

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th August, 1926.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, ELECTRIFICATION.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the question of the electrification of the suburban and hills railway service been considered from the financial and operating points of view? 2, Is it practicable from these viewpoints? 3, Will he give an approximate estimate of the capital involved in the suggested change over?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, From an operating standpoint it is practicable. The financial aspect regarding the hills railway has not been definitely determined. 3, See answer to No. 2.

QUESTIONS (3)—MAIN ROADS BOARD.

Payments into Trust Account.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has any money been paid into the credit of the Main Roads Trust Account from the land tax? 2, If so, what was the amount standing to the credit of that account on the 30th June, 1926?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

Upper Gascoyne Road Board, Proposed Grant.

Mr. LINDSAY (for Mr. Thomson) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Was he correctly reported in the "West Australian" of 3rd August as having promised £20,000 spread over ten years to the Upper Gascoyne Road Board? 2, If so, is this money to be taken from the main roads grant? 3, If not from the main road funds, which are outside political control, from what fund does he propose to allocate the £20,000?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Each of the road boards in the North-West was advised to forward for consideration a programme of works covering a period of ten (10) years, to be spent at the rate of £2,000 per annum, as I hoped that that amount could be made available if the Federal Parliament passed the amendments to the Main Roads Act, and so made available the proposed additional money for roads, and further, provided that the State Parliament ratified the agreement. 2, Yes. 3, Answered by No. 2.

Construction Costs, Payment Assessments.

Mr. MILLINGTON asked the Minister for Works: 1, What percentage of the cost of construction of roads undertaken by the Main Roads Board is chargeable to local governing bodies in regard to (a) main roads, (b) developmental roads? 2, On what basis are such payments assessed? 3, What is the period over which payments are extended?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, (a) 50 per cent. of expenditure incurred by State. (b) According to the strict reading of the Act, local governing bodies are chargeable with the same percentage of costs of developmental roads as of main roads, but as this was not the intention of the Government, it is proposed to introduce an amending Bill this session to exempt local authorities from liability to contribute to the cost of constructing developmental roads. 2, Payments are assessable by the Main Roads Board in the manner prescribed by the Act on the basis of benefits accruing to each district by reason of expenditure. 3, The assessed amount to be borne by each district shall be deemed to be a loan for a period of 30 years advanced by the Treasurer.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC, MOTOR ACCIDENTS.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Police: 1, What was the total number of recorded accidents with petrol-propelled vehicles in the metropolis, including Fremantle, Midland Junction and suburbs, for the year ended 30th June, 1926? 2, What was the total number of injured and killed, respectively, resulting therefrom?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, 372; 2, 30 killed, 342 injured. The following return gives particulars of all accidents in the metropolitan area for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1926:—

RETURN OF ACCIDENTS WHICH OCCURRED IN PUBLIC STREETS, SHOWING THE NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED OR INJURED.
FROM 1ST JULY, 1925, TO 30TH JUNE, 1926.

District.	Total number of Accidents.	Persons.		No. of motor vehicles in district.	Cause of Accident.										Ages of Persons Killed.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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		Killed.	Injured.		Killed.	Injured.	Accidents to Pedestrians.	Tram.	Cab.	Bus.	Motor vehicles.	Bicycles.	Fire Engine.	Other vehicles.	Improperly riding upon or getting on and off trams and other vehicles whilst in motion.	Loose.	Load.	Ridden or driven.	Under 10 and under 30.	Over 30 and under 60.	Over 60.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
Metropolitan including Midland Junction	322	38	206	10	118	8,081	3	25	...	1	3	20	271	3	5	...	2	5	1	9</

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Hannans (Hon. S. W. Munsie) on the ground of ill-health.

RESOLUTION — FINANCIAL RELATIONS, COMMONWEALTH AND STATES.

On motion by the Premier, resolved: That the resolution agreed to at the previous sitting with regard to the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the State Governments be transmitted to the Council, and its concurrence desired therein.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Rates.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.41]: During last session, when I introduced the Bill dealing with the increased rating powers under the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act, I made a statement to the House that that measure did not actually impose the rates but merely gave the Minister the power to impose them, and that the rates themselves would be struck by means of a regulation that would be placed upon the Table of the House, at which stage members would be able to discuss them. I made that statement based on the fact that it has been the practice for the rates to be struck in that way. That point was emphasised by the Leader of the Opposition and by other members of the Chamber. That has been the practice not only under the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act, but under the Acts dealing with the goldfields water supply and water boards. The maximum rate leviable was fixed by means of regulations. Since the passing of the Act that was dealt with last session, the position has been considered and the Crown Law authorities advise that the rates are not imposed by means of by-laws, but that every year the Minister has to impose the rates for the year and fix the actual amounts to be levied within the limits allowed by the Act. We are also advised that it would not be proper to fix the rates by means of a by-law. As the

result of that advice, the by-law under which the rates were approved under the 1909 Act has been repealed, and it is not proposed to frame a new by-law. In view of the definite promise I made when I introduced the Bill, I wish to keep faith with members by giving them full information regarding the rates to be levied for the financial year 1926-27, and the reasons influencing the Government in arriving at those rates. I desire to make the statement now because some members, particularly those representing metropolitan constituencies, may desire to refer to the question during the debate on the Address-in-reply. The rates levied for the financial year 1925-26, which were the maximum rates under the 1909 Act, and the minimum rates, were: Water rate, 1s., minimum rate, 10s.; sewerage rate, 1s. 1d., minimum rate, 7s. 6d.; storm water rate, 5d., minimum rate, 2s. 6d. The Act passed last session fixed the maximum rates as follows:—Water rate, 2s.; sewerage rate, 1s. 6d.; storm water rate, 5d. The minimum rates were left as they obtained previously. Cabinet has decided to fix the rates for the financial year 1926-27 as follows:—Water rate, 1s. 5d.; sewerage rate, 1s.; storm water rate, 3d. The minimum rates will remain as they were. It will be noted that, while the water rate has been increased by 5d., the sewerage rate has been decreased by 1d., and the storm water rate by 2d., so that the net increase to the ratepayers who pay the three rates will be 2d.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course the water rate is much greater than are the other rates.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The following figures indicate the reasons for the increase of 5d. in the pound water rate: The deficit on the water supply revenue account for the year 1925-26 was £38,757, less accrued surplus to the 30th June, 1925, £5,161, leaving a net deficit at the 30th June, 1926, of £33,596. For the current year, 1926-27, it is estimated that the deficit based on a 1s. rate will be £52,000, the principal reasons for this deficit being that the rate did not cover the operating costs and fixed annual charges on increased capital expended. One penny in the pound on annual values produces £8,195 and, therefore, to cover this deficit an additional water rate of 6.3d. in the pound should be levied. This rate does not take into account the accrued deficit of £33,596 to the

30th June, 1926. To wipe off this deficit in one year would require a further rate of 4.09d. in the pound. The Government, however, have decided to limit the water rate for the year to 1s. 5d. in the pound, and to rely on general development in the metropolitan area to assist, by means of increased valuations, excess water sales, and general business, in reducing the accrued deficit to the 30th June, 1926. Ratepayers will be given an increased water allowance for the increase in rates.

Mr. Mann: Will there be any increase in the charge for excess water?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. The deficit of £38,757 on water supply account for the year 1925-26 should have been met by an additional rate of 4.7d. in the pound. As, however, a 1s. rate was levied in July and the Bill giving increased rating powers was not passed until December last, it was not possible to meet this deficit; hence the increase in the accrued deficit to the 30th June, 1926. This deficit was due mainly to additional interest charges on completed works of improvement. The difference between the deficit for 1925-26—£38,757—and the estimated deficit for 1926-27—£52,000—is £13,243, this increase being mainly due to increased interest charges and operating expenses. Under the new Act the maximum water rate is 2s. in the pound. A rate of 1s. 5d. in the pound will, in addition to meeting ordinary charges for maintenance, interest, etc., partly cover charges for interest on £160,000 capital expended on the hills mains.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is that work completed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. I shall give details as to how we allot the charges.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do not you charge on work under construction?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Only on the portion in use. The difference of 7d. in the pound is available, if required, to meet interest, sinking fund and maintenance charges on the balance of capital expenditure on the hills mains, Churchman's Brook dam, and Wungong Brook reservoir when these works are completed and taken on to capital account. Interest on capital expenditure on the hills scheme is being capitalised and has not so far been a charge against the water supply revenue account but, as pipe lines from the various sources have now

been brought into use, it has been decided to charge interest on portion of the capital expenditure, based on the total capacity of the hills mains, as compared with the use to which they are put. For 1925-26 the amount so charged is £58,500, while for 1926-27 this amount will be increased to £160,000. The total expenditure on hills mains is £461,000, and interest on the balance of £301,000, plus expenditure on Churchman's Brook dam and Wungong reservoir, will continue to be capitalised until these works are brought into full use.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is sound business.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: As these works are brought into full operation, it will be necessary to consider further increases in rates, subject to the limit fixed under the new Act. The sewerage rate of 1s. in the pound represents a reduction of 1d. in the pound on the rate levied last year. The position of the sewerage account is as follows:—Accrued deficit on sewerage revenue account to the 30th June, 1925, £84,274, surplus for the year 1925-26 £9,767; net deficit at the 30th June, 1926, £74,507. For the current year, 1926-27, assuming a rate of 1s. 1d. in the pound was levied, the estimated surplus would be £10,727. This surplus represents 2.07d. in the pound, and by eliminating this credit balance, we could reduce the rate from 1s. 1d. to 11d. in the pound. It is necessary, however, that the accrued deficit to the 30th June, 1926, should be reduced, and the Government have therefore decided to fix the rate at 1s. in the pound, which will have the effect of reducing the deficit at the rate of something over £5,000 per annum. At Subiaco, the sewerage system is being installed. A maximum rate of 1s. 6d. in the pound, provided for in the new Act, was fixed to cover the annual deficit on the Subiaco works and the accrued annual deficit. As, however, the Subiaco scheme will not reach the rating stage until about the end of the year 1926-27, it does not require consideration this year. In regard to storm-water rating, the accrued surplus on storm-water drainage revenue account at 30th June, 1925, was £14,489, and the surplus for the year 1925-26 £6,668; making a total accrued surplus at the 30th June, 1926, of £21,157. If a rate of 5d. in the pound had been levied for 1926-27 a further estimated surplus of approximately £7,400 would have resulted. One penny in the pound on the

stormwater rate is equal to about £5,458, and it is estimated that a rate of 3¾d. in the pound would cover our expenditure for 1926-27. The Government have decided to levy a rate of 3d. in the pound, and if any loss results from this reduction, it will be met from the accrued surplus of £21,157. The rate of course will be reviewed from year to year. The foregoing figures indicate the basis for fixing the rates for 1926-27. As the water rate is being increased, members are entitled to information indicating the nature of the improved services given to ratepayers for the additional rate levied. For the last five years the capital expenditure on water supply capital account, exclusive of the hills scheme, has been as follows:—

			£
1921-22	..	..	85,311
1922-23	..	..	87,993
1923-24	..	..	241,266
1924-25	..	..	129,129
1925-26	..	..	55,045
			<hr/>
			£598,744
			<hr/>

Interest and sinking fund charges on this expenditure represent annually £41,912, equal to a rate of 5.1d. in the pound. In 1922-23 an important programme of works of improvement was embarked upon. These works account for the heavy expenditure in 1923-24 and 1924-25. The works, which were part of a comprehensive scheme to provide an improved supply to the metropolitan area, included reservoirs, filters and trunk mains on which the total expenditure was £410,826. Included in the list of works were four service reservoirs representing a total storage capacity of 36,600,000 gallons. The fact that this additional supply was available and that larger trunk mains were laid to take water into the reticulation mains assisted very largely in giving consumers a more adequate supply than was possible in the past, while the existence of these important works and the provision of similar works as the necessity arises gives an assurance that the requirements of consumers will be reasonably met in the future. Last year a record for a single day's supply was established on the 2nd January, when 15,594,000 gallons were consumed. That record was exceeded on the 19th January, 1926, when the consumption reached 18,119,000 gallons. Thus the peak supply for a single day increased in one year by 2,600,-

000 gallons. That was a terrific jump for one year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There were more people, of course.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The average daily consumption is 46.47 gallons per head and the consumption per head on the 19th January was 98.47 gallons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The people do not consume it; they bathe in it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is interesting to compare the consumption in Perth with that in other cities. In Sydney (1924) the average daily consumption per head was 46.7 gallons, and the maximum daily consumption per head was 64.8 gallons.

Mr. Teesdale: Largely on tennis courts and parks.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In Melbourne the figures for the same year were:—average daily consumption per head, 58.45 gallons, maximum daily consumption per head 103.03 gallons. It will be seen that, despite the fact that in Melbourne and Sydney there is a very heavy consumption for industrial purposes, while here the supply for such purposes is negligible, our maximum day's consumption is very much higher than that of Sydney and only slightly lower than that of Melbourne.

Mr. Mann: If we are to keep our gardens going, we require more water owing to the sandy nature of the soil.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; we shall always require more than do the people of Melbourne or Sydney.

The Premier: And we also have a greater area of gardens per head of population.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are well worth the expenditure of water.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was necessary for us to impose restrictions this year because of the abnormal consumption but compared with previous years the restrictions were not serious, the use of fixed sprinklers being limited to certain hours daily for a period of 22 days as against 41 days in the previous year. It was due to the new hills mains and additional service reservoirs that the department were able to meet the abnormal demands with such slight restrictions. The figures relating to supplies from the hills scheme are illuminating as showing what has been got for the money expended. Water was first brought into Perth from the new scheme as follows:—from Churchman's Brook, 12th November, 1925; from

Canning River, 4th December, 1925; and from Wungong Brook, 9th February, 1926; while a section of the pipe line from the Causeway to Mt. Eliza was also put into use on the same date. The quantity of water obtained from Churchman's Brook from the 12th November, 1925, to 30th June, 1926, was 127,761,000 gallons; from Canning River from the 4th December, 1925, to the 30th June, 1926, 324,949,000 gallons, and from Wungong Brook from the 9th February, 1926, to the 30th June, 1926, 162,163,000 gallons. The total from these three sources has therefore been about 614,873,000 gallons, or an average of 2,662,000 gallons per day from the 12th November, 1925, to the 30th June, 1926. This has been of material assistance to the metropolitan water supply. It will be realised that the expenditure on the pipe lines was of substantial benefit to the ratepayers during the past summer, and that without this augmented supply the position would have been serious. It can, therefore, be said that the Government have met their obligations to ratepayers and have to a great extent removed the disabilities under which consumers have laboured for many years past. The Government are also fully alive to the necessity for providing for future increased demands and will provide the funds necessary to complete the various sections of the hills scheme including Churchman's Brook dam and Wungong reservoir.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are going on with the scheme as you found it, are you not?

The MINISTER for WORKS: The wall at Churchman's Brook has been altered. We had to go down in one place to 100 feet, to find a suitable foundation. The original proposition was to go down only 6ft. We are now exploring at Wungong to find a suitable place for the wall there, but have not yet definitely decided where it will be located. Shafts have been put down and the country is being tested. The engineers have agreed as to the suitability of those two spots.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Generally speaking, the same scheme is being carried on as when we left office.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. There is only one great alteration being made. The Engineer-in-Chief is now having exploratory work done with a view to diverting a quantity of water which now goes into Mundaring, and sending it on to the

new reservoirs. He is of opinion that the country at the back of Mundaring is over-reservoired, and that a lot of water goes over the weir which could well be conserved elsewhere. He is endeavouring to find out whether it is possible to divert the water in this way. I have made this statement in view of the fact that when the Bill was introduced last session the House was of opinion that the rates would be fixed by legislation. The Leader of the Opposition said that this had always been done in the past. I think it is due to the House that I should make this explanation, in view of the advice given by the Crown Law authorities.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 5th August.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.2]: It is not my intention to speak at great length upon the Address-in-reply. I am pleased with many of the matters that have been mentioned in the Speech, but I must enter my emphatic protest against the procedure adopted when members of this Chamber are summoned to hear the Speech read. We in this House represent the people and I do not think it is right that you, Mr. Speaker, and other members should have to listen to that Speech while standing on their feet, although members of the Council are made comfortable in their seats.

The Premier: We shall have the opening next time in this Chamber.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, or better conditions and more comfort should be provided for us there. Our legs are entitled to some consideration.

