

man in the district becomes the largest holder. There is a natural inclination in that direction. I go as far as any member on the cross benches, and will assist to the best of my ability, in doing everything possible to make life attractive in the country districts. If for no other reason than a selfish reason we must see the wisdom of and necessity for developing our country districts. There are many obstacles in the way and the Government must assist. In no State of Australia has such a generous measure of Government assistance been given to people on the land as has been given by successive Governments in this State. I cannot conceive of any country where the assistance given has exceeded that which has been made available in Western Australia. It is a wise and sound policy. We must continue to pursue that policy, all the time striving to see that the expenditure of public money is in the direction of essentially reproductive works. In time to come money thus expended will be returned to us fourfold. The problem is so great to-day throughout Australia that unless the various Parliaments wake up and take serious measures to stop the drift to the cities, the Commonwealth will not go ahead and prosper, production will not increase nor will Australia be that great country we all hope to see her become. I believe that in Western Australia—and I agree with the Premier here we can carry three or four times the population we have to-day, with a greater degree of prosperity to all.

Mr. Money: We can carry twenty times the population.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. When one looks around the Commonwealth, starting from Queensland in the North and working round the various States, one realises the possibilities of each State. Each is rich in those great natural resources which go to make any country great. There are no great natural resources upon which America has built up such a big population in the past century or so, of which Australia is not possessed.

Mr. Money: They utilised their natural resources to the utmost.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is largely due to the policy adopted by the State Governments throughout Australia in the concentration of expenditure, that has led to the aggregation of population in the cities. It is true that in New South Wales railways have been constructed for 300 or 400 miles into Sydney rather than build a small section of railways to tap a natural port. It is this policy of centralisation that is the curse of Australia to-day. It is necessary to spend money in the country districts to provide facilities for settlement and production, and to ensure a fair measure of comfort and prosperity without which we will not attain that standard of life we would like to see in Australia.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8-48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 3rd August, 1922.

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

QUESTIONS (3)—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

Sustenance Allowance.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: In view of the assistance by way of sustenance allowance granted to settlers on group settlement areas, will he favourably consider the extending of similar benefits in that direction to the South-West as are enjoyed by settlers operating under the provisions of the Act governing the Industries Assistance Board?

The PREMIER replied: Allowance to group settlers is an advance against cost of making farms, and becomes an Agricultural Bank advance on the security of the made farm. Individual settlers can obtain clearing loans from the Agricultural Bank in the usual way.

Accounts System and Costs.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: 1, Has a proper system of accounts been inaugurated for each group settlement which will include all phases of expenditure? 2, What will be the basis of allocation of costs on individual farms? 3, Is the cost of supervision to be made a charge against each group, and to be debited equally to each property?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The total charges against the group must not exceed the total costs. Allocations to each block will be made by the general manager of the Agricultural Bank when it takes over the liability. 3, Yes, so far as the working foreman is concerned.

Road Making; Federal Grant.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: In view of the decision of the Federal Ministry to provide a sum of £250,000, to be allocated to the various State Governments on the pound for pound principle, for the purpose of providing work for the unemployed on road making, and of the urgent necessity for provision of good roads to group settlements, does he propose to take advantage of the assistance offered by the Commonwealth Government?

The PREMIER replied: I am taking advantage of the offer.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TIMBER MILLS.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the output of timber from the Railway Department Timber Mills for the year ended 30th June, 1922? 2, What was the average number of men employed at these mills? 3, What saving was effected by the department by having their own timber mills?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 13,615 loads. 2, 139 men. 3, A conservative estimate would be £20,000. To this should be added the indirect saving by quality and delivery.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT LOAN, £150,000.

Mr. SIMONS asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the Government received accommodation to the extent of about £150,000 or a similar sum this year from an Australian lender or lenders? 2, If the foregoing is replied to in the affirmative, will the Minister responsible give the House the name or names of the lender or lenders? 3, What were the terms and conditions of the loan?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. Inscribed stock was issued in the various States, portion of which was required for redemption purposes. 2, The stock was taken up by a number of persons and institutions. 3, The terms were, interest 6 per cent. par; period, ten years, with option of redemption by the Government in five years.

Mr. Simons: Could the names be made available later on?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

QUESTION—LAND PLANS, LOAN INFORMATION.

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. Teesdale) asked the Premier: Will he explain why the Agricultural Bank's loans on Newdegate land are not stated on the plans at the Land Office?

The PREMIER replied: The Agricultural Bank has not yet granted loans on Newdegate land.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.36]: May I say at the outset that the speech of the Leader of the Opposition last night was a very helpful one. He made many points that I should have preferred not to have heard, but, on the whole, it was an excellent and helpful speech,

one that was good in the interests of Western Australia. I think his attitude is entirely right on some of the great questions he discussed. The Leader of the Opposition was wrong in one thing; I do not say he was wrong in everything by any means, but he was certainly wrong on one point. He said that the Governor's Speech did not contain very much. I ask hon. members if ever before a Governor's Speech contained so much?

Hon. M. F. Troy: So much verbiage.

The PREMIER: I have listened to many Governor's Speeches and I do not think I ever before listened to one that contained so much. There is a great deal in the Governor's Speech which is good and helpful to the community at large. If hon. members will read that document carefully—it may be rather long—they will see most of the industries are referred to. The opportunities ahead of Western Australia are undoubted and they are understood. Everyone is fully aware that those opportunities are understood. Everyone regrets at the same time that because of lack of population, we have not been able to take advantage of those opportunities. There is no member of this Chamber who does not come to me almost daily to tell me where some of those opportunities are. I wish we had the men and the money to take advantage of all our possibilities. It means so much to us if we can only make the best use of our opportunities now. We have known of those opportunities for the past eight years or more, but we have let some of them go. We have even gone to the extent of importing much of the food we require, but which we could produce ourselves. That is not very creditable to us and it is not right.

Mr. Marshall: If it was not for the State Implement Works, we would be importing agricultural implements.

Members: We are importing them.

The PREMIER: At the present time, we are importing a great many agricultural implements. However, there are many members in this Chamber who know well the opportunities ahead of us in this great State of Western Australia. Some know the great opportunities ahead of the mining industry. We know that new finds are being reported from time to time. Perhaps those finds are not additional Great Boulders, but we all hope that one day there will be discovered another rich field like that at Kalgoorlie. We have heard of finds in the Murchison district. We all want to see a revival in the mining industry, knowing that nothing will help this State so much as a complete resuscitation of our mining activities. When we talk about bringing in 25,000 people in one year, we can look back to 1852 when Victoria absorbed 102,000 people in one year and all because gold mining operations developed there at that time. The Minister for Mines will deal with his own department, and I do not wish to touch extensively on that aspect. I hope the member for Brownhill-Invincible (Mr.

Lutey) will see all his hopes realised in a speedy and great development in connection with the mining industry. There are great agricultural possibilities ahead of Western Australia, and it will be the duty of the Minister for Agriculture to deal with that aspect, as it comes within his province. At the present time, our agricultural opportunities are barely developed to the extent of one quarter that we hope to see. We have great opportunities to open up and settle the country in the northern portions of Western Australia. With an increase in our population, there must come increased trade. With all these opportunities ahead, surely it is time we endeavoured to make use of the various avenues open to us for progress and development. Every year lost is a real loss to the State. It does not mean that we shall get less in ten years' time than we shall during the first year, for we will get more and more as the years go by. As the people cultivate the land, the return will be all the greater, and the greater will be the possibilities ahead of our State. Most hon. members, and particularly the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson), were anxious that I should go to London to advance the interests of the State. I will deal with immigration later on, but at this stage I would like to tell the House that in London I had a very interesting time. I found that the people there knew little about this State and hardly realised where it was on the map. They certainly did not know that they were eating food from Western Australia or that they were decorated with Western Australian gold and Western Australian pearls. I had, as hon. members know, Mr. Thomson, representing all Australia, with me to assist in the work I went to London to undertake.

Mr. Marshall: He never advertised the mining industry to any extent.

The PREMIER: He did.

Mr. Marshall: He told me that he did not.

The PREMIER: He did do so, and he had opportunities in that respect.

Mr. Marshall: He had opportunities, but did not take advantage of them.

Mr. Angelo: He does not tell you everything.

The PREMIER: At any rate, if any hon. member has a mine to float, I would advise him to send Mr. Thomson to London to carry out the work. Mr. Miles, M.L.C., was also of great assistance to me. When I was asked in London if we had enough to eat in Australia, I said, "Look at Mr. Miles."

Mr. Angelo: He is fed on good North-West beef.

The PREMIER: The London people were particularly good to Western Australians. I think that was because our soldiers went away and fought alongside the British soldiers. I had a good time in Manchester, and I want to take this opportunity of placing on record the fact that in Manchester there are not only enormous openings available for trade activities—there are, I think, 10 million people within a radius of a few miles—but

there are facilities for handling anything that can be sent there. Manchester has magnificent cold storage works and great bulk handling concerns, with harbour facilities right up to date. We could send everything we grow to Manchester. On the other hand, I do not believe that at the time I was there, there was 1lb. of Australian beef in the Manchester area. Although apples were being received in England, the only Western Australian apples in Manchester were those we took down with us in the train. They said, "Why not ship to us?" We should ship to them from here. The only trouble is that our small quantity of products might be diverted at the outports. Unfortunately there were labour troubles when I was there and so, notwithstanding the magnificent factories, there were only a few men at work. Just the same, we saw some wonderful machinery in course of manufacture there. We also went to Bradford, where 300,000 people deal with 60 million fleeces of wool. It was a wonderful sight to see Australian wool coming in and being sorted into groups according to quality, and finally going on to the machinery and the weavers. We went also to Nottingham and Birmingham, both magnificent places. All the people there were anxious to treat an Australian Premier liberally. I do not know why I did not grow much heavier on that trip, because certainly we were fed exceedingly well. All were very kind to the representatives of this State. I went to Smithfield and saw miles of meat from Australia, from Argentina and from all over the world. Our meat appeared to me to be quite as good as that from Argentina, although it did not look so well, in consequence of having travelled so much further. In that market they sell not only beef, but mutton, pork and meat of all sorts. They sell the meat at a very low rate, but by the time it reaches the consumer the price is vastly different. I was told that Australian meat brings as much as 1s. 10d. per lb. retail. We ought to look into this question of marketing. It would pay us well to send Home a trained man to get behind the method of selling. Our apples are equal to anything sent into England, although I am afraid some of them lose their identity and probably are sold as English apples. Our pears were selling for as much as 1s. each. It was quite evident to me that we require to know all about the methods of sale. When the traders there said to Lord Leverhulme, "We won't buy your fish," he said, "Very well, I will buy a shop and sell my own fish." And he did. We require to have this question of marketing thoroughly investigated. We ought to send to London a vast quantity of produce. When food is dear at home, ships bound for Australia ought to leave England with only sufficient food to last them to Colombo, where they could load up with Australian stuff; and on their return from Australia they should take enough foodstuffs to last them to England. They would do it if they had the storage facilities and could get the quantity they re-

