

opening up of the areas I have referred to. I trust they will proceed with the surveying and throwing open for selection of the lands in the Damnosa country, and the classification of the Kalkalling lands. I also trust that they will place the medical facilities I have referred to on a proper basis.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.47 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 19th August, 1925.

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

PETITION—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY CO., LTD., ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON presented a petition from the West Australian Trustee, Executor, and Agency Company, Limited, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the West Australian Trustee, Executor, and Agency Company, Ltd., Act.

Petition received and read and the prayer of the petition granted.

BILL—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY CO., LTD., ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. J. Nicholson and read a first time.

Referred to Select Committee.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, Bill referred to a select committee consisting of Hon. W. H. Kitson, Hon. H. Seddon and the mover, to report on the 26th August.

QUESTION—INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS.

Hon. J. E. DODD asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How many conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Office of the League of Nations have been received from the Federal Government? 2, With what matters do they deal? 3, Have the conventions and recommendations been ratified?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Thirty-six. 2, A list of the matters laid on the Table to-day. 3, The obligation to ratify is not with the State Government. Many of the points dealt with in the conventions and recommendations are covered by existing State legislation and regulations. Matters that are applicable to the requirements of this State, and for which adequate legislative provision has not been made, are now receiving consideration.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. E. Rose (South-West) on the ground of urgent private business.

LAPSED BILL—RESTORATION.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, ordered: That a message be sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting that the consideration of the Bills of Sale Act Amendment Bill, passed by this House last session and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, may be resumed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. E. DODD (South) [4.38]: The Address-in-reply debate gives us an opportunity to review the actions of the Government during the recess and to express our opinions on the programme they are going

to place before us. Also it permits us to make any suggestions we may think advisable for the welfare of the State and of the people. We are all gratified at the reduction of the deficit, and it seems likely the time is not far distant when that deficit will disappear altogether. We shall then have before us the necessity for trying to reduce the accumulated deficit. Reference has been made to the allocation of the credit for the reduction of the deficit. Personally I am prepared to give credit both to the late Government and to the present Government. Probably, as other members have said, the season and the bountiful harvest have had most to do with it. The passage of the land taxation proposals last session, and the consequent reduction of railway freights, is in my view the Government's best achievement to date. I hope every penny raised by that taxation will be remitted according to promise. Although there has been some opposition to it, the tax is now assessed on a perfectly sound basis, the soundest to be found in any of the States of the Commonwealth; that is to say, there are no exemptions, and everybody pays according to what he is receiving from the State up to the value of the tax. I was pleased to notice that the Government have decided to go on with the Norseman railway. That line, when completed, will remove a very long and fruitful source of dissatisfaction in the whole of the people on the Eastern Goldfields. There are in the Norseman-Esperance district hundreds of thousands of acres that will be opened up for profitable cultivation. I draw the attention of the Minister to the very great need for providing water supplies in that district. I am receiving many complaints from settlers on the score of inadequate water conservation. Up to date all that the Government have been able to reply to requests for assistance in that respect is that they have no money. Still, the Minister for Water Supply has promised to do the best he can to get us something placed on the Estimates this year. The same may be said in respect of Newdegate, where similar trouble exists. It is strange that to-day almost all the virgin first-class land is in the South Province, previously regarded as a mining province. Taking it all round, I suppose the South Province is to-day one of the richest in the State.

Hon. A. Burvill: And Albany is its port.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I commend the Government on their action in appointing an

independent man as Royal Commissioner to inquire into the mining industry. I do not know that they could have gone anywhere else but South Africa for such a man. Certainly the South African conditions are dissimilar to ours, but I doubt if the Government could have secured in any other country a more suitable man than Mr. Kingsley Thomas as a mining Royal Commissioner. While the Commissioner's report may be of great value, I am not optimistic of the results likely to arise from it. I shall await with interest the action to be taken by the Government to put the recommendations into effect. Some of the Commissioner's recommendations I could not possibly agree to, and I am quite certain the men working underground will not agree with them; but there are others which, if put into operation, would have a beneficial result upon the industry. As for the gold bonus, the mining industry is the burden bearer of all the industries. It has had no assistance, no help whatever in respect of Federal exactions, yet it has to bear the burden of almost every other industry. During the debate one or two interjections have been made with which I cannot agree. Mr. Potter spoke of holes in the ground and what had been taken out and what had gone into them, and so on. I would remind him that very little Government money has gone into holes in the ground in mining districts. A quarter of a million of State money went into a hole in the ground at Fremantle, and very little good came out of it. But the holes in the ground in the mining industry were dug by private individuals. We hear a lot about a wasting asset, leaving the country poorer, a decrepit industry, and other things, but I have never been able to fathom such arguments. It has been said that every ounce of gold taken out of the country makes it poorer. In my opinion the taking out of the ground of £152,000,000 worth of gold makes it so much richer. I am afraid Western Australia would not be nearly so far advanced as it is to-day, had it not been for this gold that has come out of the ground. I am glad the industry is beginning to receive a little more consideration than it has had in the past. The action of the Federal and State Governments in making remissions of taxation to the industry will be generally appreciated. The Miners' Phthisis Act has not yet been proclaimed. I know the difficulties surrounding it, and would not harshly criticise the failure