Mr. Marshall: We could do away with the whole lot, even the Address-in-reply, without causing any harm.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The most important part of the Speech is that relating to the proposal to link up Boyup Brook with Cranbrook. I have hammered away at this subject for the last 20 years through railway leagues and deputations, and during every session of Parliament that I have been here. Whenever possible I have stressed the advisability of this railway being built in order that the financial position of the State might be rendered secure. I am glad the present Government have seen fit, on the evidence put before them by settlers and through statistics, to make provision for this rail-

way, which I hope will be constructed at an early date.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is another matter.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was surprised and concerned the other night to hear the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson)—whether for political purposes or not I do not know—congratulate the Government upon their reference to this railway in the Speech. Lest any of my remarks should be misconstrued I have been very careful to go through the volumes of "Hansard" for every year since I have been in Parliament, and I find that on no other occasion has the hon. member made any reference to this railway. There must have been some ulterior motive for his remarks. I do not know whether he thinks he is going to deprive me of any glorification over the matter.

Mr. Lindsay: Perhaps some of the railway will pass through his electorate.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not one mile of it will do so.

Mr. Marshall: He suffers from a swelled head.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not wish to cause any strife. We are sitting here in Opposition because the politics of both sides of the House are not in accord. In my opinion the member for Katanning was hitting below the belt when he tried to take kudos for political motives, possibly in an endeavour to have me deprived of my seat at the next election.

The Minister for Works: Has he a Country Party man out against you?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: He has two. In my opinion he had a political motive in referring to this railway.

The Premier: He said yesterday their prospects of winning seats was never so bright. You had better look out.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We have to face our electors next year. They are the best judges.

Mr. Lindsay: Not always.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Sometimes we think our prospects are bright when they are really black; at other times they look black, whereas there is a silver lining to them. I thank the Premier for making provision for this railway, and for promising to introduce a construction Bill. I am convinced that every member of this Chamber, when he hears the facts and the statistics, will realise what this railway means to the State. I hope it will be commenced within a few months. The traffic from the timber indus-

try along the route will from its inception enable it to pay for itself ten times over. I regret that another railway which is so essential to the opening up of this great undeveloped belt of country is not mentioned. Last session I put a question to the Premier, and was buoyed up with hope at the answer. I telegraphed to different people that the Premier had told me that, acting on the report of the advisory board, he had agreed to make a survey of both railways. I am not complaining too bitterly.

Mr. Panton: You have had 50 per cent. of what you asked for.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Perhaps it was an oversight that the other railway was not mentioned.

The Premier: That is not to say we are not going on with it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I trust the Government will see the folly of their ways.

The Premier: I have held that back to see how you would behave yourself this session.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I shall be on my best behaviour, if I am sure that the people who have been suffering so long will get their line. I shall not, however, refrain from advocating it at every opportunity. I was disappointed to find that the group settlement railway between Jarnadup and Denmark is not mentioned in the Speech. Both the Premier and the Minister for Lands know how important this is for the settlers.

The Minister for Lands: That was passed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is not passed. The Government commenced the railway from the Denmark end? What about the Pemberton end?

The Minister for Lands: We have to get the money for that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Is its construction from both ends authorised?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Leader of the Opposition also says it is authorised. He spoke for three hours one night discussing this matter. I have heard the member for Avon talk about railways that were authorised 18 years ago.

The Premier: Promised 18 years ago.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Railways have been promised for many years but not built. I want something more than mere authorisation. I remember a hurdle racer named "Authorised." Some people lost a lot of money over him. We want something more definite.

The Minister for Lands: You could not have the Bill if it were not authorised.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: When are we to get the railway?

The Minister for Lands: When we get the money.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If it were going to be built it would be mentioned in the Speech. When will the money be available?

The Minister for Lands: Oh, well!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There are settlers living between 30 and 40 miles away from a railway.

The Minister for Lands: They have good roads and a good motor service.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They live all this distance from an existing railway. I regret that this line is not provided for. I believe the Government realise their responsibilities. Promises have to be fulfilled. The gauntlet has to be run next year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We will build it for you next year.

The Minister for Lands: You mean that Parliament will do so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I mean that we on this side of the House will do so.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If Parliament will give me a guarantee to build the railway, I shall be more content.

The Premier: There is that 18-year old promise ahead of it.

Mr. Lindsay: There is a fine road.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is the best road in Western Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: Why do you want a railway?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A road has been constructed for 20 miles from Pemberton to Northcliffe. It is used for heavy transport, but it runs through 14 miles of State forest from which no rates are collected. If the Minister for Works carries out his proposals, and the local authority is called upon to maintain this road after a couple of years, I guarantee that it will not be long before it becomes a veritable quagmire, and impassable.

The Minister for Lands: You know that is not so.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister knows that it is so. I know that it is so. If the road is handed over to the local authority to-morrow, that road will become a quagmire speedily, simply because the road board will not have sufficient money to maintain two miles of it.

Mr. Lindsay: They have paid nothing for it yet, though.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, of course not, seeing that it is a developmental road.

The Minister for Works: Some people get roads built for them and then want the roads kept up.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: How is it possible to keep up a road under such conditions? If the Government would give up their State trading concerns—

The Minister for Works: Are you in favour of selling the State Sawmills?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If the Government would give up their State trading concerns and State Sawmills, and would say to the private timber firms, "You must allow the Warren Road Board to rate the whole of the timber concessions," then the Warren Road Board would not mind maintaining that road. Under existing conditions, however, it is impossible. Now I shall touch on the question of education. I shall not tear the department to pieces, but I contend that many more facilities are required in my district to-day. We have schools, but we have no roads to them, and therefore the children cannot attend them. I am pleased to hear that the difficulty which arose at Northcliffe is being remedied. It did, however, give the Northcliffe parents great concern that their children could not attend school, simply because of lack of facilities for getting to school. As soon as I saw the Education Department on the subject, I was informed that in view of the conditions existing the regulation as to attendance would not be enforced. No doubt everyone here seeks to advance his own part of the State. Any member would be a poor representative if he did not look after the interests of the kiddies and of the children just leaving school in his district. My electorate is a very large one, with important centres. Indeed, Bridgetown is the centre of the South-West. Now, I want to see a secondary school established at Bridgetown, the secondary school at Bunbury being out of our reach. I also want to see an agricultural college established at Bridgetown. The Premier laughs. However, agricultural colleges can be established at Narrogin and throughout the wheat belt. Look at the way public money is being spent there.

The Minister for Works: What about a harbour for you?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I want a harbour at Bunbury. Bunbury is represented by a Government supporter. If I were a Government supporter, I would stir up things a bit regarding the Bunbury harbour. I repeat that I want an agricultural college established in my electorate, and for preference at Bridgetown, which is the hub of the South-West. No better country ever existed than that which I represent. I defy any member to contradict that statement. I am pleased to say that the Government have given me a very fair deal. They are so impressed with my part of the State that they all come along to see it, and, having seen it, I do not say they remain to pray, but they go away with an excellent impression of my district. On the sand plains and on the wheat belt agricultural colleges are provided.

Mr. Lindsay: At Narrogin there is an agricultural school, not an agricultural college.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will meet the hon. member on his own ground and ask for an agricultural school. In my electorate we want our boys to be taught farming under the conditions of the South-West as they exist to-day. Thus I want a secondary school and an agricultural school. In addition, I want an experimental farm, though, not being parochial, I do not ask for that to be established at Bridgetown. It should be established on one of the groups. We want someone to teach the group settlers how to grow crops in rotation, so that they will know when to plant this, that, and the other thing. My requirements, therefore, are a secondary school, an agricultural school, and an experimental farm. After all, that is not very much to ask, considering the enormous amount of money that is being spent in the settlement of people on our south-western lands. Next I wish to touch on a big question, a question that has given every member of the House a great deal of concern—group settlement. First of all I wish to pay a compliment to the Minister controlling the group settlement scheme. I know of no more earnest man in this State, of no man who is trying to do more to advance the State, than that hon. gentleman.

Mr. Teesdale: You will get your agricultural school now.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have just made a tour through the whole of the group settlements in my electorate, as a result of which

I find that at least 90 per cent. of the settlers welcome the change-over from sustenance to piecework conditions. I am sure members opposite will realise that under the old conditions the sustenance allowance of 10s. per day could not be called an existence, seeing that the settlers had to pay from 20 to 30 per cent. above Perth prices for their commodities. The Minister for Lands, in his wisdom, issued circular No. 88. That circular was brought into force because on some groups, now disbanded, the settlers were earning more money than they were entitled to earn if group settlement is to be a success. This may have been due to want of knowledge on the part of the foremen as to the nature of the country that was being cleared. Let me add that I favour a limitation of earnings. The present limitation, however, is much too low. Again I have to cross swords with the Leader of the Country Party as to his great anxiety to do something for the welfare of the group settlers. On the one hand he says that the capitalisation of the groups is much too high and that there will have to be a good deal of writing down, in view of the contract made with the settler that the cost of his farm should not be more than £1,000. The other night the hon. member said—this can be verified from "Hansard"—"Why put a limitation of any description on the settler? Let him have £100 or £200." What about capitalisation then? The Leader of the Country Party has not studied the conditions of group settlement or their betterment, but has been actuated by purely political motives. His organisation has been at work in the group settlements, and already a candidate has been selected to contest the seat against me.

Mr. Lindsay: You seem a bit scared.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not at all scared. If I go out of the House to-morrow, someone whom the electors think better fitted for the position will fill my place.

The Minister for Lands: It will not be a Country Party man.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will say deliberately that all this has been done from purely political motives. I have no quarrel with the Country Party, but I am bound to express my opinion that if the Leader of the Country Party had been moved by the least tittle of sincerity in this matter, he would not have left the group settlements unvisited until two or three months ago. He came to my home town on a political stunt, and then went out to visit a couple of groups which had been established a few months. That

represents all the hon. member has seen of group settlements in my electorate. I believe he went down to the Denmark group settlements, but this also was for political purposes. Then he comes to this House and poses as an authority on group settlement. Group settlements have been established for five years, and if the Leader of the Country Party was really sincere in his anxiety on behalf of the settlers, he would have visited them four or five years ago, instead of leaving it until two or three months back. I speak more in sorrow than in anger when I say that there is no sincerity in the hon. member's actions. I do not believe that he has really studied the question of group settlement one iota. He simply comes here with a lot of words, saying that we should give the settlers this and that, without limitation of earnings. In the next breath he says that there is no possible chance of group settlement proving a success because the holdings are over-capitalised.

The Premier: What about the squandering of those millions?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We have heard a lot about that, but I will not be led into an argument of any description.

Mr. Lindsay: It may be a trap.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not believe the Premier would stoop to such a subterfuge or set a trap of any description. Now I wish to talk to the Minister controlling group settlements with regard to circular No. 88. Whoever has the brain out of which that circular was evolved must be a wonderful man. Sustenance conditions were bad, but under circular No. 88 it would be impossible for any man to live and maintain his family. I am pleased that the Minister, in response to a question of mine, has thought fit to withdraw circular No. 88.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: It was withdrawn some time ago.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Dealing now with the limitation, let me say that when I was out the groups it was raining day after day—4½ inches of rain fell in three days. A settler would not be able to earn £3 in a month of such weather. Yet the settler have children to keep, and they have no credit with the storekeepers because the sustenance allowance and the "blue tails" have been cut out.

Mr. Latham: What is a blue tail?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A little bit of an order they give. Next month the settler cannot make it up, because every month stands on its own.

The Minister for Lands: Who told you that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is an instruction from the department. I am speaking about circular No. 88.

The Minister for Lands: It has gone.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, but what is the modification? I have here a lot of figures. Each month stands alone. If the Minister says that is wrong. I will read all these figures.

The Minister for Lands: It is wrong.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Which is the chief factor in making the group settlements a success, the settlers or the officers? I say they must work hand in hand. More consideration should be given to the limitation of earnings.

The Minister for Lands: There will not be any more given.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not want to see a man earning £70 or £80; if I saw that, I would sack the foreman forthwith.

The Minister for Lands: No man alone earns £70.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have known a man earn £60.

The Minister for Lands: Not a man alone; he brings in his friends.

Mr. Lindsay: I know that one man earned £70 6s. in a month.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Nobody objects to the limitation of earnings, but there must be a certain amount of spare-time effort. After a man's group is dissolved, he can put in a lot of spare-time effort. I want to see the limitation increased from £20 10s. to £30. The balance above £25 10s. could go to his feed and fertiliser accounts. However, the department will not listen to that; they say, "You must be bound hard and fast by these rules."

Mr. Lindsay: What was the expenditure of your man who earned £60?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I cannot say for, unfortunately, I have not my little book with me. Down in the Northcliffe area, where the groups are not dissolved, the limitation was £19 10s. and is now £20 10s. I can prove that the dynamite account in one man's contract was over 50 per cent. of his earnings.

The Minister for Lands: Then he wasted the stuff.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know that, but I know it was over 50 per cent. of his earnings. I examined a number of instances in the bottle bush country, and there was not

one in which the gelignite account was less than 40 per cent. of the earnings.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: What do they want gelignite for?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is the system in the bottle brush country.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Then it is a waste.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Still, it is used. Also there are in that area new settlers who tell me that, on enlisting for the group settlements, they were guaranteed a sustenance allowance of 10s. per day for three years. That guarantee was given them when they signed. Then, immediately they get down there, they find they are to have three months on sustenance, and then go on to piece work.

The Minister for Lands: They do not sign for anything.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They do not object to piece work; they are all in favour of it under fair conditions, and without any narrow limitation of earnings.

The Minister for Lands: I wish you would give me their names.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, I have a list of names that I will supply to the Minister. Now we come to the questions of pasture and cows, including dead cows. However, that dead cow business has been deferred; it will come up for consideration at a later date, when inquiry will be made as to whether the death was due to carelessness.

The Minister for Lands: You tell all good settlers on my behalf that, if we supply a settler with a cow, he has to pay for it whether it be dead or alive.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But the cow may be diseased and may die immediately after its arrival, in which case the settler is debited with 30s. a month for a dead cow.

Mr. Richardson: Settlers cannot be supplied with cows for nothing.

The Minister for Agriculture: If an ordinary settler buys a cow and it dies, does he not pay for it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But many of the cows supplied to the group settlers are of very inferior quality.

Mr. Maley: What is the price of those cows?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The settlers do not know. They get some at £12 and some at £18. Every dairyman knows that there must be rotation of cows. Because you have 15 cows, it does not follow that your 15 cows will be in full profit all the year round.

Mr. Lindsay: Evidently you are beginning to appreciate the report of the Royal Commission.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If, out of 15 cows, nine are in full profit, the settler is doing pretty well. Yet the department say that after the first lactation period those cows have to be debited against the group settler to the tune of 30s. per month.

The Minister for Lands: There is no debit at all. It only means that, on the average of the year, a cow is expected to earn 15s. monthly. If the settler is loaned the money he has to repay it accordingly.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They lend him the money in order to help him live the remainder of the year.

The Minister for Lands: There never was any intention to give the settler 15 cows.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But after the first lactation period, he has nothing to live upon.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, he has.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Possibly more than half the cows are dry after the first lactation period. It presents a very serious problem.

The Minister for Lands: Let us close down the groups.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, we do not want that. They now have a settlers' association.

The Minister for Lands: They have had that all the time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, they have had progress associations amongst individual groups, but now they have amalgamated and formed a settlers' association of a non-political character and devised for the benefit of the settlers.

The Minister for Lands: One party told me the association represented the lot, but another party told me that it was not representative at all. I am to have another deputation on the subject next week.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A deputation to the Minister a fortnight ago represented the Busselton areas and an area south of Bridgetown.

Mr. Wilson: They did not.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: However, that is the position: the settlers say their cows are not worth 10s. per month.

The Minister for Lands: They have said they are not worth 5s. per month.

Mr. Lindsay: What a libel on the South-West!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Last year, the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) asked what I

considered a good cow was worth. I once had two good cows bringing in £6 a month. The class of cows supplied to the group settlers will have to go through a building up process, for they include all sorts of breeds. A little while ago I was at a meeting on Group 31. The settlers there are enthusiastic dairymen. They have a testing machine. One of the cows tested as low as 2.3. Milk, I may say, cannot lawfully be sold under 3.2. The cow that tested so low is known down there by an opprobrious epithet. The settlers say they cannot live and pay 30s. a month for a cow.