quire. In India, too, there is an illimitable market at good prices. We ought to see whether we cannot get on to that market. What we want is a man able to get behind the whole question of sale from the wholesale places to the retailer, in order that we might know just where we stand. Of course at our distance it is most difficult to satisfactorily handle the question. I am sure it would be well worth our while to exploit those markets. Naturally I attended many functions and met many people, including the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Colonel Amery. Sir Joseph Cook was very useful to me, and of course our own Agent General was exceedingly good. I had an interesting time, and the trip ought to show some results to the State, for I was given every opportunity to accomplish my task. Had I possessed the eloquence of the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) I should have done it much better. However, I told in my own way a plain tale of the possibilities of the State, from the North-West to the South-West, and I did it as well as I could. A question of the utmost interest was that of our sinking fund. I say "our sinking fund," because it is our fund our methods of paying our debts. We set aside year by year a certain sum for investments with the object of redeeming our loans on maturity. The sinking fund trustees are really the London and Westminster Bank. We must, of course, keep faith. But I pointed out to the trustees that we need do no more than furnish enough to cover the loans at maturity, a proposition to which they agreed. I found we had been paying very much more; at least the funds were accumulating at a much more rapid rate than was necessary. The Goldfields Water Supply loan was the only one I really dealt with, because it did not occur to me in the earlier stages, not until I got a grip of the situation, that the simplest and best thing to do was to put on an expert to see how each loan stood. If the sinking fund of the Goldfields Water Supply loan is in the happy condition we know it to be in, then obviously the other loans must be in precisely the same condition. When a sinking fund is established we figure out that it will take so much per cent. to cover the loan at maturity. That percentage is put aside for investment, and we re-invest the interest collected on it from year to year. Therefore over a long term of years it does not take a very large amount to cover the loan. Our calculations, too, in those days may have been wrong. I think they were; I think the rate was too high for the term of years. The interest on our investments certainly has been very much higher than was then expected, for no one could possibly say how much would be earned by our contributions to the sinking fund. Fortunately for the sinking fund, unfortunately for the world, the rates have been very much higher than was ever expected; and the money earned through those higher rates has been re-invested again over

a long term of years, and so we have got more than is actually needed.

Mr. Lutey: Is it invested in our own stock?

The PREMIER: Yes. If you set out to get three per cent. and you actually get five, you not only make the two per cent., but you re-invest it together with the three per cent., and so over 20 or 30 years it means a very great sum of money added to the sinking fund. Then there is the interest arrangement in regard to inscribed stock purchases. I do not think we should ever put those purchases on the market again, because the term is fixed and, of course, they have to go to the full limit of the term. If we had to borrow money to pay off a loan we ought to borrow new money and cancel some of the stock. It would pay us very much better, and we could make the term to suit us. It would be bad to resell this stock to the market. If we had made a million of money on the purchase of our stock and continued to pay sinking fund on the face value of the stock, we should be contributing to the sinking fund a million which it was never intended we should contribute. The sinking fund has had these contributions for years. Put it this way: They have invested, say, seven millions of sinking fund generally, and we are drawing interest on eight millions. Obviously the interest on the eight millions is unnecessary to the sinking fund. And again that interest is invested, and so it goes on, with the result that we know we have contributed £600,000 too much on the Goldfields Water Supply fund. And I hope that other loans will be found to be in the same position.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That will make up for the loans against which no sinking fund is provided.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is incorrect because this is not a general sinking fund but a sinking fund specially applied to each loan. I admit that the State is so much better off, because the taxpayers have been paying more than they should. I do not know that the sinking fund is of any advantage to us in London. Some of the other States are able to raise money on equally good terms, particularly those States which are better known in London and they have no sinking fund. We cannot cancel the stocks, but is there any sense in continuing to pay interest on this money? I consider there is not, and I hope that the trustees, as soon as they go into the matter, will agree with me. I expect to receive a letter from them by the next mail. Our sinking fund at the 30th June, 1921, amounted to £7,641,564, and at the 30th June of this year it stood at £8,370,160. The increase for the year was £782,596. We purchased stocks for approximately £8,290,000 at a cost of £7,270,000, thus showing an advantage to the State of £1,020,000. The interest on this £1,020,000, at an average rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., would be £35,700. The average interest we are paying is rather more than that,

so that we should receive this amount in addition. The £35,700, in my opinion, is an unnecessary contribution to the sinking fund, and I say this realising to the full that we must keep faith with our creditors. A loan was raised for the purchase of the Great Southern Railway amounting to £1,100,000. It was issued for a term of 40 years with a sinking fund contribution of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This provides a fair illustration of what may happen with regard to other sinking funds. The annual contribution is £16,500 and this, invested at an average of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.—not at current rates—would produce the total amount of the debt in 35 years without discounts. Yet, in the first place, we undertook to contribute sinking fund for a period of 40 years, so that we provided for a term of five years longer than was necessary when we set out to gather in the amount required to redeem this loan.

Hon. P. Collier: There must have been some poor mathematicians in Western Australia in those days.

The PREMIER: The amount of the sinking fund was probably calculated in London.

Mr. Willcock: But the interest at that time would be only 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and would account for that.

The PREMIER: The interest works out at about £3 12s. We hold stocks in this fund alone showing a gain in discounts to date of £55,000, which in turn is producing approximately £3,000 additional contribution to the sinking fund each year and, in my opinion, unnecessarily. Each year that additional £3,000 is invested, and is earning further money. Now let us take the goldfields water scheme loan as an illustration of what has happened. The loan was £2,500,000, maturing in 1927. The sinking fund now amounts to £2,462,817. We hold goldfields water scheme stock to the value of £783,000. This is apart from other stock of our own that we hold to the value of £1,679,817. This year we shall not require to pay interest on the stock we hold, or contribute any sinking fund. As the interest on the £783,000 worth of stock held amounts to £22,487 a year, we shall redeem the remaining £100,000 during the next five years on the contributions we have been making. When this debt is paid and the fund is wound up we shall have, so far as I can see, a considerable sum, amounting to many thousands of pounds, over and above the £2,500,000 borrowed. For years we have been writing to London endeavouring to get an abatement of this sinking fund, but we have always met with refusal. When I pointed out to the general manager and trustee that we should not be asked to do more than meet our obligations, he readily agreed and so, for this year, we have relief to that extent.

Mr. Munsie: I heard one of your colleagues say on a previous occasion when a similar course was suggested that it would amount to repudiation.

The PREMIER: It is not a matter of repudiation. It is known that this amount is unnecessary.

Mr. Munsie: So it was then.

The PREMIER: No, it was not.

Mr. Willcock: You have only just discovered it?

The Minister for Mines: My proposal was to suspend payments to the sinking fund during the war.

Hon. P. Collier: That should have been done—all sinking funds.

The PREMIER: Members will realise that the inquiry resolved itself into a very simple one, because it became a matter for the actuary. The actuary is working on it now, and I hope that the result of his investigations will be satisfactory to this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Was not the objection previously that it might affect us on the money market in future if we departed from the guarantee given in the prospectus?

The PREMIER: So it would if we acted without consulting the trustees, but if they agree to grant this relief because further contributions are unnecessary, it will be quite a different thing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was the objection before, anyhow.

The PREMIER: I know that £100,000 is unnecessary and I know that another £30,000 is unnecessary and I know that a great deal more than is necessary has been contributed to our sinking funds, apart from those two amounts. The holders of the stock do not care a jot. I have already remarked that some of the other States, particularly Victoria, have been able to borrow on better terms than Western Australia. The reason is that they are better known. A lot of the rich men of Victoria have businesses in London, and consequently Victoria is better known in London. The total amount of the sinking funds of the whole of the Australian States on the 30th June, 1921, was £12,875,405. Western Australia's sinking funds amounted to £7,641,564, leaving between all the other States sinking funds amounting to only £5,233,841 on their enormous indebtedness. During the year ended the 30th June, 1921, the increase in the total of the sinking funds of all the States was £706,297, whereas the increase in ours alone was £792,738. Therefore there was a decrease of £86,500 in the sinking funds of the other States during that year. In some of the other States, I believe, they have control over their sinking funds, and are not bound down hard and fast by unalterable rules like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. When the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) talks about bankruptcy staring us in the face—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I said if we were not cautious.

The PREMIER: And says that other States including Victoria are doing so well, I would tell him that the only State which had a better cash result than Western Australia last year was Victoria, and there it was only about £30,000 better. It is true that we had

a deficit for 1920-21 of £686,000, but our sinking fund increased by £800,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is not due to the Government of the State, but to the conditions which have been laid down. It is one of our virtues of which we have boasted.

The PREMIER: I am not defending the deficit by these means. I merely wish to point out what the other States are doing in order to achieve their results.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the point was never raised until you got into your present difficulty.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member was not equal to the occasion when he was in office, that is not my fault. It is good for our credit that this should be known. Why should we hide our light under a bushel? I do not say that any particular Government is deserving of credit for having contributed this money during the last 10 years, but the fact remains that we have contributed a good deal of it. It is the people's sinking fund and the people's money. Although Mr. Lovekin, in another place, might put a different complexion upon it, that is the correct one and the true position. I repeat that I am not using this information to defend the cash result of last year's operations. I am defending the credit of the people of this State, and the hon. member cannot charge me with being wrong when I do that. No State in the Commonwealth, with the single exception of Victoria, had a cash result equal to that of Western Australia last year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would not have been so if the Government had had the money to handle. The sinking fund would have been as bad as the other funds.

The PREMIER: Almost the whole of the contributions to the sinking fund come from the State, because our securities carry interest and we pay interest on those securities; but we really hold in the sinking fund our own securities on our own account for the redemption of our debts. Having said so much in the interests of the credit of the State, I wish now to explain why the revenue last year fell short of my estimate.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is not for the credit of the State, but in defence of the deficit that you have advanced those arguments.

The PREMIER: The hon. member may say that, but I will leave another place to deal with him.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course, the sinking fund is nothing new. We are pursuing the same methods of financing the State's affairs to-day as have been pursued all along.

The PREMIER: I do not deny that. It would be a good thing if we had not established a sinking fund. It is not a bit of good. We invest our money on works which are maintained at an ever increasing standard—I refer to our railways and other works. In dealing with the finances for last year, I do not intend to give a lot of figures.

