

but he did not reply to my criticism, which was somewhat on the lines of that I have uttered to-day. He could not reply to it, and he wisely did not, but he adopted the tactics of the cuttle fish in the matter. He waited until the very week of the election and on the Saturday before the election he published a column in the Narrogin paper dealing with different land matters and with my candidature. It was a despicable action to wait until it was too late for me to make any reply at all in the newspapers in Narrogin. He referred to the fact that I was an apostle of higher prices when a Lands Department officer. I do not quite know the Parliamentary method of describing that statement, but I will risk calling it a deliberate misstatement; because, while I was in the Lands Department, I always did my best to help the people to get their land at a reasonable price. He also referred to the fact that on many occasions I had expressed my admiration for his work. Well, those occasions are unknown to me; I defy the member for Northam to tell me of one. I knew too much about his work to express any admiration or any opinion different to what I have expressed to-day. This afternoon the member for Northam uttered a number of harmless platitudes with which most of us agree about the future of the country and the agricultural industry. I agree whole-heartedly with all those platitudes; and as we have had them once, I will not repeat any of them as I might otherwise have done. It is natural, when we come to consider it, the member for Northam should criticise the new Minister in the way he did. I venture to say that, whatever the new Minister did, the member for Northam would criticise in that same manner. We must remember the member for Northam has lost a good job which the new Minister has got, and that is responsible for a good deal of the criticism that has fallen from the member for Northam to-day. The member for Northam has said that the alteration in regard to potatoes does not mean much. Well, if it does not mean much, why does he object so much? I say it means much, because it means that in the Great Southern district, where we have a big population,

we will get cheap potatoes. We could not get them, we could not afford them when the member for Northam was Minister for Lands. I would like also to refer to the way in which the member for Northam starved the Narrogin agricultural farm while he was Minister. There has been no fresh land cleared on that farm for years. I believe he treated it as badly as he could. I am pleased to see the new Premier has been good enough to say that the claims of the Narrogin agricultural farm will be considered when the question of establishing an agricultural college in Western Australia is brought up, as I believe it is to be brought up next year. I hope the new Government when bringing forward their Estimates will carefully consider the question of increasing roads board grants. The late Government cut down the grants last year to about half what they were the year before. I hope that the new Government will bring them back to the old figure and at least distribute this year in road grants as much as was distributed by the Labour Government some years ago. We have big districts to open up, and it is necessary that the roads in these districts should be adequately considered. Many members travelled over the roads in the country districts during the recent campaign, and I am sure by their experiences they will be able to judge of the urgent need for increasing road grants right throughout the agricultural districts. In conclusion I would like to say I believe the Labour Government will do good work in protecting the producer against the middleman, and will serve the best interests of the people, not only in the agricultural districts but right throughout the State. There is good work ahead of the Ministry in regard to administration as well as legislation, and in both of these directions I look to the new Government to do a lot to make Western Australia a better country in the future than it has been in the past.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth): The last speaker, like other members on the Government side of the House, said he rose with a great deal of diffidence and timidity to speak. I must confess he displayed very little timidity in his drastic



criticism of the late Government. Should I be guilty of any breaches of debate I trust it will be put down to my want of knowledge of the customs of the House, and I trust I will be allowed some little indulgence, as in extraneous and new surroundings one naturally takes a little time to feel one's feet. I have not been connected with the late Government, but I am with them and share the criticism levelled at them to-day. I must confess at the outset that unless one was aware of the good work the late Government did—because despite what the last speaker said, they did good work, it was not all bad—one would have thought they had really done nothing and that everything done was to their discredit, and that the State had suffered by it. Therefore, I do not think members will agree with all the last speaker has said. He was too drastic altogether in his criticism. He ventured the opinion that had the appointment of Mr. Jull been known before the election took place I would not have been in my position to-day. I have a good deal of sympathy with the civil servants, and I will be only too happy to assist members opposite in bringing about something to do away with a good deal of discontent that now exists; but I am in the position of knowing that, had that appointment been known before the election, I would still be in the position I am in to-day. I congratulate the Government on assuming power under such favourable circumstances. It has been suggested that the circumstances are not favourable because some districts are suffering from want of rain; but this is not confined to Western Australia, because in some of the Eastern States they are likewise suffering from a deficiency in rainfall. Never in the history of Western Australia were the prospects better and brighter than they are to-day, and the Government are to be congratulated on coming into office when things are so bright and prosperous. I agree with Mr. Mitchell that we have a great State, the greatest in the Commonwealth, greater in prospects than any of the other States; and it only remains for good Government and for wise and just