The Minister for Lands: One settler in your district said his cows were splendid.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is only one instance. I know of many good cows there, and I know of others that are no good at all. The building up period will occupy at least five years. If the previous Government had listened to me when the last drought occurred, we should have been able to stock the groups to-day without any anxiety on the part of the Minister. The settlers are right hard up against it, as hard as it is possible for them to be. They say their limitations have to be increased and that the 30s. per month per cow must be reduced. They suggest that 10s. is a reasonable proposition. I do not support that; I say that we should come down to 15s. These cows are bought by experts and are supposed to be dairy stock.

The Minister for Agriculture: Are they not?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: From my observations they were not in bad condition, but the department seems to have made a hell of a mess of the purchase of these cattle.

The Minister for Lands: I have just remembered what you told the Premier about the cream.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister does not seem to realise that a hard and fast rule has been laid down. The member for Sussex (Mr. Barnard) and the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) know what the position is, and it is no wonder that they look worried. The Minister will not understand that 15 cows will not milk all the year round. You must have rotation. If a cow does not have a calf the owner has to pay whether the cow is dry or otherwise.

The Minister for Lands: Of course he has to pay. What would he do if I gave him only six cows?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If you gave him six good cows he would be able to earn something to keep the pot boiling. Let the Minister go through my district—possibly I have been favoured in my areas—and he will see for himself what the position is. I do not intend to step on the corns of the members for Sussex and Collie; I am only relating what is happening in my district. I wish the Minister to understand that I am not critical; I am merely showing how impossible it is, unless the limitation is increased, for these men to continue.

The Minister for Lands: They can go off if they like, but they will not get anything more from me.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister, I am sure, is soft-hearted.

The Minister for Lands: I have been too soft-hearted.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister may not know that some of the best men are leaving their holdings, and this is just for the want of a little consideration. In addition to what I have pointed out, the settlers have to pay 30s. a month for the third horse. Wipe that out too and give them a chance to earn a little outside.

The Minister for Lands: The State does not provide them with the third horse.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Now I will refer to the man we are endeavouring to encourage to go on the groups and stay there. The limitation of earnings comes in again. A man does not bury himself in the bush unless it be for his children, but the department frames a regulation providing that the earnings of a boy shall be nil until he reaches the age of 16 years. After that age to keep, feed and maintain the boy and give him an interest in the farm, the father is given the wonderful amount of £3 per month for the lad. Is that not hopeless, especially when we remember that everyone is looking out for boys and is prepared to take them at 30s. per week?

The Minister for Lands: We are not paying them wages; the lads work for their fathers.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course, and the fathers have to feed them. How is it possible for a father to feed the lad and pay all the charges, the 30s. for the cow, 30s. for the third horse, etc.? Then, what about the horse feed?

The Minister for Lands: Does he not grow feed for his horses?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There should be some discrimination. Often there are boys of 11 or 14 years of age and some allowance should be made for them. Surely the Minister will agree with that suggestion.

The Minister for Lands: The Minister will not agree to it; do not forget that these people do not pay rent.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If a man is there without a family he is still allowed to take a certain amount of money, and that, too, without having a family to feed. An alteration should be made there.

The Minister for Lands: We are not providing families; we are providing farms.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But you must have the families.

The Minister for Lands: They provide their own families.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I know. I heard a little story about the Minister, but I am not going to repeat it here. Still, something should be done to keep the boys satisfied, otherwise they will drift away from the farms and go to work for someone else. Then they will be lost to group settlements. If there is a boy over 16 years of age on the holding next to that of his father, he is permitted to go to the adjoining holding.

The Minister for Lands: He can go anywhere on the groups; he can take a holding for himself.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Group settlements have made wonderful strides. One can go through that area and see beautiful farms established that would scarcely pass the understanding of any man who had been there three or four years before. One can hardly realise the enormous amount of work that has been done. Where once there was heavy forest country it is now possible to see smiling homesteads such as to make the heart rejoice. There is a great future in store for that part of the country. But we have many little problems to face and it is only by criticism that we can remedy them. We should take the group settler into our confidence, for is he not the chief essential towards success? We should make him a partner and then we should work together. In that way only can we secure the success that we wish for. The scheme is very big and in my opinion it should be placed under the control of a board of practical men. I have heard a great deal of discussion on the subject of advisory boards, and no doubt the Minister will tell us that he has capable advisers on the

board as it is at present constituted. There are on this board the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank, the Director of Agriculture and the Dairy Expert.

The Minister for Lands: And the accountant.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: All are very capable men. My opinion is that we should have practical men.

The Minister for Lands: They are all practical men.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If Parliament in its wisdom sees fit to establish an Agricultural Bank under a board of management; if in connection with the control of the main roads of the State it is necessary to appoint a board, surely it would be advisable to have a board, under the control of the Minister, consisting of practical men to look after the interests of the groups.

The Minister for Lands: There will be so many boards directly that it will not be necessary to have a Parliament.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Would it not be advisable to have practical men sitting around a table debating the position of the groups better than many of us are able to do? In fact, we could appoint two, one for the South-West and one for the Peel Estate.

The Minister for Lands: Just fancy a man being appointed to such a board when he had received advances from State funds!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: After all, that merely represents a loan, and it takes two to make a contract, each party having to be satisfied. It does not mean because money is advanced to a person, that that person is bound body and soul, and cannot have any say regarding the expenditure of that money.

Mr. Lindsay: You ought to be ashamed to make some of the statements you have made.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not ashamed, and I will speak the truth and speak it whenever I can! If the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) were honest, if he were without any political pull, if he were without someone behind him telling him to go here, or to do this or that, if he were sincere without twisting one way or the other, then, and then only, would he have nothing to be ashamed of. Under present conditions his bosses are sitting in conference in the city, dictating to him and telling him what he must do.

Mr. Lindsay: They dictated to you at one time, and you were glad enough of it then.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: You have to submit to the bosses to-day.

Mr. Lindsay: You crawled into Parliament on our backs and then twisted.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: To-day the member for Toodyay has to do just as he is told. He is not responsible to the electors at all, but is responsible to the crowd down there at the conference who dictate to him.

The Minister for Works: What about the talk regarding cordial relationships between the sections on your side of the House?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was just wondering about that.

Mr. Lindsay: What about the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) chipping the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson)?

The Minister for Works: Yes, what about that?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Apparently the Government side of the House is not very pleased!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The member for Toodyay asks what I said about the member for Katanning who was not in the House at the time. I will repeat the gist of what I said. I said that at the eleventh hour, that hon. member had taken an interest in the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway. That was the first time I had ever heard him mention it in the House and I wondered what ulterior motive was behind it. I wondered whether it was political or otherwise. I will repeat what I said about the group settlements, too. Although they had been in existence for five years, it was only during the last few months that the member for Katanning thought it worth while to visit the groups. He visited merely a small portion of the group areas, and made inquiries there in order to bring questions up before the House. I wondered whether his motive was political or otherwise, and whether there was something ulterior behind it.

Mr. Lindsay: Cordial relations!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Never mind about cordial relations; it is absolutely true.

Mr. Thomson: If you make a statement, of course it must be true.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course it is true. I have now drawn from the member for Katanning the interjection that I was waiting for. I spent three hours this morning perusing "Hansard," and I say that my statement is true.

Mr. Panton: You did not read in three hours all that the member for Katanning said!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, there was a lot of flapdoodle in it, and I did not read that stuff. I notice a reference made in the Governor's Speech to our forests, and the policy of the Conservator of Forests. As Minister for Forests the Premier will know that, year after year, I have been advocating reform in connection with our forests. I have urged that upon the present Government and upon other Governments as well. I have protested against the amount of money being wasted and stressed the wealth that is lying dormant in our forests to-day. Many people regard me in the light of a destroyer. They think I would have the forests depleted of all marketable jarrah, leaving posterity to look after itself. Nothing is further from my mind. The other night the Premier said that a million acres of land had been dedicated for the purposes of the Forests Department. What I am concerned about is that possibly owing to his lack of knowledge of the areas concerned, and the conditions imposed by the Conservator, he may be unduly influenced regarding the dedication of certain areas. With respect to the million acres of land referred to, I assert that already thousands and possibly hundreds of thousands of pounds have been squandered on work, owing to the methods employed by officers of the department. Recently the Conservator of Forests ringbarked trees over an area comprising many thousands of acres of land and destroyed thousands upon thousands of pounds worth of timber. He has lost all the royalties that could have been collected on that timber, and this work has been done in order to further the reforestation policy! Only one or two virile jarrah trees per acre have been left for seeding purposes, and the effect of the regeneration may possibly be felt in the next 200 years or so. The Conservator did not call for tenders for the disposal of the timber standing on that country, but destroyed it. If the Premier desires to make inquiries concerning this matter, I can give him the location number and the names of people who were prepared to pay anything from 10s. to 20s. per load in royalties. Most of that country would return from a load to two loads per acre.

The Premier: I shall be glad if you will write to me giving full particulars.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will tell the country the particulars now. The area in question is situate behind Colonel Brazier's property

at Kirrup and runs down to Jarrahwood. All that country has been rung apart from a few trees to the acre that have been left for seeding purposes. To anyone who has studied the timber industry which is of such value to this State, the effect of this will be apparent. Particularly is this so having regard to the railway freight that has been lost. The timber industry means many thousands of pounds to the railways. Our timber has to pay 1s. 6d. for wharfage dues, whereas wheat is free. As a result of the departmental action I have referred to, the State has lost a considerable amount of money. At the present time, sleepers are being carted from areas privately owned, and although they have to be carted upwards of 25 miles, 10s. a load is being paid for the timber. Alongside existing railways, thousand upon thousands of loads of timber are going to waste every year. Why is this so? Simply because Parliament was foolish enough when passing the Forests Act, to hand over the reins of control into the hands of one individual who reigns supreme. We cannot do anything with him. I have endeavoured repeatedly to secure an amendment of the Forests Act. Why does not the Premier as Minister controlling our forests interest himself in the question, see the members representing constituencies in the timber districts, get their views and then formulate amendments to the Act. That would cut out the wastage of timber that is so apparent to-day.

The Premier: Do you think it is my function to go round to see members? Is it not a fair thing that members should make representations to the heads of departments themselves as well as to me?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have been making such representations in this Chamber for years past and surely I should be regarded as having spoken in all sincerity. We have practical men in the Forests Department who could go through the districts concerned. I know the marketable timber that could be taken from the forests there. One hears the old question of the timber hewer versus the sawmiller, raised from time to time. Some people seem to think that the sawmillers are so much cheaper and do finer work than the hewers. If we could get a band of timber hewers, such as we had in the old days, the mills would be beaten every time. The hewers proved their worth in a test at Jarrahdale and showed that they could cut sleepers more economically than

the mills could turn them out. Hewn sleepers can be cut much more cheaply than the sawn sleepers can be turned out.

Hon. G. Taylor: But you do not get the same quantity of timber.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know about that. If the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) were to turn up her records, she would be able to show that the hewers beat the sawmillers when it came to a test.

Mr. Wilson: But the hewers had the pick of the timber.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, I understand the timber was brought to the landing at Jarrahdale and was hewn and sawn there under test conditions.

Hon. G. Taylor: I was there at the time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I wish to impress upon the Premier the necessity for properly cutting out the bush. I do not know exactly what has been dedicated, but surely he should be able to conserve the interests of the State and see that huge sums are not lost to the Treasury.

Mr. Wilson: Are you sure that upwards of £1 a load could have been secured for that timber?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes. Timber from the Margaret River area brought 35s. a load.

Mr. Wilson: But that is in different country.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then there was timber from the group settlement areas that had been cut out a dozen times; some of that brought 28s. a load. I guarantee that I can get people willing to pay £1 a load. Under the Forests Act, every location thrown open for sleeper hewing or milling is sold by auction.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Before tea I was endeavouring to point out to the Minister controlling the forests the revenue that would be derived if he were to throw open lands adjacent to the railways; open, not only to timber hewers, but to sawmillers. I am afraid that, possibly, I exceeded the limits of good taste, which I did not intend to do. However, I want to put up to the Minister a plea that he should see that something is done to cut out the timber below a girth of 70 inches. I have been preaching this, year in and year out, and I am endeavouring to show the House what a great asset

the timber hewer is to the country. Members are aware that unless a man in the industry had a license prior to 1918, when the war terminated, he is not now entitled to go on Crown lands to cut timber. Because of this, many of our own sons who never bothered to get licenses prior to 1918, are now debarred, while foreigners are cutting in private paddocks. I want to say to the Minister controlling the State Sawmills that under the present system those mills employ foreigners, whilst Britishers are walking about looking for employment. I want the Minister controlling the forests to leave the decision in respect of granting licenses to our own sons entirely in the hands of the foresters officiating in the South-West. All the members representing the South-West are unanimously of opinion that that should be done. Now just a word about saw milling and State enterprise. A long time ago, when the No. 1 State mill was destroyed by fire, the men working there had to seek employment elsewhere. The Minister controlling the sawmills, in reply to a question asked in the House, said it was the intention of the Government to reconstruct that mill. In answer to a question by me the other evening, the Minister said he had secured work at Pemberton for the men thrown out of employment by the destruction of the No. 1 mill. That is so, but many men had to get out in order to afford employment for those married men. Moreover, the wives and children of those married men were still at the No. 1 mill, and so those men have had to maintain two homes. I cannot find out whether the Government still intend to reconstruct the No. 1 Mill. I remember that when the mill was destroyed, the member for Forrest asked the Minister what were the intentions of the Government, and if I am not mistaken the Minister replied that the mill would be reconstructed. That was a long time ago, yet no provision has been made to reconstruct the mill. I believe that in the near future the Railway Department will take over the relaid line between Jarnadup and Pemberton. A little time ago a townsite was declared at Pemberton, and everybody was surprised at the enormous prices paid for the town blocks. Shortly afterwards the State Sawmills entered into competition with private enterprise and built shops and other places at Pemberton. That is an absolute disgrace. Fancy proclaiming a townsite and encouraging private people to buy at enormous

prices, and then entering into competition with them for their trade!

Mr. Hughes: It will help to keep down prices.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But does it matter if the State Sawmills, making a profit of £100,000, should lose £15,000 or £20,000 as an alternative to competing with private enterprise? The people who bought the blocks do not know whether to go on with their buildings or let the blocks revert to the Government. I wish to enter a strong protest against the position created. Our hospital accommodation down there is not what it should be. I do not blame the Minister. Perhaps he is short sighted in this respect. When we are spending millions in settling thousands of people in the South-West, at least we should make adequate provision for hospital accommodation. The community at Northcliffe consists largely of married couples, and maternity cases are always waiting to go into the hospital. There is no hospital there, no waiting room accommodation. Women have to be bundled into the hospital at the last moment, and have to leave again before they are fully restored, in order to make room for others.

The Minister for Lands: It is a very nice hospital at Northcliffe.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, and the staff are very obliging and the doctor is very good. But the accommodation should be ten times what it is. We want a waiting room, where the women could rest for a day or two before entering the hospital.

The Minister for Lands: I do not know of any Government that provide waiting room accommodation. Just now you were complaining of State interference with private enterprise!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Looking after the sick is not for private enterprise. It shows that the Minister is not sincere, for the first plank in the platform of his party is humanity.

The Minister for Works: Then why do you oppose it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not; I am advocating it. It is not reasonable to suggest that the Minister is sincere in saying that private enterprise should enter into competition with the State hospital at Northcliffe. Surely we could spend a few thousand pounds making provision for increased hospital accommodation and for a waiting room. I could relate harrowing tales of distress down there. Women have been carried

six or seven miles by road on stretchers, children have been born dead, and all that sort of thing; but I do not want to go into that.

The Minister for Lands: There is up here a committee for endowment. Perhaps they might assist you. You should see Mr. Brown, of the Legislative Council.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have in my little book a note of that committee. There is also the ladies' guild, who have been in communication with the Minister. Again, there is at Northcliffe a cemetery out in the wild bush. Yet those people have feelings.

The Premier: You mean the people in the cemetery?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, but those whose loved ones are buried in that cemetery. It took me half an hour to find the place; an unfenced area in the bush, with no clearing of any description.

The Premier: The people can get a grant for that.

