

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 9th August, 1910.

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

## QUESTION — RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS.

Mr. SWAN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of the number of serious and fatal accidents that have recently occurred at level crossings on our railways, will he take steps to have crossing keepers appointed to the various dangerous crossings within the suburban area? 2, Will he consider the advisability of appointing as crossing keepers some of the ex-employees of the railway service who have been retrenched on account of their age?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, The matter is at the present time receiving the careful consideration of the Commissioner.

## QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK, ADVANCES ON MACHINERY.

Mr. BATH asked the Minister for Agriculture: What action has been taken to give effect to the third paragraph of subsection (d) of Section 28 of "The Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Act, 1909?"

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: Each applicant for registration under Section 28 (d) of "The Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Act, 1909," is required to furnish particulars of the rate of wages paid to his employees. There is no local award governing this branch of industry, and the Trustees are guided in determining the "ruling rate" by a comparison of the different pay lists and their knowledge of the industry.

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## QUESTION—LAMBS FOR EXPORT.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, How many carcases of frozen lambs were imported into Western Australia last year? 2, When, according to his estimate, does he anticipate that there will be a surplus of lambs available for export? 3, What will the average price per lb. realised require to be to ensure to the farmer a net return of 8s. per lamb of average weight?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, No lambs were imported, but about 30,000 mutton carcases, including light weights, were brought into the State. It is probable some of this meat was originally intended for the London market. 2, After allowing for the 500,000 sheep killed for local consumption, the sheep flocks of the State increased during the past year to the extent of 634,000. Half of the sheep in Western Australia are in the agricultural districts. The building of abattoirs and export works at Fremantle will open up a market in the old world, and as soon as growers are thus assured that they will be able to sell their lambs, rams will be introduced for breeding sheep more suitable for export than the Merino. There are at present about five and a-half million sheep, including lambs, in the State, and allowing for the retention of ewe lambs for further breeding, we should have 200,000, at least, available for export. 3, After allowing for the pelt, it is believed that the transmission charges will be about 1s. per carcase. London favours lambs from 31lbs. to 36lbs. in weight, and taking an average weight of 32lbs., a price of 3½d. would have to be realised to return 8s. net to the grower. During the past three years, the average price realised was four and five-sixths pence (45/6d.).

## QUESTION—TOURIST BUREAU OFFICER.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Premier: 1, Has the officer recently placed in control of the State Tourist Bureau had any previous experience as a tourist agent?

2, What were the reasons which induced the Minister, when considering an appointment to the position, to overlook the claims of Mr. Robinson who, since its inception, acted as tourist-manager for the Caves Board, which board was appointed and maintained by the Government?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, The officer appointed in charge of the newly-created Immigration and Tourist Branch of the Colonial Secretary's Department is an officer of the department; has had seven years' experience of similar duties, and was appointed on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner in accordance with the Public Service Act. The appointment of a tourist officer is now being considered by the Public Service Commissioner. Had Mr. Robinson applied for this position his qualifications would have been given every consideration.

#### QUESTION—ABATTOIRS, KALGOORLIE.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Which Government department prepared the designs of the Kalgoorlie abattoirs? 2, What was the original estimated cost of constructing same? 3, What was the actual cost? 4, What is now the cost, to the butchers using these abattoirs, of slaughtering there?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, The Public Works Department, in conjunction with the Controller of Abattoirs. 2, £20,000. 3, £17,580 to date. Some additions are contemplated to meet the increased requirements of the business. 4, The charges (including health inspection fee) are as follows:—For every ox, cow, bull, heifer, or steer, 3s.; For every sheep, lamb, or goat, 9d.; for every head of swine, or calf, 1s.; for the use of sale yards for auction sales,  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. on all sales; for use of digester with steam, 2s. per hour; for use of rendering kettle for suet, 1s. per hour.

#### QUESTION—BETTING PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. BATH (for Mr. Collier) asked the Attorney General: 1, Have members of the police force been instructed to prosecute persons found betting at goldfields sports meetings? 2, Were such instructions intended to apply to all sports gatherings? 3, If not, will the Minister state under what authority he claims to differentiate between sporting bodies in the administration of an Act?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, Under the discretion vested in the Executive to prosecute or otherwise, according to the circumstances.

#### QUESTION — STATE BATTERY, MENZIES.

Mr. TAYLOR (for Mr. Gourley) asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Have arrangements been made with one of the banks at Menzies whereby prospectors crushing at the Menzies State battery can obtain payment for their tailings within 14 days after the completion of the assay? 2, What are the conditions as arranged for payment of tailings by the bank? 3, Why was this arrangement for payment of tailings not made general at other State batteries where the same facilities for payment existed?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, I am not aware of the conditions upon which the banks would make the advances. All we have done in this respect is to make our protraction orders absolute. 3, Answered by No. 1.

#### QUESTION — FOREIGNERS ON MINES.

Mr. TAYLOR (for Mr. Gourley) asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Were immediate instructions given to Warden Clifton, of Lawlers, to proceed to the Vivien mine and ascertain if the report of the secretary of the Miners' Union at Vivien was correct, to the effect that a number of foreigners were employed who could not speak the English language?

age? 2, On what date were instructions given to Warden Clifton? 3, Can the Minister furnish any reason why the warden refused to comply with his request? 4, Has any investigation been made? If so, when, and by whom? What was the nature of the investigation?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. 2, The complaint was received by me from the hon. member on May 27th, and on that date instructions were wired to the warden to hold an inquiry. 3, On June 8th the warden wired that he had been ill from influenza and had then to leave for Sandstone, but would hold an inquiry on his return in about a fortnight. On June 18th he wrote from Sandstone protesting against being instructed to hold the inquiry, for the reason that if a breach of the Act had been committed any proceedings taken would require to be heard by him under the provisions of Section 60 of the Act. The justice of this contention was recognised and the mining registrar was then entrusted with the duty. 4, Yes. On July 16th the mining registrar and inspector of mines visited the mine and in the presence of the superintendent and secretary of the Miners' Union examined 26 foreigners. It was not clear from the report whether there had been a contravention of the Act, but further inquiries are being made with a view to a prosecution should such appear to be the case.

#### QUESTION — RAILWAY PROJECT, LEONORA-LAWLERS.

Mr. TAYLOR (for Mr. Gourley) asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to bring down a Bill this session for the construction of the Leonora-Lawlers railway? If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, A Bill making provision for a railway to Lawlers will in all probability be introduced.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Fifth Day.*

Resumed from the 4th August.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): May I, at the outset of my remarks congratulate the member for Fremantle (Mr. Murphy) on having had the honour conferred on him of moving the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech. I remember very well when the hon. member addressed the House he paraded the fact that he required some consideration from hon. members because he was new to his surroundings. May I claim the same consideration on this occasion, being new to the position that I am at present occupying. While new to the position, however, may I point out that the member for Fremantle is new in the same sense as an old coat which has been sent to the cleaner and which has been dyed and returned. The hon. member is new to this Chamber, but he is not new to Legislative Assemblies, in which he has previously had some experience. The hon. member certainly changed his abode when he left New South Wales and came to Western Australia, and apparently he also changed his opinions, and, moreover, not only his opinions but his principles.

Mr. Murphy: The member for Kanoona can tell you that is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not reflect on another hon. member in that way.

Mr. Murphy: I mean that he has made a mistake.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member is sitting behind what may be termed a conservative Government, and while a member of the New South Wales Parliament he posed as a Labour member. I cannot see anything in keeping between the principles of a Labour man and those of the present Government and their followers. I might refer at the outset to the fact that we have had presented to us a rather lengthy Speech from the Governor, and, undoubtedly, the country and this House should be thankful to His Excellency for his patience in having to sit for the time that he did in reading

it to hon. members. In many places it was only made up of parrot phrases, the same old things we hear year after year. We were told that everything was prospering; that the gold mining and the agricultural industries were both in a prosperous condition, and that the Government had constructed railways, were constructing railways, and hoped to construct more in the future. But I am doubtful if any hon. member could find in that Speech any definite statement giving much hope for the future. We have been told that it is the intention of the Government to reintroduce during the present session a Bill for the reform of the Legislative Council. We have heard that so frequently that one begins to wonder whether the Government are sufficiently earnest in this matter to be determined to see it carried into effect. Intentions are all very good, but hon. members know that the gentleman who previously filled the position now occupied by our Premier—I refer to Sir C. H. Rason—announced to the country so far back as 1905 that it was part of the policy of the Government to reform the Legislative Council. Yet nothing had been done when that gentleman retired from his position to take up the more exalted post of Agent-General in London. On coming into office the present Premier made a somewhat similar statement in 1906: but we had several sessions of Parliament before the general elections, and no effort was made on the part of the Government to bring down a measure providing for a reduction of the Legislative Council's franchise. Last session, however, we did receive a Bill having such a reduction for its object, and it was passed through this Chamber and reached another place. Hon. members of that place, however, took the earliest opportunity of throwing the Bill out. Certainly it was not that a majority of members voted against it; yet the Government did not secure a sufficient constitutional majority to effect its passing. So we find that since 1905 the Government have adopted the reform of the Legislative Council as part of their policy, notwithstanding

which we are approaching another general election and nothing has been accomplished. May I say in respect to matters of this kind dealing with reforms of the Constitution, that when a definite promise is made to the country nothing should be allowed to prevent its being fulfilled straightway—if, indeed, the Government are genuine in their desire to keep their promise. If the present Government are sincere in this avowed desire they will not permit this session to close until another place has accepted this part of their policy—a part which, as a matter of fact, has been received in the shape of a mandate from the country. May I say, too, in connection with this matter, that we were recently faced with an election for that Chamber. I know that many candidates presented themselves who, notwithstanding the popular belief that there is no party in another place, stated definitely they were followers of the Moore Government, and on that score appealed to the electors. But I have no recollection of hearing that any Minister of the Crown or supporter of the Government had gone into the province urging that the electors should return a candidate who would support the reform of the Legislative Council. If the Government are really sincere in their desire to bring about this reform Ministers and their supporters on that occasion should have urged the electors to return only those candidates who would support that part of their policy. Yet nothing of the kind was done, and so I think I am justified in saying Ministers are not earnest in their desire to reform another place. The long period during which this proposition has been before the country and the House without its actually being put into operation leads me to believe that the Government are only desirous of placing this matter before the country with a view to retaining their positions on the Treasury Bench. We have heard a good deal, too, from His Excellency the Governor about the development of the agricultural industry; and let me say that, although representing a goldfields constituency, I consider the development of this industry as being of primary im-

portance to Western Australia. Do not let me be misunderstood in a statement of that kind. I recognise with the Minister for Lands—as enunciated by him in a statement made to the House the other evening—that the development of our gold mining industry has made possible the development of the agricultural industry. We must not permit ourselves to gaze only on the one industry and neglect the other; because every hon. member will recognise the benefits that have accrued from the gold mining industry in Western Australia. In passing, I regret however, that the Government have not given that attention to the gold mining industry which it deserves at their hands. But, dealing with the development of the agricultural industry, let me say that to my mind some of the proposals of the Government are very much in advance of the times. Only this evening we have heard in a Ministerial reply to a question asked by the member for Swan, that last year 30,000 carcasses of sheep were imported into the State. Yet we are told that the Government propose to construct freezing works and furnish other facilities for the export of lambs to outside markets. What does this mean? Either we are not yet meeting local demands, or else the producers in other countries are more than able to compete with our own producers.

Mr. Angwin: They send the wastrels here.

Mr. SCADDAN: Probably so, but if we are to send lambs out of the State they will be our best, otherwise the enterprise will be a failure from the outset. And if we are going to send the best and keep the wastrels here, then from the standpoint of the community the outlook in respect to the meat supply is not very bright. In any case I am doubtful whether this money could not be better utilised in other directions in advancing the agricultural industry. Let me state one or two things which, to my mind, should be undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity. Our wheat supply has outgrown the local demand, and, according to the prospects of the

present season, we are going to have a huge amount of wheat to be exported after next harvest. I say the Government should assist those desirous of exporting but who are really at the mercy of the middlemen. Why could not the Government come to the assistance of the small farmer who in the experimental, or at least initial, stages, is compelled to go cap in hand to merchants in order that he might be enabled to carry on until he reaps his crop? He is thus compelled to take any price offered by these merchants; and while we are exporting a certain quantity of wheat at prices quoted in the world's market, it is very doubtful if the farmers of Western Australia are receiving the full value for their product. In my opinion the Government should devise some means for collecting this wheat and making advances to the farmers, and doing the shipping and exporting themselves. I believe it would be to the advantage of the State, and I am certain it would be to the advantage of the farming community as a whole. I understand it is the intention of the Government to provide in the near future better facilities at Fremantle for the export of wheat. I desire to say on my own behalf, and I believe on behalf of the members on this side of the House, that the Government will have our support in the provision of the most up-to-date and approved methods of wheat handling. We desire to keep down the cost of handling as much as possible, for otherwise the profit will be taken from the farmer and will go into the hands of the middlemen and others entitled to make charges for handling. I think, too, the time has arrived when the Government might undertake the erection of a State flour mill. As the Government know, members on this side of the House have continually advocated the State manufacture of agricultural implements. I believe the hour is here when this should be undertaken to the material advantage of the farming community. Then we are faced with this position: I know of many cases of farmers having been compelled in the early stages of their operations to apply

to merchants for temporary assistance to tide them over their worst difficulties; and the result has been that in a number of instances when the time has come to meet the bills those farmers have had to ask for an extension of time in order that they might be able to meet other bills presented by the Lands Department for the payment of rent. This may appear to be a very small matter, and some hon. members will assert that we must obtain from men taking up land a guarantee that they propose to work it. I agree with that. But what guarantee do we receive to-day that those who actually make application for and take up land are in earnest in their intention of working it? There is little or no guarantee. And, moreover, let me say that while this is so the genuine man, the man genuinely interested in the development of his land, is very often thrown back many years owing to lack of funds. The Agricultural Bank comes to his assistance in many directions; yet the assistance thus rendered is not sufficient to keep him from borrowing outside, or obtaining from merchants and others his machinery and other appliances necessary to the proper working of his land, with the result that he is, in large measure, at the mercy of these merchants. If we were to give these deserving farmers some little consideration in the direction of deferring the payments on their land, it would be of the utmost value to them.

The Minister for Lands: We always do so when they ask for it.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is true; but fines are imposed upon them, and this does not give them much encouragement. Then, again, the independent man is not likely to go to the Minister cap in hand and ask that his payments may be deferred; whereas, if there were recognised a general system of deferred payments, the same man would be very glad, perhaps, to avail himself of the convenience. Let those desirous of working the land understand that for, say, the first three years they would not be called upon to pay the rent. We could even defer payment of that rent for the first five years,

and charge interest on the deferred payments. The State would not be a loser in any way except, of course, during the first year or two, and it would be of considerable assistance to many men who find it difficult in the early years to keep their heads above water. The Minister must be aware of the fact that if a man require land partly improved there is no difficulty whatever in obtaining it to-day, so long as he can pay the price. Although we have in our Land Act certain conditions which must be complied with, yet at the same time there is no guarantee that the man desirous of working his land will get over the numerous initial difficulties connected therewith; consequently, it sometimes happens that when a selector has made partial improvements he is compelled to hand the land over to an agent for sale. Scores of these partially improved holdings are in the hands of these land agents in Perth to-day.

Mr. Taylor: And quite a number not improved at all.

Mr. SCADDAN: While others, as the member for Murray pointed out the other evening, have been genuinely looking for land for the past few years and have not been able to obtain it, these persons can get land by some means, and immediately they get it they place it in the hands of an agent for sale at an enhanced value. The Minister for Lands will consider probably that I am drawing on my imagination, but only yesterday an instance came under my notice. A gentleman came to me and said that he had noticed the remark made by the member for Murray, and he thought it well to put me in the possession of some facts he had obtained. He had been applying to the Lands Department for the past three years in the interests of his two brothers and himself. One of them has been engaged as a farm labourer for the past two years and the other is employed in the city, while one brother is still in Scotland and is not prepared to come out until such time as they can obtain land suitable for their purpose. They had not been able to obtain land from the Lands Department, and

one of them went to a certain auctioneer well known to members in this House and obtained plans showing land which he could acquire if he complied with certain demands. I find that the names of the persons to whom the land was originally allotted are written across the face of the lots on the plan. There were three blocks consisting in the aggregate of about 2,300 acres, and in another case there was a block of 903 acres. The two gentlemen who obtained this land got it in February last, and yet three months later it was in the hands of a local agent for sale, and although only the first payment had been made, the price asked was £250 for the three lots aggregating 2,300 acres and £100 for the other block.

