

ment consider that the linking up of the railway from Dwarda to Narrogin would assist in the economical working of the Government railway system?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, (a) 1 in 30. (b) 1 in 40. 2, (a) and (b), 1 in 45 in the ranges, but the general ruling grade is 1 in 60. 3, (a) A class "M" locomotive would take to Narrogin via Spencer's Brook 275 tons; from Pinjarra via Dwarda, 140 tons. (b) A class "M" locomotive would take from Narrogin via Spencer's Brook 370 tons; from Narrogin to Pinjarra via Dwarda, 235 tons. 4, No.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. G. POTTER (West) [4.36]: In common with members who have previously spoken, I should like to take the opportunity of congratulating you, Sir, upon your elevation to the high office of President. While it has not been my good fortune to be a member of this House until the present session, I am not altogether unaware of the value of your services to the State in the past; and I assure you, Mr. President, that I look forward with the most pleasurable anticipations to receiving, as I have already received, the benefit of your wisdom and kindly consideration. I also wish to express my keen appreciation of the kindly courtesy of older members of the House, and of the most willingly given assistance which new members receive from them. It is an assistance which one appreciates highly, because one comes here to a strange routine. Certain remarks of Mr. Sanderson, who gave valuable advice yesterday, appealed to me especially as a new member. I recognise that the duties which members are called upon to perform are onerous, and I recognise it the more as I am now partly responsible for the representation of a province which has been so ably represented by my friend the late member, Mr. Panton. Yesterday we had a brief but impressive résumé of the State's early history. To look back upon that history is inspiring. I am in thorough agreement with Mr. Sanderson's statement that grandiloquent phrases alone will never enable Western Australia to achieve its great destiny. But when eloquent phrases come as the result of an abiding faith in the State, then it is the duty of members generally to spread that eloquence abroad, so that the potentialities of this country may be made known. As we heard yesterday, in the distant past Australia was but obscurely known. Even to-day it is but little known to some parts of the British Empire. Faith in Western Australia is essential, and I wish to congratulate the Premier on his great and abiding faith in this country. That faith is not the outcome of a spasmodic thought, but

rather bears the appearance of being the effect of a lifetime's love for his country. When Sir James Mitchell proceeded overseas in order to carry the gospel of Western Australia to the heart of the Empire, a feeling of strained tension, as it were, permeated the citizens of this State lest his mission should not be successful. Fortunately the mission did prove successful, and that strained tension yielded to a sense of supreme satisfaction at the results achieved. Further I wish to congratulate Sir James Mitchell on the conception of the great policy that took him to the hub of the Empire. Reverting, however, to the success of his mission, I think I may say that while we experience a sense of supreme satisfaction in that respect, we have at our doors a somewhat depressing influence. Possibly we are sometimes given to look upon the dark side of things before examining the other side of the question. I trust hon. members will not consider me pessimistic, but I would say that the scheme is of such magnitude, and this sum of money, six millions, is of such magnitude, that one might be excused if for a moment one were overawed by a grave sense of responsibility. It is better, I think, to feel a certain sense of awe in such an atmosphere than to feel transported into raptures of joy without knowing how we are going to apply this enormous sum of money, which carries with it heavy responsibilities. Naturally we look to the Government for a judicious handling of the loan. To expend it on any one great public undertaking would be a comparatively simple thing, as against spending it in a great policy of land development, which will open up so many possibilities—possibilities of success and possibilities of disaster. Mr. Sanderson said that the prospect before the country to-day was equalled only by the situation which faced it at the time Western Australia elected to enter the Federation. I trust that in the distant future, or even in the near future, we shall look back upon this present time with fewer regrets than we do to the period in which we decided to federate. No one will imagine, I am sure, that I desire to see the Government guilty of any dereliction of duty. But it is well known that the Ministry are over-worked. No human being can accomplish the impossible. If this money is to be spent to the best advantage, something should be done in the creation of more adequate machinery than already exists, because we have no time available to tamper with the situation. If the scheme is to be a success, this money must be placed advantageously within five years of the taking up of the last quota; otherwise we shall be left with an impossible incubus on our hands. To achieve that, something might be done in the way of appointing a Commissioner or a Minister for land settlement, so that the appointee might be able to devote the whole of his time to the work. It is too much to ask of the Premier or any other Minister that he should add this as a side line to his multifarious duties. Another reason why I should like to see this brought about, is that