Mr. Lindsay: Those conditions are not unusual out in the bush.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Still it is not very nice to see stock wandering all over the graves.

The Minister for Works: In the Kimberleys I saw graves 100 miles from any habitation.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If the Minister were there, he would be the first to growl.

The Minister for Works: If I were in the cemetery, I would growl?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If the Minister were in Northcliffe, he would be the first to growl.

Mr. Latham: And if he were in Opposition he would growl.

The Minister for Works: It is not my nature to growl.

Mr. Hughes: Have you been refused the grant?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The cemetery has not even been surveyed and no provision has been made for it.

Mr. Lindsay: Surely it has been declared a cemetery site!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, but it has not been surveyed.

Mr. Lindsay: You should have had it surveyed earlier.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We had better send the member for Toodyay down there.

Hon. G. Taylor: He went there.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: He went there with the Group Settlement Commission, but did

not visit the groups. The Commission sat in the hall at Northcliffe, and got the group settlers to appear before them.

Mr. Latham: That statement is not correct.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The cemetery is an absolute disgrace to a civilised country.

The Minister for Lands: Where are the trustees?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Unfortunately there are no trustees.

The Minister for Works: You must have fallen down on your job in having failed to see to these matters.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am seeing to them now.

Mr. Maley: The Leader of the Country Party also went down there.

Mr. Lindsay: And if these matters have been brought under his notice, probably they would have been fixed up before this.

Hon. G. Taylor: But the Leader of the Country Party was not looking after the dead ones.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Having ventilated all my complaints I shall now cast a few bouquets.

Hon. G. Taylor: But the Leader of the Country Party is absent.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: In the past I have advocated that something should be done for Greenbushes, which is practically the only tin-producing centre in Western Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: Is that in your electorate?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is not in yours. The Minister for Mines, as promised, visited Greenbushes and met the people, and I am pleased to say that he promised them £2 to £1 for further prospecting the tin lodes there.

The Premier: I am doubtful whether it is justified.

Mr. Heron: He treated you better than he treated me.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The people of Greenbushes, though hard up against things, subscribed £1,000 towards the development of the Cornwall lode. The shaft has been unwatered, three shifts are being worked, and we expect developments very soon. We trust that this work will bring a new era of prosperity to Greenbushes.

The Minister for Lands: Tin is bringing a good price.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Tin is one of the base metals that can be depended upon to bring

a good price year in and year out. We also received a concession for the Greenbushes timber mill as a result of which it was possible to keep the mill working. I wish to congratulate the Police Department.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is well to keep sweet with them.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The police require no praise from me; every member appreciates the wonderful work they are doing. I understand that a Bill is to be introduced to provide for pensions for the police, and I trust that members will give it their whole-hearted support, because the police are entitled to pensions.

The Minister for Lands: I suppose you know that when any thieving is done in your district it is generally the police station that is robbed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I did not know that. A redistribution of seats is necessary in this State. Let me remind the Premier of a promise he made when some of us were younger in the Assembly than we are today. He told us that if the Bill introduced by the Mitchell Government was defeated, something equally good or possibly better would be introduced when he got into power. Members in this Chamber that represent only 300 or 400 electors feel their position keenly. When they are addressing you, Mr. Speaker, on matters of grave importance, they feel that they are not justified in so doing.

Hon. G. Taylor: At whom are you looking?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They feel it is an injustice that there should be such anomalies in our electorates. Feeling as I feel and knowing how they feel, I am confident that they will gain the ear of the Premier and that he will recognise the justice of a redistribution on fair lines before the close of this session.

Mr. Hughes: Would you have a redistribution on the strength of population?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, because under such a redistribution there would be no representation of the goldfields, and that would be the end of the Labour Government.

Mr. Hughes: The people from the goldfields would come to the city.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Without a redistribution, even if the Premier were returned with a majority—and I do not think he will be—he would be placed in a false position. I speak with all due respect to you, Mr.

Speaker, and the member for Mt. Margaret. I hope the Premier, even at this late hour, will agree to fulfil the promise he made to me.

The Premier: Made to whom?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Well, to this House, that there would be a redistribution of seats if he was returned to power.

Hon. G. Taylor: But that was before the election.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have an extensive electorate, the population of which is growing every day.

The Premier: And you want to get out of your difficulties by having a redistribution.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I think I am capable of fulfilling the duties of representing my electorate. It is not right that I should represent, 6,000 odd electors in an agricultural area, while another member represents only 300 electors in a mining area.

Mr. Lindsay: You opposed the measure introduced by the Mitchell Government.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Because it was framed on wrong lines.

The Premier: It did not quite suit, did it?

The Minister for Works: Which section do you wish to get rid of?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have no wish to get rid of any section. I am not in any way vindictive. It is always regrettable to have to part with one's friends. There is an old saying that when you are climbing up the hill of prosperity, may you never meet a friend. I hope that will never apply to me. What I have stated here to-night has been intended as honest criticism. What I have said about the groups has been said from my heart.

Mr. Lindsay interjected.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If I could not speak more commonsense than does the member for Toodyay, I would not speak at all.

The Minister for Lands: The men on the groups on the average are earning more than are men in the metropolitan area after they pay their rent.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister is dealing with figures compiled prior to the 1st of July when the limitation of earnings was enforced. The Minister must be fair. I am pleased that a long-promised railway is at last to be constructed in my district. Three generations of settlers have waited for that line. I am satisfied it will prove to be one of the best paying lines in the South-West. We desire also that improvements should

be carried out at the Bunbury harbour. The member for Bunbury is quite able to champion his own cause, but I mention the subject because the producers of the South-West must have facilities so that they can ship their fruit and timber from the natural port. The Speech contains a few lines to the effect that dredging is still being carried on at Bunbury. That has been the position for years and it does not fill the bill at all. When we realise what a great territory we have in the South-West, we must admit that something more is required at the port of Bunbury. I understand that the member for Bunbury has a scheme to present to the Premier and that the Premier is prepared to grant him some concessions.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [7.58]: In offering a few remarks on the Address-in-reply, I think it might be well to ventilate the most vital points first of all. During the last few months unemployment has been a positive nightmare to me. I know that the Government have done much to provide work for a large number of men, but they could have done much more to relieve the unemployment that exists. It is the duty of any Labour man to be militant regardless of whether he be sitting behind the Government or in Opposition. When in Opposition we make a lot of noise about unemployment, and the position is bad enough at present to warrant my making a noise now.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is the worst we have known in the State.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, I have known it to be worse. Still, at present, it is very bad.

Mr. Latham: It is getting worse each year, and is certainly very bad this year.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Day after day I am besieged in the street by people out of work. In fact one can hardly get along the street without being held up by unemployed. Even when one gets to one's destination, one is again besieged not only by unemployed, but by women, accompanied by children, begging that something in the way of sustenance might be granted to them. Quite a lot of people are refused sustenance, and there are families in Fremantle being tossed into the street and having nowhere to go. Single men have been seeking shelter in any old place. A few weeks ago some of them boarded railway trucks to get out of the weather, but they were not allowed to rest even there; they were prosecuted.

Such a state of things should not exist in Western Australia. It is the duty of the Government either to find work for or give food to these people. The unemployed of Fremantle have been very patient. They have kept quiet for weeks, but the day will come when it will be impossible to keep them quiet any longer if something is not done. I hope unemployment will be relieved, and that the wives and families of those who are workless will be given sustenance on which they may live. While the workers are in employment they are unable to put by anything for a rainy day. Their wages are too low to permit of this being done. The basic wage is now £4 5s. per week. The court ruled that an allowance of 36s. a week was sufficient for the food of four persons. Four people would never get fat on a small amount like that. In answer to a question about the prisoners in the Fremantle gaol it was stated the other day that the sustenance of these people amounted to 11s. 1d. per head. The largest portion of that sustenance was for food, very little being used for clothing or tobacco.

Mr. Marshall: The catering for prisoners is on a cheaper basis than it would be for individuals.

Mr. SLEEMAN: In the case of these institutions food is bought at 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. less than it can be bought by the ordinary housewife. Everything is bought on contract at low prices, whereas the housewife has to buy everything retail at full price. The allowance of 36s. made by the court is not upon as favourable a basis as the allowance for food in the case of the prisoners in Fremantle. I would not ask anyone who has to do a day's work, and rear a growing family, to live on the present basic wage. Something should be done in the way of mother endowment. The basic wage has been arranged to provide for a man, his wife and two children. We have been fighting to raise the standard of living, to provide reasonable comforts for a man, his wife and three children. What is going to happen in the case of a man who has eight or ten children? Unless some system of motherhood endowment is brought into operation, the previous standard of living should not have been altered. It is not a crime to have children. We are always talking about populating the country. The man with the large family, however, is not provided for, and in a way is told that it is a crime to have more than two children. The allowance of 9s. per week made by the Charities Department is absolutely inadequate

for the needs of the situation. Some mothers are refused sustenance altogether.

Mr. Latham: They should be given work; not sustenance.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Some of them cannot work. I refer to widows who have families to rear. In 1919 a Royal Commission was appointed to go into the question of State children and charities generally. This commission reported as follows:—

Your commission express the opinion that this amount is inadequate for the support of children, and recommends that the allowance to mothers be increased to a minimum of 10s. in all cases where State children or children with their natural parents are supported by the State. Your commission sees no reason for any distinction between the natural parents and the foster parents of the child. The amount paid for the maintenance of a child in New Zealand is 15s. per week for every child over the age of one year, except in special circumstances when the amount may be increased, and 17s. 6d. per week for children under the age of one year.

Mr. Sampson: Is that for children boarded out?

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is for all children. The cost of living has gone up a great deal since 1919, but notwithstanding the recommendation of the royal commission that an allowance of 10s. should be made, it is only 9s. to-day.

Hon. G. Taylor: The present Minister for Lands has done more for widows, children and orphans than all the commissions in the State.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not deny that. I maintain that if 10s. was the amount that should have been given in 1919, such a sum is inadequate now. If a widow tries to augment her small income from the department by doing a little work herself, in many cases her allowance is cut down.

Mr. Griffiths: They are not allowed to go out to work.

Mr. SLEEMAN: One lady lives close to me. She is a widow and has three children. She is in delicate health, but has been trying to do a little work. I would recommend that this woman should not go out to work, but should be adequately supported by the State. If women do go out to work and earn 10s. or £1 a week extra, their allowances are reduced by the department. The sum of 9s. a week is not adequate, especially in the case of growing children, who eat practically as much as a man. As a matter of fact, these people are not receiving as much consideration as is given to the prisoners in the Fremantle gaol in the matter of sustenance. They are certainly not

getting a diet as good as the prison diet, because they cannot buy in the same cheap markets that the gaol authorities can buy in. Many complaints have been made to me concerning the adoption of children. Very often illegitimate children are adopted. An endeavour is being made to arrange that illegitimate children who are adopted shall not have any slur cast upon their birth. The adopted parents of these children urge that something should be done. They desire to have a cross entry made in the books of the registrar, so that in years to come, if any of these children apply for a birth certificate, the document will show that he or she is the child of the adopted parents. I believe this could be carried out. One man was very upset about the matter. He had adopted a little daughter. He found that if she applied for a certificate of birth under the name by which she became known, she would be told there was no record of the birth.

The Minister for Lands: I think that is being dealt with now.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I think not. There ought to be some way of identifying illegitimate children with the name of their adopted parents. On the last Estimates a sum was provided for a dentist to attend to the teeth of State school children. Nothing has since been done. Children who suffer with their teeth are merely told to go home and have them attended to. Unless the father can afford to pay a dentist for this work, the teeth are not seen to. I do not know why there has been this delay. I have made many inquiries, but have never been able to get any satisfaction.

Mr. Marshall: How much allowance was made in the basic wage for dental fees?

Mr. SLEEMAN: In the eyes of the court people are not supposed to have teeth. I have frequently spoken about the necessity for increasing jurymen's fees. It is very unfair that men should be asked to sit on a jury and lose money by so doing. I hope something will be done this session whereby jurymen will not be out of pocket when called upon to serve their country. There is a certain offence that jurymen are asked to adjudicate upon. This is an offence against children, one that is becoming rather too prevalent. Something ought to be done to alter the law so that the offenders may be dealt with. It is one of the worst offences that can be committed. I would advocate a surgical operation for the offenders. I understand that once a man

of this description leaves prison he invariably returns for the same offence. In persons of that sort there is a mental kink. A slight surgical operation would meet the case, and very likely when the man was liberated he would become a valuable member of society. I have no hesitation in advocating something along these lines. The action of some of the Government departments in Fremantle in the way they deal with their servants is causing a great amount of dissatisfaction. The services of a number of men who have got up in years have been dispensed with, and others have been put on in their place. They have been good employees for a long time, but because they have grown old they have been laid aside. In connection with the harbour works men are told to stand off because of a shower of rain. They may stand by for two or three hours, when they are told to go home. They thus lose a day's pay. Some consideration should be given to these people. They have been good employees and to pass them out because of their age is creating a hardship for them. I am glad to hear that a new prison conveyance has been started. After a great deal of battling we were successful in a motion being passed last session in connection with this matter. I understand that the body of the conveyance is almost completed at the State implement works, and is awaiting the arrival of a chassis. A better means of transporting prisoners than allowing them to go through railway stations and be conveyed in railway trains will soon come to pass. I compliment the Government upon the arrival of the new motor ship "Kybra." I hope the other vessel to take the place of the "Bambra" will reach Fremantle shortly, and that the Government will procure another vessel for the North-West coast. If another vessel were secured, that would be the thin end of the wedge towards getting rid of the black crews on our North-West coast. They are no good to the country, or to the business people or anyone else. The "Bambra" and the "Kangaroo" spend thousands of pounds every year in this State for provisions and commodities. Moreover, the money represented by the wages paid on board those two boats remains in Western Australia, in the maintenance of the wives and children of the crews. A little before the "Kybra" was due to leave the Old Country last year, I asked the Government to send seamen of

our own to bring the vessel out. I was informed that my suggestion made no difference in price, but that there was not sufficient time left to allow of the sending home of a crew from this country. I was further informed that possibly something of that sort could be done in the case of the next vessel. The men who brought the "Kybra" out came out on exactly the same wages and were repatriated on exactly the same conditions as would be given to Australian seamen.

Hon. G. Taylor: We could have found work for those men out here.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Let us find work for our own people first. Part of our unemployment problem to-day is due to people having been brought out here. I do not object to people being brought here provided that work is first found for the people already here. As regards the sending Home of crews to bring out vessels purchased by the Government, I understand that an objection has been made that if men are sent from here they are not likely to return, but are more likely to desert upon getting to the Old Country. I do not believe there is any danger of that. Moreover, the State Shipping Service know their men and can pick those who are suitable for sending Home. If Australian seamen are sent Home, the money represented by their wages is kept in the State, with resultant benefit to the community. With regard to the Fremantle gaol, I do hope that something in the nature of a prison farm will be established. It is most regrettable that young fellows sent into the gaol on their first offence for a short term should be herded with hardened criminals.

Mr. Latham: We should have a farm gaol.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We need a prison farm. As things are, lads congregate with hardened criminals, and the old hand shows the young fellow how to get rich quickly. Thus the young fellow becomes a confirmed offender. By establishing a prison farm we would save many young fellows from becoming habitual criminals. In the same connection I have to refer again to the position at Rottnest Island. If some alteration is not made in the system of safe-keeping boats at Rottnest, there will be no boat available for rescue work in case of an accident happening—and accidents are sure to happen. The present system is that every boat on the island must be securely

padlocked. A few months ago it took a party of which I was a member something like half an hour to find a man with a key so that we could obtain a dinghy. Such a position is not right. We are told that the dangerous class of criminal is not taken to Rottnest. If dangerous criminals are taken there, they should be looked after so securely that they cannot get away.

The Minister for Lands: During the holiday season the prisoners are not there.

Mr. SLEEMAN: But people live at the island at other times of the year as well. Moreover, the permanent residents on the island should receive some little consideration. If an accident ever happens, their lives are liable to be lost. It is ten thousand times better for one prisoner to get away from the island—in any case, escapes are not likely—than for one life to be lost. The present danger is that a boat could not be obtained in time to permit of a valuable life being saved. I referred to this matter last year. While on the subject of Rottnest Island, I desire to draw attention to the dangerous conditions of the jetty. Undoubtedly the people on the island were promised a jetty. After an expenditure of about £5,000 the work was stopped. I declare emphatically that the Rottnest jetty is in a dangerous condition. I believe that the Minister for Lands, who is associated with the Rottnest Island Board, will agree with me that something must be done in the matter.