Mr. Underwood: Not when you come to the deficit.

The PREMIER: This House was largely responsible for my estimate of revenue not being reached. The deficit for the year was £161,455 more than was anticipated. We received £143,803 less revenue, which was largely due to this House having shelved the Licensing Bill.

Mr. Heron: One of your own supporters was responsible for that.

The PREMIER: There will be an opportunity for the House to correct that error this year. The Licensing Bill is not a party measure.

Mr. Underwood: We will not correct it.

The PREMIER: Members will have an opportunity of correcting the error they made last year. I must also remind members that the late passing of the taxation measures led to a considerable shortage in the collection of taxes.

Hon. P. Collier: Its inclusion in your Budget made your figures look more favourable for the time being, although you knew you would never get it.

The PREMIER: That is an ungenerous statement. The hon. member was the only member in the House who knew I would not get it.

Hon. P. Collier: You did not take it seriously yourself.

The PREMIER: Did I not? In anticipation of its being passed, I became a total abstainer like the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). It is not right to say I did not expect to get the money. I did expect to get the Bill through. It was a perfectly good and reasonable measure. In England much higher licensing taxes have to be paid than in Australia, and the Commonwealth Government alone draw well over £600,000 a year from the trade in this State.

Hon. P. Collier: The Premier got through the second reading of the Bill but did not make an attempt to get it through Committee.

The PREMIER: Of course I did, but the House referred the Bill to a select committee. Let us be fair about it. I did expect to get it through but the Leader of the Opposition knew I would not do so. It was the only time he behaved really unkindly in not telling me what he knew.

Hon. P. Collier: You threw up the sponge without going into Committee.

The PREMIER: No sponge was used; at all events it would have been a dry one. Those two things accounted for a considerable shortage in the revenue. The expenditure was £17,652 greater than estimated under all heads. The revenue estimate was a very accurate one, seeing that the two million pounds earned by the Railway Department are included in the total revenue. I do not think anyone can say that the estimate was not a fairly close one. We have also given increases to civil servants, teachers, etc., as the result of the appeals before the Appeal Court, and made other payments which were not anticipated.

Mr. Willcock: The cost of commodities has been coming down, and that would counterbalance the other.

The PREMIER: Oh yes, the cost of commodities is coming down, but salaries have gone up.

Mr. Marshall: Wages are coming down. They came down 3s. a day for a start in one smack.

The PREMIER: I am explaining why we did not get the revenue we anticipated and why we spent more than we had expected.

Hon. P. Collier: This is the sixth year of explanation.

The PREMIER: The hon. member and his party made it for five and a half years. If he had his way he would be making it still.

Mr. Marshall: The Premier has not ceased yet.

The PREMIER: And I shall not cease for some time. The loss on public utilities was £565,000. In common with other members, I regret that public utilities do not balance. We cannot make them do so by taxation. I do not see how we can make good the balance by increased charges over our railways, which represent the principal culprit. But by some means or other these public utilities must balance.

Mr. Pickering: Mr. Stead has made a few suggestions.

The PREMIER: Once the railways did pay. The decrease in gold production has certainly landed us in a worse position. We now have hundreds of miles of railway through goldfields that are not in very active operation. They may, however, revive later. I hope the recent discoveries on the Murchison will lead to a greater use of those railways and to more traffic being provided for them.

Mr. Marshall: I am pretty sure of that from what I have seen.

The PREMIER: I told the House that salaries really amounted to a very small portion of our expenditure. If we did reduce salaries it would not represent very much. Some people think we spend millions in salaries but that is not so. We provide many free services, such as education, medical, health, charities, and many others. These free services increase in cost from time to time. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) may be held responsible for some of the expenditure on education. He set going a new system which is growing all the time. If I had my way that system would be sufficient to accommodate not only the children at present in the State but twice that number. The more children we have the more expense we must incur, and the better the system the more expensive it is. Ours is a very good system.

Hon. P. Collier: Has an inspector yet been appointed to deal with the ingrowing toe nails of children? I hear that this is so.

The PREMIER: I have not heard about it, but I understand the member for Kanowna proposed to have an inspection of chil-

dren by medical officers. He certainly helped to build up a system of education of which this country should be proud. We shall see the result of it before long. It will certainly produce its full value. The children are bright and as intelligent as any children in the world, and the system is a fine one.

Hon. P. Collier: Being ours they must be bright children.

The PREMIER: I am afraid mine are too old now. The advantages of the system are already becoming manifest. I wish now to deal with the question of immigration. I have here a copy of the speech delivered by a member of the Upper House, which I will deal with later. I am going to devote a special paragraph to that speech.

Hon. P. Collier: It was an excellent speech.

The PREMIER: I hope my speech will be published and sent to my constituents. I am sure that will be done because the gentleman in question is a generous man. The figures have not been understood. We propose to bring here 75,000 souls comprising men, women and children, not 75,000 farmers. Of this number, 6,000 will be settlers on the land. If it had not been for the fact that our own people are again desirous of becoming farmers we should have had to bring in more than 6,000 people. Fortunately for the State and our own workers, they are willing to go upon the land.

Mr. Heron: There is nothing else for them to do.

Mr. Willcock: They cannot get the land.

The PREMIER: I will get the hon. member all the blocks he can take to-morrow, but of course I cannot get them in someone else's backyard. Our own people are acclimatised and know how to work. They have had an experience that is valuable to them and of assistance to them as settlers. I am glad they want to go on the land. This fact has rendered it unnecessary, as we thought we should have to do three years ago, to bring in a large number of people to go on the land. We, therefore, require to bring in fewer people for this purpose, some of whom will be people who will work on the land. We cannot have a lot of new settlers without having some new workers to assist them. In Australia in 1911 there were, according to the census, 570,000 primary producers out of a population of $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, a proportion of one to eight. This proportion will now be greater by virtue of developmental public works, and also because soil production creates transport and other work to a large extent, to a greater extent than gold, which can be transported in small parcels. In 1911 gold mining in this State carried the greater part of the wealth production. We are now producing from the land much the greater bulk of our production. It is heavier to handle, heavier to market, to ship and transport. We are also producing far more in the way of wealth than we did, notwithstanding the fall in the production of gold. This shows us how much more labour is required in dealing with soil production than

with the more valuable commodity, gold. In 1919 there were in this State 15,000 land holders out of a population of 330,000, representing 22 people in the State per holding.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the definition of a land holder? Would that embrace all holders?

The PREMIER: It means 15,000 farmers, each holding his own block.

Hon. P. Collier: Any kind of farmer?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: Does it include market gardeners?

The PREMIER: It includes all people who made their living on the land in 1919. I think there are not more than twice that number in South Australia, and there are only 750,000 in the whole Commonwealth. The proportion should rise here to one to 10, as 6,000 settlers mean 60,000 souls in other avocations. The wives and children make up the balance to be absorbed. Perhaps we do not realise how different the work connected with agricultural production is from the other work we do. We have an undertaking from Mr. Hughes, and from the Imperial Government—

Hon. P. Collier: Be sure and get it in writing from Mr. Hughes.

The PREMIER: The agreement has to be sent out from England.

Hon. P. Collier: In the meantime get it in writing from Mr. Hughes.

The PREMIER: In January of last year I attended the Premiers' conference in Melbourne, and Mr. Hughes agreed to help us in this financial scheme. The Federal Government should do so because they get all the indirect taxation. On the first day that a man lands in this State and drinks a glass of beer or tea he pays something to the Federal Government. I pointed this out, and said that of course we could not afford the cost of the money required, certainly not in the early stages; and so the Commonwealth agreed to help. I then went—I believe with the approval of this House and of the people of this country—to consult the Imperial Government. After a good deal of argument they agreed to come in, and whilst I was in England the British Parliament passed the Empire Settlement Act, giving the British Government the right to help, though the amount to be spent during this year is only £1,500,000, and for the next 15 years will be £3,000,000 per annum. I thought we had better get in early, and I may say that ours was the first immigration scheme submitted. At one time we brought people to this country by paying their passages. We are relieved under this scheme of paying any of the costs of transporting people from the old land, and that means a big saving, a saving of a million of money as compared with the old system.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I saw a cable in the Press stating that each Government had to pay one-third. That cable must have been wrong.

The PREMIER: That cable was wrong. It is intended to utilise the immigration for the development of our South-West, and particularly for the settlement of land between the coast and a line drawn from Bonbury to Albany. The Commonwealth Government are to raise the loans. They can usually raise money at a point better than we can, and we shall have to pay only what they pay. The State Government are to absorb 75,000 immigrants and establish 6,000 of them on farms, in return for the loan of £6,000,000. The Federal and Imperial Governments will contribute one-third of the interest for five years from the date of raising the loan, up to an aggregate of £6,000,000. That is to say, if to-morrow we raise £5,000,000, we get two-thirds of the interest from the British and Federal Governments for the next five years, and if we raise say £5,000,000 of the amount five years hence, we shall get two-thirds of the interest from those Governments for five years from that date. Calculated at 6 per cent., this represents a contribution of £1,200,000 to the State which the State has always paid up to now. The £1,200,000 will be contributed by the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments in equal parts. Adding that £1,200,000 to the £1,000,000 saved in fares, we have a total saving on these immigrants of £2,200,000—no inconsiderable sum. Without this assistance we could not have embarked on any large scheme of immigration. If the full 75,000 people do not come here within five years, or 6,000 men are not settled here within that period, the contributions from the British and Commonwealth Governments will be abated proportionately to the shortage. That is provided for in clause 4 of the agreement. Without that provision, suppose we had brought in 74,000 people, the other Governments could have said, "We will not pay you anything; you have failed in your contract." The insertion of clause 4 makes us quite safe if we are not able to secure the full number of immigrants. We have agreed to see, so far as we can, that the immigrants receive fair treatment in private employment. That matter was mentioned last night. I believe the immigrants are treated fairly by 99 per cent. of our people. There are, unfortunately, some who do not treat anybody fairly, immigrant or Australian or anything else; but there are very few of them, I think. Whilst it is not right to reason on individual cases, I should like to mention that I heard of an immigrant who went on a farm at £1 a week, and was so good with horses that in a very little while he got £3 per week. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) will be able to tell the Committee about that case.

Mr. Willecock: What do you think a fair rate for an immigrant? I want the Government to express an opinion.

The PREMIER: I do not think that in any occupation a man can be paid more than he can earn.

Hon. P. Collier: That is no information.

The PREMIER: I do not know what the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) would be worth on a farm. He may be an experienced farmer. One would want to know.

Hon. P. Collier: Assuming that these immigrants are all inexperienced, what are they worth?

