

has apparently fallen in his late campaign through being a victim of bad companionship.

On motion by Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister) debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 8th July, 1914.*

	PAGE
Question: Boya Quarry .. .. .	223
Leave of absence .. .. .	223
Bills: Osborne Park Tramways Purchase, 1R. ..	223
Bills of Sale Act Amendment, 1R. ..	223
Address-in-reply, fourth day .. .. .	223

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

### QUESTION: BOYA QUARRY.

Mr. WISDOM asked the Minister for Works: What is the price charged for blue metal to Government departments, supplied by the Boya quarry for—(1) dust, (2)  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. metal, (3) 1in. metal, (4)  $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. metal, (5) 2in. metal?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The charges made to Government departments are sufficient to cover working expenses, interest, depreciation, sinking fund, etc.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. LAYMAN leave of absence for two weeks granted to the hon. member for West Perth (Mr. Allen) and the hon. member for Katanning (Mr. A. E. Piesse) on the grounds of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. LAYMAN leave of absence for four weeks granted to the hon. member for Greenough (Mr. Nanson) on the grounds of urgent private business.

On motion by Mr. UNDERWOOD leave of absence granted to the hon. member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) for three weeks on the grounds of urgent private business.

On motion by Mr. UNDERWOOD leave of absence granted to the hon. member for Gascoyne (Mr. McDonald) for three weeks on the grounds of urgent private business.

### BILLS—FIRST READING.

1. Osborne Park Tramways Purchase (introduced by the Premier).

2. Bills of Sale Act Amendment (introduced by the Attorney General).

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Fourth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS (Subiaco): After the very lucid and comprehensive speech of the hon. the Premier last evening, it does not seem as if there is need for anything further to be said in defence of what the Government have done, especially in view of the very weak nature of the criticism which has been levelled against us. But one marvels that even such weak criticism should be levelled by the Opposition in view of the unbounded prosperity which prevails in the State at the present time.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What about the unemployed?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The Premier last evening pointed out the directions in which this prosperity was to be seen. I venture to say that never in the history of the State since the great boom days of the goldfields has such prosperity existed as we are able to see now in the building trade in Perth, which prosperity has existed during the last three years.

Mr. Harper: Wake up.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: We have seen some of the most magnificent buildings—buildings that would undoubtedly be a credit to any city in the world—springing up, as it were, in the night, and not only has this building prosperity existed

in the City itself, but right throughout the environments of the metropolitan area. In all our outside districts, in the whole of the country towns of this State, we have seen the same prosperity which exists in the building industry. There must be some reason for this wonderful activity. It is stated very often that a country does not depend for its prosperity upon any Acts of its Parliament. Whilst it is true that in good times, when there are good seasons, or when the manufacturing industries are prospering, a country will progress in the face of adverse legislation and adverse administration. Therefore, there is a modicum of truth in that statement, but, on the other hand, I claim that in times of stress, in times of bad trade, in times of bad seasons, good laws and a good Administration can very materially benefit the country, and we have had this marked prosperity during the past couple of years, in the face of what the State has suffered from the Government which has been in power in the Federal Parliament. We find that immediately they took office they closed down the big works which had been started by their predecessors, that they discharged practically all the men who were engaged on the naval base, that they closed down the whole of the work in connection with the undergrounding of the telephone system, and that they hampered the Government by, I was going to say the dastardly action they took in connection with the sleeper contract, and yet, in face of all that opposition right up to this date, from the Federal Government, we find a time of prosperity existing now, and we can only put it down to one cause, namely the magnificent treatment which the State Government has meted out to the people. I claim, and I believe that the claim will be readily admitted by all except the most biassed minds, that it was the action of the Government, their display of such magnificent faith in the great agricultural potentialities of the State, at a time when, under ordinary circumstances, we would have had an enormous slump—it was that, and that alone, which has brought about the prosperity to which I have re-

ferred. It is well known, and I think it cannot be too often repeated, in face of the statements continually being made by members on the Opposition side, that after the present Government took office, there was a falling-off in the wheat yield of over 1½ million bushels. That naturally created a great deal of consternation amongst the new settlers, the men who had ventured their all in putting in what was their first crop. When it failed they were faced with undoubted gloom, unless a munificent Government went to their assistance, not in the way of charity but to assist them over a trying time, believing, as they and as I believe, that the result of our crops in a few years' time will more than justify the assistance which the Government has rendered the settlers. I do not desire to labour the question of the assistance which the farmers have received from the Government, but I want to refer to a few matters which will give the public an idea of what has been done. I do not believe that anything which members on this side can say, or any figures which we can produce, will have any effect on members opposite. We know their actions during practically the whole of the existence of this Parliament, and we know their statements with regard to what are known as the terminal charges on the agricultural railways. We know that when the Government, in their wisdom, abolished those charges, one after another, members opposite, who claimed that they were speaking on behalf of the farmers, rose in their places and said that the Government had done nothing for the farmers, that the Government had granted them nothing by abolishing those charges. The taunts of hon. members opposite, and the continued statements that the abolition of these charges meant nothing to the farmers, induced the Government to reinstate them, and if the farmers are suffering from those charges at the present time, they can lay the blame on the shoulders of members opposite, led principally by the member for Northam (Mr. Mitchell).

Hon. J. Mitchell: Certainly not.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The figures from the Agricultural Bank, as contained in

the report for the year ended 30th June last, which was placed on the Table only a couple of days ago, show that in 1909-10, under the Liberal Government, there was advanced £252,000, in the form of loans, but during that year £151,000 was repaid, or, roughly speaking, 60 per cent. of the amount advanced. In 1910-11 there was advanced £283,000 and £242,000 was repaid, or 85 per cent. of the amount advanced. In 1911-12, the first years of the Labour Government's administration, the amount advanced sprang up to £405,000, and the amount repaid receded to £102,000, or only 25 per cent. of the amount advanced. But in 1912-13 the advances increased to £636,000 and only £33,000 was repaid, or only a fraction over five per cent., proving conclusively the hard times through which the farmers of the State were passing. They were unable to keep up the obligations which they had entered into with the Agricultural Bank, and nothing can more eloquently show the conditions which existed in our agricultural areas during this couple of years in which we experienced a partial drought. In passing, I might say that the speech of the leader of the Opposition the other evening was one of the most extraordinary I have ever listened to. He was so devoid of grounds of criticism of the Government's policy, or their administration, that he was forced to place himself on the defensive, and he devoted more than half of his speech to justifying the deficits which existed under various Liberal Administrations, as far back as nine years ago. But there were three matters which he failed to make any pronouncement upon. He failed to tell the people of this State that the deficit which existed under his administration in 1909 was far greater than the deficit which existed at the end of the last financial year. The hon. member failed also to tell the people that the present Government had a gradually increasing reproductive expenditure and, had he taken the trouble to go through any of the monthly *Statistical Abstracts*, he would have found this valuable information which he might have given to the people.

In 1909 his Government spent on the development of agriculture £150,000 in round figures. In the financial year ended 30th June, 1913, the present Government spent £462,000, or just a little over three times as much.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What did they spend it on?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The development of agriculture.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Abattoirs took £100,000.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: In the same year the hon. member's Government spent on water supply and sewerage £90,000, and in 1913 the Government spent £393,000, or just a fraction over four times as much.

Hon. J. Mitchell: All loan.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: In 1910 the hon. member's Government spent £450,000 on railways and in 1913 the present Government spent £1,948,000, or more than four times the amount. On miscellaneous the hon. member's Government spent £35,000, and the present Government spent £326,000 or more than nine times as much, and every one of these items which I have mentioned, including practically the whole of the miscellaneous expenditure, has been on reproductive works, and that is, perhaps, information for the hon. member for Northam. There was another matter which the leader of the Opposition might have given the public a little information upon, and it is that, although he complained that the present Government have borrowed such an enormous amount of money, the percentage of our consolidated revenue, which goes towards the payment of interest and sinking fund on our public debt, greatly decreased during the couple of years which the Labour Government have been in office. In 1908-9 the figures were 28.20 per cent.; in 1909-10, they were 29.10 per cent.; in 1910-11 they were reduced to 28.01 per cent.; in 1911-12, the figures dropped to 26.86 per cent.; and in 1912-13, they further fell to 25.23 per cent.; a clear indication, I think, that the present Treasurer has indeed kept a wise check and safeguarded the finances of the State. But I hardly think we can wonder at the

leader of the Opposition not touching on any of these matters, because he generally speaks with his tongue in his cheek. He generally, as the Premier pointed out the other night, prepares his speeches in accordance with the audience he intends to address. For instance, during the Upper House campaign we find him going to Fremantle and telling the people there that the Government were neglecting the Fremantle harbour and doing nothing to provide better harbour facilities for the chief port of the State. He almost took an express train and raced down to somewhere near Bunbury and told the people there that the Government were spending all the money on the Fremantle harbour and making no provision whatever for any of the outports of the State. I wonder, does the hon. member believe honestly in his heart that he can gull people with such trash as that; that the people of the State are so ignorant and stupid that they cannot see through the tactics of the hon. member; that he can tell the people one policy in one part of the State and turn it round to another policy when in some other part of the State. I am satisfied that when the people of the State have another opportunity of expressing an opinion they will show the hon. gentleman and his party, just as they did on the last occasion, when they had an opportunity, that they want a party that has one policy and one policy only, a party that is not afraid to tell the people in every part of the State what they stand for and what their policy is. If there is one thing which the hon. gentlemen opposite pride themselves upon it is their financial ability. They claim that they are the only people in the world who know anything about finances, and they have kept on telling themselves this so often that they have convinced themselves that they are great financial geniuses. For instance, the member for Northam goes out and talks to the farmers and settlers and the people at Northam on finance. He went up there last year to the show, and this is some of the trash he got off his chest. He said—

The party to which he (Mr. Mitchell) belonged managed to free the purse

strings of the financial people and secure a reduction of the interest rate.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is a very good bit of trash to get off his chest.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member went on to say—

This had changed now. Money was scarce and dearer. When the Liberal party came again to power one of the first duties would be to make money easy and cheap.

The hon. member actually has the audacity to claim that he can control all the financial institutions of the world; that he has great influence because he happened to be the Minister for Lands in this State; that his administration and his wonderful influence is going to make money cheap right throughout the world. When the hon. member was speaking and telling the people how to make money cheap, he meant that he was going to perform it by doing something which would be of benefit for the people. I agree with the hon. member that if his party, the party pledged to the same policy as he is, were in control of the destinies of every country in the world money would be cheap, but we have the authority of the financial writer of the *Daily Mail*, one of the leading English daily newspapers, telling us how money is made dear, and of course it must be made cheap by a reverse condition of things, and this is what that writer says. I do not know whether the hon. member will pit himself against this gentleman as an authority.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What is his name?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: But I am sure the public will not recognise him in the same street as the gentleman to whom I refer.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What is his name?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: He is the financial writer of the *Daily Mail*, and writing of the scarcity of money he says—

There is scarcely an underwriting House in the city that has not had seriously to consider the question of declining to accept fresh obligations. The market for short-term issues is almost equally congested, and relief cannot be expected without a slowing down of

trade, the widespread prosperity of which is at the root of the scarcity of money.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Money fell to one per cent. in England after that.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Interest is high when prosperity is great, when there is a great demand for money, because business is extending in every direction, and I agree with the hon. member when he says that if his party were in power and were in power in every country in the world so that they could have an influence, money would be cheap, because there would be a period of great depression existing. But let us try and find out how the hon. member's party got on when they went to the money market in comparison with the treatment which the present Labour Government in this State received when they also went to the money market. Let us see if the financiers of the old world, who control money matters, were satisfied with the administration of the party to which the hon. member belongs or if it was of such a nature to instil confidence into the people. We know there was a fair amount of borrowing going on early last year and the London correspondent of the *West Australian* writes thus—

Money is dear these times, as all the Australian Governments, as well as other borrowers, are beginning to feel, but under the circumstances of a disturbed condition in Europe and in view of the experiences of other Australasian States which have recently gone on the market, the Western Australian Government have reason to be satisfied with the result of their issue this week of £1,000,000 4 per cent. inscribed stock at £99. . . . The Government did not offer any accrued interest as an inducement so that they got their money £1 a hundred cheaper than the Queensland Government when it went on the market a few weeks ago.

The Queensland Government was controlled by the party to which the hon. member belongs, and a little bit later we have some further information. The writer says—

The Tasmanian loan of £1,300,000 at 4 per cent. minimum £99, of which the Underwriters had to take up 72 per cent., was yesterday quoted at 5s. discount.

The *Daily Chronicle* states that so poor a response to so attractive a loan issue is a surprise, and has greatly modified views regarding the prospects of another loan in the future.

The *Daily Mail* declares that the failure of the Tasmanian loan is evidence that the public nowadays will be satisfied with nothing less than 5 per cent. interest even with sound security offered.

So we find from these two statements that Queensland and Tasmania, two countries which were controlled by those composed of the party to which the hon. member belongs, had a very sad experience in comparison with the experience which the Labour Government of this State had when they went to the money market.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They did not pay any more than you paid, and they got their money.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member is either deaf or refuses to hear.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You paid six months' interest.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I quoted to show that the Labour Government got their money one per cent. cheaper than the Tasmanian Government did.

Hon. J. Mitchell: After all the charges and interests are allowed they did not.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member brings in all the other charges. Does not the Queensland Government and the Tasmanian Government have to pay charges just as this Government does?

Hon. J. Mitchell: Not always just the same. We have to pay interest sometimes.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member talks like a novice sometimes. I will quote a little further to show that his statement is not a correct one. There was another loan that the Government of this State secured, and the London correspondent of the *West Australian* again states—

The Western Australian Government were well advised to issue their loan of a million 3¼ per cent. inscribed stock at the moment they did, for had they waited a little longer it is probable in view of the fact that other and bigger issues are about to come on the market, that there would have been great difficulty in raising money at a reasonable price.

Then it goes on to say—

The 3¼ per cent. stock is a new issue, but as the amounts of interest works out in relation to the price obtained it pays better at the present time to place a loan at 3¼ per cent. than at 3½, for at the latter rate the interest, taking the price obtainable into account, works out at about the same or a trifle more than 3¼ per cent. at £99, of which nearly the whole amount is realised net. So that in the long run at 3¼ per cent. the Government pays over the whole period of the loan about the same rate of interest and obtains more money.

So we find that financial expert stating, and I think proving conclusively to anybody who wants to be convinced, that it paid far better at that time to place a three and a three-quarter per cent. loan than a three and a-half per cent. loan, because the extra amount subscribed did not make more than the difference in the interest, and the Government had the additional money on which to work; so that the argument the hon. member wishes to bring forward, that although we may have got better terms than some of the Liberal Governments of the other States, we had the charges of floating the loan to pay, is to my mind, an absurd one, because every Government that floats a loan has the charges to pay irrespective of the interest at which they get the loan. There is another matter which I want to refer to briefly at the present time, because it is one on which a great amount of public attention has been concentrated and that is the price of meat. We are hearing a lot from members of the Opposition in speeches in the country, and also through the press, regarding the price of meat in this State, but I think that the Premier

last evening proved conclusively from statistics which will not be questioned, that the cost of living has increased in every other State by a fairly considerable amount, whilst in this State it has decreased, and I believe that the two main items which show a decrease in Western Australia are rents and meat. I desire to give to the House and to the country a few items which have been elicited by the Federal Royal Commission from some of those who are in control of the meat industry in various States of the Commonwealth, and in passing I would like to say that the Commonwealth Government adopted a most extraordinary attitude. Mr. Cook has admitted in the course of speeches delivered in various places that the big companies which practically form the American Meat Trust had a footing in Australia, and while admitting that they are here, he appointed a Royal Commission to find out whether they are here or not. Mr. Clarke, M.L.C., of Victoria, who is engaged in lamb producing in the northern irrigation areas, stated in the course of his evidence before the Royal Commission—

If the American meat trust tackles Victoria seriously, the local firms may have a combine and we would be in the grip of the trust. My chief fear is that in the next few years we will find the London market so controlled by the American trust that no retail butcher could buy against it. One way of meeting this would be for the Commonwealth Government or the States, acting together, to start a meat and produce market in London.

