are no Standing Orders to support the point raised that the debate is thus closed. It is only a sort of Standing Order created by custom. We are not governed wholly by custom in this House. We are governed by the Standing Orders, and the Standing Orders are very explicit. They say that when the Standing Orders do not apply we are then governed by the Standing Orders of the House of Commons. I realise that if you rule that because the Treasurer has replied the general discussion on His Excellency's vote is closed, you will narrow it down to a bare discussion on that vote alone. But it has been understood that we can discuss every department of the Government under that vote. If you rule that the debate on the general discussion is closed, that does not interfere, because members can still discuss every item of the several departments, and any hon. member can make a general speech on each department, although he cannot depart from that department, and must cover it within the four corners of his speech. But in the debate which it is contended is now closed one has the liberty of spreading out over every department, over all the ramifications of

Government. That is one of the great privileges which members claimed in earlier days. What have the people done in respect to the Mother of Parliaments to secure this general discussion? Have not the greatest fights in the political history of Great Britain been for this principle? Has it not been obtained by more than voice, by violence—that privilege of saying we shall discuss the Estimates, discuss how you spend our money? We say "You tax us, and we must discuss how you spend our money." That was the fight which made the Parliament of England great. Speech was free. But it is closed to-night. I have never seen the debate closed with such rapidity. I do not know the cause of it. The Premier and his Ministers may know. I am indeed sorry that the general discussion has been closed. But although the general discussion has been closed it will not stop me from speaking on every department as it comes up, the whole six or seven of them. I say openly I am sorry that any man should take any advantage of the opportunity of closing down discussion.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): No such advantage has been taken to-night.

Mr. Taylor: I am indeed sorry that the Premier should take advantage of his majority to stifle any debate on the Estimates. As *prima facie* evidence it looks as though it was desired to stop debate. I will withdraw and apologise if I am wrong. I hope I am not supporting a Government who would stifle debate on the Estimates. I say that openly and publicly. I am not shirking it. We are now considering further taxing the people. We have a policy speech by the Premier in which it is proposed to further tax the people to meet the requirements of the country, and now we are discussing the Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): This is not the point of order.

Mr. Taylor: Never mind about the point of order. The point of order is that we have no Standing Order to support this. There is only custom, and custom has grown up because custom

assumed a situation. There has never before been such a situation in the history of Western Australia as we have to-night. I say we have a Standing Order which is specific, and we must act upon it. When any question crops up on which our Standing Orders are silent we take the practice of the Mother Parliament, the practice of *May*. But we have a specific Standing Order which directs us how to act. I am not going to direct you as to how you should act, but the Standing Orders which control this House are supreme, and when they are silent we take *May*, we take the Mother of Parliaments. But we have our own Standing Orders, and custom is not to be recognised.

The Premier: I have made reference to the decision given by the Chairman of Committees, but a further point which I think will finalise the matter is that if the point is good that the Standing Orders permit a member to speak as often as he likes in Committee and we are not to have any regard for custom that has grown up ever since we have been a deliberative Chamber, then I hold that the general discussion should not have been permitted. Even if you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, rule with the Chairman, I will take the point that the general discussion cannot be continued except on the question submitted from the Chair, namely, "His Excellency the Governor, £1,701," because according to the Standing Orders an hon. member can only discuss the specific question before the Chair. Therefore, if the point is upheld that we must be guided by the Standing Orders and not by custom I will take the other point that the general discussion allowed on the vote for His Excellency the Governor is out of order.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I am afraid you could not deliver your Budget.

The Premier: I am not at all desirous of closing the general discussion on the vote for His Excellency the Governor and I do not propose to do it. There is no member of this House who is desirous of closing the general discussion on the Estimates, but if hon. members wish to bring this discussion under the Stand-

ing Order and allow members to speak in Committee as often as they desire, then I say we should adhere to the Standing Orders in their entirety and disallow the general discussion on the Estimates altogether. This is a point that the Standing Orders Committee might take into consideration, but for the present I suggest that the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) should withdraw his point of order, and we can adhere to the custom which has been observed for many years past.

Mr. George: I have already stated that I recognise the custom, and will uphold it; therefore, if permitted, I will withdraw my point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: If the hon. member withdraws his objection, then I take it the Premier will not move that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to.

Mr. George: I raised an objection, but I then found that a new custom had come into use of which I had been ignorant, and I stated that I was desirous of upholding the new custom and would withdraw my objection. The Chairman ruled with me, and on the protest of the Premier the matter was then referred to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If the Premier will withdraw his motion I will withdraw my objection.

The Premier: I think that to get out of our difficulty we must retrace our steps. The first thing to be done is for me to ask leave to withdraw the motion dissenting from the Chairman's ruling; then when the Chairman again takes the Chair the member for Murray-Wellington can ask leave to withdraw his objection.

Motion (dissent) by leave withdrawn.

Committee resumed.

Mr. Vale in the Chair.

Vote—*His Excellency the Governor, £1,701*—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.40 p.m.