The PREMIER: I do not know. But they soon become worth a good deal. When it comes to employment, the Arbitration Court awards fix the rates in most instances.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What did you say in England when you were asked about Australian wages?

The PREMIER: Nothing at all.

Mr. Willcock: You ought to be able to give some idea.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Question time has passed.

The PREMIER: Many of the immigrants are making a good deal of money. Some of them at the end of two years have been able to make a trip to the Old Country on their savings. I do not know, of course, every individual employer in the State; but I believe that the people of Western Australia are disposed to be fair to everybody.

Mr. Willcock: There must be some general rate, somewhere near the mark.

The PREMIER: The hon. member seems to know more about the general rate in farming than about the wharf at Geraldton.

Mr. Willcock: It is easy to say that kind of thing.

The PREMIER: I do not want to be personal to the hon. member, but he gets hold of two or three cases and maintains that they are typical of all men coming to this country. I know how to pay a fair rate for anything I get done, anyhow.

Mr. Willcock: I was not speaking personally at all.

The PREMIER: If these men come out from the city of London to learn their trade as farmers, they cannot be paid as much as experienced farm hands, because hon. members opposite will not pay any more for their bread.

Mr. Willcock: Out of the city of London! That is the class of immigrants we are getting.

The PREMIER: A man who takes a job can very quickly become experienced. The other day I heard of three men who went on a farm and all quickly became specially good, with the result that they received good wages. I was told of that case last night. Those men are at Lake Grace.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are they men who will tell the truth at home?

The PREMIER: I think so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I doubt whether all the truth has been told at home.

The PREMIER: I cannot answer for everything that is said in England. I do not know that people in England are always told the truth, but I know it does happen that they say they were told something which they had not been told. Immigrants under this scheme are to be received and lodged till placed in country employment. They are not

to come into the city to compete with other men. Those who prove most suitable in country employment are to be settled on the group system in the South-West. Of course they must gain experience before they can be settled. Members are familiar with this provision, because it obtains now and has been in operation for years as regards men coming from the Old Country. We are not prepared to spend more than £1,000 on any block. As regards the £6,000,000 loan, we can use this money to provide employment to some extent. This is necessary in our case, because in this country there is not sufficient employment to enable us to bring out such a number of people unless we can provide some work for them on arrival.

Mr. Munsie: Can you tell us to what extent the £6,000,000 can be used for providing employment?

The PREMIER: We are unrestricted.

Mr. Munsie: Are you sure the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth will agree to that?

The PREMIER: It is part of the arrangement.

Mr. Munsie: When we went to him on a deputation, he told us he would not agree to anything of the kind on any consideration.

The PREMIER: On work in the towns, no.

Mr. Munsie: No; in the country.

The PREMIER: Clearing land?

Mr. Munsie: Yes, to provide work for our people. He distinctly said he would not agree to it.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member turns up last January's newspapers he will see provision has been made for that.

Mr. Munsie: But the Prime Minister was here after that, and he would not agree to it then.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep order.

The PREMIER: We could double our wheat production, and that very soon. I consider that we could put another 1,500,000 acres under wheat very quickly. The cost of doing that would probably be £2,250,000. I will give figures showing that we have never found all the money required for the whole of the period, or even a fraction of it. This development means work for all sections of the people. The additional 1,500,000 acres can be cleared soon, and I will presently show how many acres there are to be cleared. The acreage will be cleared and cropped, and the crop will be put on a train and sent to Fremantle, and put on a ship and sent away. That will mean work all round, work for traders and mechanics and for people engaged in every branch of industry throughout the State. If so much work results now from the growing of wheat on 1,500,000 acres, how much more will result from the farming of 3,000,000 acres? If so much work results from the production of 15,000,000 bushels of wheat, how much more will result from the production of 30,000,000 bushels, and how much greater still will be the employment provided by the production of 45,000,000 bushels, which latter figure is

quite possible? We can achieve that production of wheat. Last year the value of our wheat was £3,800,000, the total value of the State's agricultural production being £8,733,000. Then we must increase the stock in our holdings by fencing. We must have fencing material as soon as prices are reasonable. Now, these immigrants can go to the man on the land and be trained in clearing. The farmer can see that they are properly treated and that food is taken to them regularly and that they receive fair value for their work. It is necessary that we should have increased work for people to do, and this will be provided by clearing and fencing operations. Increased production will also make work, and in this way there should be continuity of work. The control of all money advanced for the making of these farms will be in the hands of the trustees of the Agricultural Bank, all of whom are experienced and capable men. They have the organisation and they know the right methods to adopt, and the work they will be called upon to perform will be that of merely continuing on a bigger scale the work of the past.

Mr. Munsie: That is with regard to wheat land.

The PREMIER: All the lands of the State.
Hon. P. Collier: Under the Agricultural Bank Act?

The PREMIER: Yes. For the moment it is done by a charge against the Land Improvement Loan Fund, but that is transferred subsequently to the Agricultural Bank. We cannot make a charge against these farms until the settler is in occupation, and so we have to do it under the Land Improvement Loan Fund, and in the end it goes to the Agricultural Bank. I do not think we can have any better system, and I do not know that there are any more experienced men than the trustees of the Agricultural Bank. Certainly there is no better general manager for an undertaking of this kind than Mr. McLarty.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who are the trustees?

The PREMIER: Mr. Cooke, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. McLarty.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The primary producers have not much faith in them.

The PREMIER: Neither have they much faith in you or me. If they are wrong about us, cannot they be wrong about the trustees?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I can get along very well with them.

The PREMIER: I wish to emphasise that this money will be outside Ministerial control. The settlements of course will be under the group system. The duty of the Lands Department will be to provide the land and survey it into blocks. That is a simple task, but it demands a knowledge of the land and requires keen interest and energy. This is what the Lands Department have always been engaged upon, and they should be entrusted to carry out their share of the work expeditiously.

Mr. Munsie: They are not working too expeditiously just now.

The PREMIER: There are several groups ready now, but it is very difficult to get across the roads to send these people out. One hundred have just gone out to complete the groups already settled.

Mr. Munsie: Have you got that 10,000 acres from the Forests Department?

The PREMIER: I will tell the hon. member about that some other time. The 6,000 farms under the Imperial arrangement will all be in the South-West. We want the wheat lands for our own people. Every acre of the wheat lands we have could be taken up by to-morrow if only the land were surveyed. At the present time we are working at Busselton, Bridgetown, and Albany, and during the coming summer it should be possible to secure 20 blocks per week in each centre. That will give us far more blocks than we shall want. Whilst on this subject I would like to mention that the experiments which have been carried out at Albany are showing splendid results, and it should be possible there to make available a considerable area. That, too, will be a cheap settlement, in fact the cheapest we have ever had. It will be much cheaper because the machinery needed for the small blocks of land will be much less than that required for a larger one, and the stock will cost less. I should say it would be possible to settle people on the land in these parts for just about the cost of implements and horses on a decent sized wheat farm, where the high protective tariff and other charges have to be taken into consideration. With regard to land adjacent to railways, the Government have purchased considerable areas, but if Parliament agrees to pass the Closer Settlement Bill—

Mr. Marshall: What about a tax on the unimproved values?

Mr. Munsie: The Closer Settlement Bill will need to be a bit more drastic than the one which was introduced last session.

The PREMIER: I hope both Houses will pass the Bill this session. There are many estates close to the railway in the South-West. Many members are of the opinion that there is a great deal of good land lying idle in the York district. I can assure members that there is very little land in that district which is not being utilised, except land that is not fit for cultivation. Take the land in the white gum hills between York and Northam. You could not expect people to go there. I do not know where the rich land is. I mention this to show that settlement will be in the South-West and that it will be well away from the wheat lands.

Hon. P. Collier: The settlement will be well away from the large estates.

The PREMIER: There are very few large estates in this country.

Mr. Heron: There are one or two around the Avon Valley which are not being worked.

The PREMIER: I thought there was land available there, but there is not. With regard to the interest on the six millions which is to be advanced, the State will not pay it; it will be the borrowers who will pay it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That all depends. You will have to pay it for five years.

The PREMIER: The public will have the indirect gain. Our railways must be made to pay; all drainage works which will be carried out will have to pay. Someone said that State schools must be provided. Of course they must be provided. Is the settler of no advantage to the State? Of course he is. There will be great all round advantage to the State. Every man working for the State is of advantage to it, in that he contributes to the revenue in one way or another. I have told the House that we are to get six millions of money, that we are to settle 6,000 farmers, and receive 75,000 people, and that we are to pay one-third of the interest for five years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not know how you are going to provide for 6,000 farmers with that money.

The PREMIER: How have we settled 8,000 men at an average of £350 each to date? We must expend money on the rapid development of the wheat belt to make continuous work. The money which we will receive under the Imperial arrangement will be advanced to individual farmers and they will repay earlier than usual where 600 acres are already cleared. They will pay interest, which will be available for use in the first five years. We must make farmers of the 6,000 migrants, costing anything we like, but not more than £1,000. I do not think it will be necessary to add very much to that.

Mr. Munsie: At what rate of interest are we to get the money?

The PREMIER: It all depends upon the cost of money at the moment. I have based the cost on six per cent. interest for the sake of my argument to-night. We will get all the money that we want. If we want more, it will come from the funds of the Agricultural Bank. No one would dream of asking for more than £6,000,000 for the purpose of settling 6,000 people. Neither would one dream of asking people to come here unless we could settle them on the land with advantage.

Mr. Underwood: Could you have got more money, if you had dreamt of it?

The PREMIER: That is a very foolish remark. The arrangement arrived at suits us and will suit the people, too. We must make farmers of the people who come out. I need not say much more about this proposal. I think I have explained it fully, except to say that I hope the Agricultural Bank will invest, say, £5,000,000, if not more. The bank may spend £2,000,000 on clearing, in addition to work done out of ordinary funds. They must do this, so that the men who come to Western Australia will not displace those who are already here; rather will they make work for those who are here. We must find houses for the people who are to come out, for we cannot ask people to migrate unless we are able to house them. To-day we are building houses for workers in the country in the hope that they will be encouraged to stay in the

country districts and not gravitate towards the towns. The funds of the Agricultural Bank must be used to establish the 6,000 men. I have informed hon. members how much the bank has done in the past. To-day there are 8,000 men on the books of the bank, and the outstanding money advanced to those people totals £2,798,000. The men who went into the country districts years ago did their work for themselves to a large extent and were therefore able to do it at a less cost than we have to face to-day. Our own men on the wheat lands can do the necessary work at a less cost than is represented by the actual value of the work. For that reason, the advances to those people have been low. Regarding the soldier settlement scheme, we have advanced £4,611,000 to 4,600 soldiers. Those men, however, have been settled under a totally different scheme. They are furnished with much more than is the average civilian settler. Their farms are properly equipped straight away, including stock and housing. When they go on their farms, the properties are in perfect going-order. Some hon. member raised a query regarding the operations of the Industries Assistance Board. The amount owing to the board is now £1,413,000.