The Premier: What were the improvements?

Mr. SCADDAN: There were none whatever.

The Premier: Then there would be no transfer.

Mr. SCADDAN: I guarantee I can get a transfer any day.

The Minister for Lands: You cannot.

Mr. SCADDAN: If I could not get a transfer I would get over the difficulty. A transfer is not really necessary for the purpose of changing the holder of the land. An agreement can be made between the two persons that when the improvements have been completed to the extent required by the Act a transfer will be signed and banded over and put through the department.

Mr. Gordon: The person runs the risk of losing the land.

Mr. SCADDAN: The risks are not great and the hon. member should know that. The officers of the department are very busy in other directions, and they are not anxious every time an application is made for a transfer to send out men to ascertain whether the conditions have been complied with or not; and unless their attention is specially drawn to a case, a transfer is put through without any question.

Mr. Bolton: Who was that land agent?

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member knows to whom I refer. It is not the

first time the same thing has been brought under the notice of the Government in connection with this particular gentleman. I do not complain that he does it, because if he did not do it someone else would, but the fact remains that this is going on every day. Men are continually making applications to members of the House to do something towards getting them land, and they cannot get it. The Minister has said that it is his intention to proceed to the goldfields at an early date to induce the people there to take up land, but I can tell the Minister that it is not necessary for him to do this. Every week the people from the goldfields come down. Every time the Land Board has been sitting during the last two or three months I have had goldfields residents coming to me asking me whether I could assist them before the board to get their land. I may say I have not given one single recommendation yet, because I prefer that the board should deal with each case on its merits, but the fact remains that is the position of affairs. About two months ago there was a party of three from the goldfields sent down a representative to appear before the Land Board in connection with certain applications they had lodged for some land, and while he was down the representative saw me. I told him there was a possibility of his not obtaining the land seeing there were so many applications before his, and I advised him to go to the Information Bureau for information with regard to other blocks that might be made available in the future. This gentleman went to the Information Bureau and asked if he could get a block of 1,000 to 3,000 acres within an assured rainfall of 12 inches and within 15 miles of an existing railway or of any proposed railway; and without any quibbling on the part of the officer in the Information Bureau, this gentleman was told "he could not."

Mr. Heitmann: That has been the usual reply for the last twelve months.

Mr. SCADDAN: We are continually told about the acres that are available for anyone who requires them, but surely the State has definitely decided that to ask a

person to grow cereals at a distance of and greater than 15 miles from a railway is courting absolute disaster. It is impossible for any man to do it. That was decided years ago. Wheat cannot be grown profitably if it has to be carted more than 15 miles to a railway. Yet when a request was made to a department to see whether land was available within 15 miles of an existing railway or any proposed railway and within a 12in. rainfall, the department turned round and told the applicant they had not the land available. That is a condition of affairs that should not exist.

The Minister for Lands: Can you give me the name of the officer who said that?

Mr. SCADDAN: I did not hear the name of the officer, but it was in the Information Bureau. I will take the trouble, if the Minister wishes it, when I go to the goldfields to have an interview with the gentleman mentioned, and I will give the Minister the information. While mentioning the fact that this is the information given to our local residents, I want to know what sort of policy it is to induce people to leave England, where they can almost throw a stone across from one side of the country to the other, to come to a place where they have to go 30 or 40 miles from railway communication without any school accommodation and where they are perhaps miles from a neighbour, and to ask them to be contented and to remain on the land. We can bring out immigrants, but unless we provide them with all the facilities that should be provided such as I have said—school accommodation and other comforts of life—it is not likely the immigrants are going to remain on the land, and they will flock to the towns. That is happening every day. If hon. members were near the trades hall in Perth at any time they would see during any week a number of immigrants who have not come out during recent months, but who have been out probably two or three years and made a genuine endeavour to settle on the land but have had to leave it to come to Perth to obtain employment and get away from the humdrum life in which

they were existing in the position in which the Lands Department placed them. I have no objection to the inducing of immigrants to come to the State for the purpose of settling on the land, but it should be a first essential that the land is available and that it is within reasonable distance from railway communication, and that other comforts are provided for them. I believe Dr. Montgomery mentioned it that if anything was responsible for the fact that there was an increase of inmates in the Hospital for the Insane at Claremont it was the fact that men were expected to go out 30 or 40 miles in the back country where there were no comforts provided for them so that eventually they broke down mentally and became inmates of the hospital.

The Minister for Mines: There must have been lots of lunatics in the old days.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier suggested the other evening that he proposed to constitute an immigration board for the purpose of dealing with immigrants. Whether he intended that the board should deal with the whole question of immigration, the obtaining of suitable immigrants in the old country, or that the board was merely to attend to immigrants when they arrived here, the Premier did not definitely state. I hold that if we are going to obtain immigrants it is the duty of the Government to see that they are properly attended to when they once land in Western Australia, and that if they come here for the purpose of taking up land no effort should be spared by the Government to provide suitable land in suitable localities, if possible in localities where they can be near to each other. At present if half a dozen immigrants come from the same town in the old country the system is to send one to Katanning, one to Kellerberrin, one to Northam and one to the South-West, and it is a system that brings about considerable dissatisfaction. One can imagine them becoming immediately disgusted with the system. When they come out from England they expect to be able to settle near each other and to continue their friendships; but, unfortunately, owing to the method



adopted by the Lands Department of throwing open land in various places and making no effort to reserve land for these very people, they are separated in some instances by considerable distances. The Immigration Commission some years ago pointed out that it would be necessary to make the immigrants contented and to give them some community of interests, but we now send them hundreds of miles from each other, and very frequently 30 or 40 miles from a town or from railway communication, and naturally they become discontented. I think it would be preferable to throw open certain areas and reserve them for immigrants and for immigrants only, and to confine the immigrants to these areas. It would be useless to set land apart for the purpose of immigrants and allow them to settle in any other part of the State.

Mr. George: That would make another grievance.

Mr. SCADDAN: I hold that it would not.

Mr. George: It would look as if they had yellow fever and had to be kept apart.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not hold that view. I hold they would be very much more contented if their farms were adjoining, because then they would have their social gatherings, and they would be more contented than if they were a hundred or two hundred miles from each other. They would not feel strangers in a strange land under new conditions. They make their friendships on the boat coming out, but under present circumstances when they settle on the land, they do not see each other for a number of years, perhaps not at all. I maintain this is not the best method of dealing with immigrants. Canada has been more successful because Canada has paid more attention to the actual settling of the immigrants. Canada has been anxious to settle immigrants on land previously surveyed and cut up into blocks on which the immigrants can settle and become neighbours. It is a system under which they

are more contented and I believe it would be successful here. Certainly when they become discontented they flock into the towns and come into competition with an already overstocked labour market. If the board the Premier proposes to create is going into the whole question of inducing immigrants to come here with the genuine desire to restrict immigration to land settlers, it would certainly meet with the approval of all who take an interest in the matter; but immigration is not confined to agricultural labourers or land settlers, we are also bringing out domestic servants. A select committee of the House last session made certain recommendations in connection with the general policy of immigration, and one recommendation was that the immigrants' home should not be used as a bureau for the purpose of obtaining employment for domestic servants without any regard for the conditions under which they would be employed or the wages they would receive. The Government took absolutely no notice of those recommendations. I venture to assert that the Minister in charge of the department has never even read them, and what do we find? We find that the very evils existing when that select committee sat are existing to-day, that the immigrants' home is used as a bureau for the purpose of obtaining cheap domestic servants, and a bureau that takes no care as to the conditions the women who are sent from there are employed under. The other day a girl was sent from the home to an Afghan, and shortly afterwards she was in the police court charged with inhabiting what was really a place of ill-fame.

Mr. Jacoby: No, that was not it.

Mr. SCADDAN: It was tantamount to that. Let me tell the member for Swan that the magistrate had to rescue her from something worse even than a house of ill-fame.

Mr. Underwood: The magistrate made a law which he had no right to do.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not know that the magistrate could compel her, but certainly he persuaded her, and he is to be

commended for having done so, and for causing the girl to alter her views.

Mr. Underwood: I think he should be "sacked." What right has he to keep anyone in gaol like that.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not desire to deal at length now with the finances of the State, for the opportunity will present itself when the Treasurer gives us his Budget speech at a later stage of the session. I would say this, however, that the question arises whether we are going to continue the loan policy that has been in operation for the past few years, without any consideration as to the future. I know there is a difference of opinion in connection with the expenditure of loan moneys, and the attitude of this party on the question has been misunderstood in some cases. The member for Murray said that a statement made by the member for Brown Hill was tantamount to one that the Labour party were opposed to a borrowing policy. I have heard no one sitting in this Chamber on this side of the House say he was opposed to borrowing money, but we are asking that caution should be exercised in the way in which the money is expended. We insist that all loan money should be spent in reproductive works. If one constructs a road in an agricultural district, it is in a sense reproductive, but only indirectly. We contend that all works upon which loan money is spent should be directly reproductive; that is that the work on which the money is expended should, during the life of that work, return to the State interest and sinking fund sufficient for the purpose of redeeming the loan when it matures. Unfortunately in recent years the policy of the Government has been to spend loan money on works that cannot in any sense of the term be called reproductive, such as the construction of roads and bridges, and also in the direction of the erection of public buildings. I will give one or two figures in order to show that policy is being pursued year after year, and will give cases where works are now constructed entirely from loan, which in years gone by were built from revenue. In the financial year 1905-6, £13.175 was

spent from revenue on the construction of State batteries. Now all expenditure in that direction is found from loan money. The sums expended during the past few years from revenue on public works, buildings, etc., are as follow:—1904-5, £337,926; 1905-6, £228,931; 1907-8, £192,977; 1908-9, £175,302; 1909-10, £129,428. So it will be seen that the amount taken from revenue for the construction of these works decreased very considerably every year, and last year we spent less from revenue on roads, bridges, and public buildings than for many years past. While it cannot be gainsaid that probably the same work is being performed by the Government in the country, the money is now being transferred from revenue expenditure to that of loan. Sooner or later this policy must bring us into a position which all will regret. There have also been other items transferred from loan to revenue, and one I would mention is the replacing of obsolete rolling stock. In 1903-4 we provided £33,787 for that purpose from revenue; in 1904-5, £40,331; in 1905-6, £40,454; in 1906-7, £40,358; in 1907-8, £30,000; but, since then, the item has been transferred to Loan account. The Government by this means have been able to square the ledger; but it is in the interests of the community that we should achieve that result by transferring from revenue to loan accounts—that is by borrowing money—for the purpose of providing works which previously were paid for from revenue. While we are permitting the continuation of borrowing year after year, as we have done during the past three or four years, we might be able to make our finances balance, but immediately we refrain from borrowing to this extent, we shall find the pressure on the finances will be as bad as they were only last year. I know some will urge that many of these works will be to the benefit of posterity, and that someone coming afterwards will gain great advantage from them. One cannot do better in this connection than quote the words of Professor Thorold Rogers, and none will say that he is not a man who speaks

with great authority on this particular question. He says—

There is a commonplace with some reasoners on this subject, that the generation to come succeeds to a splendid inheritance, which the wisdom of a past age has protected, but, of necessity, has burdened. But what may the future generation say about the legitimacy of the charge? They may retort that the charge was, after all, a gambling debt, which the riper intelligence of a later age has analysed and detected.

Further on he says—

Is the future to be indefinitely pledged to the errors of the past? And then when we remember that all finance is inevitably based on the contributions of those who work for wages, and cannot escape the tax-gatherers, what may they say in the future who have no share in the inheritance? Surely the wisest course is to pay off the debt as soon as can be, and incur as little as possible in the future.

That being the case—

Mr. Jacoby: Is that the case with all taxation?

Mr. SCADDAN: By present methods taxation eventually touches the poor, and the rich are not affected. That is well known in economics.

Mr. Murphy: I am glad.

Mr. SCADDAN: You should not be.

Mr. Murphy: Yes, for I am exempt.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am doubtful of that. I would like to make myself clear on this matter; I am not desirous of preventing the expenditure of loan moneys, nor our going on the market, when necessary, with the object of obtaining money to expand the industries of the State. There are times when it is necessary, particularly in a young country like this, to borrow for that purpose. Professor Rogers also says—

In every country which progresses rapidly, which adopts means for expediting intercourse between distant parts of the same political union and does so wisely, if it can afford it debts are necessary and advantageously incurred.

I agree with that, but the question arises as to whether the Government, in their desire to make themselves popular in the country, are likely to restrict the borrowing within their means. Are the Government to borrow to an extent that eventually there shall be a collapse? I am afraid that if we pursue the policy of spending money on roads, bridges and public buildings, and in other directions such as those, there will be a collapse, and that it will be more difficult to square the finances than it has been during the past few years. It is possible that the use of loan moneys to so great an extent some years ago really brought about the strained financial position that we have gone through during the past two or three years. I hope we shall give serious consideration to this position, and be more careful about the spending of loan money in the future than we have been in the past. We are promised by the Government that, during this session, we shall be asked to consider various legislative proposals, and among them the foremost, at all events from the members' standpoint, will be, I believe, that of the redistribution of seats. Of course we recognise that at every redistribution there is an effort on the part of those who are responsible for the redistribution, that is the Government of the day, to provide that it shall not affect them, except favourably. Naturally, therefore, those sitting in Opposition watch with keen anxiety any move made by the Government in this direction. I would not abuse the Government for adopting this course, as it is very natural under our present electoral system. It is not likely that the Government when making a redistribution, will do so to their own disadvantage and favourable to their opponents. Their own interests will of course be paramount. I am looking forward to the introduction of this measure in order to see how far the Government are following those evil practices which have been in operation ever since there has been Responsible Government. It would be much better if the Government were to consider the position that faces us here. We have a population which is very shift.

Mr. Taylor: The Government also are that.

Mr. SCADDAN: The people are shifty in their habits in the way of moving from one town to another, but the Government are shifty in their opinions and principles.

Mr. Moore: They are not shifty in their seats though.

Mr. Taylor: We have not put the lever under them yet.

Mr. SCADDAN: I think that in this matter it would have been better if the Government had considered the question of making an alteration to our electoral system. They might have devised some method which would cause this Parliament to be a truer reflex of the people than it is now. The present system permits, no matter what one does, of a minority rule in this Chamber, and a minority rule here means that the wishes of the people are not being carried out. What I mean is that a Government may be in control of the Treasury benches, controlling the administration and also the legislation of the country, and yet actually in the country they may be in a minority, brought about by the fact that we have unequal political powers on the part of those in possession of the franchise.

The Minister for Mines: What about the member who represents a minority?

Mr. SCADDAN: If the Minister were to consider those who are representing minorities he would find that there are a number of members on his side of the House representing a majority of the constituency but at the same time representing a small minority of the community; that is when compared with one or two sitting on this side of the House. The member for North Perth—and no doubt the Minister for Mines has his case in mind—represents more electors than, in some instances, three members on the Ministerial side put together. That is what we call political inequality. It is useless for members to speak of getting a majority in a single electorate when that majority has not an equal voice with the majority in an adjoining electorate. That is the position at present.

The Ministry have recognised that it is due to North Perth, and to some of the other constituencies, that there should be an alteration of boundaries, but, as I have stated, that will not bring about a true reflex of the country in this Chamber. You can alter the boundaries as much as you like, and you will still have the possibility of a minority of the country having a majority of representation in Parliament.

Mr. Bath: That is the case at present.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is so as the hon. member points out. Let me mention that the Minister for Works represents Sussex where he obtained only 574 votes, and yet another Minister asks what about a member who represents a minority. The member for North Perth obtained over 2,000 votes, while in the case of the Minister for Works 497 votes were cast against him. At Guildford, the member representing the constituency, who sits on this side of the House, obtained 1,980 votes, while all his opponents put together polled only 866; yet those 1,980 votes have only one representative while 574 votes, which elected the Minister for Works in Sussex, have also one representative. Thus we get inequality of political power in the country with a possibility of a minority ruling the destinies of the State. We hear a lot about majority ruling. There should be an earnest desire on the part of representatives to see that there is majority rule in its true sense; not only a majority of electors but also a majority of representatives with a majority supporting the country.