to bring it into operation. The Act was passed 2½ years ago. In the first session afterwards, Mr. Scaddan was in power. He came in for fairly severe handling, not only in the Legislative Assembly, but in this Chamber. Some of us criticised him severely because of his failure to proclaim the Act, and yet 18 months later it is still unproclaimed. I hope something will be done by the Government to put it into force. I should like to say a few words about the recent strike. Possibly a good deal of the criticism has done good, but most of it was directed at the police and the extremists. These are not the only phases of the strike, and are probably not the most important. What concerns me most is what I may term the abdication of the strike to the rank and file, and the enthronement of executive officials. That is a serious danger with which Australia is faced, not only as affecting one section of the community, but quite a number of other sections. I cannot understand the attitude of many people with regard to the rights they have acquired. Many do not care how matters go so long as someone is in control. When one considers what our forefathers had to do in order to obtain the rights and liberties which we now possess, I think it is time one should point out the danger to democracy, and what we are likely to lose if some change does not take place. Throughout Australia it is amazing to see the indifference with which people regard the liberties that their forefathers fought so hard to gain for them. Hundreds of years elapsed before we had the franchise, even after Parliamentary institutions came into being, and before we had the ballot, and the right to combine, and the conspiracy laws were abolished. It seems to me, however, that people are only too anxious to forgo their liberties and rights. I do not altogether blame the extremists. I have my own opinion concerning a large number of men who were classed as extremists. I have my own opinion about Mr. Walsh. Everyone holds him up as an ardent extremist, but I must say we always know where he is and what he is doing. It seems to be a perversity of human nature that, once people have gained something they cast it aside, just as a child does a flower, and trample it underfoot. In the case of the recent strike there was an agreement entered into between the two parties. There was no dispute as to wages or hours, although these are the two important factors in most labour disputes. Before the expiration of

this agreement a strike was brought about. No ballot was taken, and I doubt if half the members of the union knew anything about it. That is a phase we have to look to, and to guard against. I know the difficulty of getting members of a union to take an interest in union meetings. If we can direct attention to the matter and show that the issue is not altogether one of extremism, but is more often one of apathy and indifference, the better will it be for us. We know the tragic failure of strikes upon the men and women concerned, how time, money and employment are lost. Surely in these days better methods could be adopted than those pursued during the idiotic strike that occurred recently. With regard to group settlement, I am not going to express an opinion upon the quality of the land or the prospects of the settlers. It always seemed to me that the scheme was a little too large, and that more of the money involved might have been devoted to other parts of the State. I realise that the South-West has to be settled some time or other, and I also feel sure that a great deal of the capital spent there must eventually be written off. I cannot see how else that land could be settled, but it was too big a job for one generation to undertake. The Commission went into their work with a will, and seemed to secure all the evidence they could. I know that some members of it are practical men, but I hope that no other Commission in similar circumstances will be appointed like that one. To my mind the Commission should never have been appointed. Suppose a National Government had appointed two Nationalists, two Country Party members, and one Labour Party member to inquire into the Wyndham Freezing Works, what sort of an outcry would have been raised? Suppose two Country Party members, two Nationalists, and one Labour Party man had been appointed to inquire into the effect of the rural workers' log, or something concerning the Country Party, what would have been said? I hope no other Commission like this one will ever be appointed again. The Mining Commission was on a different basis, and we all commend it. I wish to refer to the recommendation regarding piece-work. I hardly understand it. The policy of piece-work has been a plank of the Labour Party for many years. The biggest strike I have ever been in, that at Broken Hill in 1892, was a strike against the contract sys-

tem. I cannot, therefore, understand the recommendation of the Commission.

Hon. T. Moore: These men are supposed to be working for themselves, and then you talk of them working for bosses.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It might work out in the same way. Men down there have to work under a boss. I can hardly see how the system of contract is to be applied to group settlement, although I am willing to bow to those who know better than I do, and who know the men and what has to be done.

Hon. T. Moore: It will save the country millions of pounds.

Hon. J. E. DODD: If so, it will be worth trying. It is possible that a better migration agreement may yet be obtained. I do not think the Commonwealth Government or the British Government yet realise the difficulty of the State with regard to the settlement of people within its territory. For that reason a visit by Mr. Amery will be welcome. Quite possibly when we get him here we shall be able to convince him of the difficulties confronting us, what it means to clear the land, and make him realise the necessity of more co-operation. I say that not in any empty form of criticism. To-day the British Empire is a Commonwealth of nations, and the weakness of one is the weakness of all. I think the Imperial Government will yet be compelled, for its own sake, to give better conditions to the Dominions in the way of settlement. Of course, we would never have dreamt of getting such an agreement 20 years ago, and probably in 20 years' time we shall secure a still better one. I was surprised to hear Mr. Brown's remarks concerning the need for capital in this State. I always thought he was rather opposed to capitalists.

Hon. J. R. Brown: I am not opposed to a more even distribution of capital.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I admit we need men with capital in this State to assist us in settling our difficulties. With regard to unemployment, I think that is about the saddest condition that men can possibly be in. I do not blame the present Government for the unemployment we have. That is a very cheap and sometimes a mean way of securing notoriety. Whether men are unionists, non-unionists or Communists they should be entitled to work if there is work for them. If it is possible to do anything to provide work for them it should be done. Unemployment is, I think, peculiar to almost all Govern-

