

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 21st August, 1923.

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

ELECTORAL RETURN—EAST PROVINCE.

The President announced the receipt of the return to a writ issued for the election of a member for the East Province, showing that William Carroll had been elected.

The Hon. W. Carroll took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTION—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, ADVANCES.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: What are the names of the firms or persons to whom advances have been made from the Industrial Development Vote, and the respective amounts of such advances, as asked in my question of 15th August?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: I do not think that what is really banking information should be made public. I hope, therefore, that the hon. member will not press for this information. He or any other member may see the files.

QUESTION—STATE ENTERPRISES.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: When does the Minister expect to be in a position to reply to my question submitted on 8th August, relative to the State Trading Concerns?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Early in September.

QUESTION—PEEL ESTATE.

Firewood returns, Employees, etc.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Minister for Education: 1, What area of country on the Peel Estate has been cut for firewood? 2, What quantity of firewood has been cut? 3, What quantity has been sold? 4, How much is stored? 5, What is the cost of cutting, carting, and stacking? 6, Under what system is the wood sold? 7, What amount of revenue has been received by the Government for firewood sold? 8, Do the settlers benefit in any way by the sale of the firewood? 9, What number of men are employed by the Government as salaried em-

ployees on the Peel Estate? 10, What are the names of such employees and the salaries paid to each? 11, Is it a fact that a retired civil servant, who, for a number of years, was drawing a pension from the Government, is employed on the Peel Estate? 12, If so, is he a returned soldier, and what is his age? 13, Is he still claiming a pension? 14, What are the respective amounts of pension and salary?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, 8,500 acres. 2, 42,000 cords. 3, 30,000 cords. 4, 10,000 cords stacked in bush. 5, Cutting 6s. 9d. per cord. Carting and stacking 3s. 6d. per cord. 6, Contract. 7, £22,612. 8, The handling of firewood has enabled the construction of tramway to facilitate and cheapen general development, and, in addition, the land is partially cleared. 9, Three. 10, R. J. Anketell £750 salary and allowances. S. P. Hall (Head Office) £288. A. L. Macgregor £228. 11, No, not so far as I am aware. 12, 13, 14, Answered by No. 11.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from 16th August.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.37]: I propose to differ from the speakers that have preceded me. Each and every speaker in his opening remarks extended congratulations to Mr. Ewing on assuming the leadership of the House and joining the Mitchell Government. I propose to show that Mr. Ewing has to live up to a very high standard that has been set in this House, and if he succeeds in doing that he will have not only my congratulations—our friendship extends over 20 years—but the esteem and respect of every right thinking member of the community. I extend congratulations to Mr. Kirwan on his assuming office as Chairman of Committees. Mr. Kirwan's sterling qualities appeal to all of us; his ability and experience will fit him for the position to which he has been elected. The first paragraph of the Governor's Speech reads:—

My advisers, recognising the paramount importance to the State and Empire of speedy increase in population and development, are vigorously pursuing the policy of immigration embodied in the agreement between the Imperial, Federal, and State Governments. The agreement was signed on the 9th February, 1923, and operates in respect of migrants sailing from England after the 25th September, 1922, and, in respect of the financial clauses, from the date of signing.

Under that agreement the Premier undertook to bring 75,000 people into this State. He undertook to establish 6,000 of them on farms and to find employment for the other 69,000. In consideration of that the Imperial and Federal Governments were to lend us six millions of money, the Imperial Government

and the Federal Government each agreeing to rebate one-third of the interest for the first five years, conditionally of course on the terms of the agreement being carried out. Hitherto, as members know, we have gone to the London market to borrow money for a specific purpose, and have used it for some other purpose; but under this agreement, provision is made that unless we use the money for this specific purpose, the right is reserved by the Imperial and Federal Governments to withdraw their undertaking to rebate portion of the interest, and the State would then become responsible for the full payment. If one attempts to discuss the serious side of the problems affecting the State, there is a tendency to regard one as a croaker. I do not care how I am assailed; it will not deter me from doing what I consider to be my public duty. Sometimes it appears that we have got past the stage when the term "croaker" is applied; I think "bunkum" is the word now used. I find that word in the leading article of the principle morning paper. It was applied to some observations made by the overseas delegates who recently visited this State, and it was applied on the morning after their departure from the State. I do not care whether the Press characterise my criticism as bunkum or croaking. There is another side to the question, namely, if the Government will not place the true position of affairs before the people, and if the Press, particularly the "West Australian," will not do this, it is our duty, as responsible men, to tell the public exactly how things stand. I do not propose to question the possibilities of the South-West from the standpoint of production. I am satisfied that the main consideration is an ample rainfall and, in the South-West we have a rainfall equal I suppose to that of any part of Australia.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Equal to the floods of Niagara.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: For many years I have been a convert to the theory that all land is good land provided we apply science to agriculture. It is merely a question of fertilising the inferior land in order to get a crop, a crop not so good as might be obtained from first-class land, but still a good crop. All land is good provided it is properly handled. But what concerns me is the undertaking upon which the Government have embarked, and that is with unskilled labour, men from the other end of the world, men new to the conditions, to do what private enterprise has found it impossible to do with skilled labour. I know what I am talking about. I was reared in the swamps of the South-West.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: That is why you are a croaker.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There were five brothers of us. We could live there whilst our father helped us, but upon my father's death we five brothers had to come out and sacrifice what we had put in and seek employment elsewhere. That we

can produce in the South-West I have no doubt, but the question is, can we produce at a profit? It is a question of producing at a profit for the overseas market. Growing cabbages and turnips for the metropolitan area is a mere bagatelle. Unless we can produce at a profit for the overseas markets, it is of no use producing at all. This raises the question of what will happen when the Government sustenance allowance ceases. We are pleased to know that everybody on the group settlements is happy and satisfied. I should say these people ought to be happy and satisfied. The danger I fear is when the sustenance allowance ceases and these men have to play off their own bat, and, inexperienced as they are, battle their way to prosperity. We must not forget that even if we carry out the contract entered into by Sir James Mitchell, and that even if we do get a rebate of interest for the first five years, one-third being borne by the Imperial Government and one-third by the Commonwealth Government, we as a State are responsible for the repayment of the loan and payment of the interest. It is all very well for the Premier to tell flowery tales as to what is happening in this country. It is all very nice to read in the morning paper statements which we hope will materialise. But we have to remember that not only ourselves but the statesmen of the Empire at the other end of the world are watching this matter very closely. We know that Sir James Mitchell in an interview with a London newspaper drew a glowing picture of what was happening in Western Australia, and used words somewhat like the following:

The scene is in the bush in my own country. A rustle in the forest tells us of some wild creature that has been disturbed. A band of youths and young men lean upon logs or lie upon the leaves around the companionable blaze. These men are tired after a hard day's work that roughens and toughens the body, but keeps the mind sweet and clean. What are these men doing? They are making homes for themselves. They are paying their own wages, and the Government of Western Australia are lending them money to do this.

That is from a leading morning paper of the city of London. Sir James Mitchell challenged the assertion that he had used those words, but I produced a copy of the original paper. Oversea delegates have come out here to listen to the rustle of the forest and to see bands of youths and young men resting on leaves or leaning upon logs; and because some of the oversea delegates say there is another side to the picture, a portion of the Press of this State declare that the expression of such opinions is all bunkum. In His Excellency's Speech we have reference to the Goldfields Water Scheme. I do not know what has happened in that connection recently, but I understood from the Premier that a Bill was to be introduced into Parliament and that Parliament was to grant the concession, and, further, that Parliament was

to consider the pros and cons of the matter before the concession was made. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I agree with other members that it is just as necessary to continue to develop the gold-mining industry as any other industry, but according to what I see in the papers the concession has already been made.

The Minister for Education: No. It has to be endorsed by hon. members.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I thought Mr. Scaddan had been to the goldfields and told the people there, "Alone I did it."

The Minister for Education: Mr. Scaddan said distinctly that the matter must come before Parliament.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: One hon. member has stated in this House that the decrease in the price of water may possibly mean an increase in the price of wood. I, as one of the custodians of the public purse, shall want to know whether or not the concession in the way of a decrease in the price of water is to be used for the purpose of increasing the price of wood supplied to the mines by the private companies.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The wood companies are agreeable to continue to sell wood at the old price.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am merely referring to what one hon. member from the goldfields has said. Another phase of the Governor's Speech is very interesting. I have heard of people in dry areas waiting upon ministers to pray for rain, and I have heard of a sensible parson going out and then saying, "I cannot pray to-day; the wind is in the wrong quarter." But here droughts are vanished, and nothing matters as regards the sheep industry of this country as long as the price of wire netting becomes lower. The Speech says—

Sheep farming is in a highly satisfactory state, and the numbers of State flocks will be greatly increased as soon as a plentiful supply of wire netting is obtainable at a reasonable price.

That declaration represents a sop to the Country Party. Some Country Party members have been wanting wire netting, and the Government had been dodging; but they must keep faith with their supporters, and so they say that sheep farming is in a most satisfactory position, and that the numbers of our flocks will be greatly increased as soon as wire netting becomes plentiful and cheap.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The sheep are to be fed with wire netting.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Now I come to another portion of the Speech—

The development of the North and North-West continues to receive special consideration, and a tropical agriculture expert has been appointed.

Now let me give one instance to prove the special consideration received by the North-West. I understand that coal, timber, and wheat, and other primary products of Western Australia pay no wharfage at Fremantle.

Here is a letter I have received from the Broome road board—

Having noticed that such primary products as coal, timber, wheat, etc., are exempt from wharfage dues when being shipped overseas, the board request that you will use every effort to have the same concession allowed on pearl shell. In this town alone something over 3,000 people depend solely for an existence on the production of shell, all of which has to be shipped overseas for sale, and most of this shell also pays inward charges from the grounds to the packing sheds. Thus the owner is compelled to pay double wharfage. At the present time shell costs nearly £30 per ton more to take to the market than it realises. You will therefore see that the slightest reduction in costs will, especially at the present time, be an untold boon to the North. Boat owners are now faced with the immediate necessity for a drastic reduction in the costs of fishing shell. This they are doing in so far as it is within their power. Therefore we trust the Government will also assist by placing shell on the free list in so far as wharfage is concerned. There is a very grave possibility that unless a reduction in costs is secured almost at once, the whole of the pearl shell business of the North will be a thing of the past, thus throwing thousands of men out of work, besides laying idle millions of pounds' worth of capital. Therefore we trust you will use every possible effort to secure the small concession asked for.