Mr. Gordon: You cannot do that without compulsory voting.

Mr. SCADDAN: That has no bearing whatever on the matter. There are other evils which it would be of advantage to remove. The present system lends itself to the localisation of politics. Under existing conditions a member has in a large measure to obtain grants and other considerations for some little corner of the State that he represents in order to ensure his return in the future. I would instance the case of the member for Menzies. A very few votes decided

the issue in that constituency, and these few votes determined which party should have the representation in that constituency. Such conditions, in the case of the Menzies electorate, were responsible for the fact that the hon. member was compelled to give some special consideration to the place, and he did it so effectively on the occasion of his last election, that it changed a sufficient number of votes from one side to the other and ensured his return. Whether it was intended or not to have that effect I cannot say, but the fact remains that £1,000 was lent by the Government to the Callion Gold Mining Company prior to the last election. This is the kind of thing that I contend should not be permitted because it is not in the best interests of the community. If we could devise a system by which we could be lifted above that sort of thing, and also to prevent log-rolling, and Ministers will admit that there are occasions when a good deal of log-rolling is indulged in—

The Minister for Mines: You have only half the truth in connection with the Callion matter.

Mr. SCADDAN: I think I know the truth and what happened, and it may be as well to state the facts as I know them. The day prior to the general elections an application was lodged by the Callion Gold Mining Company for a loan under the Mining Development Loan Act. On the following day the Minister was defeated. I am not absolutely sure whether it was the day before the nomination or the day before the election. The Minister then ceased to be a member of this House, but he retained the position of Minister pending the decision of the Supreme Court in connection with the petition lodged against the return of Mr. Buzacott. In October, while the case was pending, I believe, the application for the loan of £1,000 was granted to the Callion Company in the hon. member's constituency. There was not much publicity given to the fact until just prior to the election after the petition was upheld. If the hon. member will look through the figures he will find that a more than suffi-

cient number changed their opinions in that district to alter the result of the election. Whether the loan was intended for that purpose I cannot say, but the fact remains that the result was as I have stated. That is not the only case that can be quoted. When the member for Kalgoorlie was seeking re-election as a Minister he was asked the definite question, prior to nomination, whether he was in favour of the construction of a dock at Fremantle, and he did not hesitate to step forward on the platform and state in a decided manner, "No, I am not." Two or three days after, and after his election without opposition, he proceeded to Fremantle, and while he did not urge the construction of the dock he made it plain there that he intended to support it. The late Mr. Price was then seeking re-election, and the member for Kalgoorlie told the people at Fremantle that if there was one member of the House who could convince him of the necessity for the construction of the dock it was the member who was then seeking election. I recognise that this kind of thing will continue under the present electoral system because it depends on a few votes in a particular district whether a man is going to be returned to support one party or another. Then there is the question of gerrymandering.

The Attorney General: What is gerrymandering?

Mr. SCADDAN: Does not the hon. member know? The hon. member will have plenty of evidence of it on the part of the Government when they introduce the Redistribution of Seats Bill. I think it will be found that a certain amount of this will be attempted in the Bill which the Government propose to submit. The fact remains that we have had gerrymandering on previous occasions. The member for Kalgoorlie had his seat gerrymandered for him. I would like to say that the position we are faced with in the future will be interesting. Any change of boundaries can only adjust glaring anomalies. Anomalies will always exist. If they do not exist when the boundaries are made it will not be long, owing to the change of

population from one district to another, before they will grow up again; and so we go on. We are faced almost every three or four years with the demand for a change of boundaries to provide more equitable representation in this Chamber. We hear a lot about the right of the gold mining industry, or the pearling industry to special representation, and that there should be special representation also for some other industry, for instance, the agricultural industry, and so we view the position from this standpoint, that it is the industry that should be represented and not the people. I hold that it is the people who make the industry, and when you have the true representation of the people the industries will not be affected, except to their advantage. There is another evil, and that is that the man of ability and merit is excluded from being elected to this Chamber owing to the localisation of politics, and it is this that prevents them from having any chance against the local candidate. I am watching with interest to see what the Government will propose in connection with the redistribution of seats. Sir Walter James said recently at Beverley—I do not know whether he was speaking with a knowledge of the position, but he is certainly a Ministerial supporter and may know something—that it was not only a matter of the voting strength of the various constituencies, but also the whole of the population, which had to be considered; it was necessary to consider other than adults. If this is the proposal of the Government I contend that it is a proposal that I have never previously heard of. I have never heard it put forward that the children of a community should obtain representation before they have reached the age of manhood.

Mr. Bath: Those are arguments which come easily to lawyers.

Mr. SCADDAN: A lawyer can make an argument where none exists. I think the member for Kalgoorlie can bear me out in that. Among the other legislative proposals mentioned in this Speech is the proposal to establish a University. The Premier can rest assured that mem-

bers sitting on this side will welcome the establishment of a University in Western Australia.

Mr. Bath: On proper lines.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is just what I was coming to. We will be keen in seeing that the University is not made a privileged place for one section while another section may be debarred. In that direction it appears to me that after all there is just as great a desire that the Government should establish secondary schools as there is for the establishment of a University. Because under existing circumstances it is only one class of the community, namely the wealthy or the comparatively well-to-do, who are able to carry their children on from the free education in the State primary schools, through the secondary schools at present in existence, to the University. I hope the day will arrive when we are able to provide free education from the primary schools right through to the University; but at present, of course, it is a question of how we are going to finance it. Still the Government might come to the assistance of those who have shown some special ability in the primary schools, by providing liberal scholarships both in the primary and the secondary schools. By those means, whether the boy would be able to pay the fees for the University or not, the Government would furnish the necessary means by the provision of scholarships, and we would have the more promising children fittingly provided for, irrespective of from what class of the community they came. The question of liquor law reform is again to be introduced. In this respect I must compliment the member for Fremantle on his ability to change his opinions. I understood that during the Fremantle election he was supported by the liquor trade, and for some reason not yet made apparent we have to imagine that the hon. member had an interview with the representatives of that trade and made them a definite promise. Without some such theory it is difficult to discover why one of the candidates, even after nomination, should have resigned in favour of the present member

for Fremantle. Yet we are told that the hon. member is in favour of a full measure of local option, and he also states he is in favour of a time compensation. It would be interesting to know if that was the pledge he gave those representatives of the trade who interviewed him.

Mr. Murphy: Both of these are acceptable to the trade in Western Australia.

Mr. SCADDAN: Well, I am not so interested in the trade as the honourable member, and therefore I am not so well posted in their views and desires. Let me say in this connection that I hope the Government will consider some of the questions which were brought under their notice by the members of this Chamber and also by the public, and make some amendment in their Bill before bringing it down again. Without this we will have to go over the whole ground once more, and possibly the measure will be hung up for another session. This is a matter which will give rise to a considerable discussion, and it is to be hoped Ministers will realise that the country desires an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the restriction of this trade. For my part I agree it is desirable that the country should be given such an opportunity. Another Licensing Bill is also foreshadowed, this time for the licensing and conduct of race-courses. Judging from what happened during the recess we would imagine that the object of the Government is to restrict the gambling evil. There is no more ardent supporter of the Government in that respect than myself, when such restriction is carried out on legitimate lines. But I want to know why the Government should in this respect give special consideration to some portions of the community whilst withholding it from others? During the recess we had the spectacle of deputations waiting upon the Acting Premier and requesting certain action in the direction of restricting gambling—

Mr. Collier: And he rose to the occasion.

Mr. SCADDAN: And what do we find? While the Acting Premier, as pointed out by the member for Boulder, rose to the occasion and, like a true

statesman, lopped off one or two of the leaves, he left the evil tree to continue to flourish as before. Yet the Acting Premier had an Act of Parliament which would have permitted him to stop gambling on every race-course as well as in every street and every public place, notwithstanding which he only put it into operation in some little places where the volume of gambling for a year would not be equal to what goes on in certain metropolitan clubs in a week. He prohibited gambling on whippet grounds, where perhaps a couple of hundred people assembled fortnightly, but he still permitted it to continue on the race-courses, where at one meeting thousands of pounds go through the totalisators, not to mention the operations of the bookmakers. Apparently the object of the Government is to prevent gambling in the smaller forms of sport while permitting it in influential institutions such as the W.A.T.C., and indeed to give that body the control of racing throughout the State. The question will arise as to what is going to happen to the unregistered race-courses. I do not agree with the building up of any monopolies, of any centralising power. I do not think the W.A.T.C. should have absolute control over the conduct of any form of sport. If sport is good, make it as free as possible. I will agree that the gambling question is one which will have to be dealt with in no uncertain manner; but the action taken by the Acting Premier in stopping gambling on whippet grounds or on running grounds, where a few pedestrians meet, is just about as absurd an attitude as he could adopt if he wishes the public to believe he is in earnest in his endeavours to stop the evil. I do not know any other example of statesmanship that would compare with it at all. The volume of gambling that takes place on these particular grounds where the Acting Premier has prevented the bookmaker from plying his calling, and interdicted the totalisator, would not be equal in a year to that of one well-known city club in a week. Some of the other proposals to be dealt with I do not desire to discuss on this occasion as

the opportunity will present itself when the respective Bills come down; but I regret very much that the Government have not considered the desirability of making some amendment to the Arbitration Act. If there is any Act that requires amendment it is the Arbitration Act, because it has given dissatisfaction to both parties.

Mr. Bolton: And also to the Judge.

Mr. SCADDAN: Even the president of the Court has on numerous occasions stated that the Act should be amended, that its administration was worrying him, and getting him down; yet we have no mention whatever in the Speech of any intention on the part of the Government to take action in respect to this measure. During the last few months we have had the case of the engine-drivers employed in the timber mills of the South-West. They made an application to the Court in the usual form, and the question arose as to whether it was required that every member of that organisation should attend a special meeting which it was necessary to call under the Arbitration Act, and to vote on the motion submitted. The Court threw the application out on the ground that it was necessary that the motion should be carried by a majority of the members present, and that a majority of the members of the union should be present at the meeting. It meant that these men had to go to one centre, namely to Bunbury, for the meeting, and that all the mills were hung up for three days. There were employed in the industry some 2,000 men who were not in any way affected by the dispute; yet these men were compelled to stand down three days whilst those more directly concerned in the issue went to Bunbury to consider the matter and vote upon the motion. And again I say no mention is made of any intention on the part of the Government to amend the Act. At present there is a tramway dispute existing in Perth, and I contend that in large measure this Parliament is responsible for that trouble. The men appealed to the Court. Under the provisions of the Arbitration Act the Court is only empowered to state the minimum

rate of wage, and if the employer is sufficiently unscrupulous he may shelter himself behind the award and pay nothing but the minimum rate. That is what happened in this case, with the result that though the Court was appealed to for an interpretation of the award the Court said that under the Act they had no power to discriminate in the matter of wages. We are in the midst of that dispute to-day, yet the Government make no mention of any intention to amend the Act with a view to removing existing anomalies. There are many other anomalies which have been brought under the notice of the Government, yet no mention is made of any intention to move in the matter.

The Minister for Mines: What could be done to prevent strikes?

Mr. SCADDAN: Allow the Court to fix a rate of wages for any and all classes of employment, and not restrict the Court to stating definitely only the minimum rate of wage. Experience has shown that 80 per cent. of the employers put upon the minimum rate the interpretation that it is the maximum rate; and they make it a standard rate, with the result that men who have been in their employ for a number of years and have by special ability obtained a higher rate of wage—which the Court readily admit they are entitled to—are at once reduced to the minimum rate of wage under the Court's award. The most efficient man is brought down from a higher rate, justified by his length of service and special ability, to the minimum rate of wage fixed by the Court and payable to the least competent man. Undoubtedly there exists dissatisfaction at this state of affairs, and it will continue to exist, and unless some action is taken we will have a recurrence of these troubles. The men will not submit to the conditions prevailing at the present time. To ask those men who have been eight or nine years in the service and who by their ability have worked up to a special rate of wage—to ask those men to go back to a rate of wage which a man going on to-morrow would obtain is an absolute absurdity, to put no harsher name upon it.



Mr. Jacoby: I thought in this case overtime was the issue.

Mr. SCADDAN: Yes, there are several questions, but this is what brought it all about. If it had been competent in the Court to fix the various rates of wage for the various men there would have been no dispute to-day between the men and the employers. The Workers' Compensation Act also requires amendment. In this respect I hope the Government will not adopt the tactics they did last session and prevent an expression of opinion being given by hon. members on the Bill introduced by the member for Dundas. It is a measure urgently needed, and I hope that every member will express his opinion and give his vote in order that the country may know what consideration he is prepared to give to those carrying on the various industries in the State. The member for East Fremantle proposes to again introduce his Bill dealing with early closing and providing for a Saturday half-holiday. From private conversation I have had with honourable members I believe there is a majority of the House in favour of the Saturday half-holiday, at least in the metropolitan districts; and yet we are faced with the position that this measure cannot pass because the Government not only will not give it their support, but they call upon their supporters to oppose it, simply, or very likely, because the measure happens to be introduced by a member of the Opposition. If members of the Opposition took up an attitude of that kind, that if a Bill was introduced from the Government side of the House they would oppose it, they would be ridiculed.

Mr. Murphy: There is one Government supporter that does not apply to; I will vote for the Bill.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am glad to hear it from the hon. member, but the hon. member has not heard the whip crack. I think the hon. member is speaking rather early. I have heard other hon. members speak like that, but when the party whips have got to work members very quickly changed their opinions so far as recording a vote was concerned.

Mr. Murphy: I would rather go out than not vote for it.

Mr. SCADDAN: During the recess we had the Minister for Works, the Acting Premier, travelling throughout the State advocating the adoption of the financial agreement, asking that the people should vote in favour of the financial agreement being placed in the Federal Constitution; and, as pointed out by a previous speaker, the funds of the State were used on that occasion, not merely for the purpose of obtaining a majority for the financial agreement, but also for obtaining a majority for Liberal candidates. There is no doubt about it, because on almost every occasion when Ministers of the Crown were moving about the State supporting the financial agreement they never neglected to ask the electors to also support the Liberal candidates. I must express appreciation of the fact that we were fortunate from a Western Australian standpoint in obtaining in the other States a majority for the Labour candidates whereby we were assured for the State that just consideration which was its due without tying the Federal Parliament for a period over which they could not see what would happen.

Mr. Murphy: Ten years instead of 25 years.

Mr. SCADDAN: Ten years hence the people of the Commonwealth will have just as much right to say what will transpire in the future as we have to say what will transpire in 25 years.

Mr. Murphy: Senator Pearce promised us 25 years and never kept his word.

Mr. SCADDAN: Never mind about Senator Pearce; there were other statements made which the hon. member might as well know. It was said in New South Wales, by someone who knows, that the Premiers of the various States, when they attended the Conference and arrived at the agreement with the Federal Ministry, gave a promise that they would use their influence in the States, not only for the adoption of the financial agreement, but also for the return of the Liberal candidates—Fusion candidates.

The Minister for Mines: Did the South Australian Government promise that?

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not know, but the statement was made by a gentleman in New South Wales who ought to be in a position to know.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It was published in the newspapers.

Mr. SCADDAN: On that occasion it was the general opinion in the State that the leader of the Opposition should also attend the Conference, but it was not until after the Conference sat and decided matters that the reasons became apparent which prompted the Premiers of the other States to reject the proposal to have the leader of the Opposition at the Conference. There was a desire to use the Conference and the finances of the States for party purposes. Let me say I glory in the fact that the people of Australia rose and took a national view, and that the election resulted in the return of a national party.