The Minister for Lands: I agree with you as to that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Turning now to works at Fremantle. I suggest that a fire main should be laid round the town. We know that disastrous fires have already occurred at Fremantle. The fire main, which has been proposed so long, would obviate much difficulty in the successful fighting of fires, and the work of laying it would relieve the unemployed difficulty at Fremantle.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the main thing.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I cannot very well speak on the Address-in-reply without mentioning the collapse of the Fremantle railway bridge.

Hon. G. Taylor: Providence came to your rescue.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I consider that the people who sneered and jeered at me when I spoke about the Fremantle railway bridge should be holding a day of thanksgiving that something worse did not happen. It was

only by a miracle that something worse did not happen. Few people know how close we were to a terrible catastrophe.

The Minister for Railways: There was not much of a miracle. Men were there watching.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A train was stopped a few yards off the bridge. If the washing away of the bridge had happened at night time, the train would not have been stopped, because the department did not have the bridge watched during the night. There were men working on the bridge during the day, but they were not there to watch the bridge. The Railway Department are deserving of a vote of no-confidence for the manner in which they failed to watch the bridge.

Mr. Latham: Move the vote of no-confidence in the Minister.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I said the department; I did not say the Minister. Someone in the department should be asked to "please explain" why the bridge was left unwatched during the night.

The Minister for Railways: That is not correct.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I defy anyone to prove to the contrary. The bridge was left unwatched during the hours of the night.

The Minister for Railways: Generally speaking, it has been left unwatched for 30 years; but when there are any signs of danger, it is watched.

Mr. SLEEMAN: When such a flood was running, the department ought to have kept a constant watch.

The Minister for Lands: I do not believe a single soul in Fremantle ever believed that that part of the bridge would wash away.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I think I may say that the bridge collapsed. It is at the bottom of the river now, any way. The strongest part of a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and the embankment proved to be the weakest link in the bridge.

The Minister for Lands: Nobody ever thought so.

Hon. G. Taylor: If the embankment had not gone, the bridge would have been all right.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the embankment had not gone, something else would have gone. I saw the Premier coming up the river past the bridge one day, and I noticed that he was surprised to see what a quantity of timber there was in the bridge. If the fairway was blocked, something had to go; and if the

embankment had not gone, something else would have had to go.

The Minister for Railways: You know more about it than the engineers know.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The matter happened to come my way on this occasion. The files show that none of the engineers was satisfied with the bridge.

The Minister for Railways: The files show nothing of the kind. The engineers were all satisfied with the bridge.

Mr. SLEEMAN: According to the files, all the engineers have said that the bridge was causing them constant worry and anxiety. Last year I read in this Chamber an extract from the report of the Commissioner of Railways stating that a steel bridge would have to be constructed very shortly, because it was an urgent necessity and because the state of the existing bridge warranted it.

The Minister for Lands: I can produce to you a minute, written in 1910, stating that there should be a railway on the south side of the river; and that minute is from the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I quite agree with that also. In any case, I hope that railway communication with Fremantle will be restored as speedily as possible. I believe the Railway Department could work longer hours on this than they are doing. I do not mean that the men should be put on longer shifts, but that the work could be pushed on more rapidly by the department. At the same time I hope there will be no attempt to make the repaired bridge a permanent structure. I trust that in the near future we shall have an announcement that a new bridge is to be built across the river. When that announcement is made, I hope there will also be a statement that the new bridge will be constructed near the site of the present traffic bridge.

Mr. Latham: How much would the new bridge cost?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hon. member had better ask the Minister. I know perfectly well that we have to take the advice of our engineers; but as a layman I believe that the engineers would not find any difficulty in placing the new bridge near the Fremantle traffic bridge. If the new bridge is placed near Bicton, a new traffic bridge will have to be built to connect the north and south sides of the river. The present traffic bridge is as bad as, if not worse than, the railway bridge, although one end of the railway bridge is gone. Something must be done, and I do not think any Government cares

for the responsibility of building two bridges. If the railway bridge is put across at Bieton, and a new traffic bridge is not built near the site of the present one, the north side of the river will be isolated.

The Minister for Lands: We have to consider the harbour as well.

Mr. SLEEMAN: All those matters can be taken into consideration. The building of the bridge would afford another 1,500ft. of berthing space. I know the engineers have prepared a plan with a lifting span in the bridge, so that if necessary, ships can pass under it.

The Minister for Lands: We can easily get a plan of the bridge, but we have also to get a foundation for the bridge.

Mr. SLEEMAN: With the engineering expedients available nowadays, a foundation can be got practically anywhere.

The Minister for Railways: Not so.

Mr. SLEEMAN: What I propose may be a little dearer, but, speaking as a layman, I do not believe there will be any difficulty in securing a foundation where the traffic bridge is now. Another work which should be gone on with is the North Wharf. That work is outside my electorate, but it affects my electors. If it is not proceeded with, the effect will be to interfere with the shipment of wheat. I believe Western Australia is going to have a record harvest, and I do not wish anything to interfere with the shipment of the wheat and the employment of the waterside workers during the coming season. The work in question will further help to relieve the unemployed difficulty. As I shall have plenty more chances of speaking during the session, I shall not detain the House longer. I thank hon. members for their attention.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.29]: I have listened with some interest to the remarks of the previous speaker. I do not entirely agree with his criticism touching the sustenance provided for widows and children.

Mr. Sleeman: I thought you were a humane sort of chap.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is not so much a question of humanity as a question of fact. In my opinion the officers of the Charities Department are sympathetic. My experience tells me that the treatment of widows and children in Western Australia compares favourably with their treatment in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Marshall: The member for Fremantle did not castigate the officers at all.

Mr. SAMPSON: I realise that.

Mr. Sleeman: But what about the New Zealand position?

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member's statement regarding 15s. a week being paid in respect of children in New Zealand homes, comes as news to me. I find it difficult to believe that that is so.

Mr. Griffiths: Well, it is quite correct.

Mr. SAMPSON: As to prison labour in New Zealand, I realise that great reforms have been made. No opportunity is lost in that Dominion of seeing that male prisoners do a good deal of afforestation work, road work, farm work, pig raising, stock raising and so on. Reverting to the question of sustenance payments to widows and children in Western Australia, there is, in my opinion, very little cause for complaint.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you think 9s. a week is sufficient for them?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a question as to what the State can afford to pay. The former Government raised the payments from 7s. to 8s. and then from 8s. to 9s.

The Minister for Lands: When I took over once, 2s. 6d. was being paid.

Mr. Sleeman: In my grandfather's time they got nothing.

Mr. SAMPSON: I agree with the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) that knowledge of anything discreditable regarding its birth should be kept from a child. I wish to pay a tribute to the department respecting the arrangements governing the adoption of children. Upwards of 800 children have been adopted with the result that many childless homes have been blessed and considerably improved by the advent of the little ones. The adoption of children is not allowed until the fullest and most strict inquiries have been made regarding the homes into which it is proposed they shall be taken. Not every application for the adoption of a child is approved. One matter respecting which I am not so pleased is that of unemployment. Nothing has been done by the members of the Opposition to embarrass the Government to the slightest degree. Everyone realises the difficulties surrounding this problem and every assistance that can be given has been rendered. Unfortunately that was not always so. Hon. members will recall what happened three

years or so ago when we had the discreditable spectacle of the unemployed being organised in order to embarrass the then Government.

Hon. G. Taylor: They advertised in the Press for committees.

Mr. SAMPSON: Unemployment is always present during the winter months, and I have no wish to make the position worse than it is. Respecting the system whereby men applying for work are asked whether they belong to a union, this meets with my strongest disapproval. It is a sad state of affairs and a sad commentary on the humanitarianism of some people that such a question should be put to a man before he is given an opportunity to get work. I know that this is being done and I hope that a change of policy will be introduced.

The Premier: Are there any non-unionists working in your printing establishment?

Mr. SAMPSON: No.

Mr. Marshall: But that is not your fault.

The Premier: Would you refuse a non-unionist if he asked for work in your office?

Mr. SAMPSON: Let me make my position clear. The question whether a man is a unionist or not is for the individual himself. Before I became an employer, I was a member of the Typographical Union. There was no great virtue in that. To-day it would be difficult to find a man working in any particular trade who is not a unionist. I belong to an organisation; why should not those who are employed join a union as well? It would be presumption on my part and an unwarranted action to question any employee as to whether or not he belonged to a union. That is a matter for the man himself. I can only repeat that the unskilled worker has a very difficult time. When he is a married man with a family and is prevented from securing work because he has not seen fit to join a union, not only does he, but also those dependent upon him, receive extremely unfair treatment. No man can live in Western Australia without contributing his share towards taxation or without contributing towards the funds necessary for the maintenance of government. Consequently, every man should be given the right to work conditionally upon his being prepared to work and to do a fair day's labour. I wish to refer to a question respecting which I have tried to make myself conversant with the various details. I refer to the marketing of fruit. I regret that the position to-day is highly unsatisfactory. Last session members had an opportunity to dis-

cuss the Primary Products Marketing Bill. That measure was brought down by the Minister for Agriculture and at the time I expressed my gratitude to him for doing so. During the last Assembly election, the Premier promised that a measure along the lines of the Queensland Fruit Marketing Organisation Act would be introduced. While the Bill that was introduced was not exactly along the lines of the Queensland Act in that it provided for the establishment of pools, it went a long way towards the ideals of most of those interested in fruit marketing, seeing that it provided for the inauguration of compulsory co-operation. Recently a conference of Ministers for Agriculture was held in Brisbane. I read the newspapers with some degree of interest, hoping for a pronouncement by our Minister for Agriculture respecting the wisdom of the inauguration of a system of control. Possibly the Minister did make some such announcement, but if so, it was not mentioned in the Press here. A close scrutiny of the Brisbane "Courier" and of "The Queenslander" failed to elicit any information on the point. The earnestness of the Minister when he introduced the Bill was beyond question and had the Bill been agreed to, it would have marked a great advance in our methods of fruit marketing in Western Australia. I hope the Premier will decide to bring down another measure this session.

The Premier: If I could be sure on which side you would be, I might do so. I have not been able to discover how you stood with respect to the last one.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the Premier has not been able to discover that for himself, he is not nearly the capable man I thought him to be. There was no ambiguity, nor yet any reservation in my advocacy of the measure both inside and outside the House.

Mr. Marshall: Your attitude in the newspapers was a bit dubious, like that of the member for Katanning.

The Premier: You introduced some peculiar amendments.

Mr. Lutey: As a matter of fact, you wobbled a bit.

Mr. Marshall: You wobbled and then you toppled.

Mr. SAMPSON: I challenge the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) to indicate where I wobbled or failed respecting my earnestness and sincerity regarding the Primary Products Marketing Bill. No one knows better than the Premier that what I say is perfectly true. I am convinced that

until there is a measure of control over fruit marketing in Western Australia, no real progress will be made. In Queensland the work of the Committee of Direction is proceeding satisfactorily. Of course it was subjected to a good deal of criticism at the outset, but that was inevitable with the inauguration of any new system. It was to be expected regarding the Bill of last session that criticism would follow. The Premier would have been surprised had that Bill passed at the first time of asking. No great reform can be brought about readily, but only after long-sustained efforts have been made can effect be given to proposed alterations. Again I say that in Queensland the work of the Committee of Direction has proved satisfactory to the growers. The price of pineapples for canning purposes have increased not less than 70 per cent. At the time when the Queensland Act came into force, the minimum rate paid to the growers for their pineapples for canning purposes was 2s. 6d. and not always was that price paid. Although it was stated to be the minimum, the canners frequently telegraphed to the growers intimating that no more pineapples must be forwarded. At a later stage the custom was to go to the markets and purchase requirements at less than 2s. 6d. per case. The minimum price obtained under the auspices of the Committee of Direction increased from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 9d. and 4s., somewhat higher prices being secured at a later stage. An important point regarding the operations of the Committee of Direction is the fact that a vote was recently taken of those engaged in producing pineapples for canning purposes. That vote showed that 88 per cent. of those voting were favourable to that method of control. The producers and growers of this State must not lose heart. I hope to hear that the Minister will introduce the Bill again. We did not succeed at the first try, but possibly if the measure were introduced again, success would follow. To-day I accompanied a deputation to the Minister for Agriculture with a request for the introduction of a measure to control the marketing of our dried fruits. That is a most difficult task indeed. It has been recognised in South Australia and Victoria that legislation is essential if the industry is to be preserved. A few weeks ago we had the spectacle of Western Australian fruit being sold in the South Australian market. The products of the vineyards of this State were brought into competition with the products of grow-

ers in South Australia where there is an Act to control this commodity. That is a very undesirable state of affairs, and I was delighted to hear to-day that the Minister for Agriculture, subject to the approval of Cabinet, will bring down a measure to control dried fruit. I hope that, if introduced, the Bill will receive the approval of the House. Last year a Bill was brought down in the Council and came here under the sponsorship of a private member. Unfortunately, it contained a clause dealing with finance, and so on its arrival here it was ruled out of order. Throughout the dried fruit districts there is a large number of young growers, many of them returned soldiers. I understand they have already approached the board concerned, in order that the capital of their holdings might be reduced. Statutory control of marketing is becoming increasingly recognised all over the world. In New South Wales there is an Act controlling dairy products, and in New Zealand there is a Fresh Fruit Export Control Act. All fruit exported is controlled by a board of seven members, two of whom are appointed by the Government, while five are selected by the growers. Frequently has it been stated that where a board controls export, the Government have full power. That is entirely wrong. In no case within my knowledge does majority control lie with the Government. In New Zealand the board ships produce to whatever destination it thinks best in the interests of the growers; it selects its own agents, but never does it own or buy fruit. The result furnishes an example of successful co-operation. Various provinces in the Dominion pool their fruit, but the whole of the crop is not necessarily included. Apart from this, the Dominion Government have recognised the necessities of the growers and have provided a minimum return on all apples exported. The marketing of fruit has often been described as a complicated and delicate operation. In addition to those places to which I have referred, South Africa has an Act to control marketing. I should like to refer to the work of the Imperial Economic Committee, which recently issued its report. The committee said it was convinced that the whole tendency towards closer organisation of fruitgrowers was desirable and indeed inevitable; and it said that it would give general and emphatic support to the principle of their organisation in the overseas parts

of the Empire. Further, the committee expressed the opinion that the proposed organisation would not be to the disadvantage of the consumer. Coming to our own department of Agriculture, there is a widespread feeling that it has an insufficient number of inspectors. I hope that when the Estimates are brought down this defect will be remedied. If control of the fruit fly is to be brought about, there must be a sufficient number of inspectors to see that the gardens are kept clean and that fruit is carefully and regularly picked up. No advance has been effected in respect of the appointment of a fruit advisory board. During the regime of the late Government such a board was in existence, and was able to give good advice in respect of the fruit industry. A question that has been referred to lately and was the subject of a deputation to-day, is the establishment of an experimental fruit farm. I hope consideration will be given to this matter. Western Australia has a great future as a fruit growing country. No other State in the Commonwealth, possibly no other country in the world, offers greater opportunities of climate and soil. Climate is the more important of the two. Given the climate and a knowledge of how to produce fruit, success is assured. I would almost go so far as to suggest that the Government might consider the appointment, not only of additional inspectors, but of advisers in the fruit department: indeed this primary industry is worthy almost of a special Minister for itself. In 1921 the then Leader of the Opposition referred to the position of the railways and declared it was an obligation on the department to put up propositions for improvements. I believe the department does all it can in this way. However, certain improvements might even now be effected. I understand the difficulty the Railway Department has to face in the fierce competition of the motor char-a-bancs. I recall the introduction by the Minister for Lands in the session before last of a Bill authorising the running of motor buses as feeders to the Fremantle tramways. Members congratulated the Minister on having anticipated the running of private buses in opposition to the trams, and it was suggested that this provision might be adopted in other quarters. I do not know whether that has been done but, if not, I believe there are certain districts where Government motor buses could well be run

as feeders to the railways. The railways are the property of the people, and anything that can be done to assist them in the services they furnish should be carried out. It has occurred to me that the railway coaches used are unduly heavy. It might prove a saving if light sets of coaches were utilised, particularly in the suburban traffic. The financial position of the railways has retrogressed to some extent, but their position is not nearly so bad as is to be found in some of the other States. In New South Wales during the past year the railways made a loss of a million, and in Queensland also the loss was approximately a million, while the Victorian railways showed a deficit of a quarter of a million. I draw attention to the following question asked by Mr. Duncan-Hughes in the House of Representatives, and the reply given by Mr. Pratten:—

IMPORTED LOCOMOTIVES.