Upon inquiry I find that at Broome the wharfage on shell is 4s. per ton, plus 20 per cent., that handling charges amount to 4s. per ton, and haulage to 2s. per ton, or a total of 10s. 10d. per ton. So much for the special consideration that the North receives in respect of its primary products as compared with the South. Here is another quotation from the Governor's Speech—

My Advisers, believing that finance and development are the matters of vital importance to the State, will ask Parliament to devote the greater portion of the session to their consideration.

As we are invited by the Speech to refer to the question of finance, I offer no apology for putting a few figures to the House. I find that in a leading article published on the 17th July, 1916, when Mr. Scaddan was about to vacate office, the "West Australian" wrote as follows:—

Mr. Scaddan showed a surplus for the last month of the financial year amounting to £214,713. He was thus able to reduce the deficit which in May totalled £1,575,749 to £1,363,031. It is a wonderful accomplishment.

That, of course, is sarcasm.

Money, as we know, has a habit of falling on the Treasury in June like manna, and in the same month there would appear to be little cause for expenditure. It is the month of July, however, that tells the tale

of the stratagems to which Treasurers resort in order to put the best possible face on the affairs of the preceding financial year. If Mr. Scaddan is in office on 31st July, his deficit for the month will be on a scale rivalling the magnitude of the June surplus. If he is not, he will leave it as a legacy to his successors.

Now let me read from an article which appeared in the same newspaper on the 13th July of this year, when the deficit totalled not £1,363,031, but £5,910,595—

The results obtained must be considered very satisfactory. They are more. They are creditable to the Government.

On the same date the same newspaper wrote—

The returns for July will, of course, show a big deficit on the month. This is the fault of a wretched system, for which the Treasurer is not responsible, but to which he has succeeded.

That is what is served up at our breakfast table. It is absolutely wrong for the newspaper to attempt to lead the public into a fool's paradise. When in 1916 that first article was written our population, in round numbers, was 316,000; when the later article was written it was 347,000, or an increase of 31,000. When the first article was written, the State indebtedness was £33,822,000; when the later article was written it was £49,704,000, or an increase of £15,822,000. At the time the first article was written the State's indebtedness per capita was £106; when the later article was written it was £142 10s. or an increase of £36 10s. The State's expenditure for the year when the first article was written was £5,705,000; when the later article was written the expenditure was £7,612,000, or an increase of £1,917,000. The expenditure on revenue account per head of the population when the first article was written was £18 per head, whereas at the time the later article was written it was £22. The revenue when the first article was written amounted to £5,356,000; when the later article was written it was £7,207,000, or an increase of £1,850,000. The State deficit when the first article was written amounted to £1,363,000; when the later article was written, the deficit totalled £5,910,000.

Hon. A. Lovekin: As Governor Broome said, "At last he moves."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The deficit for last year was £405,350. Yet we get this described in the Press as "highly creditable." The truth is the Treasurer of this State extracted from the people £300,000 more than he received in the previous year.

Hon. J. Ewing: The expenditure was lower.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: By a mere £26,000! That £300,000 is the difference between a deficit for the previous year of £700,000 and the deficit last year of £400,000—the difference between the financial returns last year and those of the previous year; the truth is that the Premier has extracted an additional £300,000, or £1 per head of the population.

Hon. A. Greig: If he raises taxation another £400,000 this year there will not be any deficit next year.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: He cannot do that. He is already taxing everybody out of existence. Here is a schedule put before me the other day. In Western Australia big incomes pay 4s. plus 15 per cent., or 4s. 7d. That has to be plussed by Federal taxation, including super tax, on personal exertion 7s. 8d., making 12s. 3d., and for property 8s. 1d., or plus 4s. 7d., 12s. 8d. How much more can the people be taxed?

The Minister for Education: What about the smaller incomes? They pay the lowest taxation on record.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: A lot of them were left off last year. Against 4s. 7d. on the higher incomes in Western Australia, in New South Wales it is 2s. 3d., in Victoria 6½d., in Queensland 3s., and in South Australia 1s. 10d. Now, will Mr. Greig tell us how the Treasurer is to get another £400,000 out of the people of this State? This has to be remembered: When this later article was written and the paper spoke of the highly satisfactory condition of the finances, the total deficit was in the vicinity of six millions and the interest on that deficit was £1,000 per day. Yet this, we are told, is highly satisfactory.

The Minister for Education: The position has improved.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: All sorts of excuses are made. We are told that the Liquor Bill, had it passed in its original shape, would have added £100,000 to the Treasury, whereas only half that amount was obtained. Whose fault was that? The Government, after mature consideration, brought down the Bill in another place. That Bill was to have produced another £100,000 from the liquor trade. Nobody would complain of that; but at the first hurdle the Government balked and agreed to reduce the amount by one-half. Whose fault was that but the fault of the Government? Again, we are told that the Hospitals Bill was thrown out. I will tell the country why it was thrown out. It was said that a Government that could with equanimity lose £100,000 on State steamers in one year, had no right to extract an additional £100,000 from the people by way of taxation. We hear nothing in the morning Press of increases in income tax amounting to £70,000 which the Government have claimed. The Minister for Education talks about light taxation. It is very light for some and very heavy for others. Last year the Government collected £70,000 more in taxation than they did in the previous year, and from fewer people. Then there is another £40,000 increased revenue in respect of the Coolgardie water scheme, a readjustment of finances. Nothing is said about that. Yet the morning Press will harp on the Liquor Bill and the Hospital Bill, losing sight of all those other things that count. Coming to the question of State trading concerns, I think I am right in saying that the dividing line between political parties in this State is that one party is of

opinion that the State should be developed by State enterprise, while the other holds that the State should be developed by private enterprise.

Hon. T. Moore: Except the land policy.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That, I think, is the position. In another place, last year, on the question of State enterprises, the Treasurer said the State trading concerns were the worry of his life; that he wished he had never seen them; that they were always in trouble and always would be in trouble and, what was worse, they paid no taxation, although they competed with people who did pay taxes. The Treasurer of the State said that of the State trading concerns, which he came into power to wipe out. The Minister for Works, who controls those concerns, in reply to Mr. Collier, who accused him of stealing the Labour Party's policy, said—

The difference between your side of the House, Mr. Collier, and ours is that you are in favour of State enterprise, and we are in favour of private enterprise.

Mr. George, in his usual classic manner, added, "All the flapdoodle in the world won't alter it." Reference has been made to the necessity for these concerns acting as police.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What did Mr. Ewing say about it?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We will come to him later. I am keeping the best to the last. I do not often read the "Worker," but this is what I read in the issue of the 17th inst:

State trading concerns as police. In confirmation of an article in last week's "Worker" entitled "Home builders being fleeced," Mr. W. C. Angwin, M.L.A., made the following statement in Parliament last week: "Only the other day I saw a letter from a contractor who went to a firm for joinery work. Thinking the price too high, he wrote to the State Sawmills for a quotation. The reply he got was 'You have already got the quote of our association.'"

There we see the State Sawmills policing the timber industry, to be sure that the prices are not unduly high! When a reputable person makes application for a quotation the reply is "You have already got the quote of our association." Take the Midland Railway Company. The Railway Department insists, in fact I think the agreement insists, that the Midland Railway Company shall charge the same rates as are charged by the Government railways. There was a time when the Midland Company charged less in order to increase the traffic; but the policeman, in the shape of the State Railway Department, stepped in and said, "Under your agreement you must charge the full rate." Let me show how people will be handicapped in developing the State: A firm, when they finished seedling, had 24 bags of barley, 350 miles from Perth. They railed the barley to Fremantle, where they sold it for 4s. 2d. per bushel. The railage charged was 1s. 2d. per bushel. If the people we hear about with smiling faces and happy homes in the South-West come to the stage where they will have

to pay railage at so high a rate, there will be quite another tale to tell. Twelve months ago I said that if we were not careful we should have the agricultural industry of this State nationalised. Every time we put another million into land, we are taking a further step towards nationalising the agricultural industry. Now we come to the Wyndham Meat Works. A select committee of this House investigated these works the session before last. The committee, of which I was chairman, put up a report that was admitted by everyone to be an excellent report. At that time, up to the 31st December, 1921, the capital account of the Wyndham Meat Works was £723,322 5s. 10d., made up of buildings £392,000 odd, and machinery and plant £331,000 odd. Mr. Lovekin asked a question on the 31st July of this year as to what was the capital of the works to the 31st December, 1922, and the answer was £1,221,410. The capital account has gone up half a million of money, but so far as I can tell not another brick has been laid there. The difference between £723,000 and £1,221,000 is half a million. The loss, presumably the losses on operation, is added to the capital account.

The Minister for Education: What would you do with the difference.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It should be added to the deficit. The public must not be taken in like that. It is suggested we have an asset at Wyndham worth a million and a quarter, but the asset is really worth only about a quarter of a million. If these figures were properly compiled that million pounds would be added to the deficit, where it ought to be placed, and where the people of Western Australia could understand it. I do not think any additions have been made to the works. The select committee discovered that the Government were about to spend an additional £115,000 on extra storage. The committee were of opinion that the money should not be spent.

The Minister for Education: And it was not spent.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But the architect was paid £3,500.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes, he was paid for services rendered in connection with plans, etc.

The Minister for Education: The Government have the plans.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Did not the Government save money by doing that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They did save money on the recommendation of the select committee. I gather from the Press that new agents have been appointed in London to handle the meat from the Wyndham works. Messrs. Brown & Dureau, or some other firm, handled the meat on an agency basis before. The commission was first of all 1 per cent., it then rose to 1½, and finally went to 2 per cent. The committee could find nothing on record to show the committee how this commission was raised from 1 to 2 per cent., except that the agents at the other end had

taken upon themselves the responsibility of deducting so much commission. I now understand that an agreement has been made in London for the sale of the meat for five years with some other firm.