Mr. Jacoby: I thought you supported the financial agreement.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member evidently did not hear me in Murray-street the night before the election, or he would not make such a statement. I went to the Perth town hall to hear the Acting Premier, Sir Walter James, and Mr. James Gardiner, on the financial agreement; and for downright misrepresentation commend me to those three gentlemen. I did not expect they would go to the length they did. For instance, Sir Walter James stated in effect that the proposal placed before the country was this: in the past we had been receiving approximately £600,000 in returns from the Commonwealth; did the people propose to continue receiving £600,000 or were they prepared to accept nothing? Sir Walter James attempted to lead the people of Perth to believe that was the proposal on which they had to vote at the election, but no one knew better than Sir Walter James that such a proposal was never submitted. No Labour candidate ever proposed to cut the States adrift altogether, and Sir Walter James knew it full well. On that occasion there is no doubt the Acting Premier showed his tact. I desired to ask a question or two at the meeting to show that some of

the statements made by the speakers were not in accordance with facts, and when I asked a question the Acting Premier said he had no objection to answering if the audience were prepared to listen to questions. The Acting Premier asked all those in favour of listening to questions to put up their hands. A chairman ought to be impartial at these sort of meetings. The chairman certainly was on this occasion; he declared the motion lost, and the meeting closed. The Acting Premier also made certain comments about the Trans-continental railway, and I notice in the Governor's Speech we have a paragraph dealing with it which must be interesting to the general public. It reads—

Feeling that delay in beginning the construction of the Trans-Australian railway is fraught not only with grave injury to the interests of Western Australia, but it is also a menace to the safety of the Commonwealth as a whole, my advisers are of opinion that, rather than incur a further indefinite postponement, the project should be undertaken by the two States through whose territory the line will pass.

If ever there was a claptrap put in a Governor's Speech in this country this is a claptrap. In my opinion there was no desire on the part of the Government to do anything of the kind; there was only a desire on the part of the Government to belittle the Federal Labour Ministry, or to try to do so. Of course they were not successful. Members must recognise that with the Labour Government in power in the Commonwealth the railway is nearer construction than ever previously. The Labour members who represented this State in the Federal Parliament toured the Eastern States to educate the public in favour of the line when Sir John Forrest was Minister and no action was taken by him.

The Minister for Mines: They did it very effectively.

Mr. SCADDAN: Yes; with the result that to-day there is a majority in the Federal Parliament in favour of the railway, and no doubt it will be constructed in due course, though the Federal Government will not ask any Parlia-

ment to build it without obtaining the fullest information. I am satisfied the Acting Premier on that occasion was more desirous of trying to belittle the Federal Government than to build the Trans-Australian railway. I believe the Acting Premier was very wrathful about a statement made by the Hon. King O'Malley that the Government of Western Australia should show their bona fides in this matter by making a grant of a certain part of the land adjacent to the railway within our borders, but according to a newspaper report the Premier of the State had previously promised something of the kind.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. SCADDAN: Then let me read something. I find in a recent copy of the *West Australian* the following:—

Mr. R. C. Hare, the Acting Agent General for Western Australia, has been of considerable assistance to the representatives of the English Press in explaining the character and importance of the recent news concerning the water find at Madura, together with Sir John Forrest's cabled statement that this means another 20,000,000 acres available for settlement.

Imagine telling the English Press this. It goes on to say—

And Mr. Newton Moore's promise to allocate to the Trans-Australian railway the revenues from a 25-mile strip of land along the line.

That is tantamount to a land grant. Probably the Hon. King O'Malley thought he was doing the State a good turn in trying to get the Eastern States to coincide with us. At any rate it was not a thing about which the Acting Premier should get wrathful when the matter was public property. I find also in this report the following:—

This means State endowment of the railway for all time with the revenue of the strip of country equal to an area of more than 10,000 square miles. That was published in the *West Australian* as sent out by their special correspondent. I think I could suggest who the special correspondent is. We have also been told that the Government pro-

pose to erect freezing works in the North-West. I think there is room for a difference of opinion on the advisability or otherwise of the construction of these works in the North-West. Personally—I am speaking on my own behalf in this matter—I hold that the time is not opportune for the erection of these freezing works in the North-West, because up to the present we have not overtaken our local demand, and it will only mean that the people of the State who would provide the money for our wealthy squatters in the North-West would not only be called upon to provide that, but would also have to provide additional money in order to buy their meat supply.

Mr. Jacoby: It will not be so.

Mr. SCADDAN: It is the correct view to take in this matter, exactly as I pointed out in connection with the export of lambs prior to our overtaking our local demand. If we are going to export our best in order to compete with other places we will have to consume the culls. It will mean that the best of the North-West meat will be exported and the culls will be sent here; and owing to the supply not being equal to the demand, we will have to pay increased prices for the meat. These are matters that in the interests of the public should receive due consideration.

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

Mr. SCADDAN: Before tea I was referring to the action of the Acting Premier in regard to the construction of the Transcontinental railway and the position in regard thereto of the Federal Labour Ministry. There is one other matter I might venture to mention here in connection with the Federal Labour Ministry as compared with the Ministry we have in this State. It will be remembered that recently a certain day was set apart as a holiday on account of the King's funeral, and the Federal Government, Labour Ministry as they are, ordered that throughout Australia all employees of the Federal Government, even the casual employees, should be granted a holiday on full pay on that day out of respect to the memory of the deceased sovereign and

loyalty to the throne. What did our State Government do. They certainly permitted those in receipt of a definite salary, those with an annual salary, to have a holiday on that day and to receive payment but the men employed on a daily or weekly wage, such as those in the Government Printing Office, were denied the opportunity of showing their loyalty in the same manner as other employees. An action of this kind does not show our State Ministry in too favourable a light. If any privilege were to be given to State employees there should not be any distinction made between the staff obtaining annual salaries and the men receiving weekly or daily wages. I know that many men, permanent men too, employed by the Works Department were compelled to work that day irrespective of their desire to knock off. We hear a great deal about the loyalty of one section of the community and the disloyalty of another section, but is it a wonder that we hear of disloyalty on the part of the workers when they get this treatment from the Government who pretend to represent the community. I had proposed to refer to the report to the Minister by Mr. Despeissis on the tropical agriculture of the North-West, but I will confine my remarks to a very few sentences. I trust that the Ministry will not accept the suggestion of Mr. Despeissis as to the engagement of Asiatic, black, and southern European labour, for the developing of tropical agriculture. It would be preferable to allow the North-West, as far as tropical agriculture is concerned, to remain as it is now, rather than permit cheap labour from southern Europe and Asia to come in to develop it. I contend that we can develop it with white labour. It has already been proved, notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, that tropical agriculture in Queensland can be developed by white labour, and so can it in our case. I hope the Government will not be indenting cheap labour. As has been pointed out by Mr. Despeissis, some of these people work for 1s. per week and women work just the same as men.

The Premier: We could not do it if we wanted to.

Mr. SCADDAN: The suggestion was made by Mr. Despeissis and if the Government adopted his report and accepted his recommendations they might make a representation to the Federal Government to allow white labour of this sort to be indentured for the purpose of developing the tropical agriculture in the North-West. I see the Minister for Mines smiling, but I would point out that at the Premiers' Conference our Premier moved that the restrictions to indent black labour to this State be removed for the purpose of the pearling industry. If he would do that in one case he might do it sary for members to take the Ministry to task for attempting to follow out Mr. Despeissis' suggestions in this respect. The Premier said the other evening that if any cases of maladministration were brought under the notice of a Minister, and no action were taken to rectify that neglect, the Government would be worthy of censure. Let me say that he as Premier, and all his colleagues, are worthy of censure for their inaction in connection with the case of Berteaux and the President Lombet leases at Davylhurst. I do not want to cite the facts of the case now as the member for Boulder will deal with them, but certain definite charges were made connecting this gentleman with certain frauds which were proved up to the hilt. There was practically a promise given to the House that action would be taken, but I have no knowledge of anything having been done up to date. The Minister will have an opportunity of replying to this at a later stage and I hope he will give an intimation as to what has been done or what is proposed to be done. The charges were serious enough to warrant a prosecution. Just prior to the closing of the last session the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Sayer, gave an opinion, without seeing the files of the department, that there was no case against Berteaux, but anyone who has looked at the files will realise that Berteaux wilfully defrauded the Mines Department and the State and that action should be taken. In spite of the facts being brought before the notice of the Minister publicly, nothing has been done. The responsibility has been shifted from

the Minister for Mines and is now being carried by the Government. The Ministry have neglected their duty and are therefore worthy of censure. What do the Government intend to do in regard to the Agent General? No reference to that has been made. May be they are waiting the result of the Beverley election. Would I be in order to suggest that possibly that is the reason. The fact remains that we have had an acting Agent General since October last. The Premier, before leaving for London, said he intended to go into the question of the reorganisation of the Agent General's office, and he surely should be able to say now what he proposes to do, whether the Government intend to appoint an Agent General, who will be, and when will he take up his duties. We know nothing now. I hope that before the debate closes the Premier will permit one of his Ministers to make an announcement, or the Premier himself might take the first occasion that presents itself to let the House and the country know what he proposes in this connection. There are one or two other matters which I might refer to, but other opportunities will present themselves. Before resuming my seat let me dispel a view taken by some—I am judging from the Press reports—that, having accepted the position of leader of the Opposition I will be more moderate in my expressions of opinion, will view questions from a different standpoint, and that there is hope for me. If I thought for one moment that accepting the position of leader of the Opposition would cause me to put the opinions which I have held in the past, and which I hold to-day, in the background or would modify my views, I would retire from the position at once. The position of leader of the Opposition carries with it responsibility not only to my party, but also to myself, and in regard to the latter responsibility it is that I should express my opinion as freely and as often as opportunity offers. I accept the congratulations of the members opposite in the spirit in which they are given. I can assure them that if at any time I see a lack of that attention given to administration of a department which should be given it, or any legislative pro-

posals made which are not in the best interests of the community and which will not give justice to the community, I will always raise my voice in opposition. This party if it stands for anything, stands for justice to all and for privilege to none.

The Premier: You have not a monopoly of that.

Mr. SCADDAN: There is no desire on my part to say that members opposite are not equally desirous of doing that but, after all, it is just as well that we should understand each other's position. That is the position we take up. We desire justice to all and privilege to none. In the future my object in leading this party will be to see that if possible they shall prevent injustice being done to anyone or privileges being given to any section of the community. I trust that we shall have a statement from the Premier as to the future of the Agent General's office and that other matters I have referred to will receive some attention.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): Will the hon. member opposite allow me to congratulate him upon his appointment to the position of leader of the Opposition. With regard to the sentiments he expressed that justice should be given to everyone, may I suggest that he should be careful, while exercising care in that direction, to try and see that justice is done to all parties in all matters brought under his notice. I may congratulate him also to a great extent on the speech he has made to-night. I believe he, to a very great extent, realises the responsibility of the position he holds. I would ask him not to be too suspicious, not to take notice on every occasion of what he hears from the man in the street, not to make charges because statements may be publicly made and to remember—if he does not know this he should do so—that in most instances when he desires information it will readily be supplied to him by Ministers. During the debate one or two matters have been referred to that I think I might touch upon. The member for Cue in dealing with the appointment of Dr. Cumpston as a Royal Commissioner to investigate the prevalence of miners' phthisis went out of his way

to make an attack on Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer, in reference to his action in connection with this investigation. I want to tell the House that Mr. Montgomery for many years has been investigating matters connected with miners' complaints, and some little time ago he had occasion to inquire into a complaint of the member for Cue, who, not by a public speech, but by a letter in a Murchison newspaper, made a statement to the effect that Mr. Chesson, secretary of the union, had the names of some 40 Italian miners who had died from the dread disease. We wrote to Mr. Chesson asking for information, and Mr. Chesson said that he had not the names, but he knew of some Italians who had gone to Italy, and were supposed to have died there. A little later, Mr. Montgomery, after passing through Cue, made a preliminary report on the investigation at the Fingal mine with reference to the prevalence of miners' phthisis in that district. He had an interview with Mr. McInerny, a boss at the Fingal mine, and Mr. McInerny made certain statements which Mr. Montgomery did not report at the time. Some months afterwards the member for Cue made a public statement to the effect that he had a sworn statement by Mr. McInerny that what had been published by Mr. Montgomery was not true. We wrote to the member for Cue for a copy of the sworn statement, and he replied that the statement was not a sworn one, but he would get a sworn statement if we desired it. Those are matters constituting the difficulties between the hon. member and the State Mining Engineer.

Mr. Heitmann: Not by a long way.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As far as the report which is being obtained is concerned, hon. members will, no doubt, on reading the papers, have noticed that Dr. Cumpston has made a very exhaustive examination in most of the mining centres. It would not be right for me to make any remarks with regard to what that report might be, but there is one thing that I was pleased to see, and which goes to show the difference between the various people who are endeavouring to mitigate the disease.

I recently noticed that Dr. Cumpston sent a letter of thanks to Mr. Dodd and Mr. Glance, and other members of the union at Boulder for the assistance they gave him; but I saw no reference from the doctor to the assistance given him by the member for Cue when he visited the Cue district.

Mr. Heitmann: That is just about the dirt we might expect from you. You know I travelled miles to give the doctor assistance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not seen anything in the Press about the assistance the hon. member gave.

Mr. Heitmann: And you have not troubled to inquire.

Mr. Holman: The member for Cue has done more in that direction than all the others together.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Being desirous of giving every assistance possible, I naturally assumed that when the Commissioner went to the Cue district all possible information would be placed at his disposal.

Mr. Heitmann: Did I not state all the facts?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I imagined that all assistance the hon. member could give would have been given to the doctor on that occasion.

Mr. Heitmann: Was it not given?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I understand it was not. The hon. member did not attend as a witness.

Mr. Heitmann: Is that all the assistance I could give? I worked for days collecting evidence, and only yesterday I wrote to the doctor stating that I had found another witness. You rotten, dirty skunk.

Mr. SPEAKER: That remark must be withdrawn. I insist on the remark being withdrawn.

Mr. Heitmann: I withdraw the remark. But the Minister is mighty unfair.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In the speech of the leader of the Opposition a statement was made with regard to my last election, and to the fact that just prior to that election I approved and that the Government granted to the

Callion Gold Mining Company a loan of £1,000. If the hon. member had desired to get the full facts of the matter the file would have been available to him.

Mr. Scaddan: I had it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot give the exact dates from memory, but if the hon. member had perused the file he would have noticed—

Mr. Scaddan: You can get it all out of *Hansard*.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member would find on perusing that file that six or eight months, or even more, prior to the date of the election the Callion Gold Mining Company made an application for an advance of £1,000. This application was submitted to the department, and after recommendations were made it was approved by Cabinet.

Mr. Collier: I have here a reply to a question which I asked you, wherein you stated that the application was made on the 10th September and approved on the 16th October.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I hope that the hon. member will wait until I have explained. The Callion Gold Mining Company applied for a grant of £1,000 at least eight months prior to the election. They got into some difficulties. It is not necessary for me to go into those difficulties, but some time later they waited upon me and asked whether in the event of making an application again, and altering the class of plant they intended to instal on the mine, the loan would be approved. I said if they made the alteration subject to the change that I desired, and being of sufficient value to satisfy the officers of the department, I would consent to the alteration. The plant they had intended to put in was an air compressor. When the second request was preferred they stated it was their intention to put in a 10-head mill, and the necessary power to work it. This £1,000 loan had been approved some eight months previously. Some time elapsed and they desired to alter the application from the air-compressing plant to a battery. Later on the request came in on the dates mentioned by the hon. member in his interjection. Those are the facts of the case, and I would be

only too pleased to show the file to hon. members when they would see that this promise was given many months prior to the election. There is another subject that I would desire to refer to before I leave these personal matters, and that is the case of the President Loubet lease. After the last session closed, I had the papers sent to the Crown Law Department and I asked them to deal with the matter just as they thought fit. I did not wish to touch it under any circumstances again.

Mr. Heitmann: Naturally.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I thought it was much wiser that I should not appear in the matter at all. The papers were handed to Mr. Barker, who in a voluminous report went into the whole question raised, and stated that there are matters of prejudice and under the circumstances would not advise that a prosecution should take place, that is of course a criminal prosecution. I have referred those papers to Cabinet, and have left it to Cabinet to decide whether action should be taken. One thing may look inexcusable, and that is the delay which has taken place in dealing with this matter, namely, since December of last year until the present time, when the report has been obtained from the Crown Law Department. I think the Attorney General will satisfy hon. members that as far as I am concerned the delay was not through any fault of my own. Mr. Barker's full report in connection with this matter will, if hon. members desire it be laid on the table of the House. Whether a civil action or a criminal action will follow will depend upon Cabinet. But we have now a distinct indication from the Crown Law Department that in the opinion of Mr. Barker a prosecution should not take place.