The Minister for Agriculture: That does not include some of the latest advances.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And they gave so much per bushel for their wheat.

The PREMIER: I have spoken regarding the development of land adjacent to railways, and I am sure I will hear more about that aspect before the Address-in-reply debate is concluded. I think there is additional land to be secured adjacent to railways. There are some railways necessary for the opening up of the South-West. The line from Pemberton to Denmark will open up some splendid land. That area has a magnificent climate; it is well watered, and is country as good as any man can desire to obtain. It will grow anything except, perhaps, cereals. We will have to face the building of that line, and I hope we will find it possible to build a line from Bridgetown to Mt. Barker. In both instances, these railways will be partly timber lines, and they should earn a considerable revenue when timber becomes once more valuable as an exportable commodity. There is no need to discuss the South-West further, nor to indicate at greater length what can be done there. Before I leave that aspect, however, I want to mention that we shall probably get a good many men who will come out with money. Many applied before I left London, and I certainly hope that these people will come out.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You must have the land ready for them or they will go away.

The Minister for Agriculture: We have repurchased properties.

The PREMIER: The total area of land alienated in Western Australia is 9,426,000 acres. That represents freehold country. Some 8,937,000 acres of first class land are held under conditional purchase conditions,

while 6,457,000 acres are held under grazing leases. The freehold and conditional purchase areas total over 18,000,000 acres, though, of course, not all of that land is first class. We have only cleared 4,681,000 acres, and 2,912,000 acres have been partially cleared. Surely there must be at least 5,000,000 acres of first class land yet to be cleared. I simply quote these figures because they apply only to land sold, and they have no connection whatever with the question of land to be sold. During the past five years the importation of foodstuffs from the Eastern States, excluding sugar, has averaged £1,845,000. Last year we imported foodstuffs to the value of £2,080,000. Practically every item included in the list could have been produced in Western Australia.

Mr. Teesdale: More shame to the State!

The PREMIER: That is so, but there are the facts. It will be seen that 6,000 people would be well off if they could, within the first few years, produce the foodstuffs to the value of the importations from the Eastern States alone. If they succeeded in doing that, they would not even require to look further for a market.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is only one chance in the world.

The PREMIER: What is that?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Start opposition works to compete against the manufactories in the Eastern States.

The Minister for Agriculture: The trouble is that we cannot get people to support local industries.

The PREMIER: That is so. There are many people here who persist in keeping the imported stuff on the market and continue to encourage that state of affairs.

The Minister for Agriculture: The imported lines are no better than our own.

The PREMIER: Our potato growers were confronted with difficulties despite the fact that bad potatoes were sent from the East to Western Australia. Another direction in which great opportunities are available for Western Australian producers lies in the development of the vine-growing industry. In 1921 Britain imported raisins and currants aggregating 169,000 tons, which represents five times the total production of Australia. Australian currants are most fashionable in London at present. We know that Great Britain is the only European power capable of drawing from her Dominions all her requirements in wines, brandy, dried fruits, and fresh grapes. In fact, Great Britain could take all the food supplies that could be produced in Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is, if they get the merchants to agree to it. The merchants want the lines that will bring them the biggest profits.

The PREMIER: The area of country proved to be suitable for the grape vine, both as regards soil and climate, is larger in Australia than it is in France or elsewhere. Every acre of wine grapes in Western Australia maintains one head of the

population. It is interesting to note that in 1920 there were in South Australia 32,784 acres under vines; in Victoria, there were 27,441 acres; in New South Wales, there were 8,923 acres; in Western Australia, there were 2,975 acres—it is estimated that there were 4,000 acres under vines in 1921—and in Queensland, there were 1,203 acres, making a total for the Commonwealth of 73,326 acres under vines. For the same year, South Australia produced 3,085,939 gallons of wine from her vineyards; Victoria produced 1,634,680 gallons; New South Wales, 777,893 gallons; Western Australia, 162,397 gallons, and Queensland, 48,495 gallons, or a total for the Commonwealth of 7,649,404 gallons.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Just enough to make a man drunk.

The PREMIER: France has 4,000,000 acres under vines and produces from that area wines valued at £130,000,000, or £32 10s. worth per acre. The consumption of liquor per head of the population in France works out at 32 gallons. As against that, it will interest the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) and the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) to know that the quantity of wine consumed in Australia is only one gallon per head.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Someone must drink my share.

Mr. Munsie: And mine too.

The PREMIER: We imagine that we can influence the world's production, but if we put in 100,000 acres of vines, what influence do hon. members think that would have on the production of France! If, however, Britain would encourage the Dominions to produce all it requires, the position would be different. I think it is just about time Britain did so, because all the other nations are putting up their duties against her. I do not say that Britain should do so and put up the cost of living as against the working people in England, but I consider she could take from us what she requires at reasonable prices. It is a very clean, pleasant and profitable occupation to which I invite attention. Vine growing takes but a little while to learn and I propose that we shall increase our vine production by putting in straight away 10,000 acres of vines. I would like to see the area under vines much greater than that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Let us grow raisins and currants, and not wine.

The PREMIER: I agree with that, but the vines must be grown.

Mr. Angelo: Why not let them make ginger beer?

The PREMIER: It is estimated that last year vine production gave employment to 3,000 people, and if we increase our acreage to the extent I have indicated, it will mean more employment still. I believe that we could possibly put as many acres under vines as they have in France. A vineyard is a very cheaply-made holding, and produces a good return.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: Before tea I was telling the House the value of vine growing. I now want to say a word or two about our apples, which, in my opinion, are the best in the world. Last year we had 10,400 acres under crop, from which we exported 242,000 cases. In 1920 Tasmania had 25,000 acres, and exported 525,000 cases. I hope we shall be able to double our area under apples, because I am anxious that ships should be fully loaded at our ports for the old land, instead of our being compelled to take just what space the Eastern States leave us. Stone fruits for drying can be grown without irrigation schemes, and men can make a very profitable living from those fruits. Apricots in particular do well on picked areas. The Lands Department have dealt with 1,921,616 acres of agricultural lands during the year, as against 1,726,515 acres in 1920-21. In the Esperance district 275,000 acres have been selected, of which 122,000 acres have been surveyed and are available. This land must be developed rapidly if the Esperance Northwards railway is to have anything to do. The land is now ready for rolling and clearing, and I hope this work will proceed at a rapid pace.

Hon. T. Walker: Are you going to put any of the new settlers there?

The PREMIER: We have a number of our own people for our own wheat lands, and already 275 settlers are down there or going there. Mr. Hewby is in charge of the work, and will see that it is done quickly and economically. Between Bodallin and Southern Cross we are surveying 130,000 acres of forest land. The local people are most anxious to take it up, and pressure is being brought to bear upon the trustees of the Agricultural Bank. It is further east than ever before, but the prospects of successful wheat growing are very good indeed. At Westonia 95 blocks, aggregating 100,000 acres, have been nearly all selected, and a further 60,000 acres are to be made available. There is adjacent to the line a considerable area of land which will grow crops and carry stock. The men who are asking for it know exactly what it will do. Only yesterday two settlers who have been there for 15 years explained to me what their experience has been. As a matter of fact, Southern Cross is one of the very few districts in the State which are never short of butter. We are classifying 900,000 acres between Bencubbin and Bullfinch, 300,000 acres on the South coast, in the vicinity of Ravensthorpe, and 300,000 in the Esperance district to connect existing classifications. Recent classifications have been made of 200,000 acres between Augusta and the Donnelly River and between the Blackwood River and the coast, a good deal of which, with drainage, is suitable for subdivision. Recently 175,000 acres have been classified between the Hay and the Denmark rivers. Last year we classified in all 109 million acres. We are beginning to know more about the land than ever before. In the past hon. members seldom bothered to

travel, and so very often they got an altogether wrong impression of the country. The Agricultural Bank has had the busiest year since 1914. The authorisations are increasing, mainly for development work. Last week we authorised £29,000 worth of work, of which £25,000 was for development. During the last two weeks advances for clearing alone have totalled £38,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How far from the railway line may the improvements be for which advances are made?

The PREMIER: Up to 12½ miles. There is an enormous area of land yet to be cleared, and we are endeavouring to bring it into use. I shall be glad if the Bank continues its authorisations at this rate, because it will mean speedy production. We have also decentralised in the Agricultural Bank. With about 16,000 accounts in one office, it was impossible to have the work done satisfactorily, or to give to clients the attention which is really necessary, apart altogether from the collection of interest and sinking fund on the loans. It is work that must be closely watched. It cannot be done with the staff we previously had, and so we have set up branches of the bank. This ought to be of great convenience, and should save the delays and bother entailed by correspondence. Generally it will help us in the administration. The collection of interest on eight millions and the repayments under the various Acts, mean work that ought to be closely watched.

Mr. Johnston: It is a great improvement in every way.

The PREMIER: I wonder if it would be better still if we handed it over to Narrogin?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Have you opened a branch at Narrogin?

The PREMIER: There are branches at Northam, Narrogin, Bunbury, Geraldton, Katanning, Bruce Rock, and Kununoppin. We have produced wheat as far out as Southern Cross. A few years ago Meckering was the eastern limit. Of course wheat grows much more rapidly now than it did in those days; still it shows how long we were in accepting the truth about our wheat lands. On soldier settlement we have advanced £4,600,000, and the Agricultural Bank has approved £4,479,000. In all, 4,552 A.I.F. men have been settled, 51 British ex-service men and eight munition workers. This is all under the soldier settlement scheme. The average expenditure is £1,100, which compares more than favourably with the other States. In most cases the men have bigger and better holdings than the men in the Eastern States. Now I come to group settlement. I do not want to weary the House with an account of this, because members know all about it. There are 26 groups. Not all the men are out, but this week we expect to have the 520 men on their blocks. The scheme is now past the experimental stage. We can and must develop under this system. Near Denmark we shall be able to settle a lot of men at a compara-

tively low cost. Up till now, at heavy cost we have been settling people on the South-West lands, the best the State possesses. In connection with this scheme, townships have to be built, and there is necessarily a great deal of heavy work. Men, women and children on the group settlements number 1,100, but there are some more families to go out. We shall double the number of farmers in that district in a very short time. I wish to say a word about the North-West. When in London, I saw the head of the Imperial Cotton Growers' Association, and he said it was most difficult to get an expert who would be of any use. I agreed with him that only the best man was good enough to send out here. They will send out such a man as soon as they can get him. I believe we can grow cotton in the North, and that we can get white men to tend it.