all our public services will be conscripted to make this scheme successful. The Railways, Lands, Surveys, Works, and all other public offices will be interested in this disbursement, and without the least reflection—indeed I have the greatest respect for the officers of the departments—no one can deny that Government departments in any State do not pull together as they should do. I do not blame either the Ministers or the heads of departments, but wherever the personal element is found there also will be found a tendency for one department to get the better of another on a job, no matter how big or how little. That is a very potent reason why the machinery for operating this scheme should be in the hands of a Minister or Commissioner specially assigned for the purpose. Lest anyone be alarmed that this is going to add another financial incubus to the State, I point out that whatever salary—and it should be a good one for a good man—is paid to such a Minister or Commissioner, it will be a cheap insurance against the improper disbursement of this enormous sum of money. Much has been said about the retention of settlers on the land. I do not believe the Government are altogether responsible for the defection of many of the settlers. There again the human element enters in. I have known people take up land who were not temperamentally fitted for the task. The Minister for Education, a few sittings ago, showed marked statesmanship when he discoursed on the policy of agricultural institutions. The establishment of such institutions would do very much, not only to ensure that the graduates from those colleges would remain on the land, but also that they would be better equipped than anybody picked spasmodically and placed on the land in an indiscriminate manner. This is the first occasion in eight years which the public have had for properly focussing the perspective of land development and State development. To-day so many things, previously taken for granted, loom very large. The most interesting, if vexing, experiences that can come to any nation are to be found in the aftermath of a great war. It is often said that example is better than precept. During that awful period we had the advantage of both, and we would be foolish indeed if we did not profit by the experience thrust upon us. We see it more clearly than ever. We see it in our exchange; to-day the balance of trade is against us. Therefore we have, if not chaos, something approximating it in our orderly Commonwealth and in our most orderly State of Western Australia. We must become an exporting State. I am sure that is the all-governing principle of the great scheme of land development. I do not think the Premier would claim to have discovered that, but certainly I applaud his effort in trying to give full effect to what among thinking people is an axiom. Very often a settler's initiative is killed in the early stages of land development. All who have had experience of it know what it is to face a great wall of timber and say, "There are a thousand acres. Out of Nature's fortress must I carve a

home." And it is after a meagre supply of stores and water have been exhausted that he finds it necessary to cease activities and proceed many miles to a railway line, or to a store where he has to pay a fictitious price for the necessities of life. To secure the tenure of a settler on the land, we should, above all things, assist him—naturally at his own expense later—and see to it that he gets a fair chance to bring his selection into fruition at the earliest possible moment. Nothing gives a settler greater heart than to see his first crop, though it be only 50 acres, above the ground. To do that, there is the clearing, dam sinking, and the provision of water facilities to be seen to. Then we come to the vexed question of transport. The question of transport is not necessarily wrapped up in miles of railway. Sometimes railways are built which are really an incubus on the settler in the fulness of time, because he has to pay so much for freight that a great deal of the profit which would otherwise accrue to him is exhausted to pay interest and sinking fund. And even then, when he sees the Colonial Treasurer's figures from time to time, he has not the satisfaction of saying, "Well, we have wiped that off, anyhow." I refer particularly to feeder roads within reasonable distance of a railway. It is well known that some of the alleged roads adjacent to settlers have no being, are roads only on the survey map. In this great development policy I should like to see full allowance made for the provision of roads for speedy transport; because if we have learnt one thing more than another in transport lately, we have learnt that the internal combustion engine has a strong claim upon the attention of the people just now. In places within reasonable proximity to large centres—not necessarily Perth or Fremantle, but even Northam, York, Albany or Geraldton—it would pay a farmer to shift his produce in one handling by motor transport, if only he had the roads; it would be cheaper for him and would save him time, which to the farmer is money. No one can assess the farmer's losses in time. Another great drawback to the settler is to be found in a district very close to the metropolitan area. I refer to the grievous position of Jandakot. It might come as a surprise to some people to learn that Jandakot is a very fertile area, when it is not flooded. I know one or two people who have sunk their money in the land at Jandakot. Lest I should be accused of drawing the long bow, I will quote a case with which I am familiar, namely that of Mr. Pearce, who between 1898 and 1917 operated 25 acres of land in the Jandakot area, and during that period employed 10 men. Would you see Mr. Pearce if you went there to-day?

Hon. F. A. Baglin: You would see Chinamen there.