Mr. Collier: I will be able to show you a few gaps in that opinion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Dealing further with the speech that has been made here to-night, I notice that the leader of the Opposition catechised the Government in connection with the Constitution Act Amendment Bill and

for the delay in bringing it forward. If the hon. member will assist us we will do all we can to get it through the House, and I hope he will not blame us if it does not successfully pass another Chamber. He knows of the efforts which the Premier put forward last session to get the Bill through.

Mr. Troy: We know who were your allies in the other Chamber.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member went further and charged the Government with not being earnest in their desire because they assisted certain candidates who were not in favour of the Government measure. I ask the hon. member whether some members on his side of the House did not support some candidates who objected to the franchise of the Upper Chamber being reduced. I fancy that was the case. I think we should try to look upon the Legislative Council not in the light of a party House.

Mr. Scaddan: Are you desirous now of the Bill being carried?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Most decidedly. If this Bill is sent on again to the Upper House I feel satisfied that it will receive every consideration from members, and that it will be successful. Then in regard to immigration I think the leader of the Opposition took up rather a curious attitude. He desired that when we brought immigrants out to put them on the land we should place them in colonies, and not allow them to mingle in competition with others already in the State.

Mr. Scaddan: No.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Well, that was the impression I gathered. I assumed from what the hon. member said that they were to be put in colonies in order that we might keep an eye on them and not allow them to come into competition with others already in the State. In regard to our loan expenditure, the hon. member has objected to any use of loan funds for the purpose of building roads and bridges, or public buildings, or any work that could be said to be of a non-reproductive nature. I want to pin the hon. member down to that, and I would like to ask him what

action he would take if he had the responsibility of encouraging new fields by providing water supplies in the district. Supposing an expenditure of from £2,000 to £4,000 was required for water supply, and the sale of the water would not pay for the cost of a caretaker, let alone interest and sinking fund—would he spend the money, or would he leave the place without water? The expenditure would be directly non-reproductive, although indirectly, perhaps, it would constitute a good investment. I believe in such circumstances the hon. member would do as we do, namely, he would spend the money and regard the indirect advantages as outweighing the apparent direct loss. That class of work is going on all over the fields day after day, and the money has to be expended. Outside the House, if not inside, an endeavour is being made to create a feeling throughout the State that the goldfields are not being treated fairly, that everything is being done for the agricultural districts while the goldfields are being neglected. I think such statements are not made here to the same extent as they are made outside; just the same they serve to impress the people with the belief that the goldfields have not been treated as fairly as they should have been, and, as compared with the agricultural districts, are being neglected. I think every member recognises the great importance of the mining industry, and, of course, it always lies with us to consider what is the best thing to be done for the goldfields. May I ask in what sense they have been neglected? Is it in respect to post and telegraphs? I say, no. Nor can it be in respect to education, or police provision, or the administration of justice. It is only a little time ago we had a report from the Public Service Commissioner, recommending that office after office on the goldfields should be closed down, on the grounds that the volume of business by no means warranted the expenditure in connection with these offices. As far as these items are concerned none can say the goldfields are being, or have been neglected. In respect to railway facilities, I have asked the Public Works



Department to give me some figures, and I find that since the advent of the Moore Administration the goldfields have been served by a greater length of new railways than have all the other parts of the State put together. Thus we have the Norseman, the Sandstone, the Marble Bar, the Meekatharra and the Ravensthorpe railways, all expressly designed for the fostering of the gold mining industry. These railways have an approximate length of 373 miles, while the cost has been £662,625. On the other hand all the other railways for which the Moore Government have asked Parliamentary authority, total 360½ miles, or 12½ miles less than the goldfields railways referred to, while the approximate cost has been £623,098. So that, since the present Premier has been in office he has asked Parliamentary authorisation for a greater length of goldfields railways at greater cost than is represented by railways constructed by the Moore Government in other parts of the State. Yet we are told that so far as railways are concerned the goldfields are being neglected.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Who made that statement?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Press generally. The goldfields members have made the complaint that so far as the goldfields are concerned they have not been treated with the same consideration as has been given to the agricultural districts.

Mr. Scaddan: What member said that in respect to the construction of railways?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not say specially about railways. I say specially in regard to the gold mining industry, that the statement is made that specially heavy railway freights apply to the goldfields. One hears the statement made time after time that heavy charges are levied on goods carried by the goldfields railways, which compel the goldfields people to pay far more in railway freightage than applies to other parts of the State. For some years past consistent efforts have been made to prevent any anomalies in connection with the carriage of goods upon any part of the railway system. True, we recently made a reduction on manures, bringing

the freight down to one-farthing per ton per mile. Hon. members generally believe that was a profitable concession for us to make, because we are getting a good return from it in the shape of wheat carried. But on the other hand we made a concession to the mining industry as well, for we are carrying mineral ore from Anaconda to Fremantle, or Guildford, at a similar rate. If values increase then we will get a higher rate, but in any case we are assisting to build up a copper mine by this low freight, a freight exactly the same as we are charging for the carrying of manures to the agricultural districts. Then in respect to food supplies, I have heard the statement that we charge a very high rate. Last year I made a comparison, and I propose to give another brief comparison this year, showing the rates charged in Western Australia as against those in existence in Queensland. In respect to vegetables we find that whereas they are carried from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie at 27s. 10d., in Queensland the charge is 33s. 9d. Here we carry flour and oatmeal at 27s. 10d., while the charge made in Queensland is 63s. 6d. Sugar we carry at 68s. 5d., while in Queensland the freight is 104s. 11d. And so on with other products. I think the comparison between the conditions in Queensland and those existing here is reasonably fair. The comparison shows that so far as the freight on fruit is concerned we treat our people far better than do the Queensland railways, more especially when we take into consideration the rates of wages and the cost of water and coal in this State. It serves to demonstrate that we have done everything possible in an endeavour to be fair to every part of the State; and so far as the construction of railways is concerned, I do not think there is any other place in the world where the Government have shown the same belief in the mineral resources of their country as has been shown by the Government of Western Australia. There is no better way of assisting the mining industry than by providing an efficient water supply. It cannot be said that the provision of water supplies in the mineral areas of this State has not been all that could be expected. Our remote districts

are fairly littered with wells in order that men might be able to go right through the back country. During last year we spent some £30,350 in water supplies, an expenditure that was somewhat less than usual. Through the Mines Water Supply Department we have provided water supplies in many of the most important mining towns. In some of these places the supplies are revenue producing. At Menzies, for instance, we derive a very good revenue, and we have a fair return from the water supply at Meekatharra: so also from Ravensthorpe, Norseman, and Davyhurst. But there are a large number of other small mining towns from which we derive no revenue. For instance, recently we put down a dam at a place called Nevoria, south of Southern Cross. It is absolutely impossible to expect revenue from a single tank in a small community. Again, a dam has been put down at Ora Banda, where there are only 150 people; yet it is essential that we should do all we can to encourage these people, and some action must be taken in regard to the water supply, notwithstanding the fact that it would not pay for a caretaker. Hon. members who live in the back country know that these water supplies have to be found. The water supply at Youanme has led to the opening up and development of the place: and unless we followed the prospector, and in numerous instances went ahead of him, these districts would not be opened up for many years to come. Since 1901 we have spent—and I want agricultural members to note these figures—we have spent in water supplies £248,434 from loan. And that is not revenue producing at all. We have to keep gangs of men going through the back country seeing that these wells are in good order, and we have to look after them whether they are revenue producing or not. As a matter of fact, the interest and working expenses have amounted to £189,945, while the revenue received was £92,850, showing a loss, if we charge 4 per cent. interest, of no less than £97,000. And this we do although the leader of the Opposition gets up and declares he considers no loan expenditure should be made unless the work is practically reproductive. I say that in the instances

quoted the work is essential to the opening up of the back country. We must give water supplies to the small communities on the goldfields, and the work must be carried on if we are going to help the development of the industry, even though it cannot be done without direct loss. The people on the goldfields should know that as far as that expenditure is concerned the revenue does not give us enough money to pay for the upkeep of the works, and not one penny is contributed towards interest on that expenditure. As a matter of fact there is a good deal of this class of work going on at the present time. Recently we spent £7,000 at Ravens-thorpe. This, it must be said, is reproductive. At Norseman we have spent £5,000, and this, also, is reproductive. But at Southern Cross I am connecting the country between that place and Youanme, Mount Jackson and Mulline, with wells. At the new find, the Corinthian, we have a gang of men, and we have another gang at the new find North of Peak Hill. We are putting dams down wherever they are required and I feel quite satisfied it will be found that the work is justified. But it is just as well to know that the money is expended from loan and we have to pay the interest from the general revenue.

Mr. Scaddan: It is the large interest bill that prevents us spending money for the purpose out of revenue.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Would the hon. member leave these people without water or prefer a district not to be opened up until revenue was available for the purpose? Representing a Kalgoorlie constituency, the hon. member does not give the same consideration to a matter like this that the members for Murchison and Dundas would. The member for Murchison knows how the country is absolutely sprinkled with wells to enable people to travel away from the railway. In addition to railways and water supplies, which I look upon as being the principal matters for assisting the mining industry, there are other systems by which we give assistance to the industry. The first, after railways and water supplies, is cheap areas to enable a man to escape as much as can

be avoided in the way of rent in the early stages of his prospecting. Other matters are cheap crushing facilities and assistance in general. The system of prospecting areas established by myself enables a man to hold 18 acres of land for 18 months, which period a warden can extend for a further six months. We have the privilege of cancelling any area if the holder gets rich stone, and that is often done. There are at present 12,465 acres held as prospecting areas, and assuming that the same area would be taken up, if it were not for this privilege we would have received £12,000 more revenue in the department. I think I am right in assuming that pretty well the same area would be held. It is impossible for the State to put public batteries in every centre; in fact, it is against the spirit of the Act to put up a battery when there is a private plant in the vicinity. We have, however, subsidised 30 private mills, and last year 30,000 tons of ore were crushed at these mills, for which the Government paid a subsidy on the average of 1s. 5½d. per ton. By the end of 1909 we had 35 State batteries, and since these figures were prepared, batteries have been erected at Marble Bar and Mt. Sir Samuel. The capital cost of the batteries has been £282,000. According to the Treasury figures the receipts from the State plants since they started have been £695,000 and the expenditure has been £727,000, leaving a deficit of £32,000. These figures are hardly correct according to the balance sheet, because they do not make provision for stocks in hand; the actual loss would be £19,000 instead of £32,000; but I have taken these figures because they happen to be Treasury figures, and I wish to keep to them as far as possible. The mills have crushed 735,000 tons of ore for 764,000 ounces of gold, a magnificent record so far as the resources of the country are concerned, averaging over an ounce to the ton and giving to the customers of the plants £3,283,119 in value from the product treated. We all know of the great developments that have taken place at

Meekatharra, and to a great extent the growth of that place can be attributed to the public battery system. Also Black Range was absolutely opened up by the water supply and battery system. Youanme, which was almost deserted a little time ago, is another instance. I took the responsibility of putting a plant there, and I believe we are going to have a very important district employing a large amount of labour there. Sir Samuel is another old district. It was pretty well deserted. We have put up a battery there with a view to trying to build up the place again. Hon. members must remember that we have to take risks in connection with the public battery system that other persons would not take. We have to provide a plant for a district with a view to helping it on, and we have to take the risk of the battery turning out a failure. On the other hand, we probably go into an old district like Sir Samuel and try and lift it from depression into a flourishing condition.

Mr. Holman: Why not try Cue?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Cue is an old place with crushing plants all round it crushing at a reasonable rate, and if the hon. member thinks a State mill is going to make all the difference in that district I have very little hope for the industry there. We want to get out to the back country where there are no facilities. Where public money is expended it should be to build up a place that has not the facilities other places have. It is all very well for people to try to analyse our work by the work done at other plants. It is quite a different proposition when a mill has plenty of stone coming in all of the one grade, and when the one class of treatment is necessary, to when you get different classes of ore during the week, or during the month, and where probably the mill is shut down for a month or six weeks or several months and the manager or caretaker has to be paid in the interval. We can crush 280,000 to 300,000 tons of ore a year, but the average for the last few years has been only 94,000 tons, so that we are not kept occupied a third of

the time. If the plants were kept occupied I am satisfied we could show a much better return for the whole system. I would like to show the class of work that can be done where we do get the stone. Taking last month's statement of the operations during June, I find that the cost of crushing at Menzies was 5s. 2 1/3d. per ton, while our charge to the customers was 8s. 2d. per ton. That was probably owing to the time system. It will be seen our crushing charges and costs were exceedingly low. I do not think they have ever been so low in the system. I may say the cost includes all departmental charges. Now, taking Leonora, I notice a statement was made by Mr. Brimage a little while ago about the charge at Leonora being 20s. a ton. The average charge to customers during June at Leonora was 6s. 9d. per ton.

Mr. Seaddan: What is your price if they crush per ton?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: These people crushed by the hour. Our charge is 10s. 6d. if they crush by the ton, but crushing by the hour the average price for the customers in Leonora during June was 6s. 9d. The cost to the department was 6s. 10 3/4d.

Mr. Gourley: How many parcels were crushed in that month?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Taking the Menzies return there were 15 parcels, and the cost was only 5s. 2d. per ton. At Leonora our charge to the customers during that month was 6s. 9d. At Boogardie the cost to the customers was 7s. 9d., whereas the cost to the department was only 6s. I would point out this cost includes all charges, inspectors' and head office costs, and such like. If we could keep running all the time a big difference would immediately be made in our charges to these people, or we could make a profit that would enable us to pay interest and sinking fund. However, we have opened up many districts and have produced over £3,000,000 worth of gold, and we have kept communities together. I recently read in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* a statement that we were making all sorts of extra charges so as to make a profit in

connection with the batteries. We have spent £282,000 on the batteries. Interest at 4 per cent. on that amount would be £97,000. The loss on working amounts to £32,000. That makes a total loss of £129,000. Then, there is depreciation. The officers of the department say it is approximately £165,000, the present value of the plants being £116,000. If these plants were compelled to pay the £97,000 interest on the capital expended we would have to increase the charges straight away by 2s. 9d. per ton.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The mills would work full time then instead of being six months idle.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member has not been about the fields much when he says that if we put on these increased charges we would get more stone to treat.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Some of the mills are hung up for six months.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Because we have not the stone to treat. I have reduced the tonnage to start a mill to 300 tons for a 5-head mill in a small district and 500 in a large district. I think we should have enough stone to keep us going.

Mr. Seaddan: Low prices should be an inducement to bring stone along.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am satisfied the prospectors would be very glad if they were told there was a further reduction.

Mr. Seaddan: You would get a bigger turnover.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But we would get a bigger loss if the stone was not forthcoming. A few years ago the charges were very high, being 15s. to 20s. a ton. They were brought down consistently year after year, until at the present time the charges show a loss on working, and we do not pay interest. If we paid interest and paid the loss we would have to provide another £129,000, and if we had to provide depreciation we would have to make it £294,000. No doubt these plants should provide depreciation if we are not going to look to the indirect advantages, and the leader of the Opposition is not going to look for any indirect advantages in the expenditure of

loan money. As I have already said, in order to provide interest we would have to increase the price by 2s. 9d. per ton.