I hope the hon. member for Northam listened to that statement, because it is one in which he ought to be very much interested. Mr. Howard Leslie, Melbourne manager for Messrs. Sims, Cooper & Co., exporters of frozen meat, when giving evidence stated in answer to Mr. Bavin that the export of sheep by his firm had increased from 73,000 in 1912 to 270,000 in 1913. I think it well that this fact should be made known in Western Australia, because this State, Queensland and the Northern Territory, comprise the principal parts of Australia

where cattle and sheep raising is carried on.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

Hon. J. Mitchell: New South Wales and Victoria too.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I want to show also the extent to which the export of mutton, principally, is making inroads into our stock in Australia. It has been admitted that the meat export trade has started only in the last couple of years, and we have information from the Stock Department of South Australia showing the decrease of the stock in that State. In 1913, compared with the preceding year, cattle decreased by 30,513, sheep by 408,432, and pigs by 5,713. We also have information through the Press that a record shipment of beef left Port Adelaide on 4th February. The consignment included 643 fore-quarters and 728 hind-quarters for London; 93 packages, 2,185 fore-quarters and 2,152 hind-quarters for Liverpool; and 146 packages for Glasgow; and in addition, 777 carcasses of frozen lamb and 456 carcasses of frozen mutton were sent away. Thus the export of meat from Australia has assumed gigantic proportions.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What are we going to do with it? We must sell it somewhere.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I am not troubling about that. I want to prove that we in this State should take steps to protect the consumer. Another witness in giving evidence before the Royal Commission made the following admission—

Last year the price of fat cattle was from £10 to £14, and now the price is from £14 to £18.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Is that in Western Australia?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That evidence was given in Melbourne. Mr. Kidman, who is recognised as the cattle king of Australia, stated a few years ago that there would be no more cheap meat in Australia, and that the time had ended when there would be competition between the big cattle producers. I am convinced that that time has arrived.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Shortage of supplies, you mean?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Yes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Well, what have you done to increase supplies?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: There is a shortage, and we are allowing an exportation which is not justified. Any country would be foolish in the extreme to allow its natural products to be exported in such quantities as to make the price prohibitive in the local market.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why, that is the policy of your Government. You advocated exportation on the hoof to Java and Manilla and those places; no freezing works, export. That is the report of the Minister for Works.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I think that is not correct.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Oh yes, I have a copy of it.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The Government might have opposed the proposal to erect freezing works by private enterprise or to subsidise private enterprise.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No, the Government opposed the erection of freezing works.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member's policy was to subsidise private enterprise.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No, it was for Government freezing works, and your Government advocated the export of cattle on the hoof in place of it. The hon. member should look up the report of the Minister for Works.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member guaranteed £75,000 free of interest for three years to a private company to establish freezing works at Wyndham. That is the policy which members on the Government side of the House oppose, and I would oppose it to-day.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No, it was not. You are opposed to State freezing works.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: No, I am not.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is what your Government are opposed to.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Freezing works in the north of this State are an absolute necessity.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But the Government have pronounced against them.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I will quote the *Pastoralists' Review* to show the object

in getting freezing works into private hands. This publication states—

As long as we can remember the agitation has been going on for freezing works in the far north-west of Australia. First of all we are assured that either the Western Australian Government, the Bovril Company, or the cattle owners intend to erect works at Wyndham. Nothing eventuates. Next we hear that the Federal Government are going to put up works at Darwin; then that a private company is going to do it. Nothing is settled. Meantime cattle owners get about £4 per head for cattle that would probably sell at from £10 to £14 per head were works available.

They are getting £4 per head for cattle which they would probably sell at £10 to £14 per head if freezing works were available. If the cattle now selling at £4 per head are to bring £10 to £14 with freezing works, what will the cattle which are now selling at anything from £10 to £12 bring? Immediately any Government in Australia allow private enterprise to erect freezing works and control them, they will be handing over the people of Australia, bound and manacled, to one of the most oppressive trusts existing in the world. I am convinced that there is a necessity for freezing works in the north of this State.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why do you oppose their erection by the State?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I believe that the loss in weight of cattle during a long sea voyage is so great that it not only makes the meat expensive by the time it reaches the metropolis, but it causes the meat to lose a great deal of its nutriment. I realise also that it is impossible to utilise for meat supplies cattle which are not in sufficiently prime condition to bring down by boat or to travel down if the season were sufficiently good for travelling. The establishment of freezing works is a necessity, but I hope that the day will never come when the Government will allow the erection of these works by private enterprise, because so sure as they do, they will be assisting in a marked degree one, and I

believe more than one, of the trusts which have played such havoc not only with the people, but also with the cattle raisers in every country where they have found a footing.

Mr. Elliott: Your Government are doing it to-day. They are establishing private enterprise in Geraldton, and they are subsidising it.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I am against the subsidising of private enterprise.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That is only the statement of the member for Geraldton.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I am opposed to allowing private enterprise, or subsidising private enterprise, to establish freezing works, and, in fact, to allowing freezing works to pass out of the absolute control of the Government; because, unless the Government have control of those freezing works, the people of Australia have no guarantee that they will get their meat supplies at anything like a fair or reasonable price. I just wish to quote what a couple of leading authorities in America have had to say with regard to trusts and combines. I wish to show that the consensus of opinion among people who are competent to judge, is that to-day it is absolutely useless to pass laws for the purpose of regulating these gigantic trusts; that there is only one way in which you can protect the people's interests, and that that is by the Government taking control of an industry as soon as ever a trust makes its presence felt in that industry. President Woodrow Wilson, shortly after taking office, made the following statement:—

American industry is not free as once it was free. American enterprise is not free. The man with only a little capital is finding it hard to get into production, and more and more impossible to compete with the big fellow. Why? Because the laws of this country do not prevent the strong from crushing the weak.

Mr. Marshall, a well-known public man of America, only quite recently also delivered a very powerful speech which attracted attention from every quarter of the United States. The report says—



Mr. Marshall's attack upon the trusts is provoking much discussion throughout America. He declares that the trusts are slowly strangling trade, and that men are driven into socialism owing to the feeling that the Government's efforts to regulate the trusts have failed.

And that is the experience of every country in the world which has made the attempt to regulate these trusts by Act of Parliament. The only possible chance for the people of Australia to escape from these trusts is to have Labour Governments in power in the States, co-operating with a Labour Government in power in the Commonwealth, which is endeavouring to pass the referenda proposals, whose object is so to alter the Commonwealth Constitution as to enable the Federal Government to deal effectively with the trusts by taking control of them when their operation becomes oppressive on the people. Now, I want to express my great pleasure at seeing in His Excellency's Speech the reference to our free educational system, the reference to the fact that we now have free education right from our kindergartens up to our University. There is, however, what I may call a new school of education making its presence felt in Australia at the present time. That new school has been in operation in the old country for some years, and has made gigantic strides there. I refer to the Workers' Educational Society, a society, or a movement, which has been initiated for the purpose of enabling those working men and working women to complete their education, who were unable to gain adequate instruction during their school-days, because of the fact that many of them were compelled at an early age to go out and become wage-earners. The movement was designed to enable these people to study various subjects under the guidance of a university professor. Governments in the old country and in the Australian States have recognised the beneficial influence which this society is bound to have upon the community, and they have rendered very generous monetary assistance towards forwarding the society's objects. In the second year of

its operation in New South Wales, the Government there gave £2,000 towards the movement. In Victoria, during the first year, a preliminary sum of £300 was donated; and the Government have promised for the next financial year a sum of £1,950. The Tasmanian Government have granted £100, and South Australia is now making inquiries with a view to falling into line with the other States and rendering monetary assistance to this movement. Now, the society is established here in our midst, and has commenced its work; but it will feel in the near future the necessity for obtaining funds. Professor Shand, one of the professors of our University, is at the present time conducting classes in connection with the movement; but, as the movement grows, it will be necessary to have a professor who can devote the whole of his time to it. Therefore it is essential that funds should be placed at the disposal of the society for the purpose of remunerating that professor. I wish to ask the Government here, when a request comes along, as it undoubtedly will, for assistance in this direction, to lend that request a very generous ear; because I am convinced that the movement is one which more than any other existing to-day will prove of benefit to the community. I want also to say just a few words with regard to the constitution of our University as it exists to-day. I am convinced, and I believe a great many people in the community are convinced, of the necessity for amending the Act which governs the University. In my opinion, the Act was drawn on entirely wrong lines, inasmuch as it places so much power in the hands of Convocation that practically in a few years Convocation will be in a position to dominate the Senate of the institution. In fact, it seems as though that time has come already. At all events, in the near future, in a very few years, the position will be that Convocation can have a majority of their own members on the Senate, and can then practically make the Senate conform to the will of Convocation. That was never intended. Certainly it was never intended by the framers of the University Act. Their

intention was that the Senate should be supreme, that Convocation should merely have advisory powers. I trust, therefore, that an effort will be made, and before very long, to bring about an amendment of this nature, taking away such powers from Convocation, a body which is composed simply of those who have obtained a university degree in practically any part of the world. I hope that the Act will be so amended as to give every section of the community representation upon the Senate of the University. I wish also to make a few remarks with regard to the expenses of the University. The other day I asked a question on this subject, but the hon. the Premier stated that the information would have to be asked for by way of motion for a return; and I have therefore moved for a return, which, however, is not yet available. I was desirous of ascertaining what revenue the University were deriving from lands which have been placed at their disposal by the grant.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Only from the lime kilns at North Fremantle.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That was my idea, too. I had that notion from my knowledge of a great deal of the lands, and I am satisfied that the same position of things is likely to remain, under present conditions, for many many years. I say that the conditions governing the University lands, the conditions under which those lands have been handed over by the Government to the University for endowment purposes, are absolutely absurd. Hon. members opposite state that they object to the leasehold principle. It was their Government, however, who placed in this University Act what I consider the most absurd leasehold conditions that have ever existed in Australia. The conditions are on a par, practically, with the leasehold conditions which exist in the old country, where there is, of course, an inordinate demand for land. But to say that lands can only be leased for a term of 21 years, and for building purposes, with the consent of the Senate—previously it was with the consent of

the trustees—for ninety-nine years, is to place a condition on those lands which prevents them from being used anywhere within a reasonable length of time. I do not believe that for the next fifty years people could be got to take up that University land, situated where it is, on the conditions which are laid down to govern the leasing of that land. Probably the Government wish to enable the University to derive some revenue from this land, and thereby relieve the Government to that extent; because whatever amount the University derive from their land the Government will not be obliged to find for the purposes of upkeep of the University. If the Government desire to make conditions which will enable the University to lease some of their land, then they should alter the Act so as to allow the land to be leased under the same conditions as apply under the workers' homes system to-day. Then, I believe, you will find any number of people willing to lease the land, not only for building, but for various other purposes.

Mr. S. Stubbs: They do not like the leasehold.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: They will take the leasehold.

Mr. S. Stubbs: About one in five might.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The conditions in the Act which govern the leasing of the endowment lands are absolutely absurd. There is no question whatever about that.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They can only lease for twenty-one years.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Yes; and for building purposes for ninety-nine years. A number of members opposite have by interjection ridiculed, and those who have spoken have also ridiculed, the claim which the Government have really made in His Excellency's Speech that they are deserving of some praise for the reduction of the infantile mortality in this State. Of course, it is an easy matter to cast ridicule on a subject such as that.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Nobody ridiculed it from this side of the House.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I say that if hon. members opposite will only take the trouble to read the hospital reports, and especially the Children's Hospital reports, since the establishment of the State milk supply, they will realise what opinions are held on this subject by the medical men in charge of those institutions. I have spoken time and again to the doctors at the Perth hospital, and they have all informed me that they never had such a splendid supply of milk whilst they were drawing their supplies from private dairies. It goes to show that the policy which this party believes in is undoubtedly the best for the community from every point of view. I want to recommend to the Government a motion which was passed at that Women's Conference which sat in Perth a few weeks ago, and at which representatives of, I believe, every women's organisation in the State were present. They passed a motion asking the Government to extend the milk supply so that they might supply every family in the metropolitan area in which there were infants or young children; and, so that the Government may have no fear on the matter, I want to inform them that they will not be acting without a precedent. I know that a lot of hon. members opposite hold that unless we can show them that these things are in operation in some other country—

Mr. S. Stubbs: We are too thick-headed to take it in.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: No, but unless we can show a precedent for it you are very likely to look askance at it. Let me read this little extract—

The milk sterilised by electricity, which is being supplied from Liverpool Corporation milk depots to about a thousand babies daily, has been tested by two professors, and in their report to the health committee they say that the keeping properties are increased and that there is a great reduction in the total number of bacteria. The sterilisation is carried on at the Earle road depot, where from 100 to 125

gallons are handled daily, being put into 3,000 bottles.

There you find that in Liverpool the corporation is supplying milk to about 1,000 babies daily, realising, as we do here, that the milk supply plays a very important part indeed in the health of infants, and young children. And then we have some interesting information also from Paris in connection with the shooting of Baron Rothschild a few weeks ago. We are told—

Baron Henri de Rothschild was widely known here for his assistance to numerous charities, principally for the financing of dairies from which pure milk was supplied to mothers. Proudhon imagined that it was these milk depots that had ruined his business.

The individual who shot at him imagined that his livelihood had been interfered with in some way because of the baron's philanthropy in financing these pure milk supplies so that the benefit might be extended to mothers. Therefore, I think the Government have ample justification for extending their pure milk supplies to people outside, people who are not compelled to make use of hospitals at the present time, but who, if compelled to rely on the private milk supplies, may be forced into such institutions.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The municipalities have power to do that.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Yes, but I do not think there is much chance of getting any of the municipalities in the metropolitan area to undertake that work. But it could, with very beneficial results to the community, be extended from that dairy at Claremont.

Mr. Elliott: How many cows are you milking in the metropolitan area to-day?

Mr. S. Stubbs: Him?

Mr. Bolton: Only the State cow, I think.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): One hundred and twenty.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Now, there is a matter about which I feel very deeply, and that is in regard to the Traffic Bill, which has been twice rejected by another place, and which it is intended to submit

again this session. In connection with that Bill comes up that very vexed question of the Perth-Fremantle road. For many years past, to my own personal knowledge, an endeavour has been made to find a solution for the upkeep of that road. It has never yet been discovered, and from present indications I do not know that we are going to discover it in the near future. The Minister for Works has started upon the reconstruction of that road, but, there is no question about it, there is going to be a big and a bitter fight over the payment of the money for the purpose of that reconstruction. I want to make this perfectly clear. I believe the system of payment which the Minister has devised, and to which he has given a very great amount of thought, is going to press very heavily upon some of the local government bodies between Perth and Fremantle. I am convinced that such bodies as the Claremont Roads Board—and perhaps the Peppermint Grove and Cottesloe Beach Roads Boards—of which I have particular knowledge, will find the payments to be made by that board in respect to the road so heavy that their funds will be crippled for many years to come.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Crippled? They could not pay it.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I do not believe they could; and the Claremont roads board are in a most unenviable position because they have another road, the Karakatta road, running between the cemetery and the railway line, every bit of it in their boundary, and not one pennyworth of rateable property on either side, and with no traffic which benefits them in any way whatever. Still, they are compelled to keep that road in proper repair. It is a condition of things which will have to be altered. It is an absolute impossibility; it is unfair and unjust to expect a local government body such as that to keep on using their ratepayers' money to maintain in repair roads which the ratepayers of that locality have no interest in whatever.

Mr. S. Stubbs: And derive no benefit from.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: No more than a person living in Midland Junction or in Fremantle—perhaps not so much. I believe the only feasible solution of this upkeep of main roads, particularly in the metropolitan area, is contained in that Traffic Bill. I believe that if the whole of these local government bodies, outside the city of Perth—because we realise there is no chance of the city of Perth agreeing to it—would stand firm shoulder to shoulder with the Government and insist upon the Traffic Bill being placed on the statute-book, we would have a reasonable solution of this main road difficulty. I desire to give a few figures showing fairly clearly what I might call the dog-in-the-manger attitude which the Perth municipality has taken up. I want to show the amount of money which the Perth municipality collects from vehicles' and carriers' licenses, the amount of money which all the other local government bodies in the metropolitan area, with the exception of Fremantle, collect, and the mileage of roads which they have within their various boundaries; and to show the proportion which the licenses of the city of Perth bears to the mileage of roads, and the same with regard to the other local government bodies. This return is for the year 1912, the latest return I could get. The Perth municipality in that year collected £1,342 in the vehicles licenses and £226 in carriers' licenses, or a total of £1,568.

Mr. Lewis: It has increased since then.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Naturally, it increases every year. But this was the latest Government return available. All the other metropolitan municipalities, except Fremantle, which I have left out of consideration altogether, collected £677 for vehicles licenses, while the metropolitan roads boards collected £436, and all the other metropolitan municipalities collected £77 for carriers' licenses, which makes a total collection by those bodies of £1,190. The Perth City Council collected £1,568, and all the other local government bodies from Midland Junction to Fremantle, exclusive of Fremantle, collected £1,190. The Perth municipality had at that date 78 miles 46 chains of

constructed streets and roads. All other municipalities in the metropolitan area, omitting Fremantle, had 215 miles, and the roads boards in the metropolitan area 181 miles, or a total of 396 miles 20 chains, as against 78 miles 46 chains administered by the Perth municipality. The license fees work out at £20 per mile of constructed roads and streets in the Perth municipality; while in respect of the other local government bodies it amounts to only about £3 per mile. It is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. It is a condition of things which should not be allowed to exist any longer; because the whole of these vehicles which are licensed in Perth must use far more of the other local government bodies roads than they do of the Perth Council's roads, because Perth has only 78 miles of roads altogether as against the other 396 miles.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Then your contention is that the fees should be pooled.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Yes, they should be pooled, and distributed amongst the various local authorities on the mileage of main roads in their respective districts; and if the money is not sufficient to keep the main roads in repair, the Government should by subsidy be responsible for the balance required. I believe that that is the only fair and logical solution of this main roads question in our metropolitan area. I believe, if all the outside local governing bodies will stand firm behind the Government on this question they will force the City Council to give way with regard to it.

Mr. S. Stubbs: That will not get over the difficulty of spending this £30,000 on the Perth-Fremantle road.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I admit that. The Minister for Works has just pointed out that if the Traffic Bill had been passed when first introduced, that that road would never have got into its present state, and the reconstruction would not have been necessary.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It has been going to the bad for years.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That is true. I realise that the Traffic Bill would not get over the solution of the reconstruction of

the road. I believe that with further negotiations and a fair system of give and take on the part of both sides some solution of the payment for the reconstruction of the road can be reached.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The State are paying for it now, and still they are not satisfied.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The State are not paying for it. The State are paying the wages of those employed on it. The Government have laid down a scale of repayment by the local governing authorities which is going to cripple a number of those authorities.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Repayments by the State?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: In the way of taking it out of their subsidies. That is only trilling with the question.