The Minister for Education: I have never said that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I hope the Minister will say something about it when he speaks. I have it on the best of authority that a contract has been made with new people in London to handle the products of the Wyndham Meat Works for the next five years. That practically necessitates carrying on these works for five years. I do not think any other firm would buy the works if the proceeds were being allocated to some other persons or firm for that period.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The commission is 3 per cent. now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The commission to be paid to the new company is, I understand, 3 per cent. What I have to say now I say with great reluctance. Whenever I have anything to say I say it to the man who is present. I do not attack people in their absence. My advices from London are that when the present Agent General, Sir James Connolly, retires from that office, he takes up the position of director in this particular company. I am leaving it at that.

The Minister for Education: I would leave it if I were you. I would not make statements like that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have it from London.

The Minister for Education: The inference is certainly a bad one.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If there is nothing in the existing agreement between the Western Australian Government and their Agent General preventing the latter from taking positions, whether as director or otherwise, in companies, there should be some honourable understanding that this would not be done. Agents General cannot do it while they hold office, but there is nothing to prevent them walking out of their offices and doing it afterwards. On the question of State trading concerns I would draw the attention of the Minister to "Hansard," page 510, dated 31st August, 1921. The Minister then said—

I want to support Mr. Miles and his contention that during the period 1911-1916 and owing to the Labour Government introducing State trading concerns, our position has been made much worse. It is on account of these trading concerns that we are in our present difficulties.

The Minister, who was then a private member, continues on page 511—

On every possible occasion that I have spoken in this Chamber and have had an opportunity of referring to these State trading concerns, I have expressed my firm conviction of what I believe to be right, and what I believe three-fourths of the people of this State believe is right, namely, that these State trading concerns

should never have been initiated, and we should not be in our present parlous condition if they had never been started.

Mr. Ewing continues—

The Government were returned to power because of their opposition to State trading concerns. Instead of selling them or making arrangements to dispose of them, they actually continue their operations and increase them, despite the fact that they are losing money on them every day. . . . They are competing with individual companies which have invested money in Western Australia, and these companies have expected a fair deal.

The Minister continues—

Figures in connection with State trading concerns should be analysed by properly qualified persons. If this were done the figures placed before the people would astound them.

He further adds—

We will never get any such clear statement when we have people interested in keeping their jobs in connection with these State trading concerns.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He has a new mental vision now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I hope he will have a new vision when I have finished to-day. On page 512 Mr. Ewing continues—

I would remind members that about £100,000 has been cut off the capital of the State Implement Works and instead of the works being capitalised at £150,000 they are capitalised at £50,000. The State is paying interest on £150,000, and the implement works are paying interest on only £50,000 and they are able to show very different results from what are actually being attained.

Mr. Ewing later on said—

I do not want to harass the Government.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: He is supporting them now.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: He was then.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It may be something to smile at.

The Minister for Education: I am not smiling.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He can always get out of it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is only one way, and that is to get out of the Government. It is the honourable way and I believe the Minister will take it. I have known him for 20 years, and I look to him to go to the Premier to-morrow and say, "Either sell the State trading concerns and get rid of them, or you will get rid of me." If he wants to retain the confidence of the public and of this House there is only one thing for him to do, and if he will analyse the position he will come to that conclusion. I think the Minister accepted office without thinking of the consequences. If he does not do as I suggest it will be one more brick knocked from the foundations of Parliament. This sort of thing is bringing Parliament into disrepute with the people. It is making the

people scoff at public men. When the Minister has analysed this position my candid opinion is that he will tell the Premier either to sell the State trading concerns or let him go. The Minister continued on page 512 of "Hansard" of the 31st August, 1921—

I do not want to harass the Government but I want members to insist upon there being no misapprehension as to the position. I certainly desire there should be no misapprehension as to my attitude towards these State trading concerns.

On page 513 the Minister continued—

It is up to the Government to do something in connection with these State trading concerns. What, I ask, are they going to do? If the Minister found himself in the same position in his private life what would he do? He would have to go bankrupt or get rid of the trading concerns.

On the same day and in the same speech the Minister said—

The Premier has said the Government cannot sell these trading concerns. If the Government had displayed any energy and determination they would find someone who would sell these trading concerns for them. After what has been said in the House, I hope the Government will advertise these trading concerns for sale and do away with them.

On 11th October, 1921, page 1120 of "Hansard" the Minister said—

It does not matter a rap to me whether the State trading concerns are paying or not. . . . I have always spoken against these trading concerns. I have fought these trading concerns all along the line and will fight them to the last ditch.

The Minister has told this country that he is going to fight the trading concerns to the last ditch. I would ask him for his own sake and for the sake of our friendship of 20 years, to live up to that sentiment.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Cannot you appreciate a man getting new lights?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: People may say that power, place and pay alter a man's view.

The Minister for Education: It will never alter my views on this question.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I ask the Minister as Leader of the House and representative of the Government to practice what he preached, no more and no less. He goes on to say in "Hansard"—

We have no right whatever to invest the money of the people in opposition to those who desire to develop the industries of this State.

On the 20th September, 1922, as set out in "Hansard" (page 833), Mr. Ewing said—

Ever since the inception of the State trading concerns, I have been entirely opposed to them. . . . It is not a question of whether one concern is paying and another is not paying. It is a matter of principle, and on each and every occasion I have spoken on this matter, I have not taken that into consideration at all.

In September of last year, Mr. Ewing said it was a question of principle with him; all I ask of him to-day is that in August, 1923, it will still be a question of principle with him.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Oh that mine enemy would make a speech!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: On the same day Mr. Ewing said—

I hope the Government will be sincere in this matter. . . . It is not fair for a section of the community not in power to govern the country, and the influence of a certain section of the community over the Government in this direction is a most pernicious thing.

Can Mr. Ewing tell me that, in face of his utterance last year, he can still sit on the Treasury bench as a member of a Government willing to carry on the State trading concerns and still command the respect of the House and of the country? If he does so, I tell him plainly that he is politically dead so far as the right thinking people of Western Australia are concerned. I have too much respect for Mr. Ewing to think he will do it. I believe he will adopt an honourable course and say that he went into his present position without due consideration and that either the State trading concerns must go or he must leave the Government. He asserted emphatically that for control of a Government to be exercised by a minority was a pernicious thing. When one goes abroad, it is such incidents as those I refer to that make one almost ashamed to admit one is a member of Parliament. It makes one's heart bleed when one finds that these things can happen. Instead of Parliament being respected and esteemed by the public as it should be, a wrong impression is created. So long as men sit here who will not act according to their convictions, so long will Parliament be held up to ridicule. Mr. Harris interjected during the debate: "Do you say that the Premier has not the courage of his opinions?" To that Mr. Ewing replied— I am still quoting from his speech on the 20th September, 1922—

I say the Premier has not the courage of his opinions in regard to this particular question.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you suggest he has not, either?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I ask that Mr. Ewing shall have the courage of his opinions. I ask him to live up to that standard of political life he led the House to believe he would live up to. I believe he will live up to that standard.

Hon. J. Cornell: After this, I think we should burn "Hansard" at the end of each session!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The present Leader of the House said that three-quarters of the people of Western Australia were opposed to State trading concerns. Holding those views, how can Mr. Ewing live up to his pledges and remain in office? It is important to remember that Mr. Ewing has been returned unopposed on this declared policy. In season

and out of season he has opposed State trading concerns. With him it is a vital principle. Mr. Ewing has pointed out that the Government, of which he is now a member, were returned to power in opposition to the State trading concerns.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I heard that Mr. Ewing made it a condition when he joined the Government.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I trust that when the Leader of the House replies he will tell the House that such was the case. If he does not do so I shall be disappointed. I trust he will say that one of the conditions he made on joining the Government was that the State trading concerns should go. There is no misunderstanding his attitude regarding State trading concerns, and Mr. Ewing himself has declared as much. He said that if Ministers owned the concerns themselves they must sell them or go into bankruptcy.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is a question of which would be the most effective to dispose of.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But it does not matter whether a trading concern is paying or not. Mr. Ewing himself said that it was a question of principle only. He referred to the pernicious influence of a minority and ended up by saying that the Premier had not the courage of his convictions!

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What minority do you refer to?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not want to get on to that subject, because we know the position.

Hon. J. Cornell: Somebody will get hurt if you do.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We saw the position last session when the Labour Party kept the Government in power against the actions of the political party forming part of the coalition. Presumably that was the aspect Mr. Ewing did not like. I do not know that I need say any more. It is useless trying to do anything in this State unless men live up to their declared utterances, and unless an important section of the Press is prepared to tell the people the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. One becomes disheartened when, having endeavoured to get things into shape, something happens and someone slips. I do not suggest that Mr. Ewing has slipped. I do not suggest he will slip. After what I have said this afternoon, if Mr. Ewing continues in a Government who persist in carrying on the State trading concerns, he will certainly lose my respect and the respect of all right thinking people of the community.

Hon. T. MOORE (Central) [5.38]: I desire to join with other members in congratulating the Leader of the House on attaining his new position. I know that he will carry out the duties with justice to himself. From what we have known of him in the past, when he won the respect of all members, I know he will get fair and generous support from the House. I also desire to congratulate Mr. Kirwan upon the position hon. members have placed him in. As to the

political position which is presented by the Governor's Speech, I will deal with a few matters. It is perhaps necessary that we should all mention the great question of finance, particularly seeing that the Government, who have been in power for three years, have to go before the people very shortly. When they took office the Government were going to do a lot of things. They intended to improve the financial position and they made many promises. One of those promises was that there should be no new taxation. I leave it to hon. members to say whether that promise alone has been kept by the Government. Every hon. member knows that the Government have failed on that point. They said they intended to put the finances of Western Australia in order. Despite the fact that the Government have had every opportunity—and hon. members will agree that there has been no factious opposition—we have gone back financially. The Government took credit for the smallness of the latest deficit, which was, roughly, £405,000, and claimed that the State was round the financial corner. As a matter of fact, the deficit was worse than when the Labour Government were in power. So far from being round the corner, hon. members know very well that we are a long way from being round it.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is a long corner.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: But there are many corners.