Refund of Duty.

MR. DUNCAN-HUGHES asked the Minister for Trade and Customs—

1. Has he authorised any refund of duty to the South Australian Railways Department with regard to the locomotives recently constructed for the department by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth and Company?

2. If so, what is the amount of the refund?

MR. PRATTEN: The answers to the honourable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Yes; on ten "Mountain" type engines.

2. Approximately, £62,000.

We have had several instances of the Federal Government imposing Customs duty on our State requirements, particularly in respect of locomotives and rails. Here we see that the Railway Department of South Australia secured a refund of approximately £62,000. I had hoped that more motor coaches would be run on our railways. Three were purchased by the late Government, and I believe one is operating on the Albany-Denmark line. From what I can learn they represent an economical method of providing a time table. Having noted what is being done in New South Wales, I am of opinion that the increased use of this class of transport would prove far more economical than the running of full sets of trains. Another railway question is the projected South Swan line. At present all goods for the chief port of Western Australia have to pass through

the Perth assembling yards. The bottle neck at Barrack-street is responsible for a good deal of delay and an inordinate volume of shunting. Consequently, it is to be hoped the South Swan railway project will receive serious attention. I was delighted to hear the Minister for Lands say it was a much needed requirement, and one that would materially assist the State. It has been widely discussed for many years past. Certainly that line, if constructed, would represent a considerable improvement in the through traffic to Fremantle, and would also open up areas at present unutilised. I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister for Railways an anomaly regarding the carriage of fertilisers. There is a specially low rate for fertilisers carried to all parts of the State during the months of December, January, February and March. For the sake of argument I shall take a distance of 60 miles as a basis. For this distance the rate on a minimum transport of six tons is 3s. 3d. per ton. This is known as the manure rate. The rate book also sets out that the manure rate applies to certain of the South-West and Great Southern districts, described as the potato districts, during the whole of the year. For consignments of less than six tons the rate is increased from 3s. 3d. to 7s. 10d. per ton. For districts not specified, consignments carried in other than the four months are charged at the rate of 7s. 10d. per ton for a six ton load and 17s. 3d. per ton for lots of less than six tons. In respect of freight, therefore, it pays a producer to pay for six tons rather than three tons. Six tons at 7s. 10d. per ton would cost him 47s., and three tons at 17s. 3d. would cost him 51s. 9d. The differential rates apply to all parts not enumerated, and they include the hills districts—apart from the stations on the South-Western line—the Eastern line, Mundaring, Upper Darling Range, Upper Swan, Toodyay, and all other parts not enumerated. Thus while the potato districts have a special rate on six-ton lots of 3s. 3d. the whole year round, while smaller lots are carried at the rate of 7s. 10d., in other districts, including those I have mentioned, the rate of 7s. 10d. applies. That is not all. Very few orchardists require a six-ton load of fertiliser at once and accordingly, if one of them in a non-favoured district orders less than six tons, he has to pay 17s. 3d. per ton. I am sure the Minister will give sym-

pathetic consideration to this anomaly. The men engaged in fruit and vegetable growing in parts other than the potato districts should receive the advantage of the manure rate. In tabular form the position, taking the sixty mile distance as a basis, is as follows, at per ton—

	4-ton.	1 ton.	2 tons.	3, 4, and 5 tons.	6 tons and over.
Manure, 60 mile freight.	" M " for 3/11	" M " for 7/10	" M " for 7/10	" M " but cheaper to charge as 6 tons. Manure rate	Manure 3/3
Dec. to March	" B " for 8/8	" B " for 17/3	" B " for 17/3	" B " but cheaper to charge as 6 tons	M. rate—47/- (6 tons) 7/10 (per ton)
Other period than above	" M " for 7/10	" M " for 7/10	" M " for 7/10	" M " but cheaper to charge as 6 tons. Manure	Manure 3/3...
Potato districts. Same as Dec. to March, except that it applies all year round					

The Minister for Railways: Why do not two or three of them combine to get the requisite load? The people you are talking about would not pay more than £2 or £3 a year.

Mr. SAMPSON: Even if they did combine, they would have to pay more than double the freight that is charged to the more favoured parts. I asked growers why they did not combine and get a six-ton lot carried at 7s. 10d., but it was pointed out that it is not competent for more than one consignee to secure a consignment. Clause 21 of the regulations provides that the Commissioner of Railways reserves the right to charge the freight on each separate consignment.

The Minister for Railways: But he does not do it.

Mr. SAMPSON: Again, it is not always convenient for a grower to arrange with someone else to order fertiliser at the same time.

The Minister for Railways: All you are talking about makes a difference of 30s. a year to a man.

Mr. SAMPSON: It makes a considerable difference to men engaged in the fruit and

vegetable industry. I appreciate the concession granted to the potato districts, but I ask the Minister to make it general. The growers in the hills would appreciate it. While they may not buy tons of fertiliser, the difference in the rate is so marked that the charging of the lower rate would be warmly approved. There are not many orchardists who order six tons of fertiliser at the one time. They might order three tons, and three tons at 17s. 3d. as compared with three tons at 7s. 10d. is a big difference. These producers receive comparatively little money and have enormous difficulties to contend with. I hope the Minister will extend to them the same good treatment that has been meted out to producers in the more favoured districts. I am aware that this consideration applies to the conveyance of bone dust from Kalgoorlie, subject to an empty truck being available.

The Minister for Railways: Trucks that otherwise would run empty.

Mr. SAMPSON: But that does not remove the anomaly. That fertiliser is not so popular with the orchardists as is the Wyndham bone and blood manure. Wyndham B. and B. is the popular manure, and it becomes available in August of each year. Long before December that fertiliser has been bought up, and even if the orchardists and potato growers in the non-exempted district desired to purchase during the four months period of cheap freights, it would be impossible to do so. If a man lived at Harvey, being on the South-Western line, he would have the advantage of the special rate the whole year round, but if he lived at Karragullen, Childlows, Mundaring or other of the hills districts not on the South-Western line, he would have to pay the comparatively heavy miscellaneous rate. A matter which I understand is to receive consideration this session is that of establishing central markets. Such markets have been long required. At present our markets are located in different parts of the city, which causes inconvenience and is costly to both consumer and producer. When the House is considering the question I hope there will be no interference with the right of consumers to purchase direct from the producers. That consideration is of first importance. In Sydney the municipal council control the markets in the metropolitan area, save one small market, but the Council do not enter into the work of distribu-

tion in any way. Its sole work is in the capacity of landlord. In Adelaide two companies are operating on the wholesale side, the east end market and the new market. In the Gouger-st. retail market there are 252 stalls. On the area under the control of this market there are 90 shops, one hotel, a hall, and four rooms that are used for social purposes. This is a method whereby the producer and consumer are brought together. With regard to the kerbstone market, I hope, when the Bill providing for the establishment of central markets is brought down, that there will be no interference with this system that is proving so good both for the consumer and the producer. The Speech makes reference to reforestation. There is an opportunity for the establishment of the wattle bark industry in this State. Western Australia is admirably adapted for the production of the acacia. The broad leaf wattle, the wattle of commerce, grows well here. As a boy in South Australia, I stripped tons of wattle bark. It is a recognised side line of the small farmer in the southern parts of that State. In those days the price ranged between £5 and £9 a ton, but to-day I understand it ranges between £18 and £20 per ton. At a later stage in the session I shall have more to say upon this point. In the meantime I hope the Minister for Forests will see fit to make a statement on the matter. I hope that consideration will be given to the provision of additional harbour space, now that the railway bridge is carried away. Added space is needed in the harbour, and the recent catastrophe affords an opportunity of considering that question. I very much regret the absence from the Chamber of the Honorary Minister, Hon. S. W. Munsie. We are all sorry that he has been stricken down with sickness, and hope it will not be long before he is with us again. Hospital services are of the first importance. As was said the other night, we can to an extent appreciate the regret that is probably felt by the Premier that the Hospital Bill was not passed some three years or so ago. The hospital tax was brought down as a result of the decision of a Royal Commission appointed to consider the hospital services. It was unanimously recommended that a tax of 1d. in the pound on all wages and other incomes should be levied. The Bill passed this House, but was unfortunately lost in another place.

Mr. Marshall: It was badly fathered.

Mr. SAMPSON: If that measure were in existence, it would be doing good work for the suffering. It is gratifying to note that the Lemnos Soldiers' Mental Hospital has been opened. The agreement in respect to that institution is unsatisfactory. I had something to do with it in the early stages. I do urge that the Federal Government should undertake not only the care of the Australian soldier who is mentally sick, but of all soldiers, including Imperial men. I regret that this provision was not insisted upon. All the expense arising out of the war should be met by the Commonwealth. The observation ward at the Perth hospital remains, but it is gratifying to know that at last the reception home at Point Heathcote is to be erected. Those who have visited the observation ward have been amazed that such a place should exist in these times. It is a blot on the civilisation of Western Australia, a condemnation of all who have had anything to do with it. I was glad to see the reference in the Speech to the Point Heathcote Hospital. It stated that a commencement had been made with the erection of the home. Since hearing the Speech I have visited the site, and consider that the description is hardly accurate. No construction work has been done, although I gathered from the Speech that the bricks were being laid and the walls were being erected. There is not a brick on the site, although I admit that a good deal of clearing and levelling has been done. I should like to be informed when the work of construction will actually be commenced, and to have some idea as to when the home will be available for use.

The Premier: A great deal of work has been done in clearing and levelling.

Mr. SAMPSON: I visited the site last Saturday, and saw that a good deal of that work had been done.

The Premier: The work has really commenced.

Mr. SAMPSON: But the paragraph is somewhat misleading.

The Premier: There will be no delay in pushing on with the work.

Mr. SAMPSON: I congratulate the Government in deciding upon going ahead with the building. The site is a beautiful one. It carries into active effect the recommendation of the Royal Commission that there should be a broad, sweeping view. It is a site without equal in Western Australia. When

the building is erected, it should forever remove the dreadful reproach under which Western Australia has suffered with regard to the shocking observation ward at the Perth Hospital.

The Premier: It is nearly as good a site as the one you recommended at Point Resolution.

Mr. SAMPSON: Point Heathcote is a better site. The other site might have been more convenient, but, as Parliament was disinclined to approve of it, there was no alternative but to look elsewhere. Every member who visits Point Heathcote will commend the site, and will be proud and pleased that it is to be used for this purpose. Only the best site should be chosen for these mental cases. In the stress of civilisation a man's reason does break down, and mental troubles are by no means unusual.

Mr. Hughes: That is chiefly due to the lack of civilisation.

Mr. SAMPSON: I think civilisation is the cause of it. I am certain that the Point Heathcote Mental Reception Home, when completed, will bring back to health and to a normal mental state many men and women who would otherwise become permanent inmates of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. God speed the day when the home shall be completed. In that beautiful place it will be possible for anyone who is mentally abnormal to receive all the necessary care and attention, without the necessity of being certified as an insane person, which is a dreadful thing to happen to anyone. The home will do much to restore those people to health, and give them a further opportunity to meet their fellow men without the stigma and strain of having been certified as mental. I appeal to the Minister for Water Supply to give the requirements of Parkerville every consideration. If he were to bring to bear upon the Treasurer the weight and force of his persuasive eloquence, I am sure the Treasurer would approve of this water supply being put in. The work was approved by the Mitchell Government, but unfortunately a misunderstanding arose on the part of the people of Parkerville, and the work was not proceeded with. They were under the impression that a certain guarantee was not necessary. I should like the Honorary Minister to say that he is going to do his best to have the work carried out. It would be a great boon to the local people, who, during the summer, are hard pressed for water. It is a delight-

ful locality but is hampered in this direction.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I am giving the matter serious consideration.

Mr. SAMPSON: I thank the Honorary Minister for that assurance. My hope is that in the near future I shall receive a letter from him stating that the Treasurer has approved of the necessary funds being allocated for this work.

MR. KENNEDY (Greenough) [9.30]: When we take into consideration the huge area of this State and its sparse population, when we bear in mind that the gold mining industry is declining on all our fields, that we have to expend large sums on such necessary services as education, police, and charities, when we recall the concessions and railway freights granted to industries in the initial stages of development, further when we reflect that many hundreds of miles of our railways passing through the agricultural districts are not earning up to their maximum capacity because the lands are not being used to their total productivity, all impartial citizens must agree that the condition of our finances is sound. Instead of whining and moaning about the 44-hour week causing the loss on the railways, certain people should take into consideration the fact that many thousands of starving stock were conveyed freight free from the Murchison last year, by way of assisting the owners. Such things account for the reduced revenue of the Railway Department. I am pleased to note that the Government carry on the land development policy to which we look to maintain our prestige and financial standing. Huge tracts of first-class land adjacent to existing railways are lying idle, and Crown lands at that. These lands are not infested by vermin of any kind, and they are within the zone of bountiful rainfalls. The utilisation of these lands would help to swell the railway revenue. One thing that is keeping such parts of the State back is the refusal of assistance by the Agricultural Bank. The officers of the bank are somewhat sceptical as to whether the lands in question will prove revenue-producing. In the Greenough electorate, one of the richest electorates of Western Australia from a pastoral, agricultural and mineral point of view, there are large areas of land still awaiting development. There can be no fear of any loss accruing from granting the pioneers of

those lands assistance to cultivate. Between Yuna and Mullewa, and also on the Wongan Hills line, there are thousands of acres of first-class land ready to be taken up, but the Agricultural Bank will not grant settlers on them assistance during the initial stages. There is also a huge tract of undeveloped first-class land between Yuna and Mullewa. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) remarked that for the past 20 years his constituents have been trying to get a railway and that the Treasurer had at last agreed to furnish the necessary funds. Over a long term of years there has been an agitation in my electorate for the extension of the Yuna-Mullewa railway, a distance of 42 miles. The Lands Classification Board submitted a report, and then the Railway Advisory Board reported that there would be a loss on the railway if it were extended to Mullewa for agricultural purposes. Another classification of the lands was made recently, and resulted as follows:—First-class 62,914 acres, second-class 38,889, and third-class 456,107 acres. I am sorry to say that the third-class is by far the largest area.

Mr. Latham: All that third-class land will be used one of these days.