Mr. Wisdom: It is repaid by portion of the State.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I say that in a large number of instances many of these local governing bodies will be crippled. There is no question about that.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It will certainly do that.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I believe that the Claremont roads board for instance would be in a far better position if they handed over the whole thing to the Government and said to the Government "You had better control the thing." That will certainly be the position into which they will be forced if they are compelled to pay the amounts which are set down. I believe that the payments of the amounts should be extended over a far greater period, which would make it less, of course, each year. I believe that the amounts should be advanced by the Government at a low rate of interest, if not altogether free of interest. I now want to deal briefly with some of the statements which the hon. member for York, Mr. Monger, made last night. He spoke about the industrial strike, and proceeded to dilate upon "the tyranny of unions."

Hon. J. Mitchell: Why don't you come on to the Youanmi trouble?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I want to say that the tyranny of unions is only a figment of the imagination of hon. members

opposite. It is a bugbear with them, and they have allowed this thing to grow on them. I do not know if they think it a good electioneering move, and whether they think if they keep on calling it out long enough, loud enough, and strong enough, they will make the people believe that it really exists.

Mr. Harper: Are you eligible to become a member of the Trades Hall?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I want to say that the tyranny of employers and of the employers' federation is a very live and very existing tyranny. We had only quite recently before the Interstate Commission which sat in Melbourne, some very interesting evidence given by a number of master printers in that capital. Just prior to that Interstate Commission we had a deputation of master printers who were called "Non-combine Masters Printers," those who were outside the combine waiting upon Mr. Tudor, the Minister for Customs at that time, who took the deputation in place of Mr. Hughes, the Attorney General. This deputation asked him to pass a law to prevent the coercion and boycotting and tyranny which was being practised by the combine of master printers of that City. When the evidence was taken before the Interstate Commission some information was elicited, and the secretary of the masters printers' combine afterwards came forward to give evidence, and Mr. Lockyer, one of the members of that Interstate Commission, questioned him regarding this matter. The Commissioner said "Your sole reason for starting this policy of coercion was that the printers who had 85 per cent. of the printing business in Melbourne feared the printers who had only 5 per cent.?" The witness answered "So far as I know, yes." So that there were 85 per cent. of the printing firms in Melbourne in the combine, and there were 15 per cent. outside the combine. They so feared the 15 per cent. that they took every opportunity of threatening the wholesale houses with boycotting if they supplied any of these non-combine printers. I want to ask hon. members, especially those sitting on the opposite side of the House, if they can point out any in-

stance of a similar state of affairs in connection with unionism.

Hon. J. Mitchell: How about Millars?

Mr. Carpenter. That is employers' tyranny.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I want to deal with that case before I conclude my remarks. There was no tyranny in connection with Millars' case at all.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Absolute tyranny.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The non-unionists there, in common with non-unionists in every country in the world, are enjoying the benefits which unionists have fought for and paid for. Members opposite are very fond of saying that they believe in trade unionism, but do not believe in political unionism.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We do not at all.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It is not many years ago since you opposed every kind of unionism. Unionism from the very earliest ages of what is called the industrial revolution in England has had to fight against oppression and against injustice, when through long centuries of fighting, struggling and suffering they have reached the state which they have to-day, where unionism is not only recognised by law, but where unionism is necessary under our laws for the preservation of industrial peace—

Mr. Harper: Tyranny.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Because none but registered unions can approach the Arbitration Court.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is not right, though.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Is the hon. member serious in that interjection?

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is neither right nor fair.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: You do not know what you are interjecting about. If you say that this is not true that only industrial unions—

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is only too true, but not fair.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That only industrial unions can approach our Arbitration Court. Therefore, the onus is thrown upon the trades union and upon trades unionists to preserve industrial peace.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I want to alter that.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If that is so, and if the workers are enjoying privileges and benefits and remuneration which organised labour has won for them, I say, as I said in discussing the Arbitration Act in this Chamber a couple of sessions ago, that it should be made compulsory that every worker in an industry should be compelled to join the trades union in connection with that industry.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We do not think so.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That is all that the carpenters of Millars' desired. They did not desire to deprive any man of his livelihood. They gave the non-unionists the opportunity to, and they desired and begged that they should, become members of the union. It is idle twaddle for anybody to say that these men did not wish to join because this was a political union. No man can be bound as to how he should vote, because he happens to be a member of a political union.

Mr. Harper: He has to pay for it all the same.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If any attempt was made to coerce a man in regard to his vote, it is only human nature to suppose that such a man would retaliate by voting in an entirely opposite direction to that in which he had led his comrades to believe he would vote. You cannot compel a man to vote against his will, and furthermore there is no one who can tell how he is voting. Tyranny of the most vile kind has been practised by the employers' federation. It is a most scandalous action that, because a few men who have a dispute with one firm and who leave their work, the employers should combine together to lock out from their work thousands of their workmen with whom they had no dispute, and to compel the wives and families of these workmen to suffer hardship when there was no cause for it whatever.

Mr. Lewis: Tyranny.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Tyranny of the vilest and grossest character. Although I am one of them who does not believe in criticising or finding fault with the judgments which are delivered by the Courts of Justice, I want to say that in

this instance the judgment of the Court was to my mind the most extraordinary judgment I have ever heard of.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They always are when they are against you.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Here is a judgment where the Judge practically says, reversing that well-known maxim that two wrongs do not make a right, that if the carpenters of Millars' went out on strike all the other employers belonging to the employers' federation were justified in combining together and locking out their employees to compel the carpenters who had been employed by Millars' to come back.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They had to come back in the end.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Not only was the action of the employers' federation absolutely unjustified, not only in my opinion was the judgment of the Court wrong, but I say that the employers' federation are going on, and to-day are endeavouring to bring about a big industrial upheaval in this metropolitan area. To my mind that is the only object they have in view. Their ideas are to attempt to have an industrial upheaval because there are two elections pending, one the Federal elections which are practically upon us, and the other the State elections which are coming in the near future.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Absolute rubbish. You want to stir up a trouble.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Members of the employers' federation to-day have gone so far as to refuse to pay the recognised rate of pay since the men have returned to work.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There is an award, is there not? The men can enforce it.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Also when they entered into an agreement with the men to go back to work, they undertook to replace every man who had been employed prior to that trouble, but they have not kept faith in that regard. I believe numbers of the men have been victimised. They have been prevented from returning to their work and earning their livings. Hon. members opposite preach about the

tyranny of unions. The tyranny of unions is not a circumstance as compared with the tyranny practised by the employers and the employers' federation. In connection with the matters which the hon. member for York mentioned, namely, the trouble at Youanmme, the manager of the mine, Mr. Walton, is recognised as a man who causes trouble in every district into which he goes. He is not five minutes upon any mine before there is an upheaval. I do not know whether he is sent round to do the dirty work on behalf of Messrs. Bewick Moreing, or whether he takes the responsibility on his own shoulders. It is, however, a well known fact that he never has charge of any mine long before some industrial trouble crops up.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Where, where?

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

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Before tea I was dealing with one of the statements made last evening by the member for York (Mr. Monger). That member also trotted out another one of those worn-out platitudes that the members on this side of the House are responsible for all their utterances and actions to somebody outside of Parliament, what he was pleased to call trades hall domination. It is true that the party at present occupying the Treasury bench of this State are formed on a truly democratic basis, that is, that the whole of the members of the community who are members of this party have an equal voice in drawing up the platform and the policy of the party; it is not left to those who are elected to Parliament to say what the policy shall be. A definite platform is laid down by all the members of the organisation and the humblest member in our ranks has an equal say, even with the Premier, in drawing up the platform and the policy, and whilst members are bound by that policy after it is agreed to by a majority of members of the organisations assembled in congress, on every other point, and every other matter of principle, which comes before members in this House, members are freer, I might say, than are members sitting in Opposition in regard to it. We have only to look through the

records of this House for the last three years, during the term of office of this Government, to learn the truth of my statement. On every division, with perhaps one or two exceptions, members on this side of the House have been divided, but on every occasion we have found that members on the Opposition benches have voted as a solid phalanx.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): With one exception, when the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) voted for preference to unionists.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: But what is the position of the party which members opposite represent? We find that every member can go out to the country seeking the suffrages of the people and place before the people their own particular views, and they have as many platforms and as many policies as there are candidates seeking election. But we find even something further than that, and if we peruse what is put before the public as a platform of that party, we find—as the *London Times* has declared within the last few weeks of their party in the Federal House—that their policy is purely a policy of negation. You can go through their platform and you will find they are opposed to this and opposed to that which is advocated by the Labour party, and on a few items—matters which the Labour party have brought into the forefront of political controversy—they jump in and support these measures. I want to prove the truth of that statement by referring to two of their platforms. These two platforms were published to the world with an interval of about 12 months. During that 12 months there had not been a State election and many of the things which were on their platform on the first occasion, the 7th February, 1913, did not find their way on to the statute-book, so that there was no need for the alteration of the platform from that point of view. But on the 26th February, 1914, we find them coming out with a fresh policy, with a lot of new matter, and that matter was only placed there because of the fact that it had been brought prominently before the people by the Labour Government. In the platform which they pub-



lished in 1913 there was no mention of the bulk-handling of wheat, but in the meantime the present Government had appointed a commission to inquire into and report upon this matter. That commission brought in a very comprehensive report, the findings of which are endorsed by practically every one of those people who are interested in the subject. Therefore, our friends rush in with another platform. There was no need for it whatever, but to show to the public what a great interest they are taking in this matter they come out with a fresh platform with this question in the forefront of it. A little later we find this position occurring: that the Federated Chambers of Commerce of Australia, whose members, I think it will be readily agreed, are supporters of the party represented by my friends opposite, had their congress in Perth, and that associated congress turned down the proposition of the bulk handling of wheat. They were opposed to it. We want to try and find out what was it that made them oppose the system.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Better ask them.

Mr. B. J. STURBS: We have sometimes to get our ideas by inference, and I have endeavoured to do so on this occasion. The only reason that I can see is that in some of the Eastern States where they have had commissions inquiring into the question as well as in this State, those commissions were unanimous about the idea that elevators, which it is necessary should be placed throughout the country as well as at the various ports, should be operated and controlled by the Government. It means that, as an initial step towards the exportation of wheat, an independent commission has laid it down that it is necessary that it should be in the hands of the Government. It means that the system eventually will have to be extended, and that the whole of the control of the export, right from the time the grain is taken off the farm to the time when it is distributed to the consumer, will eventually be controlled by the Government. Then many of the middlemen, who to-day are undoubtedly reaping a large benefit simply from the fact that the wheat passes through their hands in

name only, because they do nothing towards actually handling the wheat, will be deprived of that opportunity of doing so, and the producers will be relieved of that oppression, because there can be no doubt it is an oppression when the middleman can extract a large amount of wealth both from the producer and the consumer without returning an adequate compensation. We find also that in the platforms of our friends they are so confused in their ideas between Federal and State politics that they place upon their State platform reduced customs taxation on food stuffs, clothing, and agricultural machinery. What object can they have in placing such a plank as that upon their State platform? Simply to try and make the general public, who do not take a deep interest in political matters, believe that the State Government are responsible for customs duties. Not that I believe the general run of people in Australia would condemn any Government for it, because we find to-day that even in spite of the fact that the Country party, which is a schism from the Liberal party, stands pronounced as a free-trade party, whilst the Prime Minister has pronounced himself as in favour of protective duties. Another matter which the Liberal party find necessary to place upon their platform because of the action which the Labour Government took, is in connection with irrigation. That did not find a place on their platform in February, 1913, but in the meantime the Labour Government introduced a Bill to make it possible to bring about irrigation in this State. In February, 1914, the Liberal party came out with their platform, which includes also irrigation and closer settlement.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We had irrigation in 1909.

The Premier: The only irrigation you are responsible for is not water, but liquor.

Mr. B. J. STURBS: Our friends are not sincere. They put these things on their platform when the Labour party creates a favourable opinion on them, but they take good care that their members in another place do not pass the measures into law.

Mr. Thomas: You never suspected them of being sincere, did you?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I desire to congratulate the Premier and the Government upon having at last succeeded in getting a definite contract binding the Cook Government down with regard to the supply of powellised karri sleepers. It struck me that the Federal Government were very anxious to bring about a settlement of this question immediately there was a prospect of an election. They showed no very great haste prior to that time, but immediately there was a prospect of an election they could not take action quickly enough. They even went to the trouble to send an officer all the way from Melbourne to Perth to settle the matter. I want to show what a back-down the Cook Government have made. Their first contention was that powellised karri sleepers were unsuitable for the railway and another contention was that there had been or was likely to be delay in supplying the sleepers.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There was a delay.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: In regard to the first contention, they appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the use of powellised karri sleepers.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They have ordered powellised karri sleepers.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I wish the hon. member would listen for a moment.

Mr. Underwood: And not make those uncouth interjections.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Before the report of that Royal Commission was presented, the Federal Government signed a contract which proved conclusively that they themselves did not believe that karri was unsuitable for the Trans-Australian railway. If there has been a slight delay because of unforeseen circumstances which occurred during the erection of the mills, it was aggravated by the action of the Federal Government in interfering with the original contract. I am clearly of opinion that the bulk of the sleepers which will be used in this great railway project will be of powellised karri. Another matter to which I was pleased to see a reference in the Speech is that of constitutional reform.

Mr. Lander: It is wanted badly.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The time has arrived when a democratic country like Australia can no longer allow a Chamber which is representative of only a very small section of the community to thwart the legislation desired by a majority of the people. With regard to the British Parliament, which is recognised as the mother of Parliaments, all power has been taken from the House of Lords excepting the power to delay a measure for a period of two years, but after that time the House of Lords is impotent to work any further mischief in regard to any particular measure. I desire to quote a few figures with regard to the treatment meted out by another place to measures sent up by the present Government in comparison with measures sent up by previous Governments. In 1908, out of 48 Bills introduced, 24 were passed by this House, and only one was rejected by another place. In 1909, 36 Bills were passed by this Chamber and only one was rejected by another place, and that was a private member's Bill dealing with vaccination.

Mr. Wisdom: They were good measures.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: In 1910, 55 measures were passed by this Chamber, including the famous jerrymandering Bill, and not one was rejected by another place. In 1911, an entirely different state of affairs existed. The Labour Government were in power and of 27 Bills which passed this House, four were rejected by another place. In 1912, 20 measures were passed by this House and 10 were rejected by another place. In 1913, of 36 measures passed by this Chamber, nine were rejected by another place. These figures show conclusively that hon. members in another place are not always actuated by a desire simply to review measures without introducing any party colour into their work, but that they are influenced a great deal by the Government in power.

Mr. Lander: And how it affects their friends.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: There are one or two measures to which it is wise to direct

attention in order to show that the claim of members in another place that they are a House of review—the second thought of the community, and therefore the better thought—is totally unfounded. The Moneylenders' Bill was introduced into this Chamber with a certain definition of "moneylender." When the measure reached another place the definition was altered. Shortly afterwards a case came before the Bankruptcy Court in which a gentleman who unfortunately had got into financial difficulties had to seek the protection of the Court. Mr. Moss, the Official Receiver, in his examination disclosed that the man had been compelled to borrow money for which he was paying the lender 430 per cent. Mr. Moss pointed out that if the original definition placed in the Bill had been retained, he could have prosecuted the lender for charging that high rate of interest, but under the Act as mutilated by another place, he was prevented from instituting any proceedings against the lender. Mr. Moss directed the attention of the authorities to the matter and suggested that the Act should be amended as soon as possible, and consequently an amending Bill was rendered necessary to restore the original definition of "moneylender." Again a Bills of Sale Act Amendment Bill was introduced into this Chamber and I believe it was at the request of the Chamber of Commerce.

The Attorney General: In the first instance.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Not the whole of the clauses.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Every clause in the measure with one exception had the endorsement of the Chamber of Commerce. When the provisions of the measure were made public that body offered no objection to them, but one clause was inserted to provide that the wages of a worker up to one month should have a prior claim over a bill of sale and because that was inserted to protect the hard-earned wages of workers against a bill of sale, the measure was rejected by another place. These instances are sufficient

to prove that the time is more than ripe for the introduction of a Constitution reform measure.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You do not know the Bill.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I congratulate the Government on facing this question and I hope they will attack it in a courageous manner.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What about my amendment which was rejected by you.

The Attorney General: It was an amendment to the Sale of Goods Act and not the Bills of Sale Act. It was ruled out.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I am aware of that.

The Attorney General: It was out of order.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS. Another bugbear to the members of the Opposition is the Government policy of land reform in the direction of instituting what we claim is the best system of land tenure, namely, leasehold. Shortly after the Government took office—

Mr. Harper: It does not seem to be very popular.

The Attorney General: Not with the Opposition.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Ministers do not like leasehold.

Mr. Underwood: There are about 200 million acres of land under leasehold.

Mr. Harper: Only for pastoral purposes.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Shortly after the Government assumed office the Minister for Lands decided in accordance with power he possessed under the Land Act, to permit no further sales of town and suburban lands belonging to the Crown.

Hon. J. Mitchell: With what result?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The result is that in the country towns since established, the land is held under leasehold tenure and the towns are thriving. No objection has been raised to the system by the people concerned, and what is more, it has prevented land monopolists from buying up these blocks and charging extortionate rents to those who desire to set up in business in these localities. In these townships every business man can have his own block at a reasonable rental from the

Government, and the Government are benefiting because they are getting a substantial revenue from the rentals, and the people are so anxious to obtain blocks that they are paying fairly substantial premiums for the right.