Hon. T. MOORE: In any case, we are by no means round the financial corner now. Despite the increase in taxation, the Government have not yet shown a balance sheet to equal any presented by the Labour Government. Hon. members must admit that contention, and I am pleased to note that Mr. Holmes takes up the attitude that the people should know the real state of affairs. It is time the people knew that we have not turned the financial corner.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: It is one of those corners that are rounded off.

Hon. T. MOORE: I trust that in time we will round the corner. The people should know, however, that the position is not what the "West Australian" wishes them to believe. On the contrary the financial position of Western Australia is very bad. I will not reiterate the figures that Mr. Holmes has dealt with—I had the same figures too—but the fact remains that if the deficit was appalling in the days of the Labour Government, when it amounted to £1,360,000, it is much more appalling to-day when it is nearer six million pounds. The people will not tolerate existing conditions much longer. To bolster up and create an unnatural trade, the Government spent more loan money last year than was ever previously recorded. Quite apart from that, when the Labour Government spent two million pounds of loan money, the "West Australian," the leading paper of the State, wanted to know where the money had gone and who had got it. The paper inferred that Ministers, or perhaps the party sitting behind them, had got the money.

When they see the present Government spending 3½ millions of loan money, the "West Australian" remains silent.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The "West Australian" says the position is highly satisfactory!

Hon. T. MOORE: That is so. It is not fair.

The Minister for Education: How has the money been spent?

Hon. T. MOORE: Probably in the best way. The Labour Government spent their money in the best way. The "West Australian" does not, however, give a fair statement of the facts, so that people may know whether things are proceeding aright or to the contrary. There is this to be said about the "West Australian," however, that it has gone a little too far. From what happened in connection with the election of the Mayor of Perth and the recent East Perth by-election, it is apparent that the people refuse to follow the "West Australian" and to be guided wholly by that paper. People are now looking into matters for themselves.

Hon. J. Cornell: The "West Australian" has succeeded in promoting opposition to itself.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Not yet.

Hon. T. MOORE: We are always told that the sinking fund is a wonderful thing. Hon. members know, however, that the sinking fund is being provided out of loan money. We borrow money to pay the sinking fund! High finance! In connection with our immigration policy we find that it is by no means satisfactory. I doubt whether there is an hon. member who believes that it is satisfactory. I have not met one hon. member of this House who has expressed satisfaction in regard to the immigration policy of the present Government. It is not what we would wish it to be. I have travelled a good deal around the country, and I can speak authoritatively on the subject. We have in existence what is called the "New Settlers' League." This organisation does the best it can. It undertakes what are known as "drives." I understand that those who carry on this work are supplied with motor cars by the Government, but that there is no responsibility to the Government or to Parliament, or in fact to anyone else for what is done by that body. The members of that league ask farmers in different parts of the State whether they can employ newcomers. The procedure that is followed does not deal fairly with those newcomers. Those who are conducting the "drives" know nothing whatever about contract clearing. Yet they go out and they see certain areas which require to be cleared. The owner of the land will say, "Yes, I want this cleared; I will give you so much; send me a couple of men to make a start." The men who go along have not the slightest idea as to whether the valuation is fair or not. It is wrong that such a state of affairs should be permitted to exist. At any rate, it is not fair that newcomers should be sent to do that kind of work. I have done a lot of that

kind of work myself, and I know that it is not the proper thing to expect newcomers to tackle it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How is the New Settlers' League appointed?

Hon. T. MOORE: I have no idea. They are an irresponsible body. I dare say that any one of us could join it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How is it financed?

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not know. Newcomers are not the sort of men who are likely to do well at clearing, and it is unfair from their point of view to put them on such jobs. They fail and then drift back to the towns and on their way try to get work wherever they can. Hon. members in another place have given instances of this kind of thing. These are facts which can be supported by hon. members who have travelled through the country. The Ugly Men's Association have stated that there are more unemployed at Fremantle and more cases of distress there than ever before, and this is the result of the new arrivals finding their way back to that port. This statement was made only last week. There are instances too where immigrants have been given employment in country districts as the result of the "drives" of the New Settlers' League and have failed after a short run. The outcome of that is that farmers all declare "We do not want immigrants." It is a bad policy to send a man to a job he is not fitted to fill, jobs such as those at which only our own best men can make good wages. Inexperienced men at such work cannot even earn their food. The settler has to supply this, and he is far from pleased when he discovers that these men, who lack the experience, have not even earned their food.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How do you propose they should get their first experience?

Hon. T. MOORE: I would put them on farms where the heavy work had previously been done. On such farms they might become useful in a short time. I will always object to migrants being brought from another part of the world and given work to do which can only be carried out by men of experience. Some of the new arrivals who have been sent to do clearing work had not previously seen an axe.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Some are very good at axe work; they only want someone to show them how the work is done.

Hon. T. MOORE: Some settlers have told me that they have spent days showing the new arrivals exactly what was expected of them, and that after the men had gone, the work had to be done over again.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They should not be put on contract work.

Hon. T. MOORE: I assure hon. members that what I have related is actually happening. No hon. member in this House will agree to this kind of thing continuing. Regarding immigration generally, the Labour Party have been accused of being against this policy. Facts which have already been stated prove that during the period the Labour Gov-

ernment were in power more migrants were brought to the State than at any other period.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is your party in favour of immigration?

Hon. T. MOORE: Always, when we can show to the people on the other side of the world that there is suitable work for them to do here. If that policy were in existence now we would not have the new arrivals drifting from place to place as they are doing to-day. The Premier gets over the difficulty by saying that the more people we have here the more work will there be to do. But the new arrivals do not create work for quite a long time. At present work must be created for them and they must be looked after. Again, in connection with group settlements, the fault that I have to find is in respect of the placing of inexperienced men on the areas chosen for the groups. We find groups of 20 men, all of whom are inexperienced, engaged in clearing. The capitalisation will be so high that the interest which will have to be paid will be correspondingly great, and the result will be that it will not be possible for those who are on the groups to carry on. Hon. members know that men from here, there and everywhere are being chosen to form the groups.

Hon. J. Mills: The labour is directed by foremen.

Hon. T. MOORE: I know some of the foremen, and even supposing they were the very best foremen that could be employed, they could not prevent the properties from becoming over-capitalised.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would you be in favour of experienced clearers doing the work by contract?

Hon. T. MOORE: I am in favour of experienced men always doing that work.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By contract?

Hon. T. MOORE: It is the work for experienced men always.

The Minister for Education: What would you do with the migrants?

Hon. T. MOORE: I would place them on farms where they could do ploughing, sowing and tilling, and such like work. It is absurd to send those men into the forest country to clear karri land.

Hon. J. A. Greig: That is the Australians' job.

Hon. T. MOORE: And you want pretty good Australians for it, too. On that account we are going to have a repetition of what has actually happened in connection with soldier settlement. Those who have taken the trouble to read the report of the Royal Commission will be aware of the bungling that has taken place in spite of the fact that we were told that all was well. The report of the Commission gives us some appalling figures of what contract clearing costs. The men who have declared that the work has been done properly are supposed to be experienced. Now we find that much of the work which was done there will have to be written down so far as the capital cost is concerned. Otherwise, there will be no chance of the soldier

settlers carrying on. The Controller, himself, Mr. McLarty, admits that. Yet, at the present time, we expect inexperienced men to go out and do what the most experienced men only can successfully carry out. A contract about to construct a railway line would never think of employing a man not accustomed to pick and shovel work. He might, however, select one or two if they were big and burly. The work of clearing is quite a lot harder than navvying and yet we expect inexperienced men to carry it out.

Hon. J. Cornell: A strong indictment against the group settlement is that the inexperienced are not mixed with the experienced.

Hon. T. MOORE: If I went on to a group I would want to pick the other nineteen. Regarding the Government's developmental policy, almost the whole of the money at the State's disposal is being spent south of Perth. There are other parts of the State that are crying out for development. In the Province that I represent, and not so far north as that represented by Mr. Miles, where the population is becoming less and less despite the fact that the Government in power are enthusiastic regarding that part of the State—

The Minister for Education: So they are.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, they are so wrapped up in it that they cannot keep the population there. I was about to say that in regard to the district of which Geraldton is the natural port, there is a considerable area of land not being utilised. It is held up in large areas, and it would pay to buy those estates for the purpose of subdivision. I know that there are many that can be bought at a fair price. It would be better for the State and for the community generally if those properties were acquired right away. That would be a sounder proposition than financing the South-West, where it will not be possible to get a return for many years and where the cost of marketing will be high. In the Geraldton district it is possible to produce saleable commodities, and that is what we want to do now. Between Mingenew and Mullewa there is an extensive belt of good country. This is known to the Leader of the House, who will admit that it is first-class land, quite as good as anything in the State. It is within a radius of eight miles of Geraldton, and it is hung up. The rainfall is quite satisfactory. Farming is being carried on many miles beyond, and the reports show that the country in and around Mingenew is first-class. If the Government purchased the Midland line, it would be possible to open up this country. The Government should not be content to centre their attention upon one portion of the State and neglect the other portions. There is a belt of good country also between the Yuna railway terminus and Mullewa. Mullewa is a good district and farming is being carried on 35 miles north-west of that. This belt is within 70 miles of the port of Geraldton. As one of the members representing that portion of the State, I urge the need for facilities being

granted to these people. It would be a better proposition than the South-West offers. Regarding the proposed purchase of the Midland concession, we seem to have reached a very indefinite stage. Negotiations have been proceeding for 18 months or two years, and we would like the Government to reach finality. The Geraldton district will always be handicapped until the Midland concession becomes Government property. The Midland Company have an immense area of land that they cannot develop, and the State cannot undertake its development because it does not own the railway. I hope the time is not far distant when that railway will be purchased by the Government. For the same reason the development of the Irwin coalfield is being held up. When the Government boring party in the second bore put down reached a depth of 500 feet odd, a 12-foot seam of coal was struck. Then the Government decided that, owing to the coalfield being in the Midland Company's concession and to the company's refusal to bear any of the burden of cost, they would not proceed further with the boring. There the matter rests. We do not know what is beneath that 12-foot seam of coal. We are told that the calorific value is not equal to that of Collie coal at the 500-foot depth, but we are anxious to know whether the seam continues and improves below that depth. Until the Midland concession is purchased—the company have the right to all the minerals, which is a bad condition—we cannot develop this coalfield or ascertain its extent and value. Reference has been made to the neglect to foster the mining industry, the industry that has done so much for Western Australia. My great objection is that the mining industry is being strangled by the high rates of railway fares and freights. This is what is strangling the industry in my province. Meekatharra is 600 miles distant from Perth, and members can imagine how costly mining requisites become when they have to be transported over that length of railway. There is an agitation in the metropolitan area to secure reduced railway fares on the section between Midland Junction and Fremantle. I think the residents of the metropolitan area are faring very well indeed. The people at Meekatharra cannot afford to travel more than once a year because of the high fares. All our mining requisites have to be transported from Perth, and the high freights heap up the costs to such an extent that the mining industry is being killed. At Youanmi, a good mine has been closed down owing to the excessive costs.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: In many cases the Railway Department is used as a taxation Department, especially for the carriage of gold.