Mr. KENNEDY: I shall touch upon that aspect directly. The Railway Advisory Board reported, in reference to the 456,000 odd acres of third-class land, that the area to be served by the proposed railway contained a large acreage of non-cultivable land. They went on to say, however, that under proper methods of cultivation, probably half of this area could be profitably developed, and that by allocating about 4,000 acres for each unit, some 50 additional settlers could be provided for, which would bring the total number of settlers up to about 110. We have now reached the stage when lands of that description are capable of being brought under cultivation, and the Government should give this matter earnest consideration. Hundreds of farmers' sons in the Greenough electorate are crying out for land, and they wonder why the Government allow this large area to lie idle. There is another reason why the proposed railway extension should be made. The huge manganese deposits at Horseshoe near Meekatharra are about to be tapped by a private railway, which in six or eight months expects to begin landing manganese ore in Geraldton at the rate of 90,000 tons for the first year of operation. The

existing railway between Geraldton and Mullewa, a distance of 65 miles, has a grade of one in fifty throughout. There is one large bank of five miles which at present one would not dream of re-grading. Then there are banks of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles and one mile which require re-grading from one in fifty to one in sixty. If the large amount of money which those re-grading works would cost were expended in the construction of a railway between Yuna and Mullewa, a distance of 42 miles on a grade of one in sixty, it would be repaid within a few years by reason of the greater loads that could be hauled over the new line. The difference in distance involved would be about 20 miles extra. One has to take into consideration the heavy expense caused by the present slow and cumbersome journey, by the wear and tear of locomotives, and by the huge strain on the draw gear of rolling stock over one in fifty grades. From 70 to 100 tons more could be carried by running through Mullewa via Yuna, and this in the same running time as is required for the 65 miles from Mullewa to Geraldton. The railway officers are now considering the regrading of certain banks on that section in order to provide for the transport of manganese ore. They are thinking of putting in what are called "refuge sidings." That is to say, a train will haul a full load to one of the banks, and drop part of the load there, and the next train coming along will pick up the load detached by the previous train, and carry it on a few miles further. But that is a slow and cumbersome way of dealing with heavy traffic. Another point has to be taken into consideration from the industrial aspect. The engine men have recently brought before the Commissioner of Railways the fact that running tender first, is dangerous. The refuge sidings would mean the running of many miles tender first. The engine men will run tender first only in daylight. One can see the waste of time involved when there is no night running on the section tender first. Further, between Mullewa and Geraldton every train has to haul a tank of 15 tons water capacity for locomotive purposes. At present the Railway Department are connected up for water with the Wiecherina dam, which supplies the town of Geraldton. Last summer that dam did not fill, and there were water restrictions imposed on Geraldton residents. At present it looks as if the dam

will again fail to fill, in which circumstances the Railway Department will be unable to draw water from it. Thus arises the necessity for hauling water tanks. If the railway were built from Yuna to Mullewa, the department would have available a large water supply at Whellara. The dam there fills every year, and not one-eighth of the water is used, the service being only two trains per week. I suggest to the Minister for Railways that before any large expenditure of money is made upon re-grading works, it would be advisable to consider the construction of a railway on an easier grade and capable of hauling heavier loads. I have to congratulate the Government on their purchase of the Mendel Estate at Mullewa, containing 33,000 acres, which has been divided into 17 blocks. This estate has been lying idle for many years. I understand it was originally taken up by one of the directors of the Midland Railway Co. Having repurchased the estate, the Government are throwing it open for closer settlement, and there are 130 applicants for the 17 blocks. This fact shows how people in the northern districts are crying out for farming lands. In the Northampton area there are huge areas of first-class lands in what are known as the Balla and Dartmoor estates. These areas have recently been thrown open, but owing to the absence of good roads and the failure to locate water supplies the pioneer settlers are struggling under extremely adverse conditions. I thank the Minister for Water Supply for having sent out last year a boring party to try to locate water on the Balla and Dartmoor estates. Unfortunately their efforts proved unsuccessful. I hope the Minister will take into consideration the construction at the earliest possible moment of dams in this area similar to the dams constructed on the wheat belt. Thus the pioneer settlers on the estates in question would be greatly assisted. There is a sand plain to be negotiated between the present Northampton railway and these estates, but I understand that under the Federal and State road grant the Northampton Road Board have agreed, and rightly, to construct a road to the estate out of their first allocation of funds. I hope that the matter will not be overlooked, and that the work of construction will proceed at once. Further, I have to thank the Minister for Mines for the assistance he has rendered to the lead-mining industry in the Northampton and Galena districts. Several years ago the field was in its initial stages,

but through the sympathetic aid given by the Government to many prospectors and mining companies it is now one of the richest lead-mining fields in the State, producing thousands and thousands of pounds of wealth every year. The Government have further assisted the mining companies by providing water supplies, both for the mines and for the townspeople. Moreover, the Government have constructed a bridge across the Murchison River to tap a rich mining belt on the farther side. Five or six years ago Parliament passed an Act for the construction by a company of a railway from Ajana to Galena. Financial difficulties caused the company to fail in its undertaking. The time has now arrived for the Government to consider the advisableness of putting in a road between Ajana and Galena. The distance to be covered is only 10 miles. At present the ore is conveyed by motor tractors, the wear and tear on which is very heavy by reason of the bad roads. I trust the Minister for Works will take into consideration the road requirements of that district. The Government have carried out road construction work in the Greenough district and as these roads provide the chief means by which produce is conveyed to the railways, I hope that a continuation of that policy will be determined upon. The inadequate train service in the outer parts of my electorate should receive the attention of the Minister for Railways. Twice a week what is termed an express train runs between Perth and Meekatharra, but that train also conveys large consignments of stock. Kalgoorlie, Bunbury, Geraldton, and Albany are also served by express trains, but the one I particularly refer to is, I am sure, the worst that is run in any part of the Commonwealth. It certainly does not reflect credit upon the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. Marshall: It is the scrap heap for the whole railway system!

Mr. KENNEDY: From Mullewa onwards it certainly cannot be called an express train. In addition to the passenger coaches it has to haul huge rakes of trucks containing coal, timber, chaff, mining machinery and so on. On the return journey two huge locomotives have to be attached in order to haul not only the passenger train, but 50 or 60 trucks of stock as well. That is altogether wrong. If two engines are required for an express train, an extra guard should be provided and the passenger train run

separately either before or after the goods train. That could be done quite easily.

Mr. Latham: We have an express in our district that travels eight miles an hour.

Mr. Marshall: And that is a bit too fast for you.

Mr. Latham: Not at all, I never use it.

The Premier: We do not want to hurry up the old people at York!

Mr. KENNEDY: I congratulate the Minister for Mines on the coal-boring activities that he has authorised in the Eradu district. It has been known for many years that coal exists in that part of the State but few attempts have been made to ascertain whether the coal is of good quality. I have every hope of a good supply of coal being found there. I would draw the attention of the Minister for Justice to the operations of the Electoral Act. During the recent Legislative Council elections we found that at the closing time for receiving claims, it was possible for any political agent, by depositing 2s. 6d., to object to such enrolments as he desired to challenge. The effect of that in the Central Province, for instance, is that while the chief centre is Geraldton, towns as far distant as 125 or 150 miles away are included in the area affected. That means that exception may be taken to the enrolment of a person at Wiluna or Meekatharra, and in that event the individual concerned would be served with a notice requiring him to appear before the magistrate at Geraldton to prove his eligibility for enrolment. In the circumstances no person, merely for the purpose of having his name retained on the roll, would incur the loss of time and expense involved in the journey to Geraldton. During the election campaign referred to, we found that large numbers of electors were disfranchised.

Hon. G. Taylor: A lot of our people were disfranchised too.

Mr. KENNEDY: The position I have referred to requires attention. Regarding the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) concerning the North Fremantle bridge, it is not right that his criticism of responsible officers and men of the Railway Department should go unchallenged. It should not be allowed to stand that they were tantamount to being neglectful of their duty and that, in consequence, some catastrophe might have taken place in connection

with that bridge. It was suggested that a catastrophe could easily have occurred there had it not been for the fact that some "wandering Willie" happened along and saw a crack!

Mr. Sleeman: It was not the fault of those officers that a catastrophe did not happen.

Mr. KENNEDY: North Fremantle is not the only locality where washaways are reported, particularly in flood times. Those difficulties are frequent in various parts of the railway system. The rules and regulations under which the railway officers work provide that they shall be careful and diligent especially during the winter months. Further up the line at Baker's Hill, long before the North Fremantle bridge went, the winter rains resulted in a bridge being washed away. There were no "wandering Wilkies" there and the railway officers charged with the responsibility of patrolling that length, discovered that the line had been washed away.

Mr. Sleeman: It was a good thing for the Government that there was a "wandering Willie" about the North Fremantle bridge.

Mr. KENNEDY: The member for Fremantle takes up anything that anyone tells him about that particular matter!

Mr. Hughes: It is a pity the Causeway was not washed away during the floods, for then we might have got a new bridge there.

Mr. KENNEDY: I would draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to the inadequate railway facilities at Mullewa, which is a most important junction, where large quantities of goods and stock pass through. At present, should anyone desire to alight from a train and stay at Mullewa, he has to go a round-about way for half a mile before he can reach the town, or else commit a breach of the regulations and crawl through rakes of trucks in the running yards, past engine pits and over a running creek. The railway yard there is the worst in Western Australia. In view of the huge tonnage of goods handled at the station and of the large quantities of wheat that will come down from the Wongan Hills-Mullewa areas within the next couple of years, better railway facilities are required there, and an overhead bridge provided so that people can gain access to the town in safety.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [9.56]: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Marshall: Where is your leader?

Mr. BROWN: I do not know. It was not my intention to say a great deal this session. I said all I had to say during the debate on the Address-in-reply last session and the session before that. When, however, I heard the unwarranted and almost, I might say, brutal attack made by the Premier upon our gallant leader—

Mr. Teesdale: "Gallant" is good!

Mr. BROWN: —I could come to no other conclusion than that I should rally to the support of my leader and do my best to protect him.

Mr. Marshall: Let me like a soldier fall—on a feather bed!

Mr. BROWN: We are a little band of six.

Mr. Teesdale: God knows, too few!

Mr. BROWN: It appears as though we are loved by no one in this House. The members sitting opposite the Government have no time for us.

Mr. Latham: It is not fair to say that.

Mr. BROWN: The members sitting on the Government side have no time for us either.

Mr. SPEAKER Order, Order!

Mr. BROWN: Judged by the remarks that have been made, I can come to no other conclusion than that no one loves us.

Mr. Hughes: Nonsense!

Mr. BROWN: Why is that so? We are representatives of the people who are producing the wealth on which the people of Western Australia and the Government themselves have to depend. Why are we displaced? What is behind it all? So far as I can learn it is because we are organising.

Mr. Latham: But they are organising against you, too! Don't forget that.

Mr. BROWN: Yes.

Member: What about the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. BROWN: That hon. gentleman recognises that we are organising. Is that not right? Have we not a perfect right to go into any hon. member's electorate if we think we can win it?

Mr. Panton: Of course you have.

Mr. BROWN: Either the National Party or the Labour Party can come to the Pingelly electorate if they so desire.

Hon. G. Taylor: What makes you squeal so much about the South-West Province election then?

Mr. BROWN: There we had the spectacle of the Leader of the Opposition going through the South-West and conducting a campaign against our former representative. Yet at the same time, so we find, there was

a pact between the parties. It was said that there was a pact between us to help one another, but his action proved that it was not so. It has since been shown that we are fighting along our own individual lines. Let me inform the Premier that his outburst of passion will give us one of the greatest advertisements we have ever had. I tell him and his followers that the producers of the State will be up in arms. They are going to show the House that they will not stand such treatment. If it were not for the farmer, none of our goldfields members would be here.

Mr. Marshall: You are not going to insult the farming community by saying they are responsible for you being here?

Mr. BROWN: If you were of a farming community, you certainly would not be here. Now I want to say a word or two on finance. I do not profess to be a financier of any sort.

The Premier: Then you are all the better qualified to discuss the question.

Mr. BROWN: I want to compare our last two Budgets. In 1924-25 our revenue was £8,381,446 and the expenditure £8,439,845, leaving a deficit of £58,399.

The Premier: What is wrong with that?

Mr. BROWN: Nothing. But come now to our latest statement, that for 1925-26. The revenue was £8,808,166 and the expenditure £8,907,308, leaving a deficit of £99,142. At first glance there does not appear to be anything wrong with that, but on investigation we find that the Premier has had £426,720 more revenue than he had in the preceding year. If we had continued our upward progress with the finances we should have had a surplus. Why was our expenditure so heavy last year? The railways had a lot to do with it. What with the 44-hour week and the 3s. 4d. per week additional pay to the men, we have gone to the bad. I heard the Premier say we are a primary producing State, that our wheat returns were not so large as they should have been, and that the result was reflected in the general revenue. But we had £426,720 more revenue than in the previous year.

The Premier: But I had to spend more in satisfying the demands of your country people.

Mr. BROWN: Then you were spending it in the right direction. Anything you have expended in the country districts will bring you in a threefold return.

The Premier: That is why I say there is nothing wrong with it.

Mr. BROWN: Still, our finances are not so buoyant as they might be. We ought to have continued on the upgrade. I am led to believe that the Premier still has £300,000 up his sleeve. What about the special grant from the Commonwealth?

The Premier: That is put away for a rainy day.

Mr. BROWN: I hope the Premier will see his way to spending that £300,000 also in the country districts. I know that we are all going to the Premier for something or other, and that he requires to be pretty clever to manage everything. If he were to let his heart get the better of him, the finances would soon go to the bad.

The Premier: It was because for a few days I let my heart get the better of me that I want back that bit.

Mr. BROWN: I am pleased that the Premier included in His Excellency's Speech an intimation that he would introduce a Bill for the construction of a line eastward from Kondinin. We have to thank the Minister for Lands for that. After having an inspection made of that country, he came to the conclusion that the sooner the railway was built the better for the State. There are in that district to-day 26,000 acres of crop, estimated to yield over 100,000 bags of wheat. When the Minister was there, it was intended to put in crops 30 or 40 miles out. However, that was not done, because it was realised that it would not be profitable at so great a distance. As soon as ever the railway is built, all that area will be brought under crop. I regret that the construction of the Brookton-Dale railway is not in progress. A few months ago we were informed by the Press that that railway would be built under the British Imperial scheme. There was great rejoicing in that district, for after 20 years the people felt that their cherished hopes were about to be realised. However, in another paragraph we found that the Minister for Lands objected strongly, contending that the Pemberton-Denmark railway was still more urgent. The Brookton-Dale people thought that if the Pemberton-Denmark line should be built also, so much the better. They all believed that their own railway would be built.

The Premier: And it will be.

Mr. BROWN: Well, good luck to you, but when is it to be built? It was stated in the paragraph referred to that the Minister for Lands had said he would get the Premier to interview the Federal Government

and see if they could not get the money for the Pemberton-Denmark railway also. I can only conclude that the Premier was successful, perhaps with the aid of Mr. Prowse.

Mr. J. H. Smith: A great man, Prowse!

The Premier: I do not think Mr. Prowse knew anything at all about it.

Mr. Griffiths: Perhaps it was Senator Carroll.

The Premier: Oh no. He is fully occupied keeping his eyes on the Melbourne girls.

Mr. BROWN: I have no objection to that. It is a good thing to have a Senator with appreciative eyes for a nice girl. We have had a wonderful advertisement through "Miss Australia." A friend from Sydney told me that the best advertisements Western Australia had ever had were the several murders recently committed and "Miss Australia." He said that "Miss Australia" was the greatest advertisement of all. Now we have Senator Carroll assuring us that we have in the West the prettiest girls in Australia. I agree with him. Regarding land settlement, a great deal hinges on the way the Minister for Lands administers his department. A little time ago, when in the Kalbarin area he came to the conclusion that our system of selection was wrong, that the selectors were picking the eyes out of the country. I agreed with him at the time, but since then I have changed my mind. Why? Because we have very large areas and I understand the instructions given to the surveyors are that they should include a sufficient quantity of good land in each block. They are not able to do it. The result is that they are in the district for month after month trying to get good land into each block. If the selectors were allowed to go out and choose their own blocks, subsequently they would take up all the poor land adjoining them. From Pingelly to Kondinin there is not an acre of vacant land to-day. Yet a few years ago there was plenty of poor land available in the district. Under the existing system, except a man has a given quantity of good land on his block, the Agricultural Bank will not advance him a penny. That is the whole reason why the land out in the eastern areas has not been selected. Another thing I grieve over is that a lot of our young men, sons of prominent farmers and reared on farms, cannot get a block of land. A little time ago a man told me that a nephew of his came over from the East to select land, but was unable to obtain any, and so eventually went back to Victoria. In the

Pingelly district a man with three sons unavailingly tried for two years or more to get land for them.

The Minister for Lands: What is the use of taking up land if the bank will not advance on it? I have 4,000 acres of land open for selection to-day, but outside the approved area.

Mr. BROWN: Now I wish to say a little about our light lands. Recently I had a trip up through the Wongan Hills country and was agreeably surprised to find an experimental farm with an average of close on 17 bushels. I have been told that in the vicinity of the railway up there there are 4,000,000 acres of land of equal value. Why cannot all that land be selected? I understand it is because the Agricultural Bank will not advance a penny upon it, regarding it as of second class. But surely if we have in the vicinity of the railway land that will produce 17 bushels of wheat to the acre, it should be sufficient for the bank to advance at least half the usual amount.

Mr. Latham: Experiments on light lands have been very costly to the bank.

Mr. BROWN: Still, if the Government can do it on an experimental farm, where the expenses are so high, the private selector can do it profitably. All that country will grow oats, and country that will grow oats will produce sheep. Following on the oat crop comes a fine pasture of grass admirably suited for sheep.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is good sheep feed.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, it is producing something. In the vicinity of our railways we have millions of acres of land that will grow wheat and sheep.