measures to be brought down by the present Government to continue the prosperity the State has enjoyed under the late Government in the past five or six years. It is not my intention to harass the Government. I have come into Parliament with the determination to assist any Government in power to pass measures that may be for the progress, prosperity and happiness of the people of the State. I shall be ever alert and ready to assist in criticism wherever I think it necessary. Although the Opposition is not a big one, still we have some old campaigners and political veterans, and when occasion arises we shall be able to hold the fort and fight the necessary battles. Numbers do not count for everything. It may be the Government side will find dangers and difficulties arising that they do not anticipate, and very likely serious results will happen. The keen interest taken in the elections has been referred to. I think it creditable—the excellent poll right throughout the State; it shows the electors are alive to their interests, I trust they will not find their confidence misplaced. The Government have every opportunity, they have started in a good time when things are prosperous and they have absolutely all the power they can possibly want. One Labour member in congratulating me after the election, said he was only sorry a labour man did not win. I remarked he was decidedly greedy when the Labour party had already 32 or 33 assured seats. Something has been said about the increase of the Ministerial salaries, but I for one think it would have been better if those on the other side had adopted the suggestion which was thrown out, I think by the member for Swan, that this question should have been left to the people. It would have been better to do as they did in South Australia and have a referendum taken. Had that course been pursued the chances are we should have had the same result as South Australia had. But, as the leader of the Opposition stated, if the Government think their services are only worth £1,000 per annum, then we cannot quibble about their reducing their own salaries. The



question has been mentioned as to the state of the electoral rolls. During my candidature I found that there were a great number of electors not on the rolls, but who had a right to be there. I should like the Minister for Justice, if it is possible, to bring down an amendment of the Electoral Act so that those who have the necessary qualification and who are entitled to vote should if necessary, on the day of election, make some small kind of declaration that they have the necessary qualification, and then they should be enabled to vote. Even we might have a heavy penalty of imprisonment for several years if a person wrongly voted, but when people take the trouble to go to the poll to vote and are told that their names are not on the roll, and those people have lived in a district for years, it is discouraging to the electors to find themselves in such a position. I would like to see some amendment brought in whereby this difficulty would be overcome. I am glad to notice that the present Government have decided to adopt the suggestion of the late Government in regard to the weekly half-holiday. I am entirely in accord with the suggestion that the matter should be left to a referendum and I would go this far—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): When did they suggest it?

Mr. Allen: During the recent elections.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There has been a Bill here for the last two years.

Mr. ALLEN: When the time comes to vote I shall exercise that vote in favour of the Saturday half-holiday. The Wednesday half-holiday is of very little use to anybody and the principal sports all take place on a Saturday. I remember when I was in business in South Australia I was glad at the end of the week to be able to go into the hills and not return until the Monday. I shall be glad to assist the Government in this direction. I notice it is intended to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and I trust that whatever the nature of the amendment is, if it has the desired effect of putting an end to the industrial strikes and troubles, I shall be very glad