Hon. T. MOORE: Absolutely. Regarding lead mines we have a field which is undeveloped. There is a line leading towards the best lead mine in the State, but this industry too, is handicapped owing to the need for a little extra length of line. There are wonderful possibilities in this part of the State, but the Government are concentrating attention

upon one portion of the State only—the South-West. Previous speakers have referred to the State trading concerns, which always come in for a certain amount of criticism in this House and also by some members in another place.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The "Worker" is attacking them, too.

Hon. T. MOORE: The "Worker" has attacked the system under which they are being handled. Mr. Holmes produced evidence to show that the State Sawmills had entered the ring. Of course they have; everyone knows it, but that is not due to any fault of the Labour Government who established them. The Labour Government did not establish them with the idea of entering the ring. The hon. member knows how the State steamships are being held up and why it is impossible for them to pay under the present administration.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Political influence!

Hon. T. MOORE: Not so much on account of political influence but because the Government will not announce whether they are prepared to continue the steamships for any length of time. When the select committee inquired last year, the manager gave evidence that he could not inform any prospective shipper whether the boats would be running in three months' time. Indefiniteness hampers all these concerns. It is quite understandable that the Government Sawmills should be in the Sawmillers' Association. The hon. member said we were driving competition away. We have been told that private enterprise will not invest in various industries because the taxpayers' money is behind the Government concerns. Yet the hon. member complains that the Government Sawmills have joined up with the association. Meat works generally throughout Australia are in a very parlous position, and I shall be glad if the Minister will give me a little information regarding the Wyndham Meat Works. The "West Australian" recently published a statement by the Minister for Agriculture as follows:—

The frozen meat from Wyndham is not the property of the Government, but is merely handled by it as the agent of the Northern growers.

How has that position been brought about? It is news to me.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If there is a margin above a certain price, the growers get the benefit.

Hon. T. MOORE: I understand the growers received good prices last year. Another Press cutting reads:—

Fruit growing in Australia is an unprofitable industry, largely because Europe, which formerly provided an outlet for a considerable portion of the exportable surplus, is in chaos. The base metals industry is seriously affected from the same cause. Central Europe is underfed, but the usual channels of trade are blocked, and cattle are rotting on Queensland stations while the machinery of meat preserving works lies idle.

Thanks to the Wyndham meat works, the squatters of the North-West are getting rid of their cattle; they are not rotting on the stations.

The Minister for Education: And we shall get a better price this year.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am glad to see that the Minister already is partly wedded to these concerns.

The Minister for Education: No, I am not.

Hon. T. MOORE: I commend the Government for having carried out the policy of extending workers' homes, a policy inaugurated by the Labour Government.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And in extending trading concerns, too.

Hon. T. MOORE: The extension of the workers' homes to the country was an admirable step. Under this scheme it is possible for workers in the country to get homes for their families. It was an unsatisfactory state of affairs that necessitated a worker taking employment in the country while his family remained in the city. The fact of having comfortable little homes and not too costly will make for better townships. This work should have been undertaken years ago. I was rather struck with some of the arguments adduced at the Primary Producers' Conference regarding unimproved land values. This is quite a bugbear to a lot of members. I was astounded to notice that the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, after hearing the arguments of several farmers as to the necessity for adopting an unimproved land tax, stated that it was not possible for them as a party to do anything for the farmers when the latter did not know what they wanted. That was a remarkable statement. The farmers did not come to Perth to draft legislation. It was the intention of conference to set up a principle, and it was for men like the scientific Mr. Stewart, the leader and the deputy leader of the party to draft a Bill to give effect to the desires of the conference. These farmers know what they want. They know the extra burdens entailed because the farmer on the other side of the fence is doing nothing with his property. They know that on that account they are paying higher freights than are necessary. If the other farmer were cultivating his land they know it would be a step towards reduced taxation. They know what the city dwellers would be called upon to pay under an unimproved land tax—the men who are farming the rich lands of Perth. The farmers' representatives in Parliament, however, say that they cannot carry out the desires—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The party did not say it. Only one individual member said it.

Hon. T. MOORE: The deputy leader said it, and Mr. Stewart said there was nothing scientific about the proposal and indicated that he would not be prepared to bring in any such measure. The farmers were bluffed. We are told that there was a wordy warfare. Of course the farmers know what they want and they will get it before very long. I do not know that it is necessary to contrast the conditions existing when the Labour Gov-

ernment were in power with the conditions of the last few years. Members will recollect that during the Labour regime the war was raging. The timber industry was at a standstill, and there was a drought and two or three partial droughts. Yet no consideration is ever given to the Government of that time when the deficit is the subject of criticism. The Government now in power have had the advantage of good seasons, and any faults rest entirely with their administration. Under the Mitchell Government there has been a constant drift and things financial have grown worse than ever they were in the history of the State.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. T. MOORE: A matter which I have mentioned here before, and which is of great importance to the development of the State, is cheaper money. In pre-war days capital was available for the development of the mining, farming, and other industries at the rate of 5 per cent. Whereas formerly it was possible to develop a farm for £600 or £700, that amount has now, by reason of the fall in the value of money, increased to £1,100 or £1,200. On the top of that, the borrower has to pay, not 5 per cent., but 7 per cent. on the increased amount. While that condition of affairs obtains, those setting out to build up industries here are necessarily hampered. Farmers, in particular, are loth even to embark on clearing operations, a very necessary work in the development of our lands. The Premier pointed out to a deputation of unemployed that he had made available through the Agricultural Bank, the Industries Assistance Board, and the Soldier Settlement Scheme several hundreds of thousands of pounds for land clearing. However, owing to rates of interest being so high, the farmers are unwilling to load themselves up with overdrafts, and the money mentioned by Sir James Mitchell, although it may be available, is not being spent. From frequent conversations with farmers, I have gathered that they are not prepared to do more developing until they have paid off some of the money they already owe, as otherwise the interest bill would drag them down. That is a very sensible view. Since money has become cheaper, it is time that it should be made available more cheaply by the Government for the development of the country's resources. The Premier considers that he has made a good bargain at Home in the way of securing cheap money, having regard to the rebates in the interest. But, nevertheless, the Premier wants the whole of the nominal rate of 7 per cent. from the men who have to use the loan. The Premier of New South Wales has just returned with a loan floated on the London market at 4½ per cent. Thus New South Wales can get cheap money. The time has arrived when Western Australia too should obtain cheap money for development purposes. The able report of the Royal Commission dealing with soldier settlement points out that in almost every case the interest

is too high for the man on the property taken over. The Royal Commission recommended—

That efforts be made to secure the co-operation of the Federal Government in reducing the high rate of interest charged to soldier settlers, so as to bring them, as near as practicable, within the scope of the benefits received by pre-war settlers, and failing a satisfactory solution of the above, that the State Act be amended in order to meet the requirements provided by the latter part of this recommendation.

Hon. J. Mills: The Prime Minister promised to reduce the rate of interest after next year to 5 per cent.

Hon. T. MOORE: Our Premier may continue his present practice of making the borrower pay a high rate of interest even if the Prime Minister supplies us with money at 5 per cent.

Hon. J. Mills: The reduction of the rate to the borrower should be made a condition.