The Minister for Lands: We have not millions of acres fit to grow wheat.

Mr. BROWN: I myself have seen considerable areas. I was with the member for Toodyay at the time and he can bear out what I say.

The Minister for Lands: If you can find millions of acres of wheat land, you can do more than the department can.

Mr. BROWN: But the Minister said he had nine million acres available.

The Minister for Lands: I said there was light land available.

Mr. BROWN: The whole prosperity of the State hinges on the administration of our Lands Department. I regard the Minister for Lands as the most important man in the Ministry. He has much work ahead of him and he is facing it in a way that leaves little room for complaint. If the

Agricultural Bank trustees have not the money to enable them to make the necessary advances, the Government should introduce legislation to increase the amount and should consider the advisableness of advancing money on light lands.

The Minister for Lands: The Agricultural Bank trustees already have power to do that if they so wish.

Mr. BROWN: The Agricultural Bank is free from political control.

Hon. G. Taylor: And a good job, too.

Mr. BROWN: I agree with that. The trustees are running the bank on a commercial basis.

Mr. Latham: They are not.

The Minister for Lands: I wish they were.

Mr. BROWN: There is a decided tendency on their part to run the institution on commercial lines.

Mr. Latham: They are taking risks that no other institution would take.

Mr. BROWN: Frequently the good man has to suffer for the bad man. We know that the bank has sustained losses in certain districts. Every man who goes on the land is not successful. Every man is not honest; every man does not intend to establish a home on the land. Some men become discouraged, throw up their holdings and leave a big debt behind. When another settler comes along, the trustees of the bank are afraid to grant a loan because of previous losses in that particular district. I hope the Minister will consider this matter and do something to encourage the opening up and development of our light lands.

The Minister for Lands: I am not going to introduce any Bill to take away from the trustees of the Agricultural Bank the powers they now exercise.

Mr. BROWN: I do not ask for that. All I ask is that the Government make available to the bank an additional amount of capital.

The Minister for Lands: They have the capital.

Mr. BROWN: I am pleased to hear that. I thought they were hard up. I wish to say a few words about the groups, and I do so quite apart from anything in the nature of party politics. The groups are a legacy of the present Government from the previous Government.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Have you visited the group settlements?

Mr. BROWN: Yes.

Mr. J. H. Smith: In what part?

Mr. BROWN: I speak from a life's experience of following the plough and grubbing trees, and I think I can claim to be able to judge whether the group settlers are likely to be successful.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What parts did you visit?

Mr. BROWN: Denmark and Busselton. I believe that some of the group settlers will make good, but that the successful men will be few and far between. Many of them do not intend to remain on the groups any longer than the sustenance allowance lasts. As we have embarked upon the scheme of group settlements, it behoves everyone to do his best to make a success of them. The methods of working the groups are not as I would have them. The question is whether we have efficient foremen who really understand that class of work. To my surprise I found that there was only one team to a certain number of settlers. One man had had his ground ready for a considerable time, but before he could get it ploughed, it had become too hard and he could only get his grass scratched in.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Where was that?

Mr. BROWN: On the side of a jarrah hill out from Denmark towards Nornalup. I covered 60 miles among the groups in one day.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You spent only one day amongst them?

Mr. BROWN: One farm was typical of the others. On some of them I found not a blade of grass growing. Some of the ground that had been ploughed was carrying many trees—almost 100 to the acre—and not a blade of grass was showing.

The Minister for Lands: There are very few such farms in the Denmark district. I have been on every group there.

Mr. BROWN: I could come to no other conclusion than that, when these farms were taken over by the Agricultural Bank, the trustees would have the greatest problem in their experience to keep the men on their holdings and get back the money that had been expended. In the wheat areas there has been no trouble because, after a couple of years, men were able to produce a couple of thousand bags of wheat. After two years on the groups, many of the settlers are not producing anything. I also found that some of the settlers had one cow, but not a bit of fodder for it. They had to buy bran and chaff,

and, as members can realise, a cow kept under such conditions would be very expensive indeed. It would probably pay the settlers better to buy tinned milk until they could grow their own fodder.

Mr. Latham: Probably it was a community cow for the benefit of the children on the group.

The Minister for Lands: I have here a photograph of chaffcutting at Denmark this year.

Mr. Lindsay: Eighteen months ago I saw them cutting chaff there.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But he spent only a day on the Denmark groups.

Mr. BROWN: I hope the groups will be a success, but I fear that many of them will be over-capitalised.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Your leader says, "Let the group settlers earn as much as they can—£100 or £200 a month."

Mr. BROWN: There must be something radically wrong with the groups if a man could earn that amount. It would be impossible for him to earn it. When the group settlers are in a position to take over their farms, they will find themselves burdened with a debt of probably £1,700 to £2,000, and it will be impossible for them to live and pay interest and provide a sinking fund on such a large sum. It will become necessary for the State to write off some of the debt, just as the Government have done for the soldiers. I regret that it should be so, because the scheme is one which, if successful, must prove of great advantage to the State. When the group settlers begin to produce under intense culture, what markets will be open to them? At present there are no markets except for butter and cheese, which can be exported.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There are markets for every pig they can grow. There is a market worth two millions of money at their very doors.

Mr. BROWN: If some of the farms I saw will grow potatoes and other profitable crops, the money will have been well expended, but I have been informed that it is necessary to go to the rich portions of Western Australia in order to grow potatoes.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Potatoes are grown in the swamps during one part of the year and on the high land during the other part.

Mr. BROWN: But many of the blocks do not contain land sufficiently rich to grow potatoes. The land is fit only for pastures.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What! Around Denmark?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, even around Denmark, but I saw nothing of outstanding quality growing in the rich places. It is our duty to help the Minister for Lands in every way possible. I admit that we need population. The natural increase is not sufficient to populate our vast territory, and therefore we must look to our own race from overseas to help in this work. Many of the people being settled on the land are not accustomed to the life, and consequently they will be failures.

The Minister for Lands: Thousands of men who took up wheat lands were not accustomed to the life.

Mr. BROWN: Not too many. The conditions in the South-West, also, are different. One cannot compare the work in the wheat areas with that of intense culture in the South-West. If a man accustomed to the wheat areas was sent to the South-West, his experience would be of no value there. Dairying is an industry involving a considerable amount of hard work. Last year I learnt that the Government had purchased 2,000 cows from the northern districts of New South Wales.

The Minister for Lands: The number was 1,700.

Mr. BROWN: Probably the number of cattle required were not obtainable within the State, but the man who was supposed to be purchasing cattle did not go to many parts of the Pingelly district. Pingelly could have supplied 50 to 100 cows at £8 to £10 each, animals that were acclimatised. The cattle from New South Wales were not accustomed to local conditions, and doubtless some of them were lost through eating the zamia palm. In my young days I was on a dairy farm and I know something about stock. I saw the cattle from New South Wales when they were landed, and I consider that most of them were of good milking Shorthorn strain, but they were only heifers and would not come into profit for 12 months. Yet their cost landed here was about £12 per head. Would it not have been better to purchase acclimatised cattle at £8 or £10 per head that would have come into profit straight away? The Government will have to spend still more money on the groups, because our South-West, unlike parts of Queensland and the north coast of New South Wales, does not get the sum

ner rain. Fodder must be grown in the spring time and conserved for use during the summer months. Therefore, it stands to reason that silos will have to be provided. I have been told that it is quite common for no rain to fall for months on end during the summer. I had a trip from Bridgetown to Nannup. I reached Nannup in a heavy shower of rain, and I was told it was the first rain that had fallen for months. Even the South-West suffers from dry spells.

The Minister for Lands: The South-West has had one of the driest seasons ever known.

Mr. BROWN: I am speaking of the year before, so the South-West must have had two dry seasons. I look upon group settlement as a national affair free from party politics. Any assistance I can give towards the welfare of the groups it is my duty to give. I hope the Minister for Lands will make a success of the scheme. I am a great admirer of the Minister for Works. He has great administrative ability and manages his department admirably, but I think some of his schemes will lead to the wrecking of his party. Any controversy there has been in this House has been introduced by him. I am quite opposed to his ideas. Any measure that he introduces for the welfare of humanity or the workers seems to have emanated from Geneva. Who constitutes the bulk of those who attend the Geneva conventions? The people are drawn from the central States or countries of Europe. We know what they require in those countries. The people there seem to believe in absolute confiscation. They would take away from a man everything he has accumulated, and divide it amongst themselves. Mr. Kitson says, "There are only two of us against all these men: what can we do?"

The Minister for Lands: Mr. Kitson was not sent Home by the present Government.

Mr. BROWN: He is there all the same.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, but he has nothing to do with us.

Mr. Panton: He has a farm in the Midlands. That is how he got there.

Mr. BROWN: Probably when Mr. Kitson makes his report we shall all be enlightened. I cannot see why we should want to adopt methods that are followed in the central countries of Europe.

Mr. Hughes: What does it matter where they come from if they are good?

Mr. BROWN: But they are not good. We come of British stock. We do not want to have anything to do with methods that are adopted in central Europe. If a man does not do right there, they think nothing of cutting his head off or shooting him.

Mr. Hughes: They do that in Western Australia.

Mr. BROWN: Every controversy in this House has emanated from the Minister for Works. Probably this comes about through party politics.

Mr. Panton: Oh, no!

Mr. BROWN: It is the politics members opposite believe in. That is why we are on this side of the House; we do not believe in those methods.

Mr. Panton: And because the country believes in them too.

Mr. BROWN: Why have we not had a Redistribution of Seats Bill? I heard the Leader of the Opposition make a little squeal when he said, "How is it that you have not brought down a Redistribution of Seats Bill? The only reason is that you want to save your skins." What happened when a Bill of that nature was introduced? I remember it well. Some of the hon. member's followers were disinclined to lose their seats. It was in order to save their skins that the matter was dropped. He gave them a free hand, but now he is squealing.

Mr. Latham: This House decided the matter.

Mr. BROWN: I do not blame the Government for not bringing down this Bill. If a member had only 200 people in his electorate and 100 votes coming to him I would not blame him. On the goldfields there are seven or eight electorates with less than 1,000 voters in them.

The Minister for Lands: How many electors are there in the Pingelly district?

Mr. BROWN: There are 3,000.

The Minister for Lands: There are 8,000 in mine.

Mr. BROWN: I could hop, step and jump across the Minister's electorate, or run round it in a tram. My electorate is 150 miles long. Great expense is entailed in covering it by motor car. A member of Parliament is supposed to go everywhere, and if he is not possessed of a car he must hire one. I agree that the North-West cannot be divided on a population basis. It is a huge territory, and it is impossible for a member to get completely round his electorate. I would not complain if there were only 100 electors in one of those districts.

In the case of Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Brown Hill, Mt. Margaret, and other places which are almost outside civilisation, I do complain. The member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) has never asked for a Redistribution of Seats Bill. Probably he wants to save his own skin. I do not blame the present Government. If I were in office I would not introduce such a Bill. There is a nice rosy position, and they will be loth to leave it after next March. When we get our party organised there will be a different complexion on things. Rather more than six seats will be occupied by our representatives.

Mr. Hughes: Not at our expense.

Mr. Panton: I see some members trembling already.

Mr. BROWN: I wish to say a little about the railway system. Western Australia should be congratulated on having so great a mileage of railways per head of the population. I do not think any place in the world can boast of being in the same position. There is, however, something wrong with the working of the railways. The other day I called upon the Commissioner with a request that a motor coach should be run. The reply I received was, "Do you think we are going to spend £6,000 upon a luxury for the people?" The Eastern States are introducing these motor coaches as rapidly as possible. Some people were waiting to know the reply of the Commissioner. Immediately it was given a man went up into the district with a motor truck. He is now running every day, taking the best of our goods and the passengers away from the railways. In a few short months the railways will have lost enough to pay the interest on £6,000, which would have been the cost of the coach.

The Minister for Lands: Perhaps they came to me as they did before, and wanted me to pay the cost of the motor.

Mr. BROWN: I am sure the Minister would not give them that.

The Minister for Lands: I did not, did I?

Mr. BROWN: That was a different matter. That was in connection with feeding the railways. In this other case the motor truck is running parallel to the railways, competing at 20 miles an hour with "fast" trains running at six miles an hour.

Mr. Latham: Have you an express too?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, and that is the rate at which it travels. People are not going to patronise the railways when they can go by road very much faster. It is a mistaken

policy on the part of the railways. When a business man finds his business is increasing, he is not much good if he does not cater for the public that is coming to him. The Government are standing still. A motor coach is not a luxury; it is a business proposition. Is Western Australia likely to go back? The Premier said we had had a bad year because the wheat yield had not been good, and yet we had a revenue of £426,000 more than for the year before. This proves that we are progressing, and it behoves the Government to cater for the requirements of the public. That is the way I feel. In speaking of other departments, I do not wish to be understood as growling. The policy of the Government for providing water in dry areas is good. I have nothing but thanks to offer the Government for what they have done in the dry areas outback. I am extremely well satisfied with the expenditure of money in the Pingelly electorate on water provision. The electorate has had its share, and the people are satisfied. I think the idea of this water provision came originally from the Leader of the Opposition, who had a scheme relating to the dry areas prepared before he left office. The Opposition Leader has played a great part in the settlement of our lands. The present Minister for Water Supply, however, is also imbued with the idea that water is the first essential in dry areas. I hope he will continue to administer his department in the way he has been administering it, for as long as ever he may be there—at any rate until next March. In our Minister for Health (Hon. S. W. Munsie) we have one man in a thousand. With the co-operation of other Ministers he is leaving marks in Western Australia that will never be obliterated. I sincerely regret his absence owing to ill-health, and I trust it will not be long before we see him back in his place. I am told the system he is administering was inaugurated by the previous Government. It was not my intention to speak to-night, but another member has about three hours of an oration to make, and as he did not want to keep us here till midnight he persuaded me to take his place. Probably this is the last occasion upon which some of us will make speeches on an Address-in-reply.

Mr. Panton: Oh, don't say that!

Mr. BROWN: We do not know what is ahead of us. Undoubtedly some of us will not be returned. Anything I have said here,

I have said for the welfare of Western Australia. If I should not have the honour to be returned again, I can conscientiously say that I have done my duty without fear or favour; and as long as I can say that to the people, I am not afraid. I thank hon. members for giving me so attentive a hearing. Whatever I have said, and particularly what I have said about group settlement, has been uttered without any party feeling whatever.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 12th August, 1926.

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

QUESTION—MINING, MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Honorary Minister: 1, Are any returns available showing what percentage of the 674 tubercular and silicotic cases recorded, resulting from medical examinations under the Miner's Phthisis Act to 30th June, 1926, were employed as—(a) underground workers; (b) dry crushing plant workers; (c) other surface workers in metalliferous mining, prior to examination? 2, The average length of period of employment in each category, or if the period of employment extended to more than one category, the average period in each? 3, If returns are available, will the

Minister place them on the Table of the House? 4, If not, and the necessary data is available, and the preparation of such a return is not too costly, will such a return be prepared and be made available to the House?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Returns referred to have not been furnished to the Mines Department, but may be available at the Health Laboratory, Kalgoorlie. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Answered by No. 1. 4, The matter will be referred to the Medical Officer in charge of the Health Laboratory, Kalgoorlie, and if the information is available, and the compilation not too costly, it will be provided to the House.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, Sessional Committees were appointed as follow:—

Standing Orders.—The President, the Chief Secretary, Hon. J. Cornell, Hon. A. Lovekin, and Hon. J. Nicholson.

Library.—The President, Hon. A. J. H. Saw, and Hon. J. Ewing.

House.—The President, Hon. J. Cornell, Hon. E. H. Gray, Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom, and Hon. G. Potter.

Printing.—The President, Hon. A. Lovekin, and Hon. W. H. Kitson.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. T. GLASHEEN (South-East) [4.35]: At the outset I desire to associate myself with the welcome that has been extended to the new members. I am very mindful of my initial entry in this Chamber and of the kind expressions of welcome tendered to me on that occasion. I well remember how helpful they were to me, and in extending my welcome to the new members, may I hope that it will aid them to get the correct atmosphere of the House, as did the remarks of hon. members to me when I made my first appearance on the floor of the Chamber? As one of the newly re-elected members, may I also tender my thanks to the previous speakers who congratulated us upon our return? Naturally we are pleased to be here, and that feeling is made the more