ments. Almost every winter we have to face some form or other of unemployment. It seems almost impossible to help it. We must, however, be absolutely bankrupt of statesmanship if we cannot get rid of unemployment in this country. I urge upon the Government to make every effort to absorb the unemployed as far as they can. I wish to draw attention to the interest that is being taken with reference to the settlement of our boys on the land, or fitting them by experience to become agriculturists. I have often said there are hundreds of city boys who are hungry to get on the land, while they are at school. At the Perth Boys' School every time the city is compared with the country the boys seem to prefer the country, and yet the system of education is such that up to the age of 14 they are hardly taught anything about the country. I think something is being done for country lads in the way of agricultural institutions, but nothing whatever is being done for the city boys. They are not being taught anything about work in the country. I was interested in Mr. Chandler's proposition, although I do not know that it will prove workable. Mr. Chandler is on the right track, however, in seeking to create more interest in the way of providing openings on the land for city boys. I wish to make a few remarks regarding the proposals of the Government to alter the Constitution. Whenever anything is suggested that is likely to constitute a danger to the people of Australia, it is our duty to draw attention to it. Amongst the proposals that have been put before us is one to amend the Constitution. During the past recess and also during the last session of Parliament the Minister for Works was very busy rattling his sabre and making shining armour speeches. On two or three occasions members of this Chamber have had to direct attention to the unreliability of some of Mr. McCallum's remarks. Mr. Kirwan replied to some of those statements, and I must say that in one or two of his speeches Mr. McCallum's assertions were absolutely inaccurate and unreliable. If I were to direct attention to one Bill in regard to which we will find more unreliable information than any other, I would instance the Workers' Compensation measure which we passed last session. Just now it is as well to find out how far the suggested amendment to the Constitution proposes to go, how far it will lead us, and how far it will affect us in connection with other proposals that are being

made. It is because of that, that I ask we should have a little more light thrown on the subject and to remove all camouflage so that we may find out where we stand. Mr. Nicholson in the course of his remarks drew attention to the absence of the guard of honor on the opening day of Parliament. He thought the danger existed there of the disappearance of some of our old institutions and ideas, and he connected this action with communism. I do not think the abolition of a guard of honor matters very much. I know that there is an innate desire in the minds of 90 per cent. of the people for a certain amount of display and I would be sorry to see all ceremonials cut out completely. At the same time, I have never been able to see of what use was the guard of honor. I have seen men stand outside this building for a couple of hours and sometimes in the rain. It all appeared to me so useless; and then it was so embarrassing to the person in whose honour the guard was there. Therefore I do not consider that the abolition of the guard of honour will affect us very much. After all, sometimes the more simple a ceremony is the more effective it becomes. Take for instance the cenotaph and the grave of an unknown soldier. They are many times more effective than some of the more elaborate monuments we know of. I come back to the question of the suggested amendment to the Constitution and what it is likely to be. I desire to show the aims of the Labour movement at the present time in regard not only to the State Constitution, but to the Federal Constitution, and how they are likely to affect us. It has been stated that the Labour Party do not stand for communism. I do not think that the majority of that party do stand for it. It is my desire, however, to read a few extracts in order to enable us to find out where we are. The one party to my mind seems to be revolutionary, and the other evolutionary. I do not think after all that many of their aims are dissimilar.

Hon. J. R. Brown: One is quicker than the other.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In the State Labour platform we have one plank which reads, "Abolition of the Legislative Council," and in the Federal Labour platform we have as part of the objective, "The establishment of a Supreme Economic Council," and also as part of the platform, the abolition of State Legislative Councils, the abolition

of the Senate, unlimited legislative powers for the Commonwealth Parliament, and such delegated powers to the States, or provisions as the Commonwealth Parliament may determine from time to time. We cannot consider an amendment of our Constitution without taking into consideration what is proposed in respect of the Federal Constitution. The question is, what is likely to be best for the community? If anyone can point out to me that their scheme is the best, I am willing to be convinced, but I want to know that it is to be the best before I give my vote in favour of any radical change. I want to find out, if I can, what is the "Supreme Economic Council," and what its functions are going to be. There is no alliance with Russia. That, I think one can say with all sincerity, so far as the Labour Party are concerned; but whilst there is no alliance with the Soviet Government there can be an imitation of that Government that might in the end be quite as dangerous to the people of the Commonwealth as an alliance. What has the chief governing body of Russia to do, and what is it for? It is the Soviet Supreme Economic Council, and that is the objective to-day of the Federal Labour Party. What does it mean and where will it lead us? We do not find any reference to it in policy speeches; I have never heard it mentioned on a platform or even alluded to in the report of a speech. Yet there we have it as a part of the objective of the Supreme Economic Council. Perhaps I can throw a little light on the matter by reading the remarks of three very prominent Labour members. I have culled these remarks from a debate in the Federal Parliament. They were quoted as having taken place at the time of the Federal Trade Union Congress in 1922. Mr. Baddeley, at present Minister for Mines in the New South Wales Government, and holding other portfolios as well, said—

We are not going to function under Parliament as it exists to-day.

That clearly shows that the idea is that Parliament will not function as it is functioning to-day, that is, a Parliament elected on the broad franchise of adult suffrage. Mr. Willis, who is at present Chief Secretary in the New South Wales Government, said this—

They must get down to bedrock or the socialisation of industry, with control by the workers in the industry. They did not pro-

pose to control industry right up through their economic council. The council was to be constituted by the various representatives of industry. The position to-day in Russia is that although they have a Soviet form of political government behind it, they are building up what will be the real government of Russia—the supreme economic council. That will be the greatest force in Russia preceded by the absolute overthrow of the other systems in Russia. If you can build up that complete machinery for the whole thing, a policy to control the industries of this country, then our political government will not count that. (Mr. Willis held up his pencil.) If you cannot get political power without resorting to violence, it is no good asking the people to vote. Instead, we should be here discussing the formation of the red army. Either you must organise on the lines indicated and get complete control in that way, or you must train a big organisation on the basis of the deliberate overthrow by force.

Next is Mr. Scullin. I have heard it said that Mr. Scullin is one of the ablest members of the Labour Party in Australia. He is a member of the House of Representatives, having taken the late Mr. Frank Tudor's place. I have never heard him speak, but I understand he is a very fine speaker and an able debater, and also that he is well read in economics. This is what he said—

The Parliamentary machine has been used to give sanction to the schemes of the capitalistic system. We want the Parliamentary regime to give sanction to our proposal and the scheme we have prepared. From those industries nationalised shall be chosen the general economic central council which will really take the place of our Parliaments to-day.