Hon. T. MOORE: I think it would be worth the while of hon. members interested in the settlement of our soldiers to study the Royal Commission's report. I do not agree with Mr. Mills when he says that the Commissioners did not know what they were doing. Providing the Government act on the Commission's recommendations, something will have been achieved for the soldiers. To speak of the Commissioners as a buffer between the Government and the soldiers is quite wrong. My fear is that the report of this Commission, like the reports of so many Royal Commissions, will simply be allowed to lie on the Table and will scarcely be referred to again. I hope that will not be so in the case of this Commission, at all events. Regarding our system of education, I am honestly pleased to see an energetic man holding the Education portfolio. To give Mr. Ewing his due, he is energetic. Now he has in his keeping, for a time at all events, the whole educational system of Western Australia. Apart from other duties, that work is sufficient for one man. I confess that I am not altogether satisfied regarding the education of our youth. The system starts all right. We are very eager to get our young people to school. They attend compulsorily at six years of age, and in the kindergartens they begin even earlier. My grievance is that State education stops too soon. Just when on the threshold of understanding with the mind of an adult, a boy at the age of 14 is cut off from school. Thus, while our beginning is good our ending is bad. I hope that the Minister during his term in command of the education of our youth will give consideration to ways and means of extending the system. We expect our leaders to devise ways and means of giving our children the best education that it is possible for any people to get. If we allow our educational system to lag behind that of any other country, we shall lag behind too. I read a little while ago that one of the great educational reformers of the Old World—

Matthew Arnold, I think it was—said he regarded an uneducated man as a man maimed. If that dictum is well founded, we have quite a number of maimed youths in Western Australia. In fact, if a child is to pass out of the education system at the age of 14, it would be almost as well if he never saw a school at all. A child can be taught at home to read and write and figure a little. Every member of this Chamber is desirous that his children shall have more education than is provided for them up to the age of 14, and he sees that they get more. If it is good for the children of members of this House, and good for the children of the wealthy class of this State, to be educated beyond the age of 14, it is good for every other child; and failing such education we shall not get the best out of those who are born and reared in this State. This is a great question which must be dealt with. I was sorry to see just recently that our late Minister for Education, Mr. Colebatch, said he believed it was necessary to educate the child beyond the age of 14 years, as was done in the Old Country, where the leaving age varies from 15 years to 16 years. Practically throughout Great Britain children are being educated up to at least the age of 15. Thus we have fallen behind the Old Country. Mr. Colebatch said he believed that education should go on further than 14 years of age, but that we could not afford it. I take the reverse view, and say that we cannot afford to remain as we are, cannot afford to leave the work of education undone. When a child in Britain leaves the State or subsidised system of education, an association corresponding to the Parents' and Citizens' Associations of this State sends to the parents or guardians of the child a memorandum saying that the parents or guardians should not regard the child's education as finished. Many parents in this State are prone to believe that the education of a child is pretty perfect at 14. That impression must be removed. The Minister for Education would do well to see that parents and guardians are made to understand that something more is necessary, and that the child must not be regarded as having done with education when leaving school at the age of 14. I suggest to the Minister that he should impress this view on parents and guardians whenever he addresses one of the associations. Thus the Minister will have an opportunity of sending his name down in the history of this State. People coming after him will say, "When we had Mr. Ewing as Minister for Education our educational system advanced." I honestly hope that such will be the result. We have not been going on right lines; we want something better than that which we now have. Provided the education of the Australian youth is on right lines, and provided he is given something to carry him over the years of his adolescence, something that will enable him to retain his school knowledge and augment it with more knowledge, we shall have in this

State of ours citizens who will be able to hold their own with any people in the world.

Hon. A. BURVILL (South-East) [7.45]: I should like to congratulate Mr. Ewing on his elevation to the position of Leader of the House, and to congratulate also Mr. Kirwan on his election as Chairman of Committees. Coming to the Governor's Speech, I notice the following paragraph:—

The Government recognise that road boards must construct and maintain from rates the more substantially constructed main roads rendered necessary through the supersession of horse-drawn by motor traffic, and have under consideration measures to enable them to do this work.

I am glad the Government have this matter under consideration and are going to relieve road boards of the responsibility. For a good many years, especially in the South-West, road boards have been neglecting their feeder roads and spending nearly the whole of their money on main roads. Very often those main roads are of but little use to the settlers in the district. This promised measure is not coming before it is wanted. Road boards should not be called upon to expend rates on roads other than those that go through their respective districts. If this were remedied the boards would have funds for feeder roads, and so would encourage what is of more importance than motor traffic, namely land development. The Commonwealth, we are told, is coming to the aid of the State Government in this matter of road construction. I should like the Minister to intimate to us exactly how the Commonwealth money is to be distributed. It should be used where the new development is taking place, where settlement is sparse, and where most of the lands are still in the hands of the Crown and, in consequence, roads have to be made through them. Also the peculiar difficulties of the various road districts should be considered.

Hon. J. Mills: You will get your whack of it down there.

Hon. T. Moore: I hope you will not get more than your whack.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I should like to see the newly settled districts get it. Moreover, the boards ought to be graded, so that they would receive assistance in proportion with their peculiar difficulties. In some of the road districts five-sixths of the land belongs to the Crown, whereas in others Crown lands represent only one-sixth of the area. It is not right that this money should be equally distributed between such road districts. Again, at one time we used to have a return showing the financial position of each board and the sources of its revenue. Will the Minister, when replying, give us those particulars, so that members may have something to go upon, or is it the intention of the Government to revive this system? This information should be available to members, and we should have some definite scheme of distribution of the Commonwealth grant. In

my view the old State subsidy should be re-introduced on a sliding scale which would give difficult districts 30s. in the pound, while long-settled districts, where roads are in good condition, would get a much smaller subsidy. Under the Land Act the new settler has two years' exemption from road board rates. The first thing a settler wants is a road to his place. He applies to the local road board, and under the Act the board are not allowed to take any rates from him. In the group settlements the position is even worse. The group settlers have two years' exemption. But before that period is entered upon the settler has to get his land, which, generally speaking, occupies about two years. In the meantime the group settlers want roads and, as Mr. Nicholson says, roads in some of the group settlement areas are not too good. In the Speech we are told that 400,000 cases of fruit were exported from the State during the year. Also we learn that the quality of the fruit was good. However, nothing is said about the price it brought. Nor are we told anything about the quantity sold locally, or the quantity that lay rotting in the orchards this year. Year after year there will be a big increase in the quantity of fruit grown in this State. Trees planted years ago are now beginning to come into bearing, and in many districts the increase is very rapid.

Hon. T. Moore: Although there are no marketing facilities.

Hon. A. BURVILL: When I tell hon. members that one co-operative company at Mt. Barker ordered 16 tons of wrapping paper last year, used it all and had to order some more, it will give hon. members an idea of the progress of the industry. Not the whole of that paper was used for fruit for exportation; some of it was used for fruit going into cold storage for local consumption. The Government should give more attention to the provision of facilities for the marketing of fruit. It is time we had cold stores at Bunbury and at Fremantle, so that fruit could be pre-cooled before being shipped. It would then be in better condition to carry. At Albany two co-operative companies have already attended to that matter. Before the war, freight on fruit to Great Britain and Europe was 2s. 9d. per case; now it is 4s. 6d. The Commonwealth Government could help a little in this respect. The total cost of a case of fruit, after leaving the rails to be shipped to the Old Land, is 7s. 3d. On the price fruit has been fetching in Europe, it has been a losing proposition. The fruit-growers should have more co-operation, and the Government should help in the local marketing. It is time the question of a market in Perth was settled. I care not whether it be taken in hand by the municipal council or by the Government, but certainly the Government should see to it that the fruitgrowers have all the necessary facilities for marketing their fruit at the lowest possible cost. At present the grower gets but a very small price, whereas the consumer has to pay a very large price. In the Eastern States we have had a Commonwealth fruit pool. This

State has not benefited one penny by it. Yet the Commonwealth Government have lost £632,000 in helping the Eastern States to sell their fruit. Again, we should consider the enormous quantity of fruit wasted for want of a secondary industry which would use it. Here, too, the Government should help. Some time ago the fruitgrowers' association in the Albany district wrote up to the Westralian Farmers Ltd. and learned that the firm was advertising an Eastern State's jam, while the fruit of the local orchardists was rotting on the ground. That association passed a motion protesting against the action of the Westralian Farmers Ltd. The answer they received from the managing director was as follows:—

I am in receipt of your favour of the 12th inst., and have noted carefully the resolution by the Albany district council. Unfortunately, our chairman of directors and myself were both directors of the A.F.L. jam factory, and we can speak with confidence of the very serious difficulties of the position. Neither of us is prepared for a moment to recommend our directors to invest the company's capital in the establishment of a jam factory in this State—at least not for the present. In regard to our selling of Victorian jam, the only factory in this State is a proprietary one, and its out-turn is so very small that the bulk of the West Australian trade is done by Eastern States people, who have at their command a very much greater variety of jam-making fruits, and can make it very difficult indeed for a jam factory to progress in this State. We are fully aware that the bulk of the jam in this State comes from the East, and in taking up the selling of one of the Eastern States lines, we were merely assisting a factory which is entirely a co-operative one, and is owned by the fruitgrowers themselves of Victoria. The competition is not against the local article, but against Messrs. Henry Jones & Co., Messrs. Peacock, and the like. We feel that in the circumstances we were quite justified in assisting this growers' co-operative concern, as under present conditions our company was not in a position to create a local factory itself. We can assure you of this, that had we not offered assistance to the co-operative concern in Victoria, they would have been forced out of the West Australian business, and the proprietary interests there would have secured the trade which the co-operative venture at present gets. It may interest your members to know that for some time past the proprietary firms of the Eastern States have been selling jams in Western Australia at a lower price than they are selling them in Victoria or even in Tasmania. This is being done to strangle any effort that may be made to interfere with the monopoly they have held in this market in the past. Let me assure your members that the position is a very difficult one, and the action we took was in all good faith and

in no sense opposed to the local manufacturing firm.

In the Eastern States, immediately there is any dumping in secondary industries it is stopped by an increased duty. On the other hand, secondary industries in the Eastern States are dumping their produce here, not only to the detriment of our own secondary industries, but to the detriment of our primary producers. That, too, will hit the immigration scheme. I should like to know from the Leader of the House what the Government intend to do to put a stop to this.

The Minister for Education: Can you suggest a means?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Private enterprise in the East is out to exploit Western Australia and crush secondary industries here.

The Minister for Education: I should like you to suggest something.

Hon. T. Moore: State jam factories.