Mr. Teesdale: We can grow it in the South, too.

The PREMIER: The north of the State is a great country. There is no question about its ability to grow cotton, but we want to be very certain that we are doing the thing in the right way. The North is capable of growing almost anything. Well watered, it is an ideal place for sheep and stock. A great deal can be done there. Whether we can do it with British people, I am not prepared to say. The Britisher is an intelligent, capable man, and can adapt himself to the work he is called upon to do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It does not take 12 months to learn to milk a cow.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has been 30 years in the country and cannot milk a cow yet. In a very short time immigrants have made good bushmen, good rough riders, good workmen, and very useful men all round.

Hon. P. Collier: So long as they are up to standard.

The PREMIER: The worst immigrant I have seen was one of the biggest in stature.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The big ones are not always the best.

The PREMIER: That is so. These people are carefully selected, but it is possible to make some mistakes. There are men who ought never to come to Western Australia, not because they are physically unfit, but because they are not desirable people. On the whole, I think we are getting a very good class. We can do no better. We all believe that Australia must be kept white, and to keep it white we must encourage immigration. We are not going to bring out men to walk the streets and to put our own men out of their jobs but, with this saving clause, everyone who is true to the principle of a white Australia must encourage immigration, and must do it actively.

Mr. Willcock: There is no active opposition.

The PREMIER: But I want to see immigration actively encouraged. We cannot hope to hold this country unless we people it, and it is our duty to people it as quickly as we can. We are a long way off from Europe, but we would be in danger if England went

to war. We must not shut our eyes to the necessity for being prepared to defend ourselves if the occasion should arise. I am heartily in favour of a white Australia and nothing else, but I am not fool enough to believe that we can hold this country unless we occupy it and work it. We cannot keep it safe unless we bring people out to occupy it. I think I have made clear the matters relating to the sinking fund. I think I have given full information regarding the six millions of money and the opportunities for settlement on the land. The opportunities are great. No man can tell what opportunities are ahead of this State. Every day and all day long, fresh opportunities are revealing themselves to us. Things we never dreamt of doing, land we never dreamt of settling, things we never dreamt of growing, we find can be dealt with. The opportunity is here. We realise now that it is so, and it is our duty to strive to develop these opportunities into big industries as soon as possible. We have pottered around long enough. Knowing that we can do these things, why not do them now? There are not enough people to work for this country. If we had more people to work, there would be more work to do. There is not much trouble for the man on the land. The work of production goes on week in and week out, year in and year out. Other industries have an unfortunate habit of stopping and throwing large numbers of men out of work. The timber industry and the mining industry have been responsible for throwing hundreds of men out of work. With agriculture, however, there is always work to do. Every morning a farmer gets up with a full day's work ahead of him.

Hon. P. Collier: And well into the night too, if he likes.

The PREMIER: So it is with the men employed on the land. Seldom anything happens to interrupt their employment. The work goes on year in and year out, and it is about the best class of work that a man can do. We hear a good deal about the wages paid by farmers to their employees. I venture to say a farm hand on a fairly developed place is better off than any other worker in the community. He gets his fruit and eggs and milk and butter when those commodities are produced on the farm and, if a married man, he can grow his own vegetables. For him there is no hunger; he has no rates and taxes to pay. He has nothing to pay for except such food as he does not grow on the farm. What other man is in that position? He cannot be compared with a man who has to live on the goldfields and buy all the milk and butter and eggs and vegetables he requires and pay rates and taxes. The man on the land also gets cheap meat, and on the whole he gets a better wage than any other worker.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Your farming friends say he does not get all those things.

The PREMIER: I know a great many who do, and I know that the workers at Fremantle do not get these things. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the appoint-

ment of a committee to investigate matters connected with the Industries Assistance Board. This inquiry has nothing to do with the board's advances. Outside creditors have waited for many years for money which was owing by farmers before the I.A.B. started, and they want to know the position of debtors. They want a committee to investigate and determine the present value of the assets of these debtors. We only value the clearing, the improvements, and the crop. We do not value the land. They want to know this, and I think they are entitled to know it. If a debtor is in a position to pay, he should pay, but there is a moratorium which protects the men under the I.A.B. It is not fair that this moratorium should continue to operate year after year if these men can pay and will not pay. The proposed investigation will determine this question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is not there that the opposition arises; it is the grant by the I.A.B. to the farmer.

The PREMIER: There is no other committee.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, there is.

The PREMIER: I thought this was the committee to which reference was made.

Mr. Willecock: No, a local board to recommend advances or otherwise.

The PREMIER: I think creditors are entitled to know just how their debtors stand.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I agree with you on that.

The PREMIER: That is what I understood. I am sorry if I misunderstood the position. The Leader of the Opposition touched on day labour.

Hon. P. Collier: Only with the object of congratulating the Government on having done away with it.

The PREMIER: I think big works should be carried out by contract if possible. I think the men are more satisfied under a contractor than under the Government. In any case, it is much cheaper to carry out work by contract than by our method.

Mr. Simons: That is quite right.

Hon. P. Collier: I think you took my remarks in the wrong way.

The PREMIER: The Leader of the Opposition also referred to State trading concerns. I say with all my heart that I wish we had not a single State trading concern. These concerns are the bane of my existence. All the time we have trouble with them. I do not know whether the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) believes no implements would be made if it were not for the works at Rocky Bay.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Every year £350,000 worth of implements is imported.

The PREMIER: I know that. Ministers should not have to control State trading concerns. I do not think the employees get a penny more from the Government than they would get from private employers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But you keep the money in Western Australia instead of letting it go to the Eastern States.

The PREMIER: The Government get no taxes from these concerns, and they of course are operating against people who do pay taxes. The sawmills are a good paying proposition, fortunately, but I wish I could see the last of the State trading concerns. The Leader of the Opposition said something about the Como trams.

Hon. P. Collier: I made only a passing reference.

The PREMIER: The Como trams were laid down—

Hon. P. Collier: They were galloped down.

The PREMIER: They were decided upon in extraordinary circumstances. It is true I made a promise in this House that the Como tramway would not be built. During my absence in England, the Acting Premier found himself faced with a serious unemployed difficulty, and one means of overcoming the trouble occasioned by the dismissal of men from our great industries was the putting in hand of this work. He determined that the tramway should be constructed, knowing nothing of the promise which had been given to Parliament; but even had he known of the promise, the circumstances were so exceptional that he would have felt justified in putting this work in hand.

Mr. Clydesdale: Quite right.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It might have been right if the line had been carried another one and a half miles.

The PREMIER: This tramway was therefore decided upon, and the circumstances attending that decision are known full well to every member. The work is employing a large number of men who were in straitened circumstances at the time. I hope this new tramway will pay. I do not see why it should not. However, the House is entitled to say to me, "You promised that this work would not be carried out."

Mr. Pickering: It is too late for that now.

The PREMIER: I regret exceedingly that the word I gave was not carried out. In all the circumstances, however, the Government were justified in doing what has been done. I am not one of those who think that we should have the tramway system of Perth and should not serve Perth. I have said openly and more than once that if we own this system, we must provide the necessary conveniences. No one else can lay down a line of tramway anywhere in the city of Perth, as we have the system, and we must provide reasonable facilities for the people resident in the city.

Mr. Carter: Every metropolitan member agrees with you.

The PREMIER: I know.

Mr. Clydesdale: We shall have to make other extensions.

Hon. P. Collier: It meets with unanimous approval.

The PREMIER: There are some people who say money should not be spent in Perth, but that it should all be spent in the country. In one week we authorised more money to

be loaned to farmers than the tramways cost altogether. We propose to spend six millions on the land, a great deal of it in the settled districts.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You cannot be expected to give it all to them.

The PREMIER: It is known that we spend in the country almost all the money we borrow. Possibly they feel that the money that is spent in wages and material on work performed in the metropolitan area is taking so much from them. I agree we ought not to spend money in Perth if it can be avoided.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The trams have never added to the deficit.

Mr. Clydesdale: They are a payable proposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: But there are some things which must be done in the metropolitan area. We must have drainage, for instance. So long as the Government have the responsibility of doing the work, of putting in drainage, sewerage, water supply, trams, etc., the general taxpayer is called upon to contribute towards the cost of these works. Everything that belongs to the metropolitan area should be controlled by the people of the metropolitan area. I cannot conceive that it would not be possible for the people of Perth to select men to manage these concerns as well as they can be managed by Government departments. I think they should do so. It is no more our responsibility to provide water supplies and sewerage for Perth than it is to make the streets of Perth. If I were a resident of Perth I should want to have these things in my own hands. I hope we shall soon be able to induce them to take these things over as is done in other cities of the Commonwealth. I knew nothing of this question until I returned, but now I know all the circumstances surrounding it. I agree that the acting Premier had nothing else to do but to put some of the unemployed in the metropolitan area at work there. The season was bad and he did not know where to turn to employ those people. There is more work now in the country than we can find men to do it. The rains have come and the situation there has entirely altered. I admit that a promise was given to Parliament and that it is a serious matter to break such a promise.

Mr. Carter: You did not break it.

The PREMIER: The circumstance, however, justified the action of the Government. I do not think I need say anything more about the trams.

Mr. Underwood: You can leave that to others.

The PREMIER: Oh yes. No doubt we shall hear something about Pilbara from the hon. member.

Mr. Underwood: You may hear from me about the constitutional aspect.

The PREMIER: I do not know any member who has less respect for the Constitution than the hon. member.

Hon. T. Walker: Keep it up.

Mr. Underwood: You have gone behind Parliament. Face that!

The PREMIER: The hon. member had to face Parliament at one time.

Mr. Underwood: You have gone behind Parliament.

The PREMIER: I am not behind Parliament now; I am before it.

Mr. Underwood: You are only bluffing.

The PREMIER: Not at all. I am giving the House the facts as I know them. I regret that circumstances necessitated the building of the trams; that is all I can say about it. Employment is now more plentiful. There are some men who will not go to the country. It is unfortunate that the men who were out of work were added to by those who gave up their jobs in the country to come to the city. There are always men who will take advantage of that sort of thing. I know of three men in one district who threw up their work to come to Perth. During the recess we have been engaged in building workers' homes in the country, under the amending Act passed last session. Some have been built at Bruce Rock, Kununoppin, Dalwallinu, and other places. They are both cheap and comfortable and have cost about £250 each.

Mr. Latham: They form the nucleus of good homes.