Mr. Elliott: They have no other option.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Other countries provide instances of the benefits arising from the leasehold system. Quite recently Colonel Burns, one of the directors of Burns, Philp & Co., a man who from his position in the commercial world, is well qualified to express an opinion, pointed out on his return from a trip through the Malay States what wonderful prosperity existed there. He said—

Some time ago the Government lent Siam four million pounds, another six and a half million pounds went towards building 600 miles of railway, while four and a half millions went in public works, or a total of 15 million pounds. As the States are in the fortunate position of having no public debt, all of the amounts I have mentioned have been paid out of revenue.

The reason that they have no public debt is that the whole of the lands are on the leasehold principle and the rental from the lands pays the whole of the national expenditure of the country and enables these people to carry out gigantic public works and lend money to other countries which are not in a similarly fortunate position. The leader of the Opposition had much to say with regard to contract versus day labour. I consider that the Premier last night, in quoting figures and the opinions expressed by competent engineers in the public service, demonstrated clearly that the building of our railways is a far greater success under day labour than under the contract system. But we have also another example from a foreign country. Only a few months ago, in February last, we got information from Canada. A commission was appointed there to enquire into the cost of the Trans-Continental railway, and that commission reported that the board in charge of the construction exercised no economy and that con-

sequently the Canadian people squandered eight millions on the building of that line, the original estimate of cost being exceeded five times over and many large contracting firms having made huge profits through subletting their contracts on the railway and doing nothing whatever themselves. I think that is clearly a state of things which should not be allowed to exist in any country, and which cannot exist in a country that adopts the wise and sensible policy of constructing railways on the day labour system, guaranteeing to the people a soundly constructed railway, and also a railway constructed at a minimum cost commensurate with the substantial building of the work. I have just about completed the remarks I desire to make. I simply wish to add that I believe the record of administration, of public works, and of legislation, which the present Government have placed to their credit during their term of office, is such as will commend itself to the vast majority of the people of this State. I believe that the Government and those who are supporting the Government can, at the end of their term of office, go with clear consciences to the people who sent them here, and with no misgivings whatever as to what the result of the forthcoming elections will be. I believe that the people of this State are so enamoured of the magnificent achievements of the Scaddan Government that they will send them back with even an increased majority over the numbers which they have to-day.

Mr. HARPER (Pingelly): I rise to speak to the Address-in-reply, but in the first place I must say that I regret I cannot endorse the speeches made by the members supporting the Government. I listened attentively to the hon. Premier during his three-hours' speech. He pointed out that everything in the garden was lovely. I only wish that were true. I doubt very much, however, if it is anything near correct. I know this, that the people of Western Australia are very far from satisfied that it is correct. Anyone who travels through the country, in the agricultural districts and in the mining districts as well, sees signs there of the reverse of what the

Premier has told us. I have come to the conclusion that the present Government are highly notorious for the policy of four B's. The first B is Boost; the next, Borrow money; the next, Bluff; and the fourth, Bankruptcy.

The Premier: You will go down to history.

Mr. HARPER: Everyone knows that there is only one end to such a policy as that of the present Government. We know very well, too, that every member of the Government, and every member of this Assembly, and every individual in the State possessed of any knowledge at all, knows that the Government are very hard up, very hard pressed for money—

Mr. Thomas: That is a new charge, is it not?

Mr. HARPER: Notwithstanding the fact that the Premier has given us his assurance that everything is progressing and prosperous. The first thing I notice making progress and advancing by rapid strides is the swiftly growing deficit. That is the only thing I see progressing in Western Australia at the present time.

The Premier: You are an awful croaker.

Mr. HARPER: It is just as well that the two phases of the question should be ventilated. We have heard a great deal of the rosy side of the question. In fact, we have heard of nothing but boost and boom. At any rate the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) is very satisfied with himself—

Mr. Thomas: Naturally.

Mr. HARPER: Now that he has a promise of £800,000 to be spent in Bunbury. It is a very, very dear price for him. It is much more than he is worth. However, I am not going to say that Bunbury is not entitled to a great deal of consideration. Still, there are other places in Western Australia as much entitled to consideration as Bunbury is.

Mr. Thomas: Naturally, I do not think so.

Mr. HARPER: As regards the member for Swan (Mr. Turvey) I want to disabuse his mind on a matter which has been often mentioned by some of our members of Parliament in this State. The hon.

the Premier himself at Kalgoorlie said that when speaking on the Mines Regulation Bill last year I had advocated the introduction of kaffir labour into Western Australia.

The Premier: Hear hear. So you did.

Mr. HARPER: I emphatically deny that, and *Hansard* will bear me out in my denial. The furthest and most that I said—

Mr. McDowall: *Hansard* is not always reliable.

Mr. HARPER: It may not be when reporting the member for Coolgardie.

The Premier: Tell us what you did say.

Mr. HARPER: I said that if we had kaffir labour in Western Australia, if we had the same cheap labour in Western Australia as they had in South Africa—

The Premier: Why don't you go back there?

Mr. HARPER: Then we could produce a larger quantity of gold and a greater number would be employed in the mines of Western Australia. I was not advocating anything of such a nature as introducing kaffir labour into Western Australia.

The Premier: What else did you advocate?

Mr. HARPER: In the first place, we could not get kaffir labour if I did advocate it. The kaffirs have sufficient to do in South Africa, without coming to Western Australia.

The Premier: Thanks for that.

Mr. HARPER: What I did say was that in South Africa they could work the mines for one-third of the cost in Western Australia.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Mr. HARPER: I say they can.

The Premier: They are not doing it.

Mr. HARPER: If the kaffir was available in this State as in South Africa, I am sure every mine on the goldfields would avail itself of the cheap labour. The kaffirs can afford to live cheaper than white people, and they can afford, too, to work well during the years that they do work.

The Premier: Say that again.

Mr. HARPER: I want to give an emphatic denial to the statement that has

been made both by the Premier and by the member for Swan.

The Premier: What are we to infer from your remarks?

Mr. HARPER: That is a different thing. I was only drawing a comparison with what was done in South Africa. That is a very different thing from saying that I wished kaffirs to come over here. In the first place we could not get them, and, anyway, I did not mean to infer that in any shape or form. The speech was referred to afterwards by the Honorary Minister, Mr. Angwin, who said, "If the kaffirs were here," and "If we had the same labour." The Honorary Minister interpreted my remarks rightly. The matter was also referred to by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell). There was no idea whatever in my mind of suggesting that we should have kaffir or Chinese labour in Western Australia.

The Premier: You said it would be better for the goldfields.

Mr. HARPER: I said nothing of the kind.

The Premier: You are saying it now.

Mr. HARPER: I said that if we had the same cheap labour here as they have in South Africa, we would have more men employed as bosses than we have men employed altogether in the Western Australian mines.

Mr. Underwood: Are you in favour of kaffir labour? That is what we want to know.

Mr. HARPER: I am not in favour of kaffir labour, but the whole question of gold mining depends entirely on the cost of production. In South Africa they voted for the importation of Chinese when kaffirs were not available after the war. The miners themselves on the Rand voted for the importation of Chinese when kaffirs could not be got to work the mines after the Boer war.

Member: They were glad to get rid of the Chinese, too.

Mr. HARPER: However, I do not want to dwell on this subject. I merely desire to give a contradiction to the statement I have referred to. I do not want a statement like that going about when it is entirely untrue and false in

every respect, and I hope members will not persist in repeating that statement when they know it is a falsehood.

The Premier: What is your object in mentioning it?

Mr. HARPER: I want to give it a denial. I know you made the statement in Kalgoorlie. You said that Mr. Nat. Harper when Minister for Mines would be in favour of kaffir labour.

The Premier: Perhaps I was only joking.

Mr. HARPER: Perhaps the Premier was only joking, as he usually is. However, I wish now to refer to one or two deputations which were asked for by large numbers of West Australian farmers. One was a proposed deputation from the Great Southern Railway League. The request for that deputation bore about 400 signatures. The farmers wished to wait on the Premier with a view to placing before him their views as to the necessity for the early construction of the Armadale-Great Southern railway. The Premier quite ignored that request, although it was made by 400 farmers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What good was the deputation if we had no money?

Mr. HARPER: You could borrow money to build this railway as you borrowed money for other railways. This would be a most successful and remunerative railway, and would certainly pay good interest on the cost of construction. Apart from all that, I think the Honorary Minister would agree with me that it was only a fair thing for the Premier to receive the deputation and hear what the people who are doing so much to develop this country had to say for themselves, instead of giving them an arrogant reply that he could not undertake the construction of the railway and that he knew all about it. He said, further, that in view of the fact that a survey had not been made he could not entertain the question of the construction at the present time. Now, the Minister for Public Works told us, when the Survey Bill was before the House last session, that the

survey of this line had been made—that it had been made with a view of constructing the Trans-Australian railway from Armadale through the Wongan Gorge to Brookton. The Minister also said that it was quite unnecessary to have another survey made, that all the particulars required for the railway were available. Then the Premier replies as follows to the request for the deputation:—

With reference to your letter of the 19th ulto., addressed to the Hon. Premier, relative to connecting the Great Southern Railway with Armadale, I have the honour by direction to inform you that as provision was not made for the survey of this line in the Bill passed by Parliament last session, the survey cannot be undertaken, and further, in view of the work now being carried out on lines under construction already authorised, and those awaiting survey, the line referred to by you cannot at present receive the consideration of the Government.

That was a very lame excuse to give those people who, as I said before, are doing their best to develop the agricultural areas of this State. Now, there was another important deputation, concerning which the member for York (Mr. Monger) wrote to the Premier. That was with regard to the increased freight on fertilisers. The request for that deputation was signed by, I think, nearly 4,000 farmers. The Premier again refused to receive that deputation, and would not permit them to place their views before him. I think that was very discourteous on his part, certainly impolitic, and was very unreasonable. I suppose no deputation ever had a similar reception from any other Premier of Western Australia. He received a deputation about Collic coal in the way he should receive it. I am not objecting to his having received the Collic coal deputation, but I strongly protest against the arrogant treatment meted out both to the farmers of the Great Southern and to the whole of the farmers of Western Australia in regard to increased freight on fertilisers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It did not benefit the farmers, and so it was struck off.

Mr. HARPER: We want the freight reduced again to what it was under the Liberal Government.

Mr. Underwood: The Liberal Government only reduced the freight to catch an election.

Mr. HARPER: That is your interpretation; you measure other people's oats by your own bushel. A great deal has been said in regard to mining, and I have been referred to by some hon. members as a pessimist. I am to a certain extent careful, but I certainly have done everything I could to encourage mining. I have not talked a great deal of what I have done, but I may safely say I have done more to assist mining than those who have referred to me as taking a pessimistic view. If the Mines Regulation Amendment Bill had not been sent back to us by another place last session, it would have become law. It was not through any fault of the Assembly that it was not placed on the statute-book. If it had been agreed to, mining would have been in a much more parlous condition to-day than it is, and if the contract system, which has been so frequently discussed, had been abolished, it would have been another blow to mining. And so also in regard to several other conditions attempted to be passed in the House last session.

Mr. Mansie: Would the abolition of the night shift have hurt mining very much?

Mr. HARPER: Not very much. I am not referring to night shift. A number of the mines could not afford to do without night shift, not because it is an immediate advantage to them but because it is of advantage in keeping the mines going. I have consulted several friends on the goldfields on many occasions, and all have disapproved of the abolition of contract work. All the competent miners on the fields are in favour of contract, and what the men themselves have told me is that it is mostly the truckers and mullockers who are not in favour of contract. One man, working on the Kalgurli mine

to-day, told me that he was earning on an average 25s. a day, and that if contract was abolished he would leave the State. Another friend of mine confirmed that statement, while another told me the other day in Kalgoorlie that he was doing some sub-contracts for the trans-Australian railway, and was carrying out the work for one half the money it was costing the Government by day labour, while he and the men working for him were getting more than the men whom the Government were paying. I know of a great many cases where the work is costing double what it should. It may not apply so much to railways, because in respect to railways there is more data to go upon, and one engineer is competing against another, and so all are anxious to keep down the costs. Still I strongly disapprove the idea of carrying out railways by day labour alone; tenders ought to be called and the two systems placed side by side, so that it could be seen which was the cheaper. We are to have the Esperance railway before us again, and I hope it will meet with the same fate as it did on the last occasion. The more we read and hear of this railway the more reason do we see why it should not be proceeded with. No hon. member is so unreasonable as to ask this country, in its present impecunious position, to build a railway, unless he thinks it is justified. The member for East Perth cannot justify the construction of this railway by any means. The records of the last two years have been very disappointing, and I was told when I made the remark last year that it was an exceptionally bad year, and that this year would be an exceptionally good one. Well, the average is only a little over four bushels an acre. It is all moonshine for anyone to tell us that the crops of this area are not so well put in as those in any other district. I am opposed to this railway for more than one reason. First of all I hear on reliable authority that the rainfall, although perhaps the average is sufficient, does not come at the right time of the year. That being so, the place is no good for wheat growing, for the rain must fall in the winter and spring to be of any use in wheat areas. The old in-

flated idea of the value of the land down there for wheat growing is fairly exploded, and I hope the Assembly will not proceed with the matter any further. With regard to the railways now under consideration, I am pleased that the Minister for Works has pushed on with the Yilliminning-Kondinin and the Brookton-Kunjin lines; these two lines have made rapid progress during the last few months and for that we are grateful indeed. Had it not been for the Government going into so many costly State enterprises, those two railways would have been built at least twelve months or two years ago, and those twelve months or two years have imposed a very heavy hardship on the people who were waiting anxiously for the construction of those lines. A line I should like to see proceeded with, and which I think will commend itself to both sides of the House, is the Armadale-to the Great Southern railway. I have often mentioned this matter before, and I know the Minister for Works approves of it. I hope some other members on the opposite side will support me in regard to this. We have there a large area of land quite near to our doors, and this railway would serve thousands of farmers to very great advantage. It would serve everybody to advantage from Beverley to Albany, for it would shorten the route from Albany to Perth by 50 miles: this each way means 100 miles for the return journey, which would represent a very big saving in freight. It is a railway project which should be pressed. I am sure it would be of great advantage to the people of Western Australia, and would certainly take away a lot of the heavy traffic and divide the traffic now going round by Spencer's Brook. It would benefit the people right out to Kondinin and Kurrenkutten, and all the people of the Eastern districts, bringing them to Fremantle by the most direct route. There is another railway which should be built, namely, that from Pingelly to Gillimanning. The people have been upon the land there for the last 12 years, living 20 miles from a railway, and facing all the disadvantages appertaining to so remote a position.



Mr. Munsie: Why did you not advocate that during the nine years the Liberals were in power?

Mr. HARPER: I was not long in Parliament then. I have advocated it ever since I have been in Parliament. I was in Parliament for only one year of the Liberal regime. The people I have referred to have fulfilled their obligations to the Government, have paid their rents, and cleared their lands; they are industrious farmers, and have survived all the great difficulties which they have had to endure. I say the Government are under an obligation to them to have that railway built, either from Popanyinning or Pingelly, a distance of about 15 to 20 miles. Another railway urgently required is an extension of the Hotham Valley line to Popanyinning or Pingelly; that would serve the farmers in that part of the State. They are old settlers, and have been there a long time. They are certainly deserving of consideration. I do not intend to go over a great many of the subjects that the hon. the leader of the Opposition has referred to. He made a very convincing speech and pointed out the defects of the present Administration. What I do complain about in regard to the Government is that they are taking upon themselves too much. There are far too many of these State enterprises which should have been left to somebody else to carry out. There are their brick works, their boats, their butchers' shops, their saw mills, and I think that would perhaps comprise them all. At any rate, these should be left more to private enterprise by which the resources of the country would be better developed.

Member: What about the implement works?

Mr. HARPER: If those implement works can produce machinery which will benefit the farmers, and which can make machinery at a cheaper cost than we can now get it from the Eastern States, I am not prepared to oppose them. I only hope that this will be the case.

Mr. Lewis: You deny the metropolitan area the same facilities as the country areas. Apparently you believe only on socialism for the farmer.

Mr. HARPER: This is a national affair, and the other things I have mentioned are not. Then, again, there are the workmen's cottages.

Mr. Lewis: They are homes!

Mr. HARPER: They are going in extensively for these. The Government commitments are very great indeed, far greater than the State or the finances of the country can afford. The Premier himself has admitted that nearly three-quarters of a million has been spent in workmen's cottages. To a certain extent they are justified in carrying on this scheme, but not to the extent to which the Government has gone.

Mr. Lander: Not a thousand houses have been built in Western Australia in three years.

Mr. HARPER: In the Premier's speech reference was made to the fact that people in other parts of the world were inquiring about this workers' home scheme. Workers' homes were in force in New Zealand and Queensland a number of years ago, but not to the extent that they are in this State. There their limit is about £250, whereas here they can go up to £550. The State cannot afford to go in so extensively for workers' homes. The buildings are certainly palatial residences, but require a good deal in the way of maintenance and upkeep.

Mr. Lander: Why should not working men have good cottages as well as anybody else?

Mr. HARPER: In my opinion the cottages are far above the station of the occupants in many cases. It is not necessary that they should be palatial residences.

Mr. Lander: Only about four or five rooms.

Mr. HARPER: Some people with small families do not require such large places. This policy is only for those who cannot afford to get their own homes. There are many persons in the town who are just as much entitled to consideration as those people who live in workmen's cottages. Many of them are no better off than the workmen. Many of them perhaps have built their own homes and possibly from adverse circum-

stances have had to let their homes to somebody else, and live elsewhere. It is unfair for the Government to rent homes in competition with those people whose houses are now empty and unoccupied. That is not what we want done. What we want is to see the country go ahead. We want to encourage people on the land, the primary producers; whether they are on the gold mines or whether they are indulging in wheat growing, it does not matter.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Where have you been for the last two or three years?