Hon. A. BURVILL: We want to eliminate the unnecessary middleman in connection with the marketing of the fruit, to raise the price to the grower, and reduce it to the consumer, thereby making it certain that we shall get a payable price for the produce before it is grown. Some time ago I wrote to the manager of the South African railways, Mr. W. W. Hoy. I heard they had a system there of marketing local produce. The system in brief is that the grower can consign his local produce from where it is grown to any other town or to any other grower who wants his particular sort of produce, and can consign from one railway station to another. A man, say on the Congo, can consign his fruit, eggs or butter or other commodities—not livestock—to, say, Capetown. This fruit or other produce would be taken delivery of by the stationmaster. It would be consigned on what is called a collect on delivery note to its destination, whether Durban, Capetown, or other town. It would be delivered by Government men and the price of the produce would be collected and also the freight, and the money would be remitted back to the stationmaster who first consigned the goods, less commission, or the money would be sent in postal notes direct to the grower. The manager of the South African railways says that the working of the system is extremely simple and gives every satisfaction to all concerned. Its operation undoubtedly facilitates business relations between residents and farmers in the country and the merchants in the towns. I will read a paragraph of the general manager's letter to show what the system means:—

At approximately 100 stations throughout the Union, which includes all the larger towns, the administration undertakes the cartage of traffic between the station and consignees and consignors as the case may be, within a certain radius of the station, and at such places traffic including that consigned under the c.o.d. system is immediately on arrival at the station carted by road wagon to, and delivery tendered at, the address of consignee, all charges including the c.o.d. amount being collected

by the carter. At those stations where cartage work is not performed by the administration, it is, of course, necessary for consignee to attend at the station to pay the charges due and take delivery of his traffic. You will observe that the c.o.d. system operates only between two stations where railway staff is resident and that traffic consigned to or from a siding or stopping place, where there is no resident staff, as well as livestock, explosives, and dangerous goods, are excluded therefrom, while the maximum value of any one consignment is limited to £100. Freight charges for the transport of traffic consigned under the c.o.d. system is the same as that applicable to traffic consigned in the ordinary way, but it will be noticed from the consignment note that a consignor may elect to prepay such charges or require same to be collected from the consignee. The rates of commission shown in the attached have up to the present been applied generally to all classes of traffic forwarded under the c.o.d. system, but the administration has under consideration a proposal to effect a reduction of these charges in the case of fruit and perishables.

Provision is also made whereby the department guards against produce not being taken delivery of, or produce being of an inferior quality. The whole system has worked for some time in South Africa, and there is now a proposal to reduce the commission. The commission is, for produce not exceeding 10s., 5d.; £1, 9d.; £2, 1s. 2d., and so on. The maximum amount upon any consignment shall not exceed £100 sterling. I placed this matter before the Minister for Railways, who submitted it to the Commissioner of Railways. I am to a certain extent satisfied with the answer, but taken as a whole I think it is unsatisfactory.

The Minister for Education: What did he say?

Hon. A. BURVILL: On the 6th August the Minister wrote:—

I return herewith your papers, being correspondence with the South African railways and harbours, regarding their "cash on delivery system." I have had this matter under consideration by the Commissioner of Railways who reports that the conditions prevailing on the South African system vary to such an extent that he considers no good result would accrue from the introduction of similar regulations in this State. The Commissioner explains that in South Africa the system operates between stations at which there is a resident staff, and there is a very large number of attended stations, whereas in this State we have only 150. He also explains that most of the people who would do business under the "collect on delivery" system are served by unattended sidings, and in such cases of course it could not apply. The Commissioner suggests that the Primary Producers' Association, which has a branch at the bulk of the places where prospective consumers reside, might make it a matter

for their association, rather than the Railway Department. Farmers usually buy on extended terms, and storekeepers generally on a month's credit, and in such cases, of course, collect on delivery would not apply. We do propose, however, giving it a trial in regard to fruit, by introducing a flat rate for fruit in case lots, consigned from any one station on our system to any other station, and if this has the desired effect, it might be worth while bringing again under notice the possibility of extending it to other forms of produce.

I contend that the system is particularly applicable to Western Australia. Some 46 per cent. of the population of what is one-third of the continent, resides within 20 miles of the city. This collect and delivery system would work excellently here if we could only persuade the Railway Department to adopt it. It could particularly apply to group settlements. It would be a tremendous help in assisting the settlers to get rid of their produce, and would help the consumers in Perth. The consumer would be able to write to the head of any particular group and get the produce he wanted. He would also get it cheaper and would be certain he was getting it in good condition. The system in South Africa eliminates inferior stuff. It also eliminates the middleman. It gives the grower a chance of getting rid of his produce, and the consumer knows what he will get. The grower could get his customers together in this area or that, and grow stuff specially for them.

Hon. T. Moore: How do you get on with the metropolitan fruit sales? Are they satisfactory?

Hon. A. BURVILL: This system would do away with the auctioneer. I went to the markets last year when the glut was on. I saw cases of tomatoes sold at 1s. a case. Any quantity was passed in at this price because the auctioneer would not take less than the price of the case. A few hundred yards away I saw a lady buying tomatoes at 4 lbs. for 1s. They were the cheapest she could get in Perth, notwithstanding that a few hundred yards away tomatoes had been sold at 1s. a case. It would be much better if people could send direct to the growers, and have the produce sent straight to them instead of its going through the auctioneer, then the dealer, and so on before it reaches the consumer. The middlemen are battenning too much on the grower and the consumer.

Hon. T. Moore: The middlemen are paying too much rent in many cases.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. A. BURVILL: Let the auctioneers and middlemen do without rents and so on, and let them go out to the group settlements and earn their own living there. I approve of the settlement and clearing of the wheat areas and the policy of the present Government. According to what we have been reading recently over a million acres have been taken up in the wheat

area during the last 12 months. It has been decided to build railways in other places and open up further wheat areas. The group settlement scheme is the best for the South-West. It will mean systematic clearing and settlement. Under that system clearing and settlement will be carried on quicker in that class of country than in any part of the Commonwealth. Mr. Baxter said it was too soon to start this scheme. When I came to this State 26 years ago people were talking about settling the South-West, and they had been talking about it before. It has, therefore, been waiting 30 years. How much longer must it wait?

The Minister for Education: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. BURVILL: Mr. Cornell considered that the settlement of the South-West should go on simultaneously with the settlement of the wheat areas. It has lagged behind, and it will have to go forward pretty fast for it to catch up with the wheat areas.

Hon. J. Mills: Could not the settlement be arranged more cheaply if the Government cleared by contract instead of under the existing system?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The settlement could be speeded up by establishing railways ahead of settlement and doing preliminary work. Where the groups are, one of the chief causes of the cost of settlement is the means of transport. Stores, building materials and the like are sent over very badly made roads; at least they become pretty bad during the winter. If the railway from Denmark to Bridgetown had been built first, the group settlement scheme could have been carried out much cheaper. There has been a lot of criticism regarding the cost of the groups, the management, the type of settlers, the quality of the land, and the question of day work versus contract. I have not been through the whole of the groups, but I have kept a watchful eye on the groups at Denmark. I have lived there for 20 years and claim to know something about the area. As to the quality of the land, the district surveyor has gone through the whole district and carefully selected the blocks. The inspector of the Agricultural Bank and the managers of the groups themselves have gone through as well. The land in the blocks is good; any not up to standard has been left, the idea being that when some group settler makes greater progress than the others, he will be able to take the additional land over. Nothing more could be desired in the method of selecting the blocks. As to piecework clearing, it is right that the clearing should be done by piecework in the wheat belt, where the settler is in a totally different position from that of a man in the South-West. A wheat farmer wants to get 200 or 300 acres cleared. He has plenty to do without doing the clearing himself. It is not necessary that he should know anything about the work and, therefore, it is better for him to have it done by day labour.

The Minister for Education: You are referring only to the wheat areas.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes. In the South-West they are putting on the land men from Western Australia and from the Eastern States, and migrants as well. Most of the settlers have had no previous experience in clearing. The system there is to partially clear 25 acres out of the 160 acres which comprise each block. During the years I have been in the district I found out that it is essential that I should know all about clearing. I do know all about it, and I learned by experience. It is necessary that this knowledge shall be possessed by a settler there, although he may not do the clearing himself. If I put a man on to do clearing by day work, I must know all about it so as to give him his instructions. If I let the work out on contract I must know how it should be done. The best device for helping these men is that in operation to-day; under an experienced manager, 20 men are engaged in the work.

Hon. J. A. Greig: Do you think they are being taught the best way to clear the land?

Hon. A. BURVILL: That is a matter of opinion.

Hon. J. A. Greig: Do you think one man working on his own will work the same as when there are 20 men engaged on the task?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No, but I am sure that when those 20 men have worked under a manager and partially cleared the 25 acres on each of the blocks, they will have all the experience in clearing, ploughing, and fencing that is necessary. They will also be able to see the methods adopted and will learn to see what improvements can be made. Not always are 20 men working together in these blocks.

Hon. J. A. Greig: I am of opinion that they are being taught to do the work in the wrong way.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not think so. If Mr. Greig were more frequently on the groups and had more experience of clearing, he would not be of his present opinion. There are different methods. Some criticism has been levelled against the methods of those already established in the Denmark area, who should know something about it. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and that is what has happened. The management of the group settlements have been criticised by settlers, but now those very settlers are applying through me to the Government for permission to get for themselves a clearing machine such as is used on the groups. If the settlers have learned to appreciate the method employed on the groups and recognise that it is a better method than the one they adopted, why should they not apply for it if they believe it is the better method? If Mr. Greig went down there he would come to the same conclusion.

Hon. J. A. Greig: I have been there and have seen it done. The pulling up of the green stumps is the only thing I thought was right down there.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If it were possible to get experienced men who thoroughly understood the work, it could be done cheaper.

Hon. T. Moore: Very much cheaper.

Hon. A. BURVILL: But would it be wise to carry out the clearing on those lines? If a man is put on his 25-acre block without any knowledge of clearing, he will not have any knowledge of bush work at all—and that is necessary. As it is, these men are paying for their own experience.

Hon. T. Moore: Some of these settlers may walk off without paying for anything.

Hon. A. BURVILL: There are not enough men experienced in clearing to be found in the State to do all the clearing work for the groups. That being so, if an attempt were made to do the clearing work by contract, the price would be more costly than it is today. If Mr. Moore knew that the number of clearers was limited, and he was putting in a contract for clearing, he would submit a price accordingly. For my part, if I were doing so, I would double the price knowing that I would have to pay the wages.

Hon. T. Moore: If I did that, I would not get the contract.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Would you apply the same method to railway work?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Has the hon. member heard of any contractor who cannot get men for railway work? There is a limited number of experienced men.