The PREMIER: There is a shortage of houses at present. When more people come here we shall want more homes, but the housing that is now going on in the farming localities should relieve the situation. Thousands of people have transferred from the goldfields to this part of the State, and find it hard to get homes. We are building suitable houses now for the country districts.

Mr. Sampson: It is very difficult to get tradesmen; bricklayers are very scarce now.

The PREMIER: Yes. I am sure this is the right policy. It should lead to the transfer of people from the city to the country. They will know that they can live comfortably there, in places where they can get work and live fairly cheaply. We have numerous applications for houses which can be had at a cheap rate, and will not represent a big load upon the income of the wage-earner. It will thus cost a man far less to have a home in the country than in Perth. I hope we shall soon be able to build such homes at Trayning and other centres.

Mr. Angelo: Do not forget the north.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. Angelo: You are a long time starting there.

Mr. Underwood: We should go further north than Carnarvon.

The PREMIER: I had intended replying to some remarks made in another place by my friend Mr. Lovekin; I say "my friend" advisedly because he is my friend in everything except this speech. After all he is only suggesting what we are doing already, although he is suggesting it in the wrong way. I hope the public will peruse the figures I have given to the House, and will read into

them the facts as they are. Mr. Lovekin's speech starts off by saying that by the expenditure of eight millions we have got where we now are in the matter of production.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that from a speech delivered in another place this session?

The PREMIER: I am getting this from the "Daily News."

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it a report of a speech delivered in Parliament this session?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier cannot quote from a speech made this session. He can take parts of the speech but may not read it.

The PREMIER: I do not intend to read it; I have already done so. I am not going to tell the House what is contained in the speech, because if I did members would know what was in it. I do, however, want to correct one or two statements that appeared in it. He says that what has been done has cost eight millions and that the money to double that work has been taken from the six millions. I would point out that is not so; a great deal of the preliminary work has already been accomplished. Mr. Lovekin said the scheme aimed at doing 20 million pounds worth of work for six millions. I say it will cost only six millions. It will cost to establish schools and hospitals just what it costs now per head of the population. He further said the British Government were going to give 45 millions to the Dominions in 15 years. That will not go very far. Mr. Lovekin was one of the men who was insistent that I should go to London. He has even suggested that I should go back there and negotiate afresh in order to get better terms. It is a pleasant place to be in and I think the suggestion is a good one.

Mr. Clydesdale: You had better take the Forests Commission with you.

The PREMIER: Mr. Lovekin agrees that the work should be done. I would point out that in the past we were only too glad to pay the fares of immigrants to come out here and to bear all the other charges in connection with them. Under the present scheme we do not pay any fares. Were we ever in a better position. Everyone in the State was willing to foot the whole of the bill for bringing immigrants here, and no one suggested we should do otherwise. We did foot the bill; we borrowed the money and settled the people in that way. Now we borrow the money, and someone else pays £200,000 a year towards the interest for five years. The scheme will not cost the taxpayers a penny, and they will get all the advantages of it. It will not cost one farthing so far as the advances are concerned.

Mr. Underwood: Who will pay the money back?

The PREMIER: The men who borrow it—the farmers.

Mr. Underwood: Suppose they prove failures? Who will pay them?

The PREMIER: The money will be repaid by the men who borrow it. It must be a good thing to develop every acre of good

land we have if we can get the people and someone else to help with the money. No one would hesitate for a moment to accept such a proposition. If it were possible to develop the North-West, should we hesitate to start doing it to-morrow under a system of this kind? It will not cost the country one farthing, for the cost will be borne by other people. Can we get anything better than that, and should we expect it? We do not know what may happen in the Old Country during the next year or two. Industries may be re-established there and thousands of people required to work them. At present there are two millions of people out of work there, but if the industries are not re-established Britain will be only too anxious to get some of her people away.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The British Minister said in the House of Commons that these people were unemployable, and that he was glad to get them away.

The PREMIER: I heard the Minister speak, and he said nothing of the kind. The man who would say that he wanted to send unemployable people to this or any other country would be worse than foolish.

Hon. P. Collier: The British Minister said that these people were becoming increasingly unemployable.

The PREMIER: Unemployment has an effect of that kind on practically every man. However, these men have 250,000 small blocks on which they grow vegetables, blocks scattered all about the country. The member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) told me that he saw hundreds of them. It does nobody good to be out of work, but certainly these men are employable, and certainly they are good men. At any rate, where are we to draw immigrants from if not from the land from which we ourselves came? Of course the people from the Mediterranean countries might come here.

Mr. Teesdale: But the Mediterranean countries would not lend us six millions.

The PREMIER: I believe the course we are adopting to be the right one. I know the House is in favour of a white Australia. I have not anything more to say to-night. I have said everything that I thought I ought to say to hon. members, and I hope I have told them it quite plainly and fairly, and in a way that is understood. We look out upon things as big as we like to make them. If we are true to ourselves, we can have big development and progress, multiply our flocks and herds, and double our production all along the line. My trust is that most of us may recognise that that is the only policy which can make this country what it ought to be.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [8.18]: First of all I wish to congratulate the Premier on his safe return from the mission he undertook to the Old Country. We were grieved to receive cables stating that while there he was not as well as we would have liked him to be. I wish also to pay a tribute to Sir Francis Newdegate, in whom I know Western Aus-

tralia has a champion. As our present Governor comes from the agricultural districts of England, his opinion of Western Australia, formed as the result of travels through a large portion of this State, would carry great weight. It is a very good thing that we had at Home such good exhibits from Western Australia as our Premier, Mr. Miles, and the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson). Those three gentlemen would maintain the reputation of Western Australia as a land of good products. The member for Kataning (Mr. A. Thomson), too, would do good work for Western Australia in Scotland. If we could get a large percentage of Scottish and English elements in this State, we would be all the better for their inclusion in our ranks. We have heard from the Premier tonight the conditions—they have previously been published in the Press—under which this six millions is to be made available to the people of Western Australia. In this connection I throw my mind back to the 4th of January this year, when we were considering the Loan Estimates, which contained an item of £6,000 for agricultural immigration. The Chairman of Committees, at any rate, will recollect my then stating that this amount of money was ridiculously small in view of the development needed in Western Australia; and I suggested at the same time that someone should go Home to place before the people of the Old Country the prospects offering in Western Australia. Of course, if anyone went Home, it should be the Premier. I thought the time opportune because Earl Balfour was then at Washington, and if he was successful in inducing the various nations to agree to cessation of armaments and particularly the reduction of naval forces, the value of one modern capital ship would help Western Australia in a large measure to people its empty spaces, and so to develop this, the most vulnerable part of the British Empire. My opinion was that the Premier should go Home for the purpose of getting a per capita grant for men to be migrated to the Dominions, and especially to this State. That would be a means of relieving the unemployed trouble in Britain, where the Imperial Government were then spending at the rate of £1,000,000 per week in unemployment relief. Thus not only would Britain have a part of her unemployment burden lifted off her shoulders, but we would have been enabled to people this area of ours, and so to strengthen the position of the British people as our bondholders. Therefore it would be good business all round. The value of a modern capital ship is about ten millions sterling. It would be a splendid piece of diplomacy to get a large number of British people settled in Australia, and especially throughout the North of this continent. That would mean a great deal for British commercial policy. If the Dominions are going to be a source of strength to the British Empire, every one of them must develop, and trade must grow between the Dominions and

the British Isles. I am not altogether in accord with what is going on at present in the matter of land settlement. My opinion is that we are granting to these immigrants areas of land which are too large. I consider that we could place double the number of immigrants on the same areas, or thereabouts. The proper course would be for the Minister controlling land settlement to give his executive officers a formula on which they should proceed as nearly as possible in settling the areas. For example, there should be a formula for the South-West, where the main proportion of the settlement now proposed is likely to take place. From the Forestry Royal Commission we learn that the Lands and the Forests Departments are not working in that accord and co-ordination which we should like to see. The Minister might issue a formula to the effect that if an area carried so many loads of marketable timber to the acre, it should be reserved for timber purposes, but that if the quantity of timber was below a certain loadage per acre, the area should be used for agricultural or other settlement. In order to achieve this we must have the work done by departmental officers who know exactly, and have for years known, the particular qualities of soils in the various districts, and what those soils are capable of producing; whether, for instance, the land is suitable for intense culture, or dairying. Blocks should be of fixed acreage, which could be varied according to quality of soil. If I were instructing the officers, I should be inclined to direct them to allow 25 acres for intense culture, as sufficient to maintain a family. For dairying purposes I consider that the area should be 100 acres. In districts west of the rabbit-proof fence, beyond Burracoppin, where there is good forest country, the land should not be alienated to settlers in areas of more than 500 or 600 acres, according to value. The configuration of the country should be so observed in the course of subdivision that the blocks would be of the greatest utility possible having regard to the capital expenditure we are about to incur. There would be the roads and the railways and the bridges and the schools. For closer settlement purposes all this capital outlay should be concentrated as much as possible. Generally, the formula should provide for the land to be alienated in such areas as good men would be able to improve fully in the course of ten years. If the scheme is going to be successful, we must get the very last farthing of value in return for the capital expenditure of the Government. We must also endeavour to enable the man placed on the soil to get the maximum value in return for his energy. I throw my mind back to the earlier settlement on our wheat belt. In the district which perhaps I know best, the lands in the vicinity of the railway were cut up into homestead farms of 160 acres. Nearly all those blocks which were in the vicinity of the railway were taken up as homestead farms, and the man who worked on 160 acres for a few years did not lose the value of any

of his energy. Those blocks, when developed, were sold at prices representing considerably more than their capital cost and the energy expended on them in the way of improvements. For other farms in that district, farther away from the railway, we were not able to get the value of the improvements created on them until the repatriation scheme came along. We could not sell such blocks unless they were specially well situated with regard to railway facilities. For properties situated a few miles back we could never obtain the cost of the improvements. I say that is a wrong position.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You put those properties on the soldiers.

Mr. HARRISON: No. The soldiers were placed on a good wicket, purchasing on a walk-in walk-out basis.

Mr. Carter: Always?