Mr. HARPER: I have been developing my farm.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I say there have been no empty houses since the Labour Government came along.

Mr. HARPER: There are lots of places to let now, and there have been many during the last five or six months.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You cannot find them.

Mr. HARPER: I can point them out to you.

Mr. Lewis: The rents are all too high.

Mr. HARPER: I have rented houses, but I have never paid more than 6 per cent. on the cost of the building and the land. It really pays better to live in a rented house than to live in one you have built for yourself. What are we going to do if times like those that existed five or six years ago come along again.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They will not come again so long as this Government is here.

Mr. HARPER: The Government cannot go on borrowing money for ever like they have been for the last two or three years. They may have a lot of empty houses very soon to maintain, and keep up.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We are not looking for a slump.

Mr. HARPER: You have to provide for emergencies, however, and for disappointments; they come upon any Government. Many Governments in Australia have had adversities to contend with.

Mr. Munsie: The trouble is that the workers' homes scheme is a disappointment to the landlords.

Mr. HARPER: For my own part I would not put money into houses at all, even if I had any. I do not know anybody who has a house that gets anything like a fair interest on his money by way of rent. Our public debt is the highest by a long way of any of the other States of the Commonwealth. It is nearly double that of some of the other States, and nearly £95 per head of the population. Who is going to bear the responsibility of paying the interest on the huge sums of borrowed money? There is a heavy liability upon the people of the State. It behoves everyone to go very cautiously and only in that direction in which they are sure of success. There is certainly more care required in the administration of the affairs of the State and greater judgment and discretion than exist at the present time. The hon. member for Subiaco (Mr. B. J. Stubbs) referred to the bulk handling of wheat. That is a matter which should be gone into at the earliest possible date. We know the great disadvantages under which the people on the land are labouring. I do not know the cause of this; I do not know whether it is want of experience on their part, or whether it is due to the climatic conditions or to the nature of the land upon which the farmers in Western Australia are settled. I do know, however, that they have a hard row to hoe. In every speech that has been made there has been a reference to the season. What is going to happen if we do not have a good season I do not know. It is certainly true that the prosperity of the State depends upon the prosperity of the people on our agricultural areas. For that reason the Government should be far more lenient and considerate to the people who are endeavouring to build up the country.

Mr. Lander: Do you not think this country has given them a fair cut? The Government have only been book-keeping for them.

Mr. HARPER: I do not think that is the case. If the Government are doing

what you say is a fair thing, and if the farmers cannot get something better than that, they will not be able to carry on. The hon. member for East Perth knows that very well. He has travelled over a great portion of the State, and is acquainted with the hardships that are endured and the disabilities that the farmers have to contend with.

Mr. Lander: The Government is giving them a good cut.

Mr. HARPER: If they do not get more then they will not be able to remain on the land. Many of them are already quitting their homes. I know land upon which a great deal of money has been spent in the way of improvements, fencing, etc., and that the owners cannot sell, and are now simply walking out.

Mr. Lander: You know the reason why. There are too many afternoon farmers amongst them.

Mr. HARPER: I would not like to go as far as to say that. I know the farmers are having a bad time; I do not know why it is. I know they have many difficulties to contend with. As far as my experience goes, I do not know how they meet their liabilities at the present time, for they have to pay big interest and meet heavy mortgages.

Mr. Lander: If they stick to one block they will do better.

Mr. HARPER: I do not intend to say any more on this occasion. I think, however, that the Minister for Lands made a huge mistake when he gave that instruction which he did very shortly after he assumed office. Since then farming has gone down very considerably. I notice by the *Monthly Abstract* that the amount of land taken up this year, so far, does not amount to more than one-quarter of that taken up three years ago. That shows a great falling off in land settlement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Too much land was taken up then.

Mr. HARPER: There might have been a little too much taken up then. There is, however, too little taken up now. There is so much land available, and if the farmers are given fair treatment, and can be given some better freight arrange-

ments and cheaper facilities for producing their wheat, I say that the land settlement cannot go ahead too fast.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I am very pleased to say a few words upon the Governor's Speech. I think that the Governor must have been, if I may use a vulgar expression, indulging in leg-pulling. Everything in the Speech is congratulatory of the Government, which only shows that the Governor knows that he has a Government under him which is an honest Government, a Government by the people and for the people. If you run a tape over the whole of the items in the Governor's Speech you must admit that he is congratulating a Government, which has been so much condemned by our friends opposite, for the good things that they have done. I wish to join with others in congratulating the Government for re-appointing Sir Newton Moore as Agent General for the State for another period. There is one thing I would like the Government to do, and which I think they might have done before now. That is to impress upon our Agent General that he should not pitch any more fairy tales in the old country in order to encourage what I may call the new chum to come out here under false pretences. Too much has been done in the past in the way of lying and scandalous statements. Too much has been done in the way of inducing the people to believe that they could obtain land by the side of a railway for 10s. 6d. an acre. Any residents who have been in Western Australia for any length of time would admit that it is a scandalous thing to induce people to come out here and go perhaps, in some cases, as far as 58 miles away from any railway line. Such people have been told in the old country that they can obtain land here for 10s. 6d. right adjoining a railway line. I have often been shown pamphlets containing such information. I trust that Sir Newton Moore has been instructed not to get out any immigrants except by honest means. We do not want to bring any one out here under false pretences.

Mr. Menger: You do not want anyone at all.

Mr. LANDER: That is not so. We hold out the hand of friendship to all who come to us under proper conditions. If you bring people out here to occupy such high positions in big businesses of the State and cut down the wages of the workers then we are going to turn our backs upon them, but if you bring suitable men out to any part of Australia there is room for any quantity of workmen, so long as they are prepared to work. If you bring out here suitable men, then I am sure we shall all welcome them most heartily. But what do we find? Many of them describe themselves as agricultural labourers and when they arrive here we find that they have been working in a shop or following a trade. We have no room for such people. At present there is not much demand in any part of Australia for mechanics, but for every man who is willing to go on the land and cut out a way for himself as the pioneers of Western Australia have done, there is still a good opening in this State. The same argument applies to domestic servants. Many girls have been brought out under false pretences and I am sorry to say that the references which many of them produce are very misleading. Ladies who have been working as typists and in such-like avocations have been brought out and there is no room for them. Young Australians are available to take these positions and I am glad that they are able to compete with anyone from any part of the world in the various positions which ladies occupy. I am pleased that the Opposition cannot say there has been anything in the nature of evils to the victors in connection with the appointment of Mr. Justice Northmore. Everyone should be pleased that the Government in choosing a man to occupy this high position have chosen one who enjoys the respect and esteem of the whole of the people of Western Australia. Another matter on which we can congratulate ourselves, and in fact on which action should have been taken many years ago, is that of the State's banking business.

Hon. J. Mitchell interjected.

Mr. LANDER: This must cut into our friends' arrangements with the West

Australian Bank and must hurt them. It must hurt especially the shareholders of the bank who have drawn a big interest annually from the use of the people's money which was practically lying idle in the bank. This question should have been tackled years ago, but presently the hon. member for Northam and his friends will realise the benefit of it. Instead of allowing thousands of pounds to lie idle in the West Australian Bank it will be transferred to the Commonwealth Bank and the farmers and others in the State will derive the benefit from it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: From what?

Mr. Munsie: From the low rate of interest through the Commonwealth bank.

Mr. LANDER: Comments have fallen from the Opposition with regard to the workers' homes scheme, just because the Government have built about a thousand houses.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We have said nothing about them.

Mr. LANDER: Some of the hon. member's friends have. Fancy anyone who thinks anything at all of Western Australia finding fault with the Government for having built a thousand houses in such a large State as this. I hope that the Government will build many thousands of them and will build larger and better houses than are found in other parts. The class of tenement which the bottom dog, as he is called, has to occupy is a standing disgrace. Recently an investigation was made in Melbourne by plain clothes constables with regard to the tenements occupied by some of the poor people, and what were the revelations? These tenements were proved to belong to men occupying high positions, some of them in Parliament and some of them in the councils. These men prostituted their positions as far as they could in order to evade the Health Act and allow their tenements to be occupied by people rearing tuberculous and diseased children, attributable to no other cause than the nature of the tenements. The same thing prevails in Ireland where various bodies have investigated the matter and have found instances of a whole family occupying a single room. In the great city of London at the present time

the same state of affairs prevails. There were three houses in London and in these houses were four families, and each house was a standing disgrace to the health authorities. When this sort of thing is tolerated in other parts of the world, we ought to congratulate the Government who are willing to come forward and erect homes for the poorer people of Western Australia. Much has been said regarding people having taken advantage of the Workers' Homes Act when they were not entitled to do so. Anyone in receipt of a salary of £400 a year is entitled to avail himself of the provisions of the measure and no distinction can be made up to that amount. Our friends opposite are well aware of this fact, and I hope the time will never come when the Government will make any distinction among persons in receipt of less than £400 a year. Anyone who has a love for his home and avails himself of the scheme, shows that he is endeavouring to better his family and to push them into the front rank where every young Australian should endeavour to get, and this cannot be done on a salary of less than £400 if a man has to put down the money to purchase a home. Much has been said about the leasehold system, and it has been asked why the Government have not built more houses under this system. Members of the Opposition are well aware of the reason; they know that land is not available anywhere handy. In the newspaper on Saturday an advertisement appeared showing that the University authorities are endeavouring to beat the Government by calling for tenders for the sale of some of their land, and I hope that the Premier will sit on them for this questionable action. The Government gave Crawley to the University and have erected buildings for them in Irwin-street, and now the University authorities instead of going to the Government and asking them to make a reasonable offer for the land, secretly call for tenders for it. I hope that the Government will take a hand in this game, because it is some of the best land between Claremont and Perth. How can the Minister be expected to make the railways pay if the

best spots along the railway line are permitted to remain unoccupied! I say without fear of contradiction that there is some of the best land in the metropolitan district under offer by tender from the University Senate, and I hope the Government will secure it for workers' homes. If the Government obtain this land, they will be able to say in the Governor's Speech, at the opening of next Parliament, that they have built, not one thousand, but two thousand or three thousand houses.

Mr. Taylor interjected.

Mr. LANDER: All of the present Ministers may not be in office, but we may have some representatives from the Country party. In spite of all the unfavourable comment from our friends opposite, I hope that the Government will continue as they have started with the scheme of building better and healthier homes for the workers. I am pleased with the good work accomplished by the Railway Department during last year. Every man having produce to ship should congratulate the Government on the good work accomplished. During the year, not a single complaint was received. Until the present Government took office it was practically impossible to get a ton of wood brought down to the City. The carters after bringing in their load would have to tip it off, and I maintain that it is unfair to ask men who are working for a mere pittance to tip up a load of wood and reload it under the starvation system adopted in connection with the railways by the Liberal Government. The Liberal Government started the erection of workshops at Midland Junction and forgot to make preparations for the roof.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That was done by your Government.

Mr. LANDER: They forgot to order the ironwork; if they had ordered it it would have been delivered to them and they would have had to pay for it. They also ordered some extra locomotives and trucks as they knew it would take 18 months to obtain delivery of them, and that it would provide an election cry. The allegiance signatures of the members

of the present Government were scarcely dry before they ordered hundreds of trucks and extra locomotives. The Commissioner's report states that in a very short period 800 odd trucks came into the country and I am safe in saying that the present Government have been responsible for the building of about 1,200 trucks and a number of locomotives. While this good work is being done the Government are catering not only for one party, but for the whole crowd. I think the Railway Department might assist the farmers a little by leaving the gates of country station yards open until 7 o'clock at night. There is no necessity for any officer to be in attendance, but the gates should be left open so that a man arriving from a long distance could unload his wheat. At many of the country stations the gates are locked between 5 and 6 o'clock, and I have known men after carting wheat over a distance of 28 miles having to camp half a mile from the gates because they could not get access to the yard. If the gates were left open until 7 o'clock these men could unload their wagons and probably return home the same night. The granting of this concession will give the little farmer a show. I am in favour of helping the one-block farmer to the fullest extent, but I would not help the two-block farmer, the man who dummies a block, neglects his business and runs off to something else. I would go as far as possible to help the one-block man and the Government have gone as far as they possibly can in many instances. They have cleared the land for the farmer, fenced it, fallowed it and they have bought him horses, feed, seed wheat and advanced him loans for implements and horses and have sunk dams for him, and in many instances, have paid his store account. How much further would any Government go?

Mr. Elliott: The Midland Railway do that.

Mr. LANDER: The Midland Railway are doing a lot, but they are looking after themselves every time. Another thing on which the Government should be congratulated is the improved tram service. It has been said that the Government paid

too much for it, but before they took office the Liberal Government and the City Council were trying to beat each other for the purchase. However, they were too slow and a lively man like the Premier beat both of them.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Both of whom?

Mr. LANDER: Well, your party were defeated, they were too slow; but the present Government beat your opponents, the City council.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. LANDER: A great improvement has been effected in the service. The trams are now covering 2,000 miles a week more than previously, and are run more frequently, and they are not overcrowded as they were before. Nowadays we do not find the "mother of ten" writing about the cars. The Government are to be commended for having taken action in connection with the Collie coal industry. It is a serious matter that at the present time we are losing about £26,000 per annum on that industry. While I maintain that the industry should be assisted as far as possible, I consider that if this loss is to be incurred every year, it would pay to capitalise the amount and throw a couple of hundred thousand into the Collie district. According to the latest return the loss was £21,860, and if this loss continues, we will find it difficult to wipe off the small debt to which the Premier referred last night. Another item which is spoken about is the increase on fertilisers. I ask, does any reasonable farmer think that the Government are justified in losing the amount which they have been losing on the carriage of fertilisers? From the returns we find that fully £28,000 was being lost annually. What the Government should have done, in my opinion, was to sock it into the Northam and York farmers, and the other old, settled farmers. The reduction in fertilisers was never meant for men who had been settled on the land for years and whose holdings were properly developed: it was meant for the men in the dry areas. We find, however, that our friends at Northam and York, and so forth had a good pull with the Govern-

ment, and they pulled their own way and took advantage of the reduction. If the Government could see their way clear to impose the full penalty on all places within about 80 miles of Perth, and give the drier areas a little more consideration, I think it would be well. Nobody, whether in or out of Parliament, could expect the Government to carry on anything showing a loss of £28,000 a year. You could do with that as with the loss on the Collie coal—capitalise it and pay interest on a big loan. A lot has been said about the starting of a few steamships. I maintain the Government were fully justified in putting the scheme into action. The other party when in power were a party of promises. They said they might buy a State steamer. If they had bought a State steamer, they would have had the exploiters in the North-West against them, and they would have been treated worse than the Country party will treat them. When you realise the number of little men who have been up in the North-West for years and years struggling to make a living, you will realise the necessity for these State steamers. The exploiters of the North-West will give you every encouragement to start if you are a man of about £5,000 or say up to £10,000; but wait until you have been on a station, and have started to breed cattle, and have cattle to send down. Ask any person who has been in the North-West in a small capacity for a number of years whether he could ship his cattle. What were the exploiters doing prior to the Labour Government coming into power? The exploiters were going to every little station and purchasing the cattle for £2 a head, and then selling them to the agents for Manila and the Philippine Islands at £4 a head on Wyndham jetty. But now, since the Labour Government are in power, the little man has come in as well as the big man; and the State steamers on the North-West coast have been of the greatest assistance in every way to the small man of the North-West. I hope the Government will see their way clear to develop the North-West and to build a railway

into the North-West country. There is a great future before the North-West if only it gets a fair cut. We have heard a lot about the few pounds lost on the State steamers. Our friend from Northam, and other financial kings like him, if they were to start a big concern like the State steamship service, would, as a board of directors, I guarantee, allow for losses during the first year or two. We know that is so in connection with every tin pot business that is started. We have a little nest left to us, a baby left to us as you might say, between Hopetoun and Ravensthorpe, showing a loss of £5,700 per annum. Do we ever hear that hashed up in the House? No; our friends are as close as an oyster on that. Why? Because it concerns some of their friends who put the smelting works down there. A blind man with a stick could have told the Liberal Government that that was the wrong place to put a railway. I hope that before long the present Government will take the matter into their hands and run the Nampup railway out to Ravensthorpe and pick up that piece of line from Hopetoun to Ravensthorpe and hang it on to the Nampup railway. Our Government have spent in connection with the jetty there a good many hundreds of pounds, and they can still keep pouring hundreds of pounds into the Hopetoun jetty, the same as our friends opposite poured thousands into the Fremantle dock when they bought the Fremantle seats. That was the Fremantle bribe.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Your party spent far more on the dock than we spent.

Mr. LANDER: But we shall be able to show some returns. You cannot show any returns. We are patching up your filter beds now. I will tell you something about those presently.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will kindly address the Chair.