There we have, to my mind, the clear light of day in regard to the opinions of those particular men. One is Minister for Lands in the New South Wales Government, the other is Chief Secretary in the same Government, and Mr. Scullin is a member of the Federal Parliament. Then we have Mr. Lang, the Premier of New South Wales, condemning communism, and beside that condemnation we have the statements of two of his Ministers which I have just read. This puts me in mind of something I read the other day in a book that is in the library of this House, dealing with the Japanese army. An officer belonging to that army went to China to find out what was being done, and he gave a few instances of the operations of the Chinese army. This is what he wrote—

In another case two opposing forces of artillery agreed to fire to the left of one another instead of at each other, but one of the generals on seeing this, ordered his men to fire actually at the enemy.

As soon as he had gone, however, his men sent over a note of apology to the enemy and it was then agreed that in future they should only fire at each other when there were generals about.

It seems to me that the forces of the communists and the Labour Party fire at each other only when there is an election about to take place. I want further to allude to the position by quoting a few words that were uttered by a Western Australian delegate to the Federal Labour Congress last year. This delegate said, "Delegates should remember that the Labour movement is growing, and I hope to see the time come when conference will be practically a continuous body." What is the meaning of that?

Hon. J. R. Brown: There is nothing wrong with it.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Here we have on the platform of the Australian Labour Party a proposal for control by a supreme economic council, and the position has been laid down by Mr. Willis, Mr. Baddeley and Mr. Scullin that the functions of the economic council are to take the place of Parliament. Here we have a statement made by a member of a trade union congress that the congress will practically be a continuous body at some time in the future. What are we to do in the face of an objective and a platform of that nature when we come to consider constitutional amendments? Are we going to give away all that we possess to-day in regard to the freest franchise in the world? Are we going to give away the right to vote enjoyed by every man and woman over the age of 21? Are we to become mere creatures of a Federal Parliament consisting of 75 or 80 men and to receive powers at their hands from time to time. We shall become a glorified municipal council subject to the whims of those in authority on the other side of Australia. I think we should get all the light we possibly can upon this proposal. When we remember that every one of these reports is a censored report, it makes the position worse. To my mind the whole of democracy is endangered by the proposals that are being made, and the danger is all the greater because those proposals are never propagated from the platform. If the people only knew on what they were being asked to vote, if the proposals were only given the light of day and the people then decided to alter the constitution in the manner indicated, we should have to bow to the inevitable. I ask that the clear light of

day be thrown upon these proposals so that we shall know exactly what the intention is. The seed upon which Sovietism grew has never thrived in Australia. There are no Siberian mines, no fortress of Peter and Paul, no knout, and we have never had the system of espionage which was and is still the disgrace of Russia. Until we get oppression of that kind it will be useless to talk of casting aside a free and independent form of government in favour of some autocratic form which possibly may become as bad as the Soviet government in Russia. I do not wish to be unfair in any way whatsoever. Let me read an extract from a speech by one of the delegates to the congress. He said—

The endeavour to introduce the Soviet system into Australia, or any other country that has advanced along the lines of evolution as we have done, is like an endeavour to transplant a hothouse plant into the Antarctic. So with the communists in Australia, the Australian Labour Party can have nothing in common because here there is a vastly different standard from that of Europe. The communists of Russia are in control there by creating a system of espionage, which places the system of espionage under the Czar in the kindergarten.

That is the opinion of a Labour leader. Yet in face of that we have the objective and platform as they are to-day. Mr. Theodore in a very vigorous speech said—

Let them fight in the communist party, but do not let them come into the Labour Party for that purpose. White-anting is what it would be. It is not necessary to go into the history of what has been happening in the last two or three years to spread the Soviet propaganda throughout England and other countries.

When dealing with amendments to the constitution, we have to consider what is behind these proposals and where they are likely to lead us. It may be argued that even if the proposals were carried, we would still have the constitution to prevent them from being adopted without the will of the people. That would apply under the Commonwealth constitution but not under the State constitution. In the Commonwealth, before the constitution can be altered, the proposal must be carried by a referendum. In the State there is no such provision. In spite of the fact that the initiative and referendum has been a plank in almost all Labour platforms for many years, we find that the Upper House in Queensland was abolished, but no initiative and referendum Bill has yet been prepared. I do not care what party may be in power, whether it be Liberal, Labour or any other party, I would

not give it full and supreme control in one House. There is not the slightest doubt that any party in supreme control without check can hold office so long as it likes. Take the position of Queensland to-day. I have always said there are good and bad in all parties. The Queensland Government have a record of good deeds and legislation which might possibly shame other States, but for all that the Government of Queensland can hold office so long as they like. Where a vote was taken of the whole State, not one single member was returned in support of that Government. Yet every election, the Government, by a redistribution of seats, manage to retain office. I am often amused to hear people talking of Bolshevism without having any idea what it means. I believe the Soviets in control in Russia are better fitted to control and govern than were the people they succeeded. I give them that credit. But I believe also, in common with a great number of Labourites and socialists who have been to Russia, that the regime there is one of the cruellest autocracies imaginable. Let me suggest what might happen if all the second Chambers were abolished and there was only one Chamber in each State. Time and time again have not the people of various countries wakened to find the constitution scrapped? We have not to go back very far. The constitution did not avail in the case of Mussolini when he wanted to down the socialists. It did not avail in the case of the Spanish dictator. It did not avail the other day when a general of the Greek army stepped in and abolished the constitution. We should be very careful to find out what is behind this movement for the abolition of the Upper House.