Hon. G. POTTER: No, not even Chinamen.

Hon. T. Moore: Only ducks.

Hon. G. POTTER: The ducks have been shot for food. If on the way out to Jandakot

you were to call in at a market garden, you might see Mr. Pearce working for wages. Where the 10 men and their families whom Mr. Pearce supported are to be found, I do not know. Mr Pearce was flooded out. His is not an isolated case. This is one of the particular points I wish to stress in support of my argument for the co-ordination of all departments. In this great policy of land settlement the drainage of those swamps has concerned the Government very much, and the Government have not been blind to, or neglectful of, their duty. They have done what they could in the matter. Unfortunately, much of it has been done piecemeal. I do not pose as an engineer, but common sense teaches me that water will find its own level. If one commences to drain land that is comparatively dry, it stands to reason that one is only opening up a channel to relieve a wetter area. With one controlling head, who could co-ordinate and subordinate when necessary these various Government departments, and lay out a scheme of adequate drainage for these particular areas, covering in one instance from 20,000 to 25,000 acres, all of which are suitable for dairying, there should be no loss of money on the whole scheme when it is completed. Those parts which received the benefit of engineering skill and co-ordinated effort would probably produce as much as would pay for the whole scheme. I submit this as a suggestion to the Government in dealing with these areas. I should have spoken on the question of roads in order to induce settlers to remain on their blocks, but that subject is now before the Minister for Works, who has intimated that he will make certain recommendations to Cabinet. The decision of Cabinet in this matter will be awaited with the most profound interest and anxiety by the settlers concerned. There is another matter which mitigates against settlers remaining on their blocks. Take Spearwood, for instance. One member yesterday referred to an ideal group settlement in the hills. In Spearwood we have another ideal settlement at the foot of the hills where one can see the Darling Range wrapped in beautiful hues. Spearwood is an excellent example of group settlement. When they consider all the work that has been done in that district, members will be shocked to learn that there is yet no railway platform there. When a parcel arrives by train, the guard (a Government servant) has to solicit the kindly offices of some of the passengers (who have paid their fares) to assist him in lifting certain articles out of the guard's van. That is a deplorable state of affairs. I hope the Government will soon correct such a prodigious anomaly.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It is the same all over the State.

Hon. G. POTTER: I am prepared to believe there are many other instances of that kind. One comforting reference in the Speech is to homes. A good deal of statesmanship has been shown in this direction. I presume these homes will be made available to the far-

mers in the same way that they are to the workers in the town.

Hon. H. Stewart: You are wrong in your presumption. For years past they have not been able to get them.

Hon. G. POTTER: Hope springs eternal in the human breast, and I trust that hope will never die out. I could wish that the occupants or selectors of these homes, which have been erected by the Workers' Homes Board, will some day be able to look forward to the time when they can say: "This home is mine; I own it." On the other hand, will these homes be built under the iniquitous leasehold system? I know of many people who have had homes built under the leasehold system, who are grossly dissatisfied with their bargain. It would be difficult to persuade them that it was anything but a bad bargain. True, they have had the advantage in that the Government built the homes for them, but they are no nearer the time when they can regard them as freehold. We have heard the phrase, which has been styled as grandiloquent, that the Englishman's home is his castle. However lowly the worker's home may be, if it is built on the leasehold principle it never becomes his castle. Many people who were enthusiastic about it at the time have since changed their minds, and yearned for a freehold property. Another contributing factor towards keeping the farmer on the land is the expansion of our educational activities. When we come to deal with the Estimates, it behoves us to approach the Education vote in a spirit of great liberality.

Hon. J. Duffell: We have already done that.

Hon. G. POTTER: If necessary we can approach it in a spirit of even greater liberality.

Hon. J. Duffell: Where are you to get the money?

Hon. G. POTTER: This is the age of specialisation. The country with a population of highly educated people is the country that will lead the world. The country that is not so equipped must take second, third, or fourth place. It is not altogether the fact of citizens of a community being educated that will result in the success of that community: it is the application of that education, of all that it means, the training of the mind of the child to equip him to take his place in the world when he reaches manhood; these are the things that matter. Many people may ask of what use it is to educate the child of a farmer? Such people stand in great need of the attention that is given by the teachers of this State. Some will ask what is the use of teaching a boy of that kind anything about geography. Is it not right that a boy should know something of the world he lives in? Others may ask of what use is it to teach a boy higher mathematics. They forget that this is designed to cultivate the boy's mind so that he may master details when he meets