Mr. LANDER: I am glad to see that we have some more new railways authorised surveyed and carried out. I would like the Government to go a great deal further in regard to agricultural lines. I am pleased to know they put the Esperance line on, and I will support

that line. If we took any notice of the croakers we would never have had any lines in the Eastern wheat belts; and if we had taken notice of the holders of big areas, who would have monopolised all the 10-acre blocks round the water-holes, we should never have had any agricultural districts. Similarly, those people will never agree to the Esperance railway. I am glad to say, however, that on this side of the House there are only a very few members who have ever voted against an agricultural line. I think I am justified in saying members on this side will continue to support agricultural lines, irrespective of what the farmers may say we are doing for them. I would have liked to see, among the new lines of railway, the Yorkkrakine-Merredin line. Here we have the Agricultural Bank with hundreds of thousands of pounds lent out to little settlers, little settlers who were, as we know, picked up from the Fremantle streets, unemployed, and sent out there, and who got on splendidly. What did our friends opposite do with those settlers when they got them there? They jerked them out 20 miles, and left them stranded as they are stranded to-day. I would like to see the Yorkkrakine line put through, and I say we would be justified in putting it through. We hear people talking about the hardships of these settlers. I have been among those farmers, and I say they have some of the finest women there to be found in the whole of Australasia.

Member: Will you take us there?

Mr. LANDER: I will be very pleased to take the lot of you. They have some of the finest and bravest women in Australia there. When we come to realise the position of these poor beggars, induced to go out there under false pretences, we must sympathise with them. If a man were to do such a thing as some of our friends opposite have done in the past, he would have the Commissioner of Police on to him with a staff of plain clothes constables to arrest him for obtaining things under false pretences. I say the Government in the past have sent people out to these areas and

practically obtained from them things under false pretences. They have made promises to these people, and they have never carried out those promises. I would have liked to see that Yorkkrakine line put on the list with the other railways, because it is fully justified. I do not see any grounds for opposition from Mr. Paterson, the manager of the Agricultural Bank, who has lent hundreds of thousands of pounds to little settlers without hope of ever getting it back. Everybody who has to do with wheat knows that it is impossible to cart wheat 20 miles and make it pay, especially in a bad season.

Mr. Underwood: It is worse in a good season, because you have more to cart.

Mr. LANDER: We have only to take the good work that has been done by the present Government in supplying water to these people. It does not matter where you go, in any direction in Western Australia, you will find the Labour Government has put down dams and wells and has sunk bores for the little man; and we must give them credit for doing as much as they possibly could for the farmers, irrespective of what has been said for political purposes. The brick kiln also seems to cut very deeply into some people. I hope it will cut a bit deeper yet. When you come to realise that in Western Australia at the present time bricks have practically gone up to £3 a thousand, you will see that something had to be done. Any one who has had anything to do with building will say the price is exorbitant. From the reports of what is being charged for bricks in other States, it seems possible that we shall be able to turn them out at a little under £2 a thousand. Some people say that the bricks will be turned out for less, but I will be satisfied with that. Our capitalist friends, instead of condemning us, will then come and shake hands with us for giving them the opportunity to build on the vacant blocks of land that they have hanging about Perth. I am also pleased to notice that the Governor congratulates the Government on going in for harbour improvements. I am glad that the Government have made a start at



Bunbury, Albany, and other harbours, besides Fremantle, but I would like to hear them say that they are also going to start on Geraldton. As a metropolitan member who has been in Geraldton, I say that the Geraldton people should have their harbour started and cranes erected as soon as possible. There is no doubt that the wheat areas around Geraldton are going to be an important factor in Western Australia, and every encouragement should be given to Geraldton with regard to its port, irrespective of what member represents Geraldton, although I do not think that consideration has any weight with our present Government. I would like to see Geraldton harbour coming along as rapidly as any other harbour.

Mr. Underwood: What about the Port Hedland harbour?

Mr. LANDER: I certainly think, taking into consideration the amount of money spent by the Government in the North-West, that Port Hedland harbour has done very well. You have a baby up there costing us about £8,000 or £9,000 per annum. I mean the railway. If you do not look sharp, possibly the white ants will have it eaten before you can pay interest on it. I think Port Hedland has done very well indeed. What with improvements to jetties and wharves in the North-West, I think the North-West has been fairly well considered. Another item of advancement that is promised has reference to water supply. Every person living in the metropolitan area will admit that the water supply in the northern portion of the metropolitan area, prior to the Labour Government coming into power, was a standing disgrace to everybody concerned in it. There never was a sufficient supply to serve any of the higher places around Perth. Now that the higher places are being built upon, with the increase of population, it is a standing disgrace that the Liberal Government in the past should have so neglected the water supply for the metropolitan area. The Liberals promised a supply—I will admit that—years and years ago; but they never got any further. The Labour Government have provided an extra supply on Mount Eliza, and have also erected a

reservoir at Mount Hawthorn; and not only have they looked after the metropolitan area, but they have gone into the country and have shown their appreciation of the country districts by furnishing them with a water supply also—I must say, not before it was wanted. I am sure that when the time comes round for the numbers to go up, we will find that the people in the country districts, irrespective of what the Opposition benches may say, will send up members in favour of the Scaddan Government again. Another item which I consider reflects no credit upon the late Government is the scandal at East Perth. I refer to the filter beds. I say those filter beds constitute a standing disgrace, and as for the expert, whoever he was, that recommended the filter beds which were put there previously—well, I trust that now the Government have started to deal with some public officers, that expert will be one that will be given his swag and told to tramp. For if ever a country has paid for the advice of so-called experts Western Australia has. Instead of calling them experts we should call them downright wasters and robbers, men who have bled the Government. All Governments are led by their experts, and I say that these experts who have led the Government into throwing money away as has been done in this case, are unfitted to hold the high positions which they occupy, and such men are complete frauds instead of being experts. When our experts built the Bunbury bridge they drove the piles down 90 feet into slush, and what do we find they are doing at the filter beds? They are building them 6 feet deep in slush. You might as well put a boat there and allow it to ebb and flow with the tide. This Government has been made to spend about £10,000 to blind over one of the greatest mistakes ever made. I hope the expert who is answerable for the filter beds being put where they are will be asked to stand down. We have been ladelling out disease to the inhabitants through these filter beds, and for the last two months or so it has been practically impossible to live near them. It was a mistake in the first place to take the sewerage matter and try and tip it into the river. There

was a gentleman, Mr. Crowder, who unfortunately is not with us now, who threatened to bring an injunction against the city council for allowing drainage to flow into the river. Now if these new filter beds do not prove a success our river will be contaminated, and this will be done on the advice of experts. If the expert is amongst us now I hope the Government will tramp him, because no one will ever again have confidence in him. I would agree to the erection of a pumping station to-morrow, but after taking into consideration the heavy expenditure that the taxpayers have been subjected to in regard to house connections, do you mean to say that these poor beggars can stand another rate on top of what they are paying at the present time. A pumping station would cost £300,000, and I question where the sewage could be pumped to. But if this Government will not do it someone will have to take action to deal with that menace at East Perth. Now we hear it is to be a success, but in my opinion it has only been patched up for the time being. Another matter I would bring under the notice of the Government, and which I reckon is a scandal, is the erection of a dam at Bruce Rock, 32 miles from Merredin. This is one of the finest dams in the agricultural districts and it cost £10,000. It possesses a fine catchment area, but when they had four inches of rain it was not possible to get more than four feet of water into it. This £10,000 has been wasted there, and the work is a standing disgrace. I would like to see the expert who was responsible for the construction of that dam tramped also. It is a standing disgrace that these things should go on. Then there was £200,000 spent on the Fremantle dock, and what about the expert who was responsible for that? Whichever Government is in power I think should deal with these experts, because there are many of them whom we do not want and who are a complete failure. We can go back many years and find that, in connection with the purchase of the water works, that was done on the advice of an expert, and Western Australia has had to pay for it. I would like to see something done to shake up these gentlemen, to

show them that they do not rule supreme in Western Australia. I would also like to see the Public Service Act amended so that we might be able to deal with these people. It is a scandal to employ ignorant men who call themselves experts, and who do nothing but mislead the Government. Have we not seen the same thing in regard to the purchase of stock? If the experts had exercised care the Government would never have bought G.10 bullocks. Immediately a boat comes in the question is asked, "What sort of bullocks have you on board?" and when they are told, the reply is, "More trouble, more for the boilers." And when we have experts leading us into such traps it is time for the Government to take action. I congratulate the Honorary Minister, and I think everyone will congratulate him, on the good work he has done in his department not only in reference to the improvement of the milk supply, but many other matters. When I first took up this question of the milk supply, the death rate in the State was 140 per thousand. The Government, however, came along and courageously handled this question until now we find that the death rate is the lowest in any of the Australian States. The Government supplied pure milk to the children's hospital, and immediately an improvement in the condition of things came about, until now the death rate, we learn, is down to 66 per thousand. How can we thus fail to realise the good work which has been done? I heard the leader of the Opposition twitting the Government by saying that his Government had bought the cows. The present Government, however, bought the cows and they took particular care to buy good ones, and cows that were free from disease. When the present Government took over the cows which had been purchased by the previous Government 50 per cent. of them were rejected. The other day the Fremantle council thought they would have a cut at our Honorary Minister, but why did they not go into the matter properly and ascertain if the particulars were as they had been published in the newspapers? The Honorary Minister, however, knocked everything out of the

arguments of the Fremantle council. We must also give the Honorary Minister credit because he has done really good work in reference to the hospitals. During the period of the Labour administration we find that a few good rows have been kicked up amongst members of the boards of management. That is a good sign, for whenever these people disagree they are sure to be doing good work. Those who are always agreeing you can reckon are a lot of cronks. There is nothing like differences of opinion, and then it is that we find that the wheat is sifted from the weeds. It is pleasing to know that the cost of patients at the Perth public hospital has now been reduced to £1 11s. 6d., and when you run the tape over that you must congratulate them on the good work which they have done at that institution. The only thing I regret is that public subscriptions have fallen off considerably. I would like to see the public respond more liberally towards the good work the public hospital and the children's hospital are doing. We must all admit that they are doing good work, and at reasonable rates, and when you take into consideration the reduction in the death rate, that too is considerably in their favour. I would like to have seen greater interest taken in the matter of dealing with the red plague. This is a question which is very difficult to deal with, and it wants treating with a drastic hand. It is one of those diseases which remain latent for generations, and any person who has studied physiology knows how it can be transmitted from one to the other. I hope the Government will go into this question and deal with it with a bold face. It is a question many do not care to handle, but it should be handled in an open and fearless manner. In the North-West I am sorry to say there are districts which are practically ruined through it, and unless we take steps to eradicate it we shall have it transmitted throughout the State. I know that the colleagues of the Honorary Minister are assisting him in this matter. Another matter which deserves a little consideration is the action the Government have taken to deal with inebriates. I am sure every member will give the

Government credit for that action. Many of us are often too hard on the drunkard. I am of opinion that in the cases of both men and women it is a disease, and must be dealt with as such. Those who have gone into the drink question have more sympathy than we for our unfortunate fellowmen. Most of us have known really good men with only one failing, namely, the drink. Keep them from that and they are good citizens; but immediately they get drink they seem to lose all self-control. I am pleased to see the Government are taking steps to deal with these inebriates. I hope they will meet with every success, and I am sure they will receive the congratulations of all concerned. Many families have been ruined by drink. It is of no use condemning a man; what we should do is to assist him as far as we possibly can, and I am glad the Government are doing something in this direction. Then there is the allowance paid for the conveyance of children to State schools in country districts. This is very much appreciated in the farming areas. I hope the Government will continue this as far as they possibly can. Another good step is the extra allowance paid to widows and orphans. This is a step in the right direction. When the Government came into power it was a small pittance of about £7,000 per annum, and it was necessary that the child should be taken before the court and declared to be a neglected child. I am pleased that that has been done away with, and now when a widow is left with a family all she has to do is to appeal to Mr. Longmore, when every consideration is shown to her. In some instances these mothers are drawing as much as £2 per week. I have had something to do with the question, and I have received every consideration from the Minister and from Mr. Longmore to assist me in trying to put these mothers in a more comfortable position than they have been hitherto. I am pleased to see the Government have improved the conditions of many country hospitals. I would like to see a hospital established at Merredin. It is a big agricultural centre and railway junction. I would like to see the Government place an amount on the Estimates this year to

provide a hospital at Merredin. I believe they are going to erect a hospital at Kellerberrin, and I give them credit for this, but I say a hospital is even more necessary at Merredin. It does not matter whether it be a fracture or a serious illness; I have seen very bad cases at Merredin, and if we could save them having to travel 33 miles, if it were only to establish them in temporary quarters, it would be a great boon. And while they are about it the hospital should be made a maternity hospital as well as a general hospital. It is really necessary, and would save a great deal of anxiety and expense. Another thing which should be done is to make better provision on the Merredin platform for those who have to wait hours for a train. It is a disgrace to the Government to allow a platform like that to continue in its present condition. Some times 50 or 70 persons are to be found waiting on that platform, persons in from Bruce Rock, Dowerin, and other places, waiting for one or other of the expresses. They arrive at about 12 o'clock midnight and have to wait until 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning, freezing on that platform without a waiting room or a fire. I wrote to the Minister and asked him to put in an oil drum and direct the station master to light a fire. This in itself would be a great boon on a cold night. Again, it is not a fair thing to ask the railway officials to do their work on that platform. There are the two expresses up and down, and four trains daily, and it is most unfair to ask the officials to do their work there. I would like to see something done by the Government to hurry on the improvements to the Merredin platform. No doubt we will be told the delay is due to want of funds; but it would not cost much to improve that platform. If that were done it would be appreciated by the travelling public.

Mr. Foley: What sort of refreshment room have they there?

Mr. LANDER: It is improved lately, but at one time it was a standing disgrace.

Mr. Foley: They could go in there for shelter.

Mr. LANDER: It is not large enough for them all to get in. I hope these proposed improvements will be made. I congratulate the Government on their attitude towards the question of sly grog selling, although in my opinion they have not gone far enough. Sly grog selling is going on all over the districts; it is a standing disgrace. Officials will tell us that there is a greater number of convictions and fines imposed than in the past; but sly grogeries are flourishing in the agricultural districts to a greater extent than ever before. I hope the Government will, as the result of their increased fines and the enlarged powers we gave them last session, takes some steps to deal with this evil. Look at it from a business aspect. Here we have a sly grogery, and you might be running a farm in the district. Your man comes in and gets too many drinks at the sly grogery. In a half drunken state he meets with an accident. Then the Workers' Compensation Act operates and you have to pay him compensation for the accident which he met with as the result of his visit to the sly grogery. We should take more stringent steps than in the past in dealing with this matter. At Bruce Rock the practice has been carried on openly for a considerable time, and the member for Pingelly can tell his friend, Mr. Hedges, when next he meets them, to ask about his bullock driver. On one occasion that bullock driver came in there and after his departure he was found seven miles out helplessly drunk, sitting between the two wheels of his bullock wagon. If the bullocks had gone on the poor fellow would have been killed, and someone would have stepped in and tried to have claimed compensation. We should put our several Acts into force and protect these poor fellows from the sly grogeries. I am pleased, too, with the steps the Education Department have taken in reference to the continuation classes and the continuous courses from the primary school to the University. Prior to the Government coming into office, if a child left the James-street school he lost 12 months. That has been remedied, and a child can now continue his studies right

ahead. The Government should watch and see that the University classes are open for all. In reference to the veterinary classes, an attempt was made to stop certain individuals from attending those classes, to conserve the classes for others. With the assistance of one or two I have been able to break that up and make the class open to all. I hope that if ever on another occasion the attempt is made to boycott anyone from attending the University classes the Government will take steps to protest against it. We are to have some fresh legislation, including constitutional reform. By Jove! if ever there was a place that required constitutional reform, most of the people in Western Australia would hold up both hands and say Western Australia is that place. When we come to think of the scandalous way in which some of our Bills are dealt with when they get to another place, we must agree that when they name that place the slaughter house, it will be properly named. When we take an important Bill like the Mines Regulation Bill, asking them to do away with the night shift, we find they hold a caucus meeting and pick out a few points to discuss. Fancy denying the miners, the men who have put Western Australia in the position in which she is to-day, the right to live! They tried to make a comparison between our asking men to work afternoon shift in the timber mills and the mine owners asking the men to work night shift down a mine. There is no comparison between asking a man to work in a black hole in foul air, and asking him to work out on a timber mill. Statistics show the number of poor fellows who have been hurried away to their graves by miner's phthisis, and I am sure it is time everyone took a stand to protect the lives of miners in Western Australia. The erection of a sanatorium at Wooroloo is costing the Government thousands of pounds, but it is money rightly spent and I hope the institution will be a success. An interesting photograph was published recently showing the ill-effects of rock-drilling work on able and robust men in Sydney, and the record of deaths which oc-

curred as a result of dust and foul air after a few years' work was appalling.

Mr. Foley: They were working in good air.