Hon. T. Moore: There are plenty of men to do the work.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Any number of them.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Much has been said about the excessive cost of clearing on the groups, and I understand details have been presented to the House. I have particulars regarding costs that have been incurred down there.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Where did you get them?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I got them out personally. I have not seen the particulars that have been laid on the Table, and I can only give hon. members the cost of clearing the blocks at Denmark. I know nothing about the others. I do not see, however, why the other blocks should cost much more than those at Denmark. There is no doubt that when the work was first started in connection with the group settlements, the wrong methods were used. Taking group 41—

Hon. J. A. Greig: The easiest group in the South-West to clear.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Mr. Greig was there and criticised the clearing operations. Mr. Greig condemned the costs, but the two blocks that were first dealt with were the most expensive, because of the regrowth of timber. Every man employed was inexperienced at that stage, and of the two worst blocks, one that is finished now cost £415 to clear the 25 acres. The other block, which was in a little worse condition and was not quite finished when I was there, cost about £60 more. Some of the other blocks will cost, reckoning on no improvement in the clearing, from £100 upwards. They started the men, however, on the worst of the blocks.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Was that in the karri forest country?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes; it had been cut out by Millars. If it had been cleared immediately after the heavy timber had been taken away, the cost of clearing would have been cheaper. As it is, the country had lain idle for 14 years and the timber had grown up again.

Hon. J. A. Greig: The stumps of the trees were left.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The land was partially cleared.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is interesting to know that partial clearing costs over £20 per acre.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It does not cost so much. As to the cottages, I do not think a cheaper cottage could be obtained in Western Australia. That part of the work has been done by contract.

Hon. T. Moore: Did the State mills supply the timber?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No, the contract price was £130 and the timber was obtained outside the combine. The State mills are in the combine, so they had nothing to do with it.

Hon. T. Moore: Some of the group settlers got cheap timber from the State mills.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Perhaps so.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is that the price for a 4-roomed house?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The contract price for the timber was £130, for the building £45; the freight cost £30 and the cartage from Denmark railway station to the group £20, or a total of £225. A worker's home of three rooms costs from £500 to £600.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What are the workers' homes built of?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Brick.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That makes all the difference.

Hon. T. Moore: The quota you referred to is for rough jarrah.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It was possible for any hon. member to procure these details. They were available for anyone who desired to get them. The details show that the plans provide for a house containing two rooms 12ft. by 14ft., two rooms 12ft. by 12ft., two verandahs, a thousand-gallon tank, stove and so forth.

Hon. T. Moore: But the timber is unseasoned jarrah.

The Minister for Education: Not now.

Hon. T. Moore: The quote mentioned was for that class of timber.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Where did you get this information?

Hon. A. BURVILL: It was available for any hon. member to get.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I think hon. members might allow the hon. member to proceed without so many interjections.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If Mr. Baxter wishes to stand outside and criticise, it is very easy for him to do so. I did not have any trouble in getting this information. I do not believe in everything that has been done

on the groups. I have criticised the work, both on the groups and in Perth, when I thought it necessary. Objection might be raised by some hon. members that the timber used was not procured from the State Saw-mills, and that the work was being done by contract.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Why not do the clearing work by contract?

Hon. A. BURVILL: People in other parts, seeing what has been done on the groups, have endeavoured to procure cottages for themselves similar to those erected on the groups. They realise that they are the cheapest that can be procured. We have had all sorts of people sent down there, but the "pommy" migrants are in the majority. A great deal depends upon the man himself.

Hon. T. Moore: Did you say that the "pommies" were in the majority?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes.

Hon. T. Moore: There are only 240 in all the groups.

Hon. A. BURVILL: So long as a man is a "live wire," it does not matter where he comes from. At the same time, the authorities might be more careful in the selection of the settlers. They are brought here and it is not the fault of the managers of the scheme, that they are put on the groups. When the men go there, the managers do the best they can for them. Mr. Dodd and others remarked that there are no farm hands available in England. I doubt that statement. In the district in which I live there are settlers who came out as immigrants and who have made good. In fact, they have done very well during a series of years, extending up to as long as 14. Those settlers came from various counties in England, and they have told me that there are any number of farmers in England who could be persuaded to come to Western Australia, and who are not in too good a position inasmuch as they have to rent the land that they are working. Unfortunately those farmers are of a conservative turn of mind and they want to be positive about their future before they can be induced to make a move. If we had men of the type of whom I speak constituting the groups, they would prove a valuable asset because they understand just that particular kind of cultivation that is necessary.

Hon. T. Moore: But you offer them only 25s. a week when they come here.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am speaking of group settlers. Those people would have a tremendous advantage over the type of immigrant arriving to-day.

Hon. J. Cornell: Teach the average "pommy" how to handle a horse and the rest will be easy.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Complaint has also been made about markets for the produce that will come from group settlements. It is only necessary to draw attention to the fact that we still send out of the State the huge sum of £900,000 for produce that should be grown within the State. When that is

overtaken, we shall then have just as good if not a better chance than the Eastern States, of exporting to Europe. The Government should consider the means whereby we should be able to help the dairying industry in Western Australia. In Victoria this industry was given a substantial start by the granting of a bonus of 6d. per lb. on the quantity exported.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It was 3d.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Seeing that the Commonwealth Government are willing to lose £600,000 on the fruit pool—

Hon. J. Cornell: Not willing.

Hon. A. BURVILL: At any rate they have lost it—they might be induced to assist us by way of granting us a bonus.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Not on your life!

Hon. A. BURVILL: Under the Federal Constitution it is not possible for us to assist an industry by giving it a bonus.

Hon. J. Cornell: A hundred and one bounties are granted by the Commonwealth.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I suggest that the Government give this proposal serious consideration, because, as soon as the groups are actively producing, they should be given assistance similar to that which was granted to industries of a like nature when they were established in the Eastern States. To-day we are up against greater costs for clearing, higher wages, higher cost of material, and, in fact, increased costs in every direction.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The returns now are twice as good as they were in those days.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It will be a couple of years at least before there will be any produce worthy of the name at the groups, and the advisableness of assisting the group settlers, so as to give them an incentive, should be seriously considered.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would they not do better with pigs than with cows?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member is being subjected to too many interjections.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I agree with the hon. member that the settlers would do well with pigs, but so far as the South-West is concerned, the cow holds the key to the position. When a man has cows, he is bound to keep pigs, and if he is growing potatoes and he cannot sell them, he can always make use of them.

Hon. J. Cornell: And if he cannot sell the pig, he can eat it.

Hon. A. BURVILL: When a man has cows it is easy for him to rear young pigs and he can turn them into bacon at small cost. To keep pigs without cows in the South-West would result in failure. Potatoes are a good side line. Last year Bunbury picked up £20,000 in six weeks by exporting potatoes to the Eastern States. Now we are beginning to export seed potatoes. Once the groups are in full swing, and the settlers have their stock, potatoes as a side line will always help to keep the pot boiling. Regarding tomatoes, I would like to draw attention to

what Queensland has done. Let me read this extract from the "West Australian"—

Authorities in Brisbane estimate that the Queensland crop of tomatoes this season will total 250,000 cases, of which 80,000 are to be pulped and the balance sold fresh. The Government is backing pulping operations to the extent of £8,000. From the whole of the tomato pool operations it is expected that £50,000 will be realised.

All our canned tomatoes and tomato sauces are brought over here from the Eastern States. Bendigo, I think, is the biggest supplier, and yet this State is second to no other State in Australia with regard to the production of the tomato. As a matter of fact, I doubt whether there are better places in the Commonwealth for the growth of the tomato than Geraldton in the north and any part of the South-West. With regard to condensed milk, all that comes from the Eastern States. In Victoria this commodity is not prepared in one district alone; there are factories all over that State. It was generally thought that Warrnambool exported potatoes and nothing else. We have it on the authority of the Press that Warrnambool, a little while back, in the course of a week exported 40,000 cases of Nestle's milk for Eastern ports by one steamer and 30,000 cases for Japan and Indo-China ports by another steamer. This proves that Warrnambool, if it ever did, does not now entirely depend on potato production. I contend that if the group settlers, when they cease to draw their 10s. a day allowance, get down to work in earnest, there is no reason why they should not make good. At the same time I do not see why they should not be given a Commonwealth or a State bonus.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It cannot be done under the Constitution.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Western Australia is suffering from the opposition which comes from the Eastern States. An hon. member earlier in the debate referred to the State Improvement Works and other trading concerns. So far as I can see, if there is going to be continued opposition to factories starting in this State, there will be nothing else for it but to go in for further State industries, because it will be possible by such means only to fight vested interests from the other side of Australia, which vested interests are now strangling our secondary industries. I am not altogether in favour of State enterprises, but at the same time something should be done to destroy unfair competition and dumping which is taking place.

Hon. J. Cornell: Everything will come in time when you increase the population.

Hon. A. BURVILL: We are suffering severely from the Massey Greene tariff. In 1921 this meant £5 18s. 6d. per head, equivalent to £30 per family, and last year £5 0s. 3½d. per head, or £25 per family. Western Australia is the biggest immigration State just now; we have the greatest area of vacant land and can do more for new arrivals than any other State of Australia. We shall for a

long time yet be putting more money into Eastern States coffers through the tariff. An hon. member described us as a junior partner in the Federation. I think sometimes that we are only a very poor relation; indeed, I have thought we were worse than that, that we were simply Lazarus.

On motion by Hon. F. E. S. Willmott, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st August, 1923.

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

QUESTION—PEEL ESTATE.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been called to an address delivered under the auspices of the Fremantle Business Men's Association regarding the failure of Peel Estate settlers? 2, Is the statement correct?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, As to the quality of the land, yes. Otherwise, thoroughly competent officials have been in charge of operations on Peel Estate, viz., Mr. E. M. Downs, Agricultural Adviser; his assistant, Mr. Tonkin; and the Agricultural Bank Inspector, Mr. Rhodes. The policy is well defined—dairying and growth of fodder and root crops. Inexperienced men have not failed for lack of advice. A few have proved unsuitable, as is inevitable in dealing with large numbers. The State can guarantee the land—it cannot guarantee the men.

QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME.

Mr. J. THOMSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, With reference to the findings of the Commission of inquiry into the management of the Old Men's Home held in 1916, do the Government intend to put the recom-