Mr. Holman: We spent money from revenue on State batteries.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Government to which the member belonged were not the first to do that. Does not the member consider that interest should be found even although the capital is found from revenue? For instance, if he were to build a house or construct a water supply, would he not think the capital cost of the work should be capable of producing interest? I certainly should. If we were compelled to add sufficient to our charges to make up for depreciation and interest on loans we would have to increase the present price by 8s. 5½d. per ton. If efforts were not made on the part of the Minister to curtail expenses, assuredly he would be laying himself open to attacks from the Opposition. We can, however, show that the crushing costs have been decreased by 1s. per ton during last year's operations, although we had more batteries to work and less stone to treat, and this shows that the administration has been carefully watched and that there have been no extravagances. All we want in connection with the battery system is tonnage, for if we get that we will very soon show better returns. I hope we shall be able to show some profit, despite the large sum of money invested. It is just as well, in giving consideration to what has been done for the industry, to recognise that £280,000 odd has been expended upon a system which has not paid for working expenses, one penny interest or one penny for depreciation. The indirect advantages are, however, enormous, and I believe they fully justify the expenditure. In addition to that we have given subsidies for cartage and for development, we have assisted in diamond drilling, and at the present time some good work is being done in that respect in the Mount Morgans district owing to the assistance given there. We have assisted in development generally, and in the purchase of machinery. It must al-

ways be understood that when people come to us for assistance from the Mining Development Vote it is a critical period of their history: it is a time when they have pretty well exhausted all their funds and have probably no rich ore in sight. The department have then to take the risk. I have consistently refused all requests for assistance in development work. By the efforts we have made in helping men to buy machinery we have been able to build up a great many mines in Western Australia. Suggestions have been made that boards should be appointed in connection with the apportionment of the Mining Development Vote, if there is to be one in the future. It is impossible in the outback country to have mining boards fully qualified to deal with this question of the apportionment of funds. There could not be one in every camp, and a mining board in a place such as, say, Leonora, would endeavour to concentrate their efforts on assisting mines, the development of which would have the result of building up their own town and would neglect places like Mulline, Malcolm, and other outback districts. The same remarks would apply to boards at Menzies or Kookynie.

Mr. Scaddan: That is purely assumption.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A mining board in Menzies would not pay much attention to applications for assistance from Davyhurst or Niagara.

Mr. Scaddan: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Because it would not help to build up their particular district, and their interest, consequently, would not be the same.

Mr. Hudson: Whom would you appoint?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There would be a great difficulty unless the boards were made purely local, for there could not be one in each mining district. I intend, if required, to provide members with a list showing the expenditure from the Mining Development Vote in the various constituencies. I had one prepared last year which showed that the Mount Margaret district had received the largest portion of this amount, while of the re-

spective towns the list was headed by Kanowna. I should be pleased to publish the return. I think it would also be wise, if we have a sum on the Estimates for mining development, to set out how that sum is to be apportioned to the various goldfields. Since the year 1901 we have spent on mining development £124,458.

Mr. Holman: How much have you got back?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The recoups amount to £18,316. In the early days the major portion of the vote was spent in the nature of subsidies in connection with crushing at private mills, and a deal in subsidies in developing below the different levels. There were also subsidies in connection with diamond drilling, so that nothing like all the money was paid in the shape of advances. We have exceedingly good value for the advances now in existence. For instance, there was a question of a loan raised by the leader of the Opposition at Callion for £1,000. There is a magnificent security for the advance there. There was also a sum at Gwalia and for Hatt's battery.

Mr. Scaddan: What was the security on the Callion?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is a 10-head mill, and we have a first mortgage on it and a mortgage over the mine. We have also a mortgage on Hatt's Mill, and could get the money any day we liked to foreclose. I have not yet closed on them for I think that by doing so I would only delay operations, and might prevent local creditors from being able to get their money. Besides giving railways, water supplies, and assistance generally we have established a mining school where very good progress has been made. We are starting an engineering course there and are doing all we can to enable students to obtain a sound mechanical and engineering knowledge. Our duty should be to build up a race of mining engineers there, and everything possible is being done to make the School of Mines a thoroughly first-class institution. Statements were made that we are charging much higher fees there than in Perth, or in other schools of mines in the Eastern States. That idea was exploded by a statement pre-

pared by Mr. Allen, the director, which showed that the fees charged at Kalgoorlie compared more than favourably with the fees charged in the Technical School, Perth. The total amount spent in mining development from the granting of Responsible Government has been £1,450,000. When members know what is being done in this direction in the Eastern States and New Zealand they will appreciate the assistance given in Western Australia. In New Zealand large sums of money were spent from loan, but it was mainly in the building of roads, a course to which the leader of the Opposition in his speech to-night offered so much objection. In Victoria they have done nothing so extensive in the nature of establishing a battery system. They have in that State some small mills and have compelled those having them to pay the greater cost of the upkeep. In none of the other States has anything been done in the way of providing railways, water supplies, or assistance generally. In fact, in no other part of the world has such generous assistance been shown as has been exhibited towards our goldfields by the Government.

Mr. Scaddan: Nor has such a generous return from the fields been given.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The question may well be asked how is it that, with all this assistance, the industry has not made the advance one would expect. When one looks at the history of Kalgoorlie and the great development at a depth showing large lodes carrying good values, such as for instance at the Fingal, Cue, at Kalgoorlie and at Leonora, and the big discoveries at Meekatharra, and the opening up of other new districts, such as the Youanme, it will be realised that fresh developments are daily arising in connection with the industry. During the past month or two a rich deposit has been discovered within a few miles of where gold was first discovered on the Eastern fields. There certainly has been a slight decline in the gold yield, but it must be remembered that we are treating a bigger tonnage and employing more men than formerly. I was pleased to see an article in the

Boulder *Star* recently to the effect that 500 men were being taken on at the Perseverance, and the suggestion was made that more miners were required than were actually available. I do not know if that is the case, and I do not want to do anything to interfere with the labour market, but I know that there has been a closing down of the Gwalia at Wiluna, and the dismissal of a large number of men. No doubt these men will be available for the Eastern fields, where it is said there is a shortage. There has been a big increase in the coal consumption, the figures being 214,000 tons last year, as compared with 175,000 tons the previous year. In connection with copper there was turned out during last year copper to the value of £43,000. So far as these two industries are concerned, I feel sure they have an undoubted future.

Mr. Collier: How does copper compare with the previous year?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I should have said that the increase this year was to the value of £43,900 and that the increased tonnage was 6,790. So far as coal is concerned, there is no doubt that it is getting a hold in the bunkering trade which I feel sure will continue to grow. The reports I have received from the Phillips River and Whim Creek show that there are large deposits there of valuable copper. I regret to say, however,—and it seems wonderful considering how much rain has fallen in other parts of the State:—that the water supply at Phillips River has been so bad that unless we give considerable assistance I fear the company will be compelled to turn off a large number of men and probably put the place back for a few years. Any day, however, we may find the dams which have been constructed there filled with water. The question members might well ask themselves is this, what is the cause of greater progress not having been made in connection with mining? I put it down to the antipathy to capital. There is no doubt that a great number of people think that the capitalist is a monster and look upon him as their greatest enemy. It is impossible to build up big mines

in this State without capital. It is impossible to expect the prospector to go into the back country to build up the industry unless he can get money to set his mine going. Fair treatment should be shown to the people who are prepared to put money into the industry.

Mr. Holman: Have not they had fair treatment?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know the member will not agree with me. Surely any person should recognise the great value a mine such as the Fingal is not only to Cue and Day Dawn but also to Perth, Fremantle, and Geraldton, and that it means employment and living to large numbers of people. So long as the State sees there are fair conditions for the employees, great good must be done by the introduction of capital. It should be recognised that if we induce capital to come here and help to build up the small mines, good must ensue. Unless a prospector is lucky enough to find a wonderfully rich proposition, he cannot expect to do well if he has no capital behind him. There are very few of these rich propositions and it is not they who require assistance, but there are the hundred and one small properties where capital judiciously expended in development and machinery, so as to enable the mines to be economically worked, would not only build them up but also the industry as a whole and so enable labour to be provided for the people.

Mr. Holman: What capital came in to build up Meekatharra?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The rich shows at Meekatharra built it up.

Mr. Holman: Some of those rich shows did not go above 3dwts.

Mr. Collier: What percentage of their profits do these wealthy companies put into prospecting?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think they do half enough in that respect, but there have been some instances where they have expended money. I cannot show that they have done all they ought to have done in the way of building up the industry, but we must have capital, labour, and brains. These three things are most essential.

Capital and labour are both very necessary but unless we have brains as well in helping to build up the industry, capital and labour are not of much use. Let us take South Africa, and see the enormous development that is going on there. There they pay 10 per cent. royalties, and there is no diminution in the amount of work.

Mr. Scaddan: There might be.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There might be some day. The Government there have done all they possibly could to build up the industry. In 1880 they came to the conclusion that mining was a more speculative industry than any other, and being so they could not see why it should not be more restrictive. To-day they have something like between 135,000 and 145,000 men employed in it.

Mr. Scaddan: Are our conditions restrictive?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They are undoubtedly restrictive. I want to point out that a certain amount of antipathy exists towards the person who is prepared to come here and invest his capital.

Mr. Holman: Point to one instance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They are innumerable.

Mr. Holman: That is all nonsense.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know the hon. member thinks differently.

Mr. Holman: If you exposed some of the mining swindles you would do some good.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I hope the hon. member has not been swindled. Anyhow, with regard to our laws, we have had great praise from an American authority who was sent here a little while ago. He described them in a report which he recently issued as being the most symmetrical and evenly balanced. That should be sufficient praise. What I want the country to believe is that in connection with an industry such as this we want to create a better feeling so as to induce capital to come here and we will be able then to employ not 18,000 or 19,000 miners but more like 50,000, and with conditions which are better even than those exist-

ing to-day. The duty of the State is to look after the interests of the people and we should do our utmost to encourage capital to come here and to find employment for our people.

Mr. Holman: Expose a few of the big mining swindles.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will be pleased to make any restriction in the Mining Act to prevent fraud. If I had the opportunity to do anything in connection with company laws in any way so as to make sure that shareholders would be treated more fairly, I would do everything I possibly could to that end. Where you have an industry which is speculative it should not be too restrictive.

Mr. Holman: There are thousands of acres of the best auriferous land locked up under exemption, and have been locked up for years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course the hon. member may have that idea. I was going to make some remarks with regard to the history of other countries, and point out the value of the mining industry, but I do not think it is necessary here, because I would be occupying too much time, and moreover I wish to make a few references to our railway system before I conclude. I will not have an opportunity again, so I thought a few remarks with regard to what is being done in the Railway Department would be of interest to members, and probably the information that I can give may be the means, I hope, of less criticism being offered by hon. members. The mileage of our railways in 1905 was 1,568. Last year it was 2,145, and we opened 102 miles in 1907-8; 101 miles in the following year, and 100 miles last year. Hon. members will thus see the quick growth of the railway system. This year will be a record one. We have just opened the Sandstone railway. We are about to open the extension to Meekatharra, and we will follow with the Upper Chapman, Bridgetown-Wilgarrup, Dowerin-Merredin lines, and the extension to Wongan Hills. All these will be opened during the current year. Just to show that the railways of Western Australia are a fair paying



proposition, I will quote a few figures: The capital cost in 1907-8 was £10,732,000; the earnings in that year were £1,501,000; the working expenses £1,007,000, interest £336,000 showing a surplus after paying working expenses and interest on the capital expended of £128,000. The year before last, 1908-9, with a capital of £11,016,000 the earnings were £1,508,000—just a little more than in the previous year. The working expenses decreased to £973,000. Our interest bill was £377,000, yet we showed a surplus that year after paying working expenses and interest of £156,000. In the year just ended, 1909-10, the capital cost increased by £367,000, making a total capital cost of £11,384,000. The earnings were £1,637,000, an increase of £128,000 over the previous figures. The working expenses came to £1,096,000, interest to £387,000, and the surplus over working expenses and interest to £153,000.

Mr. Holman: Explain how much has been transferred to loan.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Looking at these figures, one will see a decrease of £3,900. We paid into Suspense £21,000, being half the cost of the fire at Midland Junction, and the replacement of the stock which was burned. We also paid £12,000 for the purpose of carrying on relaying works between Beverley and York. A sum of £33,500 could have been added to our profits of the previous year, if we had desired and instead of having spent £124,000 for the purpose of earning £128,000 we have an increase of £33,000.

Mr. Holman: You transferred £40,000 from revenue to loan for replacing obsolete stock.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not this year.

Mr. Holman: It was £30,000 this year, and £40,000 in the previous year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member will remember that we gave an undertaking that in connection with Collie coal we would carry it for two years further. An increase took place in the price of Newcastle coal, and so there had to be a corresponding increase in the Collie article. This meant an increased

charge to the department. Again, when the Goldfields Water Supply Department asked the mining companies to pay a higher price for water they also asked that the railways should pay a fair sum for their water supply on the goldfields, and we had to agree to take what would represent a minimum outlay of £20,000. Then, we have been bringing a lot of old engines that we had put on one side into traffic again for all the spur lines, and that was a charge against our revenue during the past year. We have also an increase in our salary bill which did not apply last year, and which amounts to a large sum in the wages and salaries of the staff generally. I have not the exact figures here.

Mr. Gill: Would it not be just as well to pay all the wages that are due before the expiration of the year instead of holding them over until the new year?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I was not aware that that was done. It was not brought under my notice. I know, however, that a little while ago some people in the back country did not get their wages paid until some five or six days after they were due, and I asked that that state of affairs should be altered. I do not think that people should be compelled to wait for what is due to them, especially those in the back country, and I asked that every effort should be made to get over any difficulty that might exist. With our increased mileage we have increased traffic. During last year the trains ran over 296,000 miles; we carried 460,000 more passengers, and 296,000 more tons. I will not bother going into all the figures about the earnings and the expenditure, because I want to refer more particularly to the question of the manufacture of rolling stock. The member for Brown Hill pointed out that if we were not careful we would find ourselves short of rolling stock. We have been opening up a lot of new lines, and naturally we want a lot of rolling stock, and every effort is being made to meet the demand of the railway system. Last year we put into traffic five OA locomotives which were made at the workshops; 5 ACL cars, 52 D vans, and 272 Gc wagons, all made at the workshops. There were also manu-

factured at the Westralia Iron Works 82 Ge wagons. There are now in course of construction at the workshops five more OA locomotives, seven ACL cars, 134 Ge wagons, while 166 Ge wagons are also being made at the ironworks. We have accepted contracts and given authority to the workshops for two AD cars, two Za brake vans, 25 D vans, and 50 Fa louvered vans, and to the iron works for 15 AT cars, three AW cars, two AU cars, and 250 Ge wagons. The stock in course of construction amounts in value to £60,000, while those authorised and about to be constructed will cost about £123,000. We will require in addition a number of locomotives which will cost a large sum of money; 10 suburban cars, 350 Ge cars, 25 Fa louvered vans, 100 sheep and cattle vans, 10 brake vans, and five other vans. We are going to do all we can to try to build these, with the exception of the locomotives already ordered. We will require three locomotives to work on sharp curves and steep gradients, and it will be necessary to order these from England or elsewhere.

Mr. Seaddan: Could not they be made here?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We really have not room at the present time to carry on other necessary work. We have all we possibly can do, and we have already let a contract for the construction of new paint shops to cost £12,000. When the plans of the workshops were originally designed they comprised three buildings of 600 feet each, and the select committee who dealt with the question considered that three shops of 300 feet would be sufficient for the then requirements. They were quite right, but the time has now arrived for extension and we will have to increase Nos. 2 and 3 by 300 feet, making them in accordance with the original scheme. Buildings and machinery together will cost £100,000, but we will be able to do considerably more than in the past in respect to the manufacture of locomotives. However, we will not be able to manufacture the locomotives required for immediate necessities. Still, we intend, if we can get the authorisation we require, and if we can get the necessary workmen—

Mr. Angwin: It will be easy to get them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Well, as I say, if we can get them, we intend to see if we cannot manufacture all the rolling stock we require. I am pleased to say that up to the present time, and for some years past, every bit of rolling stock has been made in the State.