Mr. LANDER: In the same way able bodied men enter the mining industry, work for a few years and then have to find easier jobs, or take advantage of the sanatorium. When once a man has been badly attacked by the disease as many of our miners have been it is hopeless to expect any improvement. The question has been fought from the point of view of finance. Pounds shillings and pence have been considered before the health of the employees who make the big dividends for the mines. I hope that this question will be forced so that we can abolish the night shift and provide better working conditions for the men. It is not often that I detain the House at any length, but there is one other item to which I wish to refer, namely, the Agricultural Bank. Mr. Paterson and his officers deserve credit for their good work. I think it is time that steps were taken to provide offices for the bank. A sum of £860 per annum is being paid for office rent which amount capitalised would pay interest on the outlay required to erect a really good building. It is time the Government got a move on and erected offices for this bank. If we examined some of the public offices in Perth we would have to conclude that the Government are as bad as the mine-owners, for civil servants are working in unhealthy offices. I hope the Government will hurry on the town hall proposal and erect suitable offices for their employees. We recognise the good work which has been done by the Agricultural Bank. If many of the people who made use of the bank had been guided by the sound advice given by Mr. Paterson and his subordinates, they would have been in a different position to-day. Many of them are crying out that the Government are not helping them, but if inquiries are made among the farmers, it will be found that there are not so many croakers as some hon. members would lead us to believe. It is a hard battle for the farmer without capi-

tal during the first few years, but there are not many croakers among them. They are brave men, and their wives are brave women. They are doing good work and they require a little consideration. I hope that the Government will make the report of the board better known, and they should give settlers to understand exactly what they intend to do. I endeavoured to ascertain what was to be done and I was asked, "Did you not see it in the paper?" I saw an announcement stating that the Government would not be too hard on the men, but I wanted further information. The Government ought to say to those who are suffering from the blow, "We will not ask you for any rent or interest for five years." This would be an encouragement for them. A friend of mine lost £1,000 as a result of the blow, but he said he required no more assistance than he would be in a position to repay. He desired that his rent and interest should be deferred, and he would then be able to carry on. The report should be published so that the settlers in the outback places will know what is being done. At the present time they are in suspense and are in a quandary as to what to do. No doubt, the cost of land in some instances was too high and many settlers are situated too far from a railway, and the result has been that they cannot make a success of their holdings. If their rent and interest are deferred for a time the action of the Government will be appreciated.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Geraldton): I am glad to have the opportunity to say a few words on the Address-in-reply. In listening to the Premier I could not help but admire the tenacity of purpose with which he pursued the leader of the Opposition, whose political actions were analysed and turned inside out. We all know the feeling which one experiences in playing a game of bridge when one of the players insists on holding what is usually termed post mortems. The three hours of reeriminations in which the Premier indulged appealed to me as one great political post mortem. As a new member it seemed to me to be somewhat

undignified. It may be in accordance with the rules of the House, but it did not appear to me to be at all dignified. I take it that we in Western Australia have very few enemies. This is to some extent a misfortune, because, having no enemies to fight we spend most of our time and a great deal of our energy in fighting each other. I congratulate the Government on the judicial appointments which have recently been made to the Supreme Court bench. In the elevation of Mr. Justice Macmillan to the Chief Justiceship in succession to Sir Henry Parker, and the appointment of Mr. Justice Northmore as a Puisne Judge. I have no hesitation in saying that throughout the length and breadth of the State there has not been one word of criticism. This is all the more pleasing because prior to the appointments being made we heard ugly rumours that political influence and bias were to be brought to bear upon the Government's selection.

Mr. Bolton: They emanated only from the Liberals you know.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I am pleased to record my testimony that these appointments have been excellent ones. As regards the agricultural districts, I am sorry that so far the rain has been very late in coming, and now it has come that it has been to some extent scanty, but I believe that the season has only been deferred. If we recollect, last season was within ten days of being as late as the present one and it ultimately proved a really good one. I am convinced that this will be the case this year. As regards the pastoral areas, I am not able to speak in such hopeful terms. From Roebourne to Sandstone in the Murchison, Gascoyne, and Ashburton districts, with the one exception of Port Hedland, they have missed the summer rains and we have now reached the last month in which rain can be expected. But Western Australia has a wonderful way of recuperating at the last moment, and I believe that during this month or perhaps early next month we will have a general downpour which will save the situation. In the Roebourne district there has been practically no rain for 18

or 19 months and the stock are in a low condition. The only relief which the squatters can obtain is from the shipping interests, and every vessel is being loaded up to its full capacity in order to bring the stock down south. The other day £8,000 were sent down in one shipment. All the boats are going full steam ahead, but unfortunately ship-owners, as is usual under the law of supply and demand, have put up their rates of freight, and I am sorry to say that the Government steamer "Kwinana," which was put on the coast to stop this sort of thing, has joined in the general movement. Last year I had 3,000 sheep brought down in the "Kwinana" from Wyndham to Geraldton at a freight of 2s. 6d. per head. This year when I approached the management of the vessel I found that it would be difficult to obtain space in her at all, but the only terms on which I could obtain it was at the rate of 3s. per head from Point Sampson to Geraldton. This represents an increase of about 25 per cent. for a journey of 500 miles less. This is a point which is certainly not in favour of the State steamship service. Even if the vessel had been run at a slight loss the Government should have stood by the stock-owners in their hour of need and brought the starving stock down south. What has intensified the position is the fact that the Government have wiped out in one fell swoop the rebates on the railway. The Premier stated that this would affect only the big man, and I maintained that the small man who is taking one or two trucks should obtain them on the same terms as the man who takes 14 or 15 bogies. The effect of this is that the price of meat has been increased to the consumer in Perth, and what is more important, it is impossible to travel starving stock, a step which will probably be necessary in a few months if there is no rain in the Murchison. Another action on the part of the Government which I deprecate was the attempt last year to double the land tax to farmers and the imposition of increased freight on manures, coal, and timber.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you want the Government to carry stuff at a loss?

Mr. ELLIOTT: The Government must not expect these actions to prove acceptable to the people of the country, but on the other hand they must expect to incur a certain amount of unpopularity. I would like to contrast the treatment which the deputation from the owners and big men of the coal industry received at the hands of the Premier compared with the audience which he gave to the farmers. The coal merchants headed by Mr. A. A. Wilson and his friends of the Trades Hall, we are told, received civil treatment.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The leader of the Opposition was present.

Mr. ELLIOTT: And although the Premier was approached by a deputation representative of about 4,000 farmers, they were told brusquely and somewhat curtly that he refused to receive them and that they would be only wasting time. The reasons which guided the Premier in the one case ought to have held good in the other case. If it is found possible to reduce the rates on coal it should have been possible, in view of the bad season, to reduce the rates on manure.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They reduced the price of coal as well, you know.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I do not wish to be critical as regards the workers' homes scheme, for it has my fullest support. I believe it is accomplishing much good throughout the settled districts of Western Australia. I believe that to some extent workers' homes have been erected on the fields, but in the coastal towns where they have been erected in greater numbers, they have proved an immense boon to the working men. There are some amendments to the Act which I think are necessary. When the Government cuts up a block of land, as at Subiaco, and as they have been doing at Geraldton, some provision should be made as to the formation of roads.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you mean macadamised?

Mr. ELLIOTT: I mean the making of roads.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Private people do not do that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Private people, by regulation under the Roads Act, when they require to cut up land, before the plans for subdivision are accepted for the cutting up of the land, have to provide the roads, macadamised roads, at their own expense. The Government ought to be put on the same footing as a private individual. It may mean an increased cost in connection with the workers' homes. We have a spectacle at Geraldton where 10 or 12 acres were cut up by the Workers' Homes Board, and the only track provided was really a sand heap. It is unfair to expect women, with their children, to push their prams through this heavy sand. The Minister in charge of the department might well take this matter into consideration by way of introducing an amendment to the measure. As regards the leasehold system I do not wish to say very much. The working men for whom the system was inaugurated have spoken against it themselves. The Government have only had some 200 homes taken up under this system, whereas they have had, I believe, 1,000 taken up under the freehold system.

Mr. McDowall: There was no land available.

Mr. ELLIOTT: This proves that the leasehold system was not acceptable to the working men. May I ask the Honorary Minister under what principle Ministers of the Crown have built their own homes. I venture to say there is not one of the Ministers of the Crown who does not live in a free house and on freehold land. May I ask, under what principle the Honorary Minister is holding his?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Under the only principle upon which I could get it.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I admire their ingenuity, by which they are able to go into the country and persuade the people to take the pills that they themselves are not prepared to swallow.

Mr. Underwood: That is tripe.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The remark is typical of the hon. member. I am glad to see that some of my shafts are getting home. We find the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) has been touched on the raw.

Mr. Underwood: They are not truths.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The hon. members opposite do not appear to like what I say upon the workers' homes question, so I will turn to the question of the tramways. I was not in the House at the time the tramway Bill was put through. I believe that the leaders of the Liberal party were in favour of it. For my part, however, I think that a great mistake has been made in purchasing the trams for Perth. We have something like £500,000 capital invested here. It was thought that after the purchase the one-fourth of the profits of the company on that £500,000 would no longer be remitted annually to the old country. Pressure was brought to bear by the Government and also upon the municipal council, as a result of which the trams were purchased. Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand, people thought that the remittances to England had ceased. In my opinion this is nothing of the sort. It is fallacious. It is true we are not now remitting the profits of the trams but are remitting the money in the shape of interest. We have a system, too, which has in no way been improved.

Mr. Lewis: Oh yes, it has.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The trams are very much dirtier than they used to be. The Government have shown a profit of £20,000 for last year and yet no provision has been made for the depreciation of the service. I think that the Government will find that there are rocks ahead, in view of the condition into which the service has fallen, and the expenditure which will be required upon it.

Mr. Underwood: Where did you get the information that no provision had been made for depreciation?

Hon. J. Mitchell: The statement has been made publicly.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I will now turn to the question of agricultural railways. I have lately had the pleasure of a trip over the



Wongan Hills line with the Minister for Works. I would like to add my testimony to the way that line has been built and equipped. I believe it has cost a large sum of money, but I believe that the value for the money is there. In contrasting the railways built by this Administration and the cheaper lines built by the previous Government, we must remember that when you have cheap things you cannot expect to have the same facilities as if you pay a large price. You might buy a pair of boots at 14s. and yet get equal value by buying a pair at 25s. The question of quality is operating. When funds are limited, as was the case under the Liberal administration, as they admittedly were, it is a question whether it is not better to build light lines at a cost of £1,100 than to build half the number of lines, which are costing £2,000 or more a mile. The Government have claimed that they have found it necessary to expend £46,000 in equipping and reballasting and adding to the facilities of the light lines of railway taken over by the working railways from the Liberal administration. This sum was expended on railways and represents an average of £137 per mile. If at this trifling expense we have secured reasonably efficient lines of railways I think Western Australia may congratulate itself on having made an excellent bargain. I think that probably both classes of railway represent good value for the money. I quite believe that both parties felt that they were doing their best with the money that was spent. I believe that, although we have cheaper lines and more expensive lines we have good value for what has been spent on them. It has been mentioned that Mr. Rolland in his report stated that under the day labour system lines can be constructed equally as well as under the contract system. I am prepared to accept Mr. Rolland's report: he is a responsible officer and an officer of very high grade, and I believe him when he makes that statement. You must, however, remember that he has been reporting to a Ministry that he knows are biased in favour of the day

labour system. We do not know what qualifications he made.

The Minister for Mines: That is a reflection on Mr. Rolland. The hon. member suggests that he would report in accordance with the desire of the Minister.

Mr. ELLIOTT: We have not Mr. Rolland's statement before us, but have only the Premier's version of it.

The Minister for Mines: The whole statement was put in last session and read to the House.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I have not seen it. Such statements are very often qualified, although the qualifications do not appear.

The Minister for Mines: There were no qualifications at all.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Let the hon. member speak.

Mr. ELLIOTT: As regards the implement works, I was not present on the opening day but I made a point of going down later on and of getting an order from the Minister for Works to be shown over the machinery and works. I may tell you that I have been very greatly impressed, not only with the works and the nature of them—for there were several machines of which I have an intimate knowledge, windmills for instance—but I was also impressed with the manager. I believe that Mr. Davies has been given a free hand by the Government in the matter, and he assured me that he was able to turn out machines that were at least 30 per cent. cheaper than those which were imported by the ordinary manufacturer. If this is the case, although I am generally opposed to these socialistic schemes, I feel that the country is to a great extent committed to them, and, as representing at least some of the farmers, I should be unwise and foolish to attempt to shut down on this particular scheme, if it is going to bring the necessary help to the farming community.

The Minister for Mines: Socialism, therefore, is good if it helps the farmers.

Hon. Frank Wilson: We can see what the State steamers have done.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I wanted specially to point out what Mr. Davies told me,

but we have yet to see whether what has been said will be carried into effect.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is right.

Mr. ELLIOTT: There were no figures available at the time I was down there. I asked Mr. Davies for a price list. He told me that he was getting one out and that it would be available in four or six weeks time. There is one very important point in regard to the manufacture of implements and that is the manufacture of spare parts. Farmers have had a terrible experience in this respect. We have heard complaints on all sides in regard to the matter. A farmer will buy some new-fangled machine at the instance of some persuasive canvasser, who will point out the benefits and the virtues that are contained in this machine. Something goes wrong with the works and the farmer has to send to Adelaide, to Melbourne, or even to America to get spare parts to replace the old ones. I hope, therefore, that the Government will see that all machines that are made have a supply of spare parts which can be provided to the farmers. The Government in this connection have taken a certain course. They intend to dispose of their machines not by employing commercial travellers. It will be found that the Government will be in no better position in regard to the disposal of their machines than anybody else. Commercial laws must necessarily apply to governments. Business firms find that it is necessary to employ personal canvassers in order to dispose of machinery. I think the Government will find it necessary to do this also.

The Minister for Mines: The smallness of the price is the best answer to that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I think the Government will find that it will be necessary to have personal canvassing in order to dispose of the machinery. Such an individual, if he is a good man, will probably talk down 10 or 20 per cent. and will be able to push the commodity which he may be employed to sell. As regards the sleeper contract, I may say that the negotiations have, in my opinion, been very badly conducted. There has been a great want of business knowledge shown on the

part of the heads of affairs. An attempt has been made, instead of getting through with the business, to make political points against Mr. Cook, the Prime Minister, and his colleagues. It is a very fortunate thing for Western Australia, in my opinion, that the contract was cancelled. Mr. Properjohn, the manager of the mills has stated that the output of the mills is considerably less—I think 52,000—although the Premier said it was 72,000.

The Premier: The contract was not for 72,000 at all.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I think that Western Australia would have been mulct in very heavy costs if the contract had gone through. As regards the powellising process, I think that this is on its trial. I think that the terms of the contract were, to say the least, amazing. Why we should give powellising rights to this man for something like five years, after his payments have expired, I do not know. I think, however, that the country has a right to know why these provisions were put into the agreement. I regard the powellising process as something that has yet to be proved. It may be compared with the cures for consumption about which some of you may have heard in the past. Medical gentlemen very often come forward and say that they have certain cures for consumption. I remember the case of Dr. Kochs, a celebrated German scientist, who some 10 years ago claimed that he had found a lymph that was a cure for consumption. The latest medical gentleman to come forward with a cure for this is Dr. Paget, and I trust he will be successful.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Dr. Kochs' cure is very good.

Mr. ELLIOTT: He did not prove that he could effect a cure. Dr. Paget also claims that he has some serum by which he could cure that dreadful disease known as the white plague.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Mr. Angwin does not believe in it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We are trying it, at all events.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I can understand that by the utilisation of this arsenic process

you can do away with white ants, but how arsenic is going to affect the natural process of the dry rotting of timber, I do not know.

The Premier: Eight years' experience of the process should be sufficient.

Hon. Frank Wilson: On 50 sleepers!

Mr. ELLIOTT: Of course, if it could be proved, it would be a splendid thing for Western Australia, and the Premier would have every reason to flatter and congratulate himself that the scheme had proved a success.

The Premier: I am perfectly satisfied but I suppose you will take the credit if it turns out a success.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I may certainly suspend my judgment on it for the time being. We have not yet had sufficient time elapse to allow of our saying whether it is going to be a success or not.

The Premier: You are willing to give it a show, are you not?

Mr. ELLIOTT: There is this point always to be remembered, that although the Government are very sanguine, as they tell us, in regard to the success of the powellising process, they do not seem at all anxious, or they do not seem game, to try the process themselves. They do not use it on their own railways. The wish of the Premier and his confreres seems to be to try it on the dog first.

The Premier: I did not know that I am a dog.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The dog in this instance is the Commonwealth Premier, Mr. Cook.

Mr. Underwood: What sort of sleepers have you got at the head of the Marble Bar railway?

Mr. ELLIOTT: If the dog survives the process, we shall all be extremely pleased. My personal attitude on these matters is that I suspend judgment on it.

The Premier: Who is going to prove it?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Time will prove it.

Member: It has been proved.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The process has been put to the test for about five or six years in a wet cutting close to Perth.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I maintain that is not a fair test. If the Government wish to test the efficacy of the process against white ants and dry rot, let them test it on the Eastern goldfields line to Kalgoorlie, where the sun is baking hot, or on the Cue railway. I only hope it will be a success. If so, it will be a grand thing for Western Australia, and a great feather for the Premier and his party; but up to the present time it has not been proved.

The Premier: You will never be satisfied until I am dead, that it is a success.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I shall be dead myself before you. Now, in regard to the State steamers.

The Minister for Mines: That is something fresh, something new.

Mr. ELLIOTT: We have it on record to-day—the statement has been put forth by authority of the Colonial Secretary—that the loss on the State steamers up to June, 1913, which is only 13 months they have been running, amounts to almost £23,000.

Mr. McDowall: Is there not always a loss on big businesses just starting?

Mr. ELLIOTT: We have it also on the same authority that the cost of repairs has been charged to capital account.

The Premier: Where did you gather that from?

Mr. ELLIOTT: From the same source. I anticipate a very serious loss when it comes to realising the boat which has been proved to be thoroughly unsatisfactory—the "Western Australia."

The Premier: What about the loss on the steamer that was plying between Geraldton and Fremantle?

Hon. Frank Wilson: When are you going to give us the balance sheet?

Mr. Underwood: When is Newton Moore going to square up about selling that pup to us?