them. He has to meet with such difficulties on the farm, indeed in any walk of life. The ability to master detail will save a boy much arduous work. Others may ask of what use is it to teach a boy history? A knowledge of history produces in a boy a certain amount of esprit de corps and a certain amount of pride of race. It is a good thing to train a boy to a knowledge of these questions, because at some future date he may be able to call a Premier of this State to order. It is wise to teach a boy something of the English language, so that he may be adequately equipped to place questions of importance to his district before some visiting Minister for Agriculture. Education to the boy on the land, or in any calling, no matter how humble it may be, is most necessary. It befits him to apply himself in an intelligent manner to the most simple and mundane things in life. The more lowly and mundane these things are, the more necessary is it that, when the day's work is over, he may be able to cast his thoughts in other channels and enjoy such mental recreation as will inspire him to be a better citizen. As a further concomitant to our great educational system, there is a cry in the land that the parents of large families should be assisted in the purchase of books and school accessories. It is grievous to note the anguish of some of the parents of the future citizens of the Commonwealth, who will some day possibly play a big part in our national life, and to witness their perturbation and their anxiety concerning the money that is required for the purchase of books for their children. I wish to make special reference to the settlement of ex-soldiers on the land and their treatment in this State. There are many such men in my district who are dissatisfied and disappointed that their ambitions to secure land have not yet been realised. I am sure the Government are endeavouring to do their best, but would urge upon them to do better than their best and to place these men on the land as soon as possible. They are not all physically fit for the arduous work of land cultivation. Many of them must perforce follow some occupation in the more populous centres. It is pathetic to see some of these men going about from place to place seeking work. I know it is impossible at present for the Government to find work for all. I do not admit that the Government should be an employment agency. I was hopeful that had the Press not been in recess it would have been announced that some of the private employers of labour had determined to search for situations in which to place these men. They are asking for very little. They do not wish to displace other people, but they do ask for the consideration that was promised would be meted out to them when war activities ceased. That was a very solemn pledge that has not altogether been fulfilled. I do not say it has not been fulfilled by the Government, but I do say that some members of the community have not done so. It is only the great ur-

gency of the occasion that impels me to take up the time of the Chamber on this point and that is my only reason for raising it. I would like to ask the Government to use their influence with the Commonwealth Government to ascertain exactly what the position is likely to be in Western Australia regarding defence matters. Certainly we should be delighted to know that the great burden of defence has been lifted from the shoulders of the Commonwealth. We are comforted to know that our shores are inviolable for a considerable number of years. Even so, however, it is necessary for us to be assured that adequate defence measures are not centred altogether in one part of the Commonwealth and that the great State of Western Australia, still being a part of the Commonwealth, shall receive adequate attention from the defence authorities, or from those within the Commonwealth Parliament who control defence.

Hon. A. BURVILL (South-East) [5.17]: With Mr. Potter, I would like to commence my remarks on the Address-in-reply by congratulating you, Mr. President, on attaining your high position after so many years of Parliamentary life. I wish to thank hon. members for the way in which they have assisted me, as they have assisted Mr. Potter too, in our initiation into the whys and wherefores of the business of this Chamber. I intend to make a few general remarks and to refer especially to the Premier's immigration scheme and his proposals regarding the South and South-West. I am in full accord with Mr. Macfarlane, who referred to the difficulties of pioneering this vast country with all its unattractiveness, as compared with the ever-increasing attractions in the city. He said that, as members of this Chamber, we should endeavour to remedy that state of affairs as far as possible. I agree. There is one practical way of ameliorating the social isolation that exists in the back country, and that is by the re-introduction of the provision for a Government subsidy on a £ for £ basis for the erection of agricultural halls. In the city, people get the advantages of ever-increasing attractions in the shape of electric power and trams, telephones, telegraphs, free education and a university. If they get all those facilities, surely a little assistance in the direction of erecting agricultural halls in the back country should not be refused. It will be agreed that assistance in this direction should be an obligation upon the Government. It will help to make the social life of the wives and families of settlers far more attractive and, to some extent, it will help to break the monotony of isolation, which is unavoidable in the pioneering stages. Some may object to this on the score of the halls being unproductive works, and they may object on the score of economy. I think that primary education, with the best qualified teachers, postal facilities, telephones—no man or his wife should need to travel more than two miles to a telephone in case of sickness—and agricul-