Mr. Angwin: How does it compare in the matter of price?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: More than well in respect to boilers, wagons and carriages. We have done remarkably well both in respect to our work and in respect to contracts within the State. We shall have these great alterations made in the workshops, and we will be faced with a large indent of machinery for them. Thus I hope soon to have such a plant as will enable us to manufacture all the locomotives required within the State itself. Then, next year, we will have very great additions to our trade. There has been a big expansion all round, including timber and Collie coal. We should, I think, have more coal to carry in the future than we carried last year. There has been an extraordinary settlement going on in connection with agriculture. Last year we carried over 40,000 tons of superphosphates, and with the increased tonnage of superphosphates we can reasonably expect a largely increased tonnage of products. Mining is on the upgrade, and there must, of necessity, be a big increase in population and production. Every effort will be made by the Railway Department to cope with the increased traffic following upon the progress made by Western Australia, and I hope we will be able to show a far greater revenue next year than we have done in the past.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest): In rising to make a few remarks on the Address-in-Reply it is not my intention to follow the various statements made by the Minister who has just resumed his seat. I think it would be preferable to wait till we read them in *Hansard*, because it is impossible to keep any check at all upon his statements as orally delivered. I desire to say I regret very much the delay in the opening of Parlia-

ment this session; because it appears to me we are likely to get through a good deal of work without proper attention and necessary discussion. There are various Bills foreshadowed as likely to come forward before Christmas. We met at the beginning of August, and I believe a great number of legislators suffer from summer lag, and will want to adjourn before Christmas. That being the case, we will not be able to give proper attention to the contentious measures outlined in the Governor's Speech. I do not intend to deal at any length with the Premier's speech delivered at Bunbury; because instead of being a statement or utterances foreshadowing legislation, it was largely in the nature of a batch of statistics. I do not intend to follow those subjects further than to make reference to the industry upon which practically the whole of the South-West is dependent at the present time. In that speech some attention was paid to the timber industry, and I contend it was not before it was time. The Premier has made the announcement that it is the intention of the Government to appoint a capable man to look after the forests of the State.

Mr. Jacoby: Hear, hear.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is all very well to say "hear, hear," and I am prepared to support it, provided we get a capable man. It is a reflection on the Government to think that the man at present in charge of the department has occupied his position for the last 15 years, the inference being that he is now incapable—in other words, it is only after 15 years that we discover he is incapable. I am not raising any objection to the proposed appointment mentioned by the Premier, but I hope the Government will not go outside of Australia for an expert to deal with the forestry system of the State. I think the report of the Royal Commission that sat in New South Wales, might be taken into serious consideration by the Premier. We would be wise if in making this appointment we paid special attention to that report, and especially to the following clause:—

We found a considerable difference of opinion among educational experts

and others as to the fitness for that position of a highly trained man from abroad, who, while possessing a knowledge of the principles of modern forestry under European, or, perhaps Indian conditions, would be ignorant of the peculiarities of the Australian flora, the characteristics of our indigenous trees, the opposite conditions of soil and climate, and the liberal laws under which our rural populations are controlled. After carefully weighing the evidence given on this point, we are convinced that in order to ensure the proper working of a new department, and to establish a successful forestry system, it is advisable that the position of chief commissioner should be filled by a man having Australian forestry experience, and proved organising and administrative ability, rather than by a highly trained scientific expert from abroad.

I sincerely trust that in the new appointment the Government will not go to the North of England or the South of Scotland for an expert, as they did last year. I hope that instead of this they will reserve the post for one or another of those men who have spent all the years of their lives among the flora of Australia. I want to say a word in regard to the reservations in connection with the timber industry, and to direct my remarks particularly to the Minister for Lands; because, three or four weeks ago, a statement was made in the Press that the Minister had reserved 750,000 acres for public works requirements, or for the services of the State. Most people will agree with the Minister when he takes a step that will assure to the people for the next few years a sufficient supply of timber for their requirements. There are many big projects looming in the future; there are a couple of Transcontinental railways to be constructed in Australia, and there will, of necessity, be an expansion of our railway system through all the States. But I want to enter an objection to the methods adopted by the Minister, to his saying that three-quarters of a million acres of country has been reserved and yet not making any attempt

to classify that area—that is to say, to discover whether it is blackboy, or jarrah, or karri, or tuart, or any other particular timber. It is absolutely impossible to get from the Ministry, or from the Forestry Department, any accurate estimate of the area of our jarrah lands at present the property of the Crown. It is impossible, I say, to find out the area to be exploited in the future, or the area we can lock up for our own requirements. I contend it is time some attempt was made to classify the timber lands with the object of getting that information of which we stand so much in need. I say without fear of contradiction, that the figures given by the Minister, so far as they relate to jarrah, are entirely misleading; and when we desire to raise our voice and ask that caution be exercised, when we want to exercise a little vigilance in connection with our timber areas we are met with the reply that the Minister has reserved 750,000 acres and that, consequently, there is no occasion for alarm. Instead of this being the actual area available I think I am safe in writing off 500,000 acres of it, so far, at least, as jarrah is concerned. I am pleased that the Minister has reserved the flora and fauna in the vicinity of Pinjarra and put it in Class "A." This reserve has dwindled materially from what it was originally, and I hope it will now remain the property of the State. Attempts have been made in the past, and I suppose will again be made in the future, to have this area thrown open for timber-cutting; but I hope when such attempt is made in the future the Minister will bring both his big feet down on that proposition as soon as he can. I think if we were to take the system adopted in South Australia of finding out the area of country available and classifying it by giving it in different hundreds, we would have a more accurate idea of our timber lands in this country. As I say, it is impossible to get this information, and I see no possibility of any improvement in this respect unless some reform is brought about in the Forestry Department.

The Minister for Lands: We will have the conservator presently.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I think we might do something before the conservator arrives. I want to say a few words in regard to the cut-out areas of the State. The timber wealth is likely to be of the utmost importance to the State for years to come, and it behoves us to see that we have a continuous industry. I do not want to see the export figures grow and expand for a few years; only to have the boom followed by a disastrous slump. I want to see the industry continuous, giving continuous employment to the large number of men engaged in it to-day. We find that 120,000 acres has been cut over by the companies, and no use whatever is being made by the Government of that area to-day. When the new conservator is appointed it will not be so much his duty to bring into existence new forests as to police the forests we have, and which, if receiving the attention the Government should be giving them, would be producing a much larger quantity of timber than they do.

The Premier: It can only be done by natural re-growth.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I will admit we cannot plant the hardwoods; that is not my policy. I am taking up the same stand as last session, that if we were to assist nature a little in this country—and nature is rather generous—by employing a few practical men to go throughout these cut-out areas, we would be doing a great amount of good. I certainly have worked in the industry for a few years, but I do not claim the practical knowledge that hundreds of others have in the State. I believe, however, from the experience of men who have been all their lives in our forests that the greatest enemy to the cut-out area, and the greatest enemy to our forests, is bush fires. If attention is paid in this direction and in the direction of taking out any scraggy trees that might prevent the growth of young promising trees, we could bring our cut-out forests into a reproductive state again. There are settlements in some of the cut-out areas, and I believe settlements should be allowed in some favoured areas, especially in gullies that are perhaps suitable for vine culture or fruit growing. The only thing in regard to encouraging settlement

in the jarrah areas is the fact that in a few years when we have the settlers it means the past experience in regard to Jarrahwood and Denmark will be repeated when the lands will not grow good timber any longer, and the Government will be asked to buy, perhaps at an exorbitant price, two streaks of rust and a permanent way. However, in many favourable localities fruitgrowers and settlers would make a good living if given assistance at the start. Many employees at timber mills I am sure will be prepared to establish homes for themselves and utilise the time they lose at the mills in improving their holdings. Something has been said to-night in regard to the colony system of settlement. I hope encouragement will be given to that system in settling our agricultural settlers in close proximity to one another. I believe I would have no difficulty in getting a hundred of the best axemen to-morrow, sons of farmers from the Eastern States, to take up each 1,000 acres close to one another where they could co-operate to make a success of their settlement. I hope encouragement will be given to them so that we will not see them wage-slaves for ever and not dependent on an industry which fluctuates, but we will see them men who will strike out for themselves and make an independent living. I hope the Attorney General or the Solicitor General will give me some information in regard to the freedom allowed to timber companies in the carriage of freight and passengers on their lines. I approached the Solicitor General last recess, and he assured me in the documents I received from him that some of the timber concessions were absolute principalities, and that it was almost impossible for the Government to intervene. I am going to prosecute the subject further, because I find the freights of the various timber lines are excessive, and that the fares are practically double those charged on Government lines. Proper facilities are not provided and, while workmen at the different centres have to ride in open trucks, for others they provide carriages. This is a discrimination that should not be allowed to continue. At Yarloop and

other centres workmen have to board the train in open trucks at five o'clock in the morning no matter what the weather may be, but if Ministers of the Crown are going to the assistance of one of their nominees who is floundering the company are prepared to put on closed carriages. The excuse is that there are so many dead-ends it is absolutely dangerous to travel in closed carriages, but that excuse does not hold good when Ministers of the Crown journey on these particular lines. A few nights ago the Attorney General and the Acting Premier went to Nanga Brook in one of these carriages. I say this distinction should not be allowed; it is a class distinction of the worst kind; and these people trying to make the best of it in timber centres should be entitled to some consideration. With regard to the statement of the member for Albany, replied to by the Premier, as to planting the pines at Ludlow, I wish it to be distinctly understood that not one member of the Opposition objects to the policy of planting pines. Most of us have read of the success in the Eastern States in this direction. I think I know every acre of pine forest planted in South Australia. None of us are going to raise our voices in opposition to the policy of pine plantations. I support the policy of planting pines in any part of the State suitable. There are pine forests in the North-West of the State, but from information I have received I believe the nearest is 245 miles from Derby beyond Isdell and back from the Leopold Ranges, and that it is absolutely impossible for any company to exploit these areas of pine forests in the North-West for many years to come. In fact I was assured by men who had been there that it is not a forest at all, but that you find a clump of suitable trees and possibly go 10 or 15 miles before you find another clump.

The Premier: This pine is to the East of Cambridge Gulf; it is not near Derby.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: No; there are pines at a place called Isdell. They extend for 400 miles, I believe. We are all in a quandary in regard to the extent of the forest. I do not think any member of the House knows as much about the sub-

ject as we would like to know, but I know the country is a long way away and difficult to get at, and from the information I have gathered from men who have been over the ground I believe that it is not a forest that it would pay a company, no matter how wealthy it might be, to put in a railway to tap; also that it is very patchy and consists of clumps of pine with big spaces between. However, in regard to the Ludlow planting, I am not altogether convinced we are following out the most economical and best policy in selecting Ludlow where the timber is so heavy. We were told by the Premier in his policy speech that there were 40 bullocks, 30 men and two traction engines employed in clearing at Ludlow preparatory to planting pines, and the Minister for Lands in making his speech in this House said it was costing approximately £5 per acre.

The Minister for Lands: I said it cost £13 by day labour and half that sum by the present method.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not going to quibble over 10s. or £1, but I am going to watch these figures closely. I am convinced it is not being cleared at £5 or £6 an acre. From what I know of the district and of the work being done it will not be cleared at £6. There are several other localities in Western Australia it would cost half that amount or practically nothing to clear where pines would grow to equal perfection. I think we are on the wrong track in spending such a large sum of money, allowing it to be £6 10s. an acre, to prepare it for a pine forest. The Premier assured us that Ludlow was selected on the advice of Mr. Macfarlane, the head forester, Mr. Adams and Mr. Port. I will grant that Mr. Macfarlane is as good a judge of soil as can be found in the State, but I believe that there are many members in the House who could, with an equal degree of success, select an area for the bringing into existence of a pine plantation as the other two gentlemen. I do not think either of them claims to have special knowledge of soils, such as are required for the growing of pines; therefore, I wish to endorse the remarks

of the member for Albany but not in opposition to pine plantations. I believe pine forests should be grown in Western Australia without spending £6, or £7, or what I feel will be a great deal more, per acre in order to get the land ready. Before leaving the subject of timber reserves, I wish to say in regard to the particular area of 750,000 acres the Minister mentioned as being locked up for future requirements, I made inquiries with regard to a block of 29,000 granted within the last 10 days to a timber company right on the edge of the proposed railway from Pinjarra to Maradong. That proposed railway goes something like 12 miles. I had hoped that the Premier in his speech at Bunbury would make provision for this line going at least 20 miles, because we are laying down lengths of railway 60 or 70 miles in some places, and we are doing very little in extending that line to the Williams district to give facilities to people who have been settled there 40 or 50 years. I was hoping the Premier would give some assistance to those settlers who have been working under very bad conditions and many disadvantages for so long. However, the line goes out a distance of 12 miles, and just adjacent to it an area of 29,000 acres has been granted to a timber company during the last 10 days. I have the Minister's letter in reply to my inquiry which was to find out whether this particular area was included in the reserve of 750,000 acres, and I find in the reply this area was originally intended to be in the reservation but was excluded and granted to this particular company.

The Minister for Lands: That is not so.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The reply I received was to this effect—

In reply to your inquiry of the 25th ultimo, I beg to forward herewith plan showing, bordered green, blocks of land, applied for by Messrs. Port, Honey, & Co., to the East of the flora and fauna reserve, Marrinup, and to state that the area marked "1" did come within the original proposed reservation of 750,000 acres, but has been excluded therefrom and granted

to the applicants together with the area marked number "2" under saw-milling permit No. 34/11.

The Minister for Lands: Who signed that?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I cannot make out what the signature is, but is from the Lands Department.

The Minister for Lands: It is not mine, I think there is something wrong about it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There may be something wrong. I hope there is. If the Minister has power to wave his hand, like the magician Carter, and decree that 29,000 acres shall be allotted to this company there is nothing to stop him from decreeing that 290,000 acres should go to them.

The Minister for Lands: It was not taken out of the reserve.

The Premier: I think it was east of the reserve.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I want to enter my protest against the system adopted by the Department in connection with forestry generally. It appears to me that the Forestry Department are being absorbed by the Lands Department and that sufficient attention is not being given to the industry. The present buildings in which the department are housed are a disgrace to the Government. Any dealer in second-hand clothes would not carry on business in such premises. The office of the Forestry Department is an eyesore to people coming from elsewhere who desire to see the exhibits kept there. Even if it does necessitate his taking his attention from agriculture for 24 hours, I hope the Minister will give attention to the Forestry Department and see that better buildings are provided for the head office. A word with regard to the State mill erected last recess in the Marrinup district. I with other members, advocated the erection of a State mill and was more than pleased when I saw the Government had launched it in that district. At the same time, however, while I welcomed the establishment of the mill I must deplore the bungling in fitting it up and carrying it on. I do not know whether it was that there were too many

engineers at work, but some say that the Government desire to see the experiment a failure and the expenditure mount up so that they can cease to carry on operations there. The mill should certainly be able to do work equal to that of some of the small private mills, but we find that, whereas the latter cut 25 loads a day, the State mill can only cut seven or eight. However, there is an improvement being shown and I am prepared to make a good deal of allowance, for we were all small at one time and we had to grow. It appears that the machinery in the mill is not up to date, for there are no modern methods adopted. The travelling bench is a primitive affair consisting of two trucks held up by 7 x 7 oregon; in addition other portions of the plant are obsolete. I was there a few weeks ago and what impressed me was the bad position in which the mill is erected. It is not on a good site, there are no winches to get the timber into the shed, and men with kangaroo "jacks" have to try and force the logs uphill. In such circumstances the venture cannot be a success and the expenditure will mount up. I hope the Government will give attention to the work of overhauling the plant and bringing it up to date. The quality of the timber there is excellent, averaging as it does something like 80 per cent., and in such circumstances no difficulty should be experienced in making a success of the venture. In no enterprise in Western Australia is there a better opportunity provided for good results being shown than in connection with the State sawmill. I hope this branch of the industry will receive the attention of the Government and that the mill will be brought up to date for, in its present inefficient state, it is unfair to the manager. I do not know whether that gentleman has managed mills in the past and I make no charge of incompetency against him. I know that Mr. Davis is a timber expert and has a better knowledge of timber than most men. I make no indictment against him as manager, for he has only been in charge a little time. It is not fair to him to provide him with faulty tools and bad machinery and ask him to

turn out a fair quantity of timber or a creditable output. I want the whole of the plant to be overhauled, for this branch of State enterprise has great possibilities in the future. A subject which I have given a great deal of attention to and which I think should be advanced further in Western Australia than in any other State, is the establishment of workmen's homes. Perhaps there are many Ministerial supporters who will not agree that the Government should be landlords. In New Zealand, however, the experiment of establishing workmen's homes has been tried, while in South Australia only a fortnight ago a Bill was passed for the purpose of establishing such homes so as to give the great bulk of the people a better opportunity to live happy lives and in better surroundings than they have had in the past.