Mr. ELLIOTT: I do not know why it has taken 13 months to bring the accounts out. I know what would be thought of a commercial firm that did not have its audited accounts within two or three months of the date on which they closed. But in Western Australia with these trading concerns things are running very

slowly. A lot of water runs under the bridges before the Government can find time to get these accounts out. I would not be opposed to the State steamers as such, provided that they carried out the conditions for which they were put on. The leading idea in introducing these State steamers on to the coast was to provide facilities for small squatters in the Kimberley districts, who are alleged to be boycotted, to bring their stock down.

The Premier: We are doing that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Now, if we look through the list of shippers by the "Kwinana" we find names that suggest to me what are called the beef barons. For example, there are the names of Copley Bros., Holmes Bros., and Forrest & Emanuel.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Mr. ELLIOTT: We find those names instead of those of the small men. I do not believe that 5 per cent. of the small squatters have had stock coming down on the State steamers.

The Premier: That is absolutely incorrect. Allow me. There have been over 7,000 cattle brought down for small owners as against 1,800 for big owners.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Oh, ring off, ring off.

Mr. ELLIOTT: By small owners do you mean Herbert Lee-Steere of Yandanooka Estate? The small pastoralist in the Kimberleys have turned out to be a myth. The Government used to send emissaries all over the place, but failed to find them, they do not mention them now. They bring stock down as business men should do. The records of the "Kwinana" and the "Western Australia" have not been such as would commend themselves to the small man. I know one man who tried small shipments, and some of his cattle were sold at a net price of 10s. per head.

The Premier: The small men are booking space for next year already.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I would like to point out that in connection with the first three trips this year, something like 400 head perished and a large percentage of them belonged to the Government. Only the

other day a gentleman in the Upper House, whom I must not mention, stated—and I think it was also stated by the Premier—that those steamers were provided to furnish special facilities on the North coast. The argument was that if the small farmers in the backblocks could have agricultural railways that did not pay, why should not the same facilities, to the extent to which it was possible, be granted to small squatters or large squatters in the Kimberleys and the North-West? That would be an excellent reason if it turned out so. But what is the position? We find that when two State boats were put on—the "Western Australia" and the "Kwinana"—the Adelaide Steamship Company, who previously had done the mail service, took off the "Moirá" and the "Aldinga." Our friends on the Opposition bench at that time—the Labour Government—were enabled to arrange with Mr. Fisher to secure the contract for the mails. Then the Adelaide Steamship Company came to the conclusion—I think it was a wise one—that they would not cut off their nose to spite their face. It was the condition of this mail contract that made the trade possible to them, and when the mails were taken away the company took off their boats. Therefore, when the "Aldinga" and the "Moirá" were taken off—good boats in every sense of the word—instead of increased and improved facilities, the people of the North-West received infinitely worse facilities. If you travel up North, as I did not very long ago, you find that complaints concerning the mail service are very, very urgent. Mr. Gregory when up there was absolutely pestered with complaints. One of the chief complaints was as to these boats. The Government have only two, and, naturally, sometimes the boats go in for repairs, and the Government have not another by which they can replace the "Western Australia." Again, when there was a strike of their friends in the other States, the mail contract was hung up: so that, instead of placing increased facilities on the coast, they have made the conditions on the coast infinitely worse than before; and the

main point is that this is being done at a loss. Now, we have lately had a deputation waiting upon the Minister for Lands with regard to the renewal of pastoral leases expiring in 1928. I am pleased to say that the deputation was received cordially; and, although nothing very definite resulted, we have the satisfaction of knowing that the matter has been put before the public, and has set people thinking. Although we have 14 years of our leases to run—which appears to the outside public a very long time—it is not a long period when you come to consider the difficulties involved in and the time required for developing a big pastoral country. In fact, it is only like a drop in the ocean. I have here a copy of a little notice that I cut yesterday out of the *Sunday Times*.

Mr. Underwood: Good old *Sunday Times*.

Mr. ELLIOTT: It refers to a new pastoral lands company, and distinguished names appear on the list. The office of the company is, care of Mr. Thomas Walker—

The Premier: Hooray!

Mr. ELLIOTT: I think, in Thirlmere-road. Mr. Collier is a partner, Mr. Angwin is a partner, and Mr. Johnson is another. I think the only member of the Ministry who is excluded is Mr. Dodd. He, I suppose, could not get there in time. When you understand that these gentleman of mature years, who never before interfered in pastoral matters, rush in with one accord and take shares such as these, it seems as if something has transpired which other people know nothing of. When these political eagles from their point of vantage in the heavens swoop downward suddenly, the inference is that they have discerned something in the shape of prey not visible from a lower elevation; and the Ministry must in that case expect a section of the people to suspect that they acted from some inside information not available to the public. I do not believe it. I believe the methods and actions of these gentlemen are worthy ones; and I welcome this young company, because, when the renewal of our leases comes

up for consideration, these gentlemen will have some experience, some inside experience, of the trials and the expense involved in working these leases—better experience than they could possibly get while in their comfortable chairs in their offices.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The liquidator will welcome them, too.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I can say this honestly, that I wish them the fullest measure of success; and I hope that as time goes on they will become healthy and wealthy, and, as we are apt to call them, bloated squatters. That is not meant offensively.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They are bloated squatters now.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Now I come to the subject of the freezers at Wyndham. I think that the experience of shipping stock, and the experience of the prices of beef and mutton here during the last few months must have convinced everyone with a little common sense that some other system is possible and necessary. We have had enormous losses on the "Kwinana" and also on the other boat, and we are forced to the conclusion that the system which we adopt at present is both obsolete and inhuman. I would point out that when you find 50 per cent.—sometimes 40 per cent. and 30 per cent. at others—of the cattle that are put on board in robust health at Derby die within 48 hours, you can realise that the sufferings which the remaining cattle have to go through are something terrible. I would liken it to the horrors of the slave trade—the human slave trade—of 100 years ago. We have its replica to-day in the state of those overcrowded cattle steamers coming down our northern coast under tropical conditions. I think the S.P.C.A. should take this matter into consideration, or at least should support the establishment of State freezers at Wyndham. When we consider the loss of weight and the loss of stock, I submit that that mortality and loss are to us a retribution for our inhuman treatment. I now turn to a subject on which I am quite sure the Premier will be all attention. I refer to the price of meat. I wish to draw public attention from my

place in this House to the audacious statements made in the other States by the Premier and the Colonial Secretary, that the Government had reduced the price of meat in Western Australia by 3d. a pound. The Premier when he comes back to Western Australia does not venture to repeat that statement, but he says here that he has prevented the price from going up. I am conversant with the trade and I say unhesitatingly that never in the history of Western Australia has meat been so expensive as it is to-day. At North Fremantle, in open competition, mutton has been fetching, I have been assured—I was not there myself—up to 10d. and 10½d. a pound. At the same time the Government are selling meat in their shops at 5d. per pound.

Member: Sevenpence.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I have always regarded the Premier as a very happy looking man with a very good digestion, but I never regarded him in the light of a conjuror; and the man who can buy meat at 10d. and sell it at 7d. I regard very much as I regard a conjuror or one of those gentlemen whom you encounter on the racecourse. The only effect in my opinion, and I am glad to say it was drawn attention to by Mr. Holmes in another place, is that these butchers' shops are ruining the smaller butchers. I say that this is dishonest trading in favour of a few. The Government add the loss to the deficit. It is unfair competition. I have myself been to some of these meat shops and I have found the meat to be cheaper, but we must recollect the fact that it is not exactly the same article which is being sold by other butchers. The article retailed in the Government shops is inferior, and moreover, it is not delivered; it is sold for cash, and consequently only those people who live within half a mile of the radius of the shop can take advantage of it. I have it on the authority of leading butchers that the consumption of meat in the State butchers' shops is 20 carcasses per week. The consumption of the trade in the metropolitan area is 700 carcasses.

The Premier: If that is so what are you making such a noise about?

Mr. ELLIOTT: The Premier claimed that Western Australia was the only State in which last year the cost of living was reduced.

The Premier: The figures I gave were those of the Commonwealth Statistician.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I took it from the Premier's figures that groceries had come down from 26s. 11d. to 24s. 11d. If the facts given by the Premier are substantiated, then the claim for increased wages on account of the increase of living is dishonest.

The Premier: I told you we increased the wages and lowered the cost of living.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I leave the Premier to decide this point with his followers. I make him a present of the argument, and leave him to his own reflections. Coming to the question of education, I am sorry the Attorney General is not here. I congratulate him to a great extent on the way he has conducted the business of that department. I have it on the authority of the Minister for Works that no less than one school a week is being constructed throughout the State, equalling 52 schools a year. The permanent officers in the department should share in the congratulations, the Director of Education, the Chief Inspector and the other inspectors. The cry of free education from kindergarten to the University to my mind is somewhat discounted when we reflect that the parents have to pay for the books with which the children are supplied. I know where a family of five or six is concerned the cost of books becomes a serious item, and it exceeds the amount of the fees previously charged. If the Minister brings in an amendment to the Education Act he should consider the question of going the whole hog.

The Premier: You would not support your leader in imposing a charge of 2s. a week for children over 14.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I believe in free education. With regard to the salaries paid to teachers it should be universal that the C grade should be entitled to consideration. I think also that the A and B grades are not sufficiently paid. Of course I know it is a matter of finance.

On the goldfields, although drinks are a shilling, living is no dearer than it is in Geraldton or Bunbury. All commodities are practically as cheap on the fields as they are at Geraldton, and if a living allowance is given to teachers on the goldfields there should be a proportionate allowance for places such as Geraldton. It is a reasonable suggestion also that free railway passes should be given once in two years to the teachers at schools distant from Perth. I can speak minutely and accurately about schools in Geraldton, and this is a very serious matter. We have two schools there, the central State school, and the school at Bluff Point, 2½ miles out. This was recently constructed, but no quarters were provided for the teacher. This is a matter which should be attended to. In Geraldton we have a first class school with a roll of between 600 and 700 pupils, boys and girls, and it can scarcely be credited when I tell hon. members that 150 of these are without accommodation as to class rooms. The position is that 50 are accommodated in the Druids' Hall, which has only recently been engaged, and 100 children have to be accommodated in the lavatories. Our education is compulsory, and it is compulsory here that they be taught in the lavatories. I make the statement unblushingly and without fear of contradiction, that this Government are teaching 100 children in the lavatories of the Geraldton school. This fact is known to the Minister for Education, because when he went there on the occasion of the last election he made a beautiful speech containing honeyed words, and gave the children a half holiday, and, by the way, I would make this kind of thing an offence on the eve of an election. Instead of giving these children a half holiday, he should have provided them with decent class rooms. The matter was brought under his notice, and a small class room has been provided, but it is only large enough to accommodate 50 children, and the other 100 are still being taught in the lavatories. That is a point I hope *Hansard* will note, namely, that 100 children in Geraldton are being taught in the lavatories. And the sani-

tary arrangements at the school are absolutely obsolete. No improvement has been made to those sanitary arrangements for the last ten years. They have been condemned, and in the meantime the number of children has quadrupled.

The Premier: For six years out of those ten you had a Liberal Government in power.

Mr. ELLIOTT: But why have you not seen to it? This matter was brought to the attention of the Attorney General at election time, and all he did was to make a beautiful little speech to the children and give them a half holiday. Now we come to a matter which is of the utmost importance to Geraldton, namely, the Yandanooka estate, which was purchased in 1912. It contained 67,000 acres of freehold and 69,000 acres of leasehold, the price paid being £140,000. This was purchased, of course, under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, which makes provision for the purchase of land suitable for immediate settlement. The average for the whole estate—I am only taking the freehold portion—under the provisions of the Act, and allowing for 20 years' terms, is £3 7s. 5d. per acre. The selling price the Government have imposed on the 24,000 acres cut up is £4 7s. 2d. per acre, or 19s. 9d. above the average of the whole estate. From personal knowledge I can say that the land cut up was absolutely the worst portion of the estate. It was offered at practically £1 above the average price for the whole estate. Had the whole of the property been dealt with under Section 12 of the Act, which is mandatory, the portion recently thrown open could have been written down 20s. leaving a balance of 43,000 acres to carry a charge of £3 19s. per acre, or about 8s. less than the price asked for the skimmed milk portion. Naturally, very little land was sold. The people came down, and seeing the price imposed upon it went back without even bothering to inspect it. The land was thrown open in March, and withdrawn in June. Some 800 acres were applied for by certain squatters, there happening to be two or three little blocks required. The general public,

when they saw that the land was being overloaded, naturally went off without making any purchases.

Mr. Underwood: How did they get on at Oakabella?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Every block has been sold.

The Premier: What about Narratarra?

Mr. ELLIOTT: The whole of that is selected also. The inference is obvious; it is that no honest attempt has been made to dispose of that Yandanooka estate under the mandatory sections of the Act. I contend that it has not been done. The Government have sold only a very small portion of the estate, and have loaded the land with £2 an acre, which is absolutely unjustified by the Act. Obviously it was never intended that the land should be selected. The land was only opened for three months before it was withdrawn. I have searched the Act and can find no power under which the land can be withdrawn from sale. Of course the whole thing has been done in the interests of the butchers' shops and the State steamers. The Government know perfectly well that the only chance they have to make a success of these miserable fetishes is through the Yandanooka estate. If the estate fails then the whole thing falls to pieces like a pack of cards. This land was bought in the interests of closer settlement, and it is now withdrawn from sale and is being run in the interests of the butchers' shops. It is a grazing farm to-day. If the mandatory sections of the Act had been carried out, there would have been 30,000 acres of this land under crop this year, producing, I should say, not less than 18 bushels to the acre, or 180 thousand bags of wheat valued at £90,000. I would commend the Government for having employed as manager of the Yandanooka estate a gentleman than whom they could not find a better in Western Australia. He is an old squatter, and he knows the position from the first verse in Genesis to the last in Revelations. He does not want these "cockies," as they are called, messing about the estate which he has to administer, and I assume he has advised the Government that they should

put a high price on the land and, if it is not sold, shut it up again for the next twelve months. That is the position.

The Premier: It shows good judgment, anyhow.

Mr. ELLIOTT: His judgment is all right from the butcher shop point of view, but what about the Geraldton point of view? The people of Geraldton claim that this land should be producing wheat and stock for their port and that £90,000 worth of wheat should have gone to Geraldton this year. The Government have allowed these glaring faults to continue, but a remedy will not be suggested by the manager of the estate. Yandanooka was purchased for closer settlement and the Government have no authority to continue as at present.

The Premier: So were the other two estates.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The law is mandatory and should be carried out. The people of Geraldton have regarded the question of harbour improvement with disappointment and expectancy. The Minister for Works promised that he would not return to Geraldton without having the plans of a harbour approved by Cabinet in his pocket. The other day he came there and said he required further data. The Minister has had six months since the Engineer-in-Chief returned from England in which to procure this data and has had ample time to provide plans for harbours for Albany and Bunbury. I hope I will have the assistance of the members for those districts. I have a telegram, received from Bunbury, expressing the hope that I would be elected to assist that port, and now that the hon. members for Bunbury and Albany have arrived in shoal water, I appeal to them to assist me with their sympathy, work and speech.

Mr. Foley: Will you support the member for the district in regard to the Esperance harbour?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Certainly, when the proper time comes.

The Premier: You will not be here then.

Mr. ELLIOTT: That will make it all the better. If, in advocating additions to the Geraldton harbour, I am committing



what might be described as political harakiri, I do not care; I am fighting for Geraldton and it does not matter whether I am returned, or whether Mr. Heitmann is elected to represent this constituency. I am here at present to fight for my district, and I intend to do it. Geraldton is a district with a magnificent hinterland, producing gold, wheat, lead, and other commodities. Bunbury is only 100 miles from Fremantle, while Geraldton is 300 miles distant. I believe I have the sympathy of the Minister for Works. He admits that the prospects of Geraldton are superior to those of any outport in Western Australia. In the near future I believe that it will be the second port in Western Australia. Last year 500,000 bags of wheat were handled there and, though I do not care to venture into the fields of prophecy, I believe that in two years this quantity will be doubled.

The Premier: It is going ahead under the Labour Administration.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The Geraldton people are consequently very anxious regarding the harbour. When the Minister for Works visited the town previously he promised railways, water supplies, and schools, which have not eventuated, and concluded his speech by stating "Gentlemen, I believe you will return Mr. Heitmann. If you do not I shall consider that you do not approve of our policy and do not require these works, and we will then have to reconsider our position." This was a scandalous statement to make.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Disgraceful!

Mr. ELLIOTT: I do not believe that the Minister meant what he said. In my associations with him I have found him to be most courteous.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He is pretty cunning.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I admit that I am disappointed in him. One can afford to discount the promises he made on the eve of the election, but recently, before the business men of Geraldton and representatives of the council, the Minister for Works stated that he required other data before the harbour improvements could be proceeded with. He said there were three plans extant and that the data required

would be available at the end of the month. He promised that within seven days from the date of receiving that information from the Engineer-in-Chief, Cabinet's decision regarding the plan to be adopted would be announced. I believe that the Minister will keep his promise. I cannot conceive that the Government committed to decentralisation will, as a result of political sins or mistakes at the last elections, act other than honestly and honourably by Geraldton. I shall be extremely disappointed if in the course of two or three days we do not hear something definite from him.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You will be disappointed; there is no question about that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I do not desire to abuse or menace the Government. Recently the *Sunday Times* published a paragraph stating that the Government had evidently given up all hope of beating old Sam Elliott at the next election, and added, "We know this because they have given a harbour to Albany and another to Bunbury, but none to Geraldton." If the Government wish to beat me they should give Geraldton, not only a harbour, but the best harbour that the finances of Western Australia can afford.

On motion by Mr. Foley, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned 10.59 p.m.*