The Honorary Minister: Did not you on one occasion introduce a Bill for the abolition of the Upper House?

Hon. J. E. DODD: No. I have never been wedded to the franchise of this Chamber. I introduced a Bill for the introduction of the initiative and referendum. Also, when an amendment to the Address-in-reply was moved by Mr. Panton that the Upper House should be abolished, I endeavoured to get the amendment amended by providing for the operation of the other plank of the party platform. The Upper House should be abolished only when the people have a right to initiate or veto any legislation by direct vote. As we go on, I think we shall find a good deal of alteration will be made

industrially. I give credit to every member of Parliament for a keen desire to do his best for the people of the country. If we possibly can, we want to abolish all the misery and unhappiness that exists from economic causes. In future I believe the workers will secure a very much greater control of industry than they have to-day. That is inevitable, and it is wise that it should be so. In connection with mining, there are many things happening underground and if the workers had a little more control in some way or other they could effect many economies and make things very much better all round. I believe the millionaire system which is now in vogue will come to be regarded with as much horror as is slavery to-day. To my mind the millionaire is something that ought never to be allowed to exist. No man should ever be allowed to accumulate money to that extent. Surely we can bring about a state of things that will prevent one man from holding such immense resources of power and wealth, while many other men have not enough to eat. Let me stress how much more might be done by the workers themselves in the direction of co-operation. The Country Party have set a very fine example in that respect. They have shown what can be done by voluntary co-operation in connection with the Westralian Farmers and the Wheat Pool. In America a good deal of attention is being paid by the labour unions to the formation of co-operative societies and they are being very successfully conducted. If we directed more attention to matters of this kind, it might be better for us. In concluding my few remarks let me say how much I regret the death of the Hon. J. A. Greig. The late member was a man of absolutely straightforward ideas, and I endorse everything that has been said about him. I always listened with interest to his speeches. He made no pretensions to oratory; what he told us was told in simple language and had the ring of sincerity. I am sorry he has passed from us. Let me extend a welcome to his successor, Mr. Glasheen. I was glad to note references in his speech here and in his election speeches to the fact that he was formerly a member of the Boulder Miners' Union. He was a member of the union at the time I was secretary. I am sure the knowledge and experience that he gathered on the goldfields regarding union matters will stand him in good stead here.

HON. A. BURVILL (South-East) [5.30]: Before addressing myself to His Excellency's Speech, I wish to say a few words regarding our late member, Mr. Greig, who was my colleague. I knew Mr. Greig from the date of his entry in Parliament, and I can endorse every word that has been uttered with regard to him. He was a man of transparent honesty, and he had a thorough knowledge of, and sympathy in the difficulties attendant on agriculture in this State. Mr. Glasheen, whom I have known for some time, will, I feel sure, prove a worthy successor to Mr. Greig. I desire to congratulate Ministers on the bright outlook and the optimistic tone of the Governor's Speech, as well as on the prosperity forecasted. The deficit, which has been hanging over Western Australia since before the war, is beginning to disappear. This is to be credited in some degree to the late Government and the present Government, but the main factor in the almost complete disappearance of the annual shortage is the flourishing condition of our primary industries, and the good prices which have ruled for their products. I am glad the Government have supported the Albany Woollen Mills by placing with them orders for Government requirements. That is a great gratification to the people of Albany. The mills are running smoothly, and the manager, Mr. Chambers, has expressed himself as surprised at the adaptability of the local employees, who, he says, are picking up the trade of weaving and spinning cloth far more quickly than he had anticipated. At present the mills have an output of about 40 pieces, or 2,400 yards, per week. They expect to reach an output of 50 pieces, besides blankets and rugs, before long. The quality is stated to be as good as any obtained in the Eastern States or in the Old Country. The machinery is perfectly up-to-date. The manager has been informed by tailors that in regard to shrinkage the percentage in Albany cloth is less than in any other cloth. The looms have been made a little larger than usual for that particular purpose. The mills have the best dyer procurable in England, and use the best indigo colours that can be obtained. The following unsolicited testimonial has been sent from the manager from Sydney—

You will be interested to know that Mr. Wilkinson, of the well known firm in Sydney, was recently in Western Australia and had the opportunity of inspecting your samples, and speaks very highly of every sample he saw. As a matter of fact he

said that, if anything, it was slightly better value than any in the Eastern States at present. I am sure this information will be interesting to you, especially as it comes from such a recognised capable critic as Mr. Wilkinson.

I trust the business houses of Perth and the rest of Western Australia will emulate the Government's support of local industry. At present, I am sorry to say, they are not doing so to anything like the extent they should.

Hon. T. Moore: It is a shame.

Hon. A. BURVILL: According to the report of the Commissioner of Railways, our railway system shows a considerable improvement in management, there being a surplus of £190,565 after payment of working expenses and interest. Moreover, there are fewer persons employed now than there were on the 30th June, 1921, the respective numbers being 8,156 and 7,616. The reduction proves conclusively that the railways are being better managed than they were several years ago. One thing I do not like, however, is that the interest per average mile amounts to £222, the highest point reached for a number of years. I consider that the interest on the railways should not be paid by the users of the railways, but should be a national responsibility. The burden is too heavy to be borne by the farmers and miners. Those two classes cannot pass on the burden, as manufacturers, exporters, and importers can and do. Moreover, these latter can secure special concessions to a greater degree than the farmers and miners can. The State as a whole will own the railways after interest and sinking fund payments are completed. The railways will not then be owned by the users, and therefore the State as a whole should pay the interest.