Mr. HARRISON: I merely say that we could not get the value of our improvements until this took place. Now, this is how I view the position: If under this scheme we are going to get value for the capital expenditure of the State and the energy of the man, we must get the very best out of every farm, and we must secure the co-operation and co-ordination of all the chief men in our service who are connected with the scheme. Success will depend very largely on how the work is plotted out and on how it is carried into effect by those particular officers. I am satisfied that we have in our public service men who will do their very best if only they are guided in the direction I suggest. Is it not much better for the settlers themselves to have their energies and their values concentrated, rather than that they should have large areas on which they could not do as effective work as on smaller areas? We are bound to have a certain percentage of immigrants who will not be suited for the life in our agricultural districts. I want to make sure that those men who do not follow up agriculture successfully, shall get a fair return for their energy before they relinquish their properties. I want to see that there will be value created in the interests of their neighbours. Unless we take precautions, it will mean that, in ten years or so, the children of those who are successful will not be able to acquire land. Those who are at present occupying land in our wheat areas, as well as in other agricultural centres, will be faced with this problem. After all, we have only a limited area within a prescribed rainfall. Why should we not conserve that area and make the best possible use of it? The fact is that in the South-Western areas, where it is intended to spend the larger portion of the money available for the settlement of overseas immigrants, the capital outlay involved in providing the required facilities will be more costly than has been the experience in any other part of the State. Roads, railways, bridges, culverts, and formations generally, will cost more, and it will be to the advantage of everyone concerned that settlers should not be given too much land. Hon. members will under-

stand what I am driving at regarding the large areas of land which have been given to settlers. I want to see the State get the highest security for the funds made available to the settlers, who, in turn, will get greater opportunities to realise an adequate value for the energy they expend in the development of their holdings. By safeguarding that position, we will assure a greater carrying capacity for the utilities provided and increase production by means of which the farmers will be assisted to pay for those utilities. It is imperative that holdings should be cut according to the configuration of the country. In the South-West there are gullies, swamp land and watercourses. To survey such land according to the points of the compass is not the best way to deal with it.

Mr. Mann: They are not doing that.

Mr. HARRISON: As far as possible each settler should have water or swamp land on his block.

Mr. Mann: That is the system that is being followed.

Mr. HARRISON: It may be; I hope it is. Each farmer should have some swamp land where available. After making a couple of visits to Pemberton, I am satisfied that it would have been in the interests of the State and the settlers as well, if the areas of the blocks there had been smaller, and if three or four men had been settled on areas where one man has been placed. The overhead costs, owing to the methods adopted in clearing the land by using tractor power to tear down the trees, will be very heavy. Furthermore, the methods adopted in clearing have brought to the surface subsoils from too great a depth. The effect of this will be that when trees are planted, the growth will not be uniform. Some trees will grow well and thrive but others will be stunted. It would have been better had some other system been adopted which would have kept the soil sweeter. It would have been better if this work had not been hurried so much, and it would have resulted in reducing overhead costs. It would have been better had the men been engaged in clearing smaller areas. I do not think more than from three to five acres at most should have been cleared.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are only clearing five acres on each block.

Mr. HARRISON: Very good; I would reduce it. It would be better to do that and sweeten the land. I am not a south-western farmer but from what I have seen of the development of those areas during the earlier stages, settlers there should have some protection regarding the trees supplied to them on order. This protection should be in the direction of compelling the suppliers to furnish trees true to name in accordance with the orders received. It takes two or three years before a grower really knows the type of fruit his trees will carry, and if the trees are not true to type the loss involved is too much for the grower to shoulder. A pure seeds Bill should be introduced this session so as to protect the growers. It

should prevent the possibility of nurserymen sending out old stocks, of which they desire to be rid, substituting them for trees ordered by the producer. A pure seeds Bill, too, would be of immense advantage to those engaged in intense culture in the production of vegetables and so on. Perhaps it would be difficult to administer such a measure but, at any rate, it would be a deterrent against the practice I have indicated. In any case, I do not think we will get anything like value for the capital expenditure involved in the schemes I have dealt with.

Mr. Underwood: You will not get anything like what you want.

Mr. HARRISON: The difficulties confronting settlers on the land are apparent when we consider the Federal tariff. For general purposes, we may put down the tariff at a 30 per cent. basis. A perusal of the tariff will show where we really stand, but for the life of me I cannot understand why people do not think as I do on this question. We borrow money to develop the country and then, artificially, through legislation or by means of a Customs tariff, greatly curtail the purchasing power of that capital. The value of agricultural machinery imported into Western Australia for the year ended 30th June last, was £271,267. Of that amount, overseas importations were represented by £36,472, while overseas machinery brought in via the Eastern States was valued at £10,103. If we had the same tariff imposed upon agricultural machinery manufactured in the Eastern States, the importations would have represented £90,422 last year. There is scarcely anything that the settler wears, uses or eats, apart from those articles grown within the State, that does not bear tariff charges or their equivalent up to about 30 per cent. When that is applied throughout the State, the cost of living is increased. This difficulty in regard to the cost of living has been the means of raising wages through the Arbitration Courts. But the fact remains that though the men have received increased wages, that increase has not given them any higher purchasing power than was possessed before they secured the increase. It meant that where such increases were made at the expense of manufacturers, commercial interests, or distributors, those extra charges were added to the cost of articles and commodities on top of which was placed a percentage for profit. That percentage was generally a fair amount. The effect of this was that those engaged in business simply secured greater profits on similar turnovers, which meant that wealth came to them at a more rapid rate. The profit involved is about four times as much as bank overdrafts would be at present banking rates. The result of all this is that instead of being better off, people are actually in a worse position. If a settler becomes sick, it costs more to maintain his family than it did under earlier conditions. If a man is out of work, it costs more for him to live; when he is old, it costs him three times as much to secure a competence than it did many years ago. I cannot understand

why people do not realise the position. Take it from the other point of view: suppose we were all freetraders. Western Australia would get no advantage from freetrade. We get no benefit respecting manufactured articles, such as jams and so on, because we are living in one Commonwealth, and the competition is within the Commonwealth. We cannot get protection against the competition of the established secondary industries of the Eastern States, and it simply means that we are up against eastern manufacturers all the time. Whichever way we look at the position, we suffer from the disabilities of both freetrade and protection and enjoy the benefits of neither.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know that that affects this particular question.

Mr. HARRISON: It has a good deal to do with land settlement.

Hon. P. Collier: Why not bring in a Bill to reduce the tariff?

Mr. HARRISON: If the Leader of the Opposition and his party would assist us in that direction it would be of advantage.

Mr. SPEAKER: This Parliament has no power to deal with the tariff. If the hon. member is illustrating some point, I will allow him to proceed.

Mr. HARRISON: The tariff and its consequences, including the profits required by those engaged in commerce, will reduce the purchasing power of the money to be made available by easily 50 per cent. at the outset. We have something in Western Australia in the shape of assets of which the outside world knows nothing. I have been through various countries, but I have never had a better orange anywhere than I have had in Western Australia. I have not seen finer grapes than I have seen in this State, nor have I seen better apples than we grow here. Also, on our swamp lands we grow as fine a vegetable as can be produced anywhere. I am sorry I have not seen the Kendenup product, but if, as I am told, through dehydration, they can get the quality stated, there is certainly a great field for the marketing of that product. For long we have had the quality in our goods, but it has been difficult to retain that quality all the way to the consuming public. At a meeting the other night the Premier said we need not be afraid of the market if only the growers will put up their goods satisfactorily. I agree with that. Manchester is untouched. The Lancashire workers constitute an enormous market for our goods, if only we can get them there in satisfactory condition. Moreover, we can grow as fine a wheat as is to be found anywhere in the world. Our flour will make its own market when it is fully known and properly shipped by modern appliances. Except for the gold, our mineral wealth is almost untouched, and if we had those disabilities of which I have spoken removed, we should develop our base metals. There is vast wealth in the State, and all that we require is the removal of our disabilities. If the Commonwealth Govern-

ment must have revenue through the Customs, let us pay direct to the Customs instead of having middlemen's profits added to the Customs dues. If we were to work as one man, probably we should get our disabilities removed. Western Australia is good enough to develop, and will pay for its developing. Unfortunately the man who does the greatest amount of developing work, he who is nearest to Nature, does not get anything like his proper percentage of value produced. The first man to reap the benefit of the capital coming out from England will be the commercial man. Everything that the settlers require in the shape of tools, clothing, etc., will represent to the commercial man an immediate advantage. We on the land have to grow our products and wait until we market them before we get any cash return. We have been asked to explain the drift to the cities. The answer is simple. There is no incentive for young people to remain in country districts. Consequently they migrate to the better conditions in the city. Once let the people in country districts realise that it is more profitable and healthy for them to remain in the country, and they will no longer desire to come to the city. When you give them comforts and decent home life, families reared in the country will remain there. A little ridicule has been directed at the $2\frac{1}{2}$ acre crop of cotton. I would not care if it were only $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres. I suggested two years ago that cotton seed, linseed, and tobacco seed should be distributed to the country schools for cultivation in small experimental plots. We should then find out which centre is most suitable for the production of each of those commodities. Tobacco was grown at York some time ago, but it was not successful, because of insects boring the leaf. However, if we were to make these small experimental tests at country schools, it would be very interesting for the children and would cost nothing. During the last two or three years it has been proved that the carrying capacity of the South-West areas has been very much increased by subterranean clover. In the Great Southern a similar result has been achieved by the cultivation of Sudan grass. At Geraldton recently I was informed that the fattening qualities of blue lupine were simply astounding.

Mr. Latham: It is very good on light land.

Mr. HARRISON: Well, we have plenty of light land in most districts. If we could get in the eastern districts anything which would give us a similar advantage, it would revolutionise the stock-carrying capacity of our land. I congratulate the Premier on having secured so large a sum of money. If judiciously used it should serve to create a turning point in the history of the State. I am very pleased indeed that a move has been made in this direction, and I am convinced that if the officers of the various departments will work together most excellent results will be obtained.

On motion by Mr. Underwood, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 8th August, 1922.

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

QUESTION--DUMPING OF EASTERN GOODS.

Mr. CARTER asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware of the fact that dumping of Eastern States' goods is occurring on a large scale in Western Australia, that such tactics on the part of Eastern commercial houses is designed, and is successfully operating, against the local industries already established and the establishment of further secondary industries in our State? 2, If so, has any action been taken to prevent these attacks upon our growth? 3, Will he cause the attention of the Commonwealth Government to be drawn to the matter and demand that the terms of the Federal Constitution be applied to prevent continuance of the evil?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The W.A. Chamber of Manufactures has recently written to the Minister for Industries stating such to be the case. 2, The matter is receiving attention. 3, If it can be shown that dumping is occurring, and the Federal Constitution can be applied by way of remedy, suitable representations will be made.

QUESTION—STATE SAW MILLS.

Mr. WILLCOCK (for Mr. Wilson) asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the output of timber from the State Saw Mills Department for the year ended 30th June, 1922? 2, The average number of men employed by this department during the year ended 30th June, 1922? 3, What were the profits made by the department during the year ended 30th June, 1922?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 50,480 loads of sawn timber. 2, 890 men in