Mr. Walker: They have them even in Sydney.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But not on such a great scale. Nothing contributes more to the grinding poverty of the people of the State, the factory workers and the people of large towns, than the excessive rents the masses have to pay. They are charged exorbitant rents for what in many cases are tumble-down rookeries, that is in the populous centres, and it would be a good step if the Government, seeing that we have so large an area of country and so much timber—a great deal of which now goes into the fire at the different mills—and seeing that we now have the State sawmill, owned by the people, turned this timber to good account by establishing workmen's homes. Hundreds of these homes could be established and people engaged in the various industries would be given a better chance in life. A workable scheme should be brought down. I do not expect the present Government to do it, but they might pave the way, as they have gone so far in the direction of State socialism, by establishing a State sawmill. If they do this I feel sure they will have the support of the people. The workers in the various industries are having rather a bad time when they approach either the Arbitration Court, or other tribunals, in order

to have conditions of pay, etcetera, fixed. At times they have had to suffer heavy reductions owing to the awards of the various courts. These awards would not have been felt so severely were it not for the great exactions owing to the heavy rents the workers have to pay. As New Zealand and South Australia have blazed the track in regard to the establishment of these homes, the Government should not hesitate to initiate a system of that kind here at once, so as to give Government employees and the outside public an opportunity to do a little better for themselves.

Mr. Collier: But that would not be encouraging capital.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I listened with considerable interest to the remarks of the Minister for Mines on the question of capital. He seems to be under the impression that a capitalist is a very shy bird, but my knowledge of the capitalist and wealthy corporations is that they will go to any locality or district where they can get a fair return for the money they have invested. I am not going to worry myself much as to the capitalist's position, for he can look after himself. With regard to the matters dealt with in the discussion on the Address-in-Reply, it has been noticeable that some attention has been paid to the question of immigration. However, I will not labour that question to-night. It is hardly worth while saying much on the Address-in-Reply for little attention is paid by any Government to grievances brought forward in the course of that debate. All I have to say on the question of immigration is that I am not altogether convinced that we are adopting the best policy. I will not, like some members, congratulate the Premier on the splendid work he has done in the old country, for the results are not manifest yet, although possibly they may be later on. Certainly some injury was done by the Premier's visit in one particular and that is that Parliament was not called together early owing to his absence. Some say he was away looking for Imperial distinctions, but I do not think that was the case; the fact remains, however, that, owing to the absence of the Premier,



Parliament was hung up. Here we adopt a different system from the other States; we have a one-man Government, and when that one man goes away it is impossible, evidently, for the Ministry to call Parliament together or to transact the business of the country. The Acting Premier made an heroic effort, during his brief occupation of the Premier's chair, to do as much as he could to establish himself in the favour of the public. I remember reading his utterances of the past three or four months with regard to the Transcontinental railway.

Mr. Scaddan: He was only kite flying.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was nothing else. He had no authority from the people or from the House to say that the Government were in favour of launching out in the expenditure of two millions to run a railway from Kalgoorlie to the South Australian border.

Mr. Scaddan: He was quite safe. he knew South Australia would not consent.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes. The Fisher Government will construct the line and when the next elections come on the Federal Labour party will perhaps claim some credit for building it, and then Mr. Wilson will be able to adopt the attitude he has often taken in the past and say that he bluffed the Government into the course they took. The Acting Premier particularly condemned Mr. King O'Malley for what he termed his land-grab policy.

Mr. Collier: He will survive it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Kings have survived greater condemnation than that before. I am inclined to approve of the Federal Minister's attitude. I do not look on it as a land-grab policy, for it is for the people of Australia. It is not to be looked upon as an ordinary land-grab or concession or privilege to any particular company. Mr. King O'Malley suggested that 25 miles on each side of the railway should be given to the Commonwealth and that this would facilitate and expedite the construction of the railway. As a taxpayer of the Commonwealth I am not particular which governing body has charge of my property. Personally, I would rather see the Commonwealth

have it. for if so they would keep the fee simple of that land, which is now valueless but might become valuable later on; whereas I fear the present Government would dispose of the land to a land company or private individual. The policy of immigration has been mentioned very much during this debate. I want to say that coming into contact with some of the immigrants, I am convinced that a great number of them have no intention of going on the land. The very day I was elected for Forrest, no fewer than 12 of them went to one timber station in search of work, while I met others who were going to different localities to compete with the wage earners in the South-West. I met several in the Bridgetown district who told me that 107 of them had arrived in the one boat, and they added they had been offered work in Perth but that they did not take it. I asked them what wages they had been offered, and they replied 6s. This had been offered to them by a nurseryman in Perth, a man who apparently was taking advantage of their ignorance of the country's conditions. There are scores who are competing with the workers in the State, and who have no intention whatever of going on the land. I do not propose to deal further with that subject, because after all it would be indulging in some little repetition and the Premier has suggested there may be a better scheme adopted in future for bringing immigrants to the country. I hope that a scheme will be adopted. The type of immigrants coming here is not the same as the old stock who came a few generations ago. Those who are arriving at the present time have not a knowledge of agricultural pursuits, and they are not in the position to adapt themselves to circumstances, or to do pioneering in the agricultural or other centres. A great number come out as agricultural labourers, and before they pass muster in the old country they are supposed to show that they have had agricultural experience. I have been informed by some of them that all it is necessary to do is to go to a farmer, get employment for about a week, and then obtain a reference. A

number of these people have had only a couple of weeks' experience and it seems that the reference they get for this work is sufficient to enable them to secure a passage out as agricultural labourers, and when they arrive here they have no intention of making a living out of the land. No doubt the Premier has done good work but we will have to wait a few months for evidence of that. I have read reports in different journals of the speeches the Premier made, and the impression he created. I read recently in a leading journal published in Australia an account of a banquet which was tendered to the Premier; I forget whether it was at the Fishmongers' Hall, or where it was. There were among the company present, the Earl of Crewe, Lord Rosebery, Sir George Reid, and Sir Newton J. Moore.

Mr. Collier: Great capabilities in that lot!

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: This journal deals with the speeches made by the different speakers. The Earl of Crewe was first, Lord Rosebery second, Sir George Reid third, and our Premier last. In dealing with the Premier's remarks it says—

After those gentlemen had spoken the Premier of Western Australia was called upon. The uprising of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Newton J. Moore, Prime Minister of Western Australia, caused a commotion. In megaphonic tones he shouted involved remarks about Western Australia. A cab horse in the neighbouring street bolted, and the driver threatened to sue the Western Australian. The Premier of Western Australia spoke longer than all the other speakers put together.

There is no doubt in my mind that after his experience at that meeting he created an impression in England. I have no desire to take up more time, but I just want to say that I appreciate the action of Ministers on the other side of the House in going into my electorate just recently for the purpose of placing the Government policy before my constituents. I am perhaps the newest man from the country. I have been to my electors at a later date than any other member in this

House, and notwithstanding the heavy cannons that the Ministry poured in, notwithstanding all the opposition that was shown, I managed to squeeze home. I do not know whether the Premier would have gone out to the different centres if he had been in the State, but at least four Ministers of the Crown put in an appearance in that electorate. It was said in some quarters that the Treasurer was anxious to annex that £25 to assist the revenue. However, we find in the centres visited by two of the Ministers, the Attorney General and the Acting Premier, and in the other centres visited by the member for Nelson, and yet other centres visited by the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Mines, that in these centres where 400 votes were polled only eight of them were recorded for the Government candidate. The Ministers should congratulate themselves on their persuasive powers. I desire to say that I took exception then, and I take exception now, to the statement made by the Acting Premier at Nanga Brook, and he is rather reckless when he is on the stump and not particular how he misrepresents—that the timber workers of Forrest were instructed not to go to the meetings of my opponent, and not to have anything to do with the Government policy, that they were instructed to go to the poll and give an overwhelming vote for labour. I desire to say that no such instructions were given, and the Acting Premier knows that full well if he will admit the fact. No doubt there are a great number who perhaps will not have a kindly feeling towards the electors in a particular district which shows such decided partiality for any particular party. The electors of Forrest showed in an unmistakable manner their opinion of the policy of this side of the House, and I suppose they also wanted to show that they resented the tactics adopted by not only the members of the Ministry but by some of the journals supporting them throughout Western Australia. It is only a little while since one journal, and I believe the Premier is interested in it, described all timber workers in Western Australia, men who contribute very

largely to the prosperity of the State, as gypsies without any aim or object in life.

The Premier: I have been as good a friend to them as you have been.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am speaking of the attitude of the journal which circulates in the district which returns the Premier to Parliament. I do not say that that journal exercises great influence, but I say it ill becomes it to appeal to the electors of Forrest to return a supporter of the Government after the manner in which, only some seven weeks before, they had written these electors down as gypsies and wanderers, and as men who were not to be trusted. Another journal a little while ago published a paragraph dealing with the prosperity of the town, and the good order which was being maintained and said that notwithstanding the fact that a large number of timber hewers were in town during the previous four days there was an entire absence of crime. I believe that the timber workers throughout those centres resented being called gypsies, and they have shown in the past that they are able to give attention to political subjects, and are in a position to exercise an intelligent vote as other communities in Western Australia. The Acting Premier speaking at Nanga Brook admitted that the profits of the company had increased, and that the position of the workers had also improved, and that there was evidence of prosperity on all hands. I will admit that the position is improved, and I will admit that things are more prosperous than they were three or four years ago, but the condition of the men to-day is far from satisfactory in many centres. At the same time there is a vast improvement compared to the condition of things three years ago. The Acting Premier denounced members on this side of the House, yet there is one among them who has done perhaps more than any other man to improve the position of the workers in the timber industry. The Acting Premier went so far as to say that the increases earned by these men in the South-West were obtained through the efforts of the Premier. I do not think the Premier would make such a preposterous claim as that. The

reason for the increase obtained by the men and the improvement which is so marked to-day is owing to the fact that the men have at last resolved to be loyal to themselves. They have built up an organisation which is the strongest financially in Western Australia, and they can command respect and attention, and it is the men's own efforts which are responsible for the improved position of the industry to-day. One word more with regard to the exception from the Governor's Speech on the subject of a proposed amendment to the Arbitration Act. It is not necessary to labour this subject, but I hope the Government will consider the matter apart from other items of policy, and I hope they will bring in an amendment during this session in order to do away with the friction which exists, and the unsatisfactory state of affairs at the present time. We as a party on this side of the House are accused of taking up an attitude that is diametrically opposed to that which we took up a few years ago. My opponents have taunted me, as they have taunted us all on this side, with the fact that while we advocate arbitration yet we will not comply with the awards. I want to say again that the Arbitration Act as it at present exists, is not what the Labour party asked for. There were only seven members of the Labour party when the measure was placed on the statute book. Efforts were made in 1904 to amend the Act so as to make it a more workable measure, but they failed. Since then, the present Government have made no attempt to amend the Act in the necessary direction. The leader of the Opposition has referred to an incident of three or four weeks ago by which owing to a legal technicality, and a ruling given by Mr. Justice Burnside, the whole of the timber industry was demoralised for three days, and something like 2,000 workers were idle through no fault of their own. When we see that the Act is faulty and does not work with that smoothness it should do, it is the duty of the Government to make the announcement that they are prepared to amend it, and do away with the differences that are causing so

much unrest in Western Australia. The Judges and the people right through Western Australia, employers and employees alike, are complaining of the Act, yet no attempt is being made to rectify the grievances brought along. Now, just a word in regard to another industrial measure—and I am sorry the Government are neglecting to such a large extent measures on the statute-book or which should be there in the interest of the workers. I wish to refer to the Workers' Compensation Act, though not to make any lengthy reference to it; because in a few weeks' time we will have it before us, when we can speak to it with undivided attention. An effort was made during last session to have the Act amended, and the chief hostility shown on the Government side of the House was to the proclamation of diseases common to miners in this State—that men suffering from phthisis, and other ailments, owing to working in ill-ventilated mines should be included in this Act. Apart from that some effort should be made to increase the amount paid to the relatives of a breadwinner in the case of a fatal accident. I was reading the other day in a journal very favourably disposed towards the Government—I refer to the *Mining and Engineering Journal*—of the case of a widow at Gwalia whose husband had been killed in the mine, and who placed her case in the hands of a solicitor, making a claim for £2,000. The journal pointed out how foolish an action it was on the part of the widow, seeing that if she had refrained from engaging a solicitor and had accepted £500—which would have been £100 more than is provided for in the Act—she would have been amply compensated for her loss. Personally, I do not think £400 enough, and I hope that members on the Government side will show a little more generosity and liberality in dealing with this industrial measure, and that they will agree to bring it up to the standard observed in the old country. I read a few days ago of the instance of a man who, witnessing an accident while in the employ of a private firm, died from shock. He was not actually engaged at work at the time,

yet the court held that the firm by whom he was employed would have to pay compensation. We have not got anywhere near that in this country. Our Act lags far behind that of the old country, and I hope the Ministry will bring it up to date, and replace it on the statute-book in an amended form. One section which I hope will be amended is that relating to the period which must elapse before compensation is paid. Under the Act as it exists to-day a man has to be laid aside for a fortnight before his compensation starts or he receives any payment at all. I say no logical argument can be advanced as to why the worker should be a fortnight off before receiving a penny of compensation. That is the worst fortnight he has to put up with, and we say that is the time during which he should receive most compensation. I trust we will be able to bring our Act into line with the English law by making compensation payable from the date of the accident. There are other matters with which I could deal, but I will have opportunity when the Estimates are under discussion. Particularly do I wish to refer to subjects connected with hospitals and public health. However, it is not my intention now to take up more time; but I hope that when particular measures are brought down, contentious measures some of them, Ministers will be able to give some information as to the course they intend to adopt, and we will see that some improvement is to be made in our legislation. I purposely curtail my remarks because I believe, as I said at the outset, that the debate on the Address-in-Reply does not provide a fitting opportunity for dealing with many matters that require the attention of the Government. Because after all, no matter how carefully a man may prepare his utterances, no matter what the facts at his command, Ministerial attention is not given to any speaker while speaking on the Address-in-Reply. I have listened to different Ministers and members on the opposite side of the House during the last few days. I recollect that the member for Roebourne at least a dozen times urged the Minister to make a note of a particular request; yet I do not think the Minis-

ter, nor, indeed, many others, took the slightest notice of him. However, the time will come during the next few weeks when, I hope, attention will be given to various matters to be introduced, such as the Licensing Bill, the redistribution of seats, and other measures foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech. I only desire to say I hope there will be no undue haste, even if the House has to sit long after Christmas to make up lost time, the time during which Ministers have been touring the country instead of meeting Parliament. I hope even if we have to make up this lost time we will give proper attention to the various measures, that we will criticise them, amend them, and make them more workable in the interests of the people of the State.

On motion by Mr. Carson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 10th August, 1910.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Attorney General: Regulations made under Education Act.

By the Premier: 1. Reports of the Public Service Commissioners on Accounts and Stores. 2. By-laws under "The Met-

ropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909." 3. By-laws of the Wiluna Roads Board. 4. By-laws of the Municipality of Busselton. 5. Copies of Orders in Council under Section 35 of "The Audit Act." 6. Poundage Fees agreed to by the Cottesloe Beach Road Board.

### QUESTION—LAND AVAILABLE, VICTORIA DISTRICT.

Mr. S. F. MOORE asked the Minister for Lands: When is it intended to throw open third-class lands in the Victoria district for selection under conditional purchase conditions?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Lands) replied: On the 16th instant, *vide* notice now appearing in the *Government Gazette*.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY OVERHEAD BRIDGE, FREMANTLE.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Railways: When is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the erection of a bridge over the railway from Edward-street to the wharf at Fremantle?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The Commissioner advises that this bridge is not required for railway purposes, and he does not propose asking for authority for its erection.

### QUESTION—SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADMASTER.

Mr. DAGLISH asked the Minister for Education: 1. Is it true that a person from outside the State has been appointed as headmaster of the Secondary School? 2. If so, has the appointee had any previous experience as a headmaster? 3. Is there no member of the staff of the Education Department or of any secondary school here qualified for the position? 4. In what were the local candidates inferior—scholarship or capacity to organise and control a new institution?