Hon. H. Seddon: How would you do it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am not going to explain how it is done. It must, however, be possible, because it is done in other directions. The users of the railways pay the interest, while the sinking fund is paid by the State as a whole. We could easily transfer the interest in the same way as the sinking fund has been transferred, and then we could lessen the burden on the mining and farming producers by reduction of freights. At any rate, the special land tax that is being collected should be credited to the finances of the Commissioner of Railways. I do not know that it would not be better to cut the land tax out

altogether. However, I shall have more to say on that later.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you approve of the land tax?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Subject to certain limitations. I now wish to bring to the attention of the House the fact that the railway system is being used for centralisation purposes, and that special concessions have been granted to manufacturers, merchants, and importers and exporters in Perth and Fremantle. I consider that it would be an advantage to the farmers generally to raise certain rates and allow the railways to lower other rates correspondingly for the benefit of agriculture. I shall prove this by what is actually occurring now. I obtained a return with regard to railway traffic in the lower end of the State, the district I live in. This return shows the tonnage of wheat railed from different zones for the season 1924-5, and also the tonnage railed from the various stations and sidings. There was railed to Fremantle at points nearer to Albany by rail wheat amounting to 3,312 bushels. The quantity of wheat railed to Bunbury at points nearer to Albany was 185,040 bushels. The quantity of wheat railed to Fremantle at points nearer to Bunbury amounted to 1,055,808 bushels. The total quantity of wheat railed to Albany was 255,564 bushels.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Do you mean bushels or bags?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Bushels. The total quantity of wheat railed from the district was 1,696,640 bushels. The total quantity of wheat railed to Fremantle that should have been railed to Albany or Bunbury was 1,244,160 bushels.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What do you mean by saying that the wheat should have gone to other ports?

Hon. A. BURVILL: That they were the nearest ports.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then what was the reason for taking the wheat the further distance?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The reason was that the merchants wanted to centralise, and so economise at the expense of the farmers. Wagin is 21 miles nearer to Bunbury than to Albany. Fremantle is 78 miles further than Bunbury from Wagin. Albany has an advantage of 57 miles. A point I shall enlarge on later is that if the Albany-Newdegate line is built, the whole of the Lake Grace-Newdegate area will be easily

within the Albany zone. Now I wish to point out the differential rates, as I call them, whereby wheat is exported to the disadvantage of the farmer, and to the disadvantage of the railways, but to the advantage of the merchants, whether they are co-operative merchants or private merchants. There is a special overseas grain rate over the Government railways. For 50 miles it is 8s. 3d. per ton, for 100 miles it is 10s. 11d., for 150 miles 12s. 6d., for 200 miles 14s. 1d., for 250 miles 15s. 11d., for 300 miles 19s., for 350 miles 21s. 6d., and for 400 miles 24s. It will be noticed that the farther the distance, the less is the rate per ton mile. I will show how that works out in practice. I will deal with the southern ports. From Ongerup to Albany is 148 miles. Albany is the nearest port to Ongerup and the rate for that distance is 12s. 6d. per ton. If wheat were railed from Ongerup to Bunbury, a distance of 245 miles, the rate rises to only 15s. 3d. per ton. If the wheat were railed to Fremantle, a distance of 322 miles, the rate increases to 20s. 8d. per ton.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Very little Ongerup wheat goes to Fremantle.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Take Pingrup as another instance. If wheat is railed from there to Albany, a distance of 175 miles, the rate per ton is 13s. 4d.; if railed to Bunbury, a distance of 215 miles, the rate is 14s. 7d., while if it is desired to despatch the wheat to Fremantle, a distance of 296 miles, the rate is 19s. per ton. Then there is the Lake Grace line. If wheat is taken from that centre to Albany, a distance of 222 miles, the rate is 14s. 10d., while if it is railed to Bunbury, its nearest port, some 201 miles distant, the rate is 14s. 3d. If the wheat were railed to Fremantle where most of it went this year—practically a million bushels were sent to Fremantle—the railage would be 17s. 9d. over a distance of 279 miles. If this special concession ceased at the nearest port I could understand the Commissioner trying to help the farmers, but it does not do so. As it stands at present it enables the merchant, at a price that cannot pay the railways, to rail the wheat past two ports in some instances. If, however, the concession ended at the nearest port, Ongerup wheat railed to Albany would be charged at the rate of 12s. 6d. per ton, whereas if railed to Fremantle the railage charges would be 25s. 3d. per ton. Similarly

with regard to Pingrup wheat. If it were railed to Fremantle the cost would be 23s. 5d. instead of 19s. which would be the rate if it were railed to its nearest port, Albany. In the case of Lake Grace, if wheat, instead of being railed to Bunbury, at a cost of 14s. 3d. per ton, were railed to Fremantle, the charge would not be 17s. 9d. but 22s. 2d. Why should the railways lose money for the benefit of wheat buyers? In any event the farmer has to pay the extra. If he had to pay all he should pay, there would be such an outcry that this practice would be stopped immediately. I hope the Minister will take notice of this point and that he will take steps to have the preferential rate system altered, so that it shall apply only to the nearest port. I would like to deal with flour for a few moments. That commodity is railed at a lesser rate for overseas purposes and from Katanning to Fremantle the rail-age charge is 13s. 4d. per ton, less 12½ per cent. It can be railed from Katanning to Albany at a cost of 11s. 7d. per ton, less 12½ per cent. Albany is 120 miles nearer to Katanning than is Fremantle. The effect of the present system is that the Railway Department has been transporting flour over the extra 120 miles at a charge of 3s. 3d. per ton. I do not think that rate can pay. If any individual desired to have a bag of flour railed to him over a distance of 20 miles he would have to pay 2s. Apparently this rate was provided in order to dodge railing consignments to different ports. Katanning flour passes both Albany and Bunbury. I want to know if the consumers of the flour are getting any advantage from this position. Certainly the wheat growers do not, because if the wheat is milled in Fremantle there is a special rate concession on the wheat, whereas if the wheat were milled in Katanning, the farmer would pay railage only as far as the mill. This special concession is altogether in favour of the manufacturer of the flour. As to the position of consumers I read a report in the Press last week stating that in Adelaide the bakers were charged £13 7s. 6d. per ton for flour; in Melbourne the charge was £14 5s., and in Western Australia £15 10s.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There is a good ring here.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Bran and pollard supplies are required for dairying. I find according to the Press statement that in Adelaide the prices of bran and pollard

range from £7 to £8 10s., in Melbourne from £7 10s. to £8, and in Western Australia from £8 10s. to £9. Those prices showed an increase of about £1 per ton. Of course the Adelaide prices would appear to be slightly less, but that is because the price of wheat is less. What I want to know is why the consumers of flour and users of bran and pollard should be charged so much more here than in the Eastern States. In evidence taken before the Food Prices Commission it was shown that less was charged for flour for overseas than on supplies for local consumption. One of the Commissioners asked what price was being charged on flour for Java, and the reply was, "From £13 to £13 10s. per ton f.o.b. Fremantle, which, naturally, is below the local price, which is £15 5s." Mr. Padbury, when giving evidence before the Commission, apparently had a desire to help the farming community because in his evidence he said that in order to help the farmers and the State, he would charge the same railway rate for flour and wheat as for fertilisers. At present Albany is the port through which supplies will be drawn for the group settlements at Denmark. If one desired to procure a 6-ton lot of offal from Katanning, it would cost 11s. 7d. for freight plus the charge for sheets, equalling in all 12s. per ton. If a consignment of flour were desired from Katanning for shipment overseas, the charge would be 3s. 3d. per ton for the extra 120 miles. The way out of the difficulty that Mr. Padbury proposed was to charge a farthing per mile. I think the better way would be to have the mills at the country centres and ship the flour from the nearest port, in which case all the offal would be at the mill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you advocate a State mill?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I believe in private enterprise, but if private enterprise is to have such concessions in a wholesale fashion, I think it is about time we had some State enterprises. If a dairyman or anyone possessing fowls required pollard supplies it would cost him, if he resided in Albany, 12s. 7d. per ton for lots from a half-ton upwards of offal brought from the nearest mill at Katanning. The charge is 8s. 7d. a ton for 10 miles, with a charge of 4s. for loading and unloading. The minimum distance allowed is ten miles. If I desired to procure a ton of wheat or grist, I would

have to pay 12s. 7d. freight on it for 10 miles, but if a flour miller desired to rail a ton of flour to Fremantle instead of to Albany, for the extra 120 miles he would pay only 3s. 3d. because the flour would be for export. The position is ridiculous. The freight rates applying to smaller consumers call for criticism. For instance, there is the potato grower. If he has a 5-ton truck order he pays at the rate of 4s. 6d. for 10 miles, whereas if he has a half-ton lot only the charge is 12s. 7d.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You would not expect them to get it at the same price?

Hon. A. BURVILL: But we do not expect such a tremendous difference. Then there is the charge of 4s. for loading and unloading. Very often the farmer loads the potatoes into the truck himself, yet he is charged the 2s. Sometimes he unloads the truck as well and then he is charged the extra 2s. I have pointed out the effect of centralisation in the shipping of wheat. In the interests of the group settlements and of the dairying industry this factor should be altered. Hon. members will see if they look at the map that has been displayed on the walls of the Chamber, that there is a large area the natural ports of which are Bunbury and Albany respectively. What is the use, therefore, of hauling wheat all the way to Fremantle? Then there is the question of taxation and the concessions on the railways. Last session we agreed to a land tax. Exemptions were to be taken off and we were to have the double land tax in return for which we were to receive special concessions in the shape of reduced freights. In the Governor's Speech it is said that all sections have received benefits from this reduction. Probably they have. In my opinion it is a very one-eyed affair. The worker comes in first with £63,000; the merchant, the manufacturer and others come second, while the farmers come practically nowhere.

Hon. J. Ewing: There is nothing left for them.

Hon. A. BURVILL: In "Hansard" members will see that on the 18th December, 1924, the Colonial Secretary, when moving the first reading of the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill, said—

All users of the railways, whether by means of the receipt or despatch of goods or as passengers will benefit by the imposition of this tax.

At that stage I asked by way of interjection whether there would be a guarantee that

freights would be reduced. The Colonial Secretary replied in the affirmative. I am glad that the Colonial Secretary used the word "imposition." It did not appear so apparent to me then as it does now. Great pains were taken in both Houses to prove that it was to the interest of farmers, particularly the producing farmers, to have a land tax. However, I now consider that we were sold a pup. We shall not be found quite so gullible if an attempt be made to perform the operation again.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Then chloroform will have to be resorted to next time.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I wish to say a word about the bottle brush country in Albany and other districts. Some years ago a land development committee started experimenting on that country, the necessary money being advanced by the Government. The first experiment having been brought to a certain stage, the land was put up for sale and the money advanced by the Government was recouped to them. The Government still hold some of that country, and I think the Lands Department use it as a paddock for their horses.

Hon. T. Moore: Is that in the town of Albany?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes. Since then further experiments were tried outside of Albany, and the work was extended to Marbellup, on the Great Southern. However, the experiments were never conclusively proved, although it was proved that such land could grow good grass and was valuable in other ways, but that machinery would be required to do the work economically. It was also proved that certain fertilisers, such as basic slag, were of no use on that land, and it worked out that the best grasses were clovers. It was never determined how many acres would be required to make a farm of that land. The matter was handed over to the Agricultural Department, and it is now for them to prove that point. I am glad to see they are carrying on with the King River section, but I am sorry the Marbellup experiment has been allowed to lapse. Only last week I saw there clovers doing splendidly. Lotus major, 2ft. long, with stalks as thick as one's finger, was growing amongst the scrub. It is a pity the experiment should be allowed to lapse. The land development committee started well, but in this, as in many other matters connected with group settlement, we want a practical man in

charge. We cannot expect the Director of Agriculture to look after cotton in the north, group settlements in the south and the wheat belt in the east. If there be anything more than another wanted in this State, it is a practical man to take charge of all agriculture in the South-West. The South-West will never prosper through the attentions of the Agricultural Department until such a man is appointed. It is all very well to have pig experts, and dairy experts and fruit experts, but we want a practical man to take charge of the whole business. At Mt. Barker a committee has been formed to go in for field demonstrations at which all the theories put up by the Agricultural Department's experts are tried out before being given a wider application. The difficulty lies in getting experts who have made their livings by the methods they advise other people to adopt. I am not surprised at the majority report of the Royal Commission on group settlement. There is in it very little constructive criticism.

Hon. T. Moore: In what constructive way does the minority report differ from it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The majority report starts out with a recommendation that group settlements should be suspended. When a man is suspended, generally that is an end to him.

Hon. J. R. Brown: If suspended by a piece of rope, it is.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The group settlers in the Denmark district have been very uneasy since they read in the newspaper an outline of the majority report.

Hon. T. Moore: That was the newspaper report, before ever the Commission's report was issued.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The uneasiness began after the majority and minority reports were published in the Press.

Hon. T. Moore: The report shows that those group settlers were uneasy when we were down there.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I think those who signed the majority report have been a little uneasy themselves. What they should have said was that group settlement should be, not suspended but developed. There was no talk about suspending activities on the wheat belt.

Hon. T. Moore: I think we have heard that before.

Hon. A. BURVILL: But there was the same dolorous, pessimistic tale about sending people out into the wheat belt to starve.

There is now no cry of stopping work on the wheat belt. The same people who cried out about the Eastern wheat belt in the early days now want to have group settlement abandoned in order that they may get out to the Eastern wheat belt.

Hon. T. Moore: Of whom are you speaking?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Another point: they are still asking that the debts due to the I.A.B. by the farmers of the eastern wheat belt be reduced, and that railways and settlement be extended further out through the belt. I wish they would adopt the same attitude towards group settlement. Mr. Holmes admitted that there is good land in the South-West. Evidently the interest he showed in the Peel Estate has taken him further south into the group settlement country, and he has been converted to the idea that we have good land down there.

Hon. T. Moore: The Group Settlement Commission's report shows that.

Hon. A. BURVILL: When Mr. Angwin read the Commission's report he said "Group settlement shall continue." The majority report put up certain recommendations, one being for training camps and clearing by piece work.

Hon. T. Moore: The minority report has that also.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It reads as follows:—

That group membership be confined to settlers who have passed through a period of preliminary training.

That for the purpose of providing training for settlers, group areas in each district be conducted as training camps while the farms are being prepared, and that the Imperial Government be invited to approve of such camps as training farms under the new agreements.

In the minority report there is the same recommendation. What I ask is whether the Commission went into the financial side of this proposal, the practicability of establishing training camps? Would it not be more expensive than the allowance business?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must ask questions through the Chair.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Then I ask you, Sir, to consider would it not be far better that those group settlers should be placed on their groups under a system more economical than would be the establishing of costly training camps? What would be done in those camps? Are the men to be trained as farmers, or trained to clear, or trained to milk cows,

and how long is it going to take? In my opinion this training of the migrants should be done in the Old Country. The initial blunder in respect of group settlement was that the men were not properly selected in Great Britain. It is fairly evident that the migrants should go through some process of selection and training, and that the Mother Country should accept the whole of the responsibility and guarantee to send us only men who are fitted for farm work. I cannot see how the establishing of training camps out here is going to be less expensive than the present method. There should be some better method of selection of our own people also. Apparently just now any married man applying to go on a group settlement is given a chance, very often because the applicant is out of work. It would be far better to select only those likely to adapt themselves to farming.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Before tea I was speaking about training camps. The actual training of group settlers who come from the Old Country must be given in the Old Country, and Great Britain must take the responsibility. It is not right that men should be trained out here, because of the expense involved. There is another question which makes it far more important that they should be trained in England. It is noticeable that a certain number of migrants have left the groups of their own accord chiefly because they were not adapted to the work. When this happens we get a lot of people who are a drag on the labour market.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Could they be given suitable training in the Old Country?

Hon. A. BURVILL: It is not so much the training that is required, as the selection. It is the personal equation and the adaptability of farming that chiefly matter. That could easily be remedied in the Old Country, especially if the Government sent Home an officer to assist in the selection of migrants. It would be better to do that than to bring people out here and then find they are not adaptable to the work and are likely to become a drag on the labour market. If Australians do not turn out to be suitable as group settlers, we do not increase our difficulties, because they are not the same as new arrivals. Not everyone will make a farmer. Some people would not do so if they were placed in the Garden of Eden.

Hon. V. Hamersley: They do not know it until they try it.

Hon. A. BURVILL: We do not want too many people coming out here to try at the Government expense. Something has been said about group foremen not having power to dismiss unsatisfactory settlers. If a man is not amenable to discipline and defies his foreman, the foreman is placed in an invidious position. Settlers of this character should be put on to piecework. If they are unwilling to do that work, the best thing they can do is to get out altogether. I do not know whether the Commission observed it, but in