indeed. When this Act was first introduced it was thought that it would be the means of settling all industrial disputes. Unfortunately it has not proved so, and any amendment I hope will have the effect of settling industrial disputes. Those who have lived and been in districts where strikes have taken place know full well the terrible pain and suffering that is caused through strikes, and the loss of capital and of business caused through strikes, and if the Government bring in an amendment that will overcome these difficulties they will earn the good wishes of the people. I trust that whatever the Government do the amendment will be such that when an award is given it will be carried out on both sides. I am in sympathy with the Minister in trying to put a stop to land speculation. I am one of the Terrace agents, but I have no sympathy whatever with land which is taken up for speculative purposes. I have in my mind at the present time the case of two young fellows who for the past two years have been trying to get land. I do not know if their failure has been their own fault, but they have repeatedly gone before boards and have not been successful. I hope the Government will put right all this sort of thing and that in future there will be no complaints. As to the question of immigration, there is nothing in the Speech about it, but all are agreed on the one fact, that Western Australia needs two things to-day, capital and population. We must have immigration to settle the lands and to work hand in hand with the Federal Government to provide for our own defence. But it must be remembered that we want workers, not shirkers. It is no good bringing men out here who will not work. We want the right stamp of immigrant and then it will be found that the people will not be disappointed. A good deal has been said about the cheapening of food supplies. That is not a question which can come within the range of party politics, therefore I can say that I shall honestly do all I can to support the Government in cheapening our food supply. I had almost anticipated that the Government would have right away chartered



a ship and sent it to the North-West to bring down cattle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You cannot bring down cattle at this season.

Mr. ALLEN: Is that the reason? By the way the Government were talking during the recent elections I thought that they would have already chartered a ship or two and sent to the North-West coast for cattle. As to the question of water supplies, I hope the Government will take the proper step to provide the metropolitan area with a more up-to-date water supply and now that the sewerage scheme is being connected with the houses more water will be needed. Our present supply is unsatisfactory and inadequate, and I hope the Government will get to work and do something at once. Primary industries have had a great deal of consideration, and properly so. They are in a prosperous condition. I trust our secondary industries will not be overlooked when occasion arises to give them assistance. I trust the opportunity will come when the Government will be able to give some preference to the secondary industries and place orders with them and thus assist them. A great deal of capital has been invested in our secondary industries in Western Australia, and they should be further developed. When we remember that seven million or eight million pounds go out of the State every year for the importation of goods, it will be seen that there is big scope in building up the secondary industries of Western Australia. I would like to express the hope that the Government will deal more generously with the Perth City Council in regard to its subsidy. At the present time the Perth City Council is only getting a maximum of £2,000, but if that council was treated at the rate of 5s. in the pound, they would get £5,060 a year. The Government should recognise the services the municipality have rendered to the Government and in consequence are entitled to greater consideration. If the Perth council were to be allowed to rate Government properties, on an estimate made in the year 1903, the Perth City Council would receive something like £11,000 from the Government.

I have expressed the opinion out of the House, and I express it again, that a great deal of time is often wasted over the Address-in-reply, therefore I do not intend to take up the time further. I should, Mr. Speaker, at the outset have taken the opportunity of congratulating you on the high and honoured position which you occupy. I do not know that I should be right in saying that I hope you may occupy it for a number of years, but I know that you will occupy it to the satisfaction of the House and with credit to yourself.

Mr. DOOLEY (Geraldton): I, like the previous speaker, have opinions about the time taken up on the Address-in-reply, and I think there may be a good deal of time wasted. But it is also very necessary that certain matters should be given voice to and many things referred to which perhaps members would not have an opportunity of doing under other circumstances. I would like, in the first place, to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment, because knowing you as long as I have, I am pleased to think that the choice of the House has been so unanimous. You are a man who at all times has been held in the highest opinion in public life, and for the spirit of justice which has been apparent in all your actions, therefore, I think the appointment is a happy one. In regard to the Ministers, although I offer my congratulations to those gentlemen yet at the same time I have to offer my sympathy to them because I recognise that they have a great task before them, coming as they have done into office when the work of previous administrators had accumulated through, I venture to say, neglect and carelessness in regard to their departments, therefore they have made the work of their successors very arduous indeed. There is an opinion prevalent in the northern districts, particularly at Geraldton, that we in the past have not been given that consideration that we should receive, and I regret to notice that so far as the Address from His Excellency is concerned there is a small matter that indicates that the present Administration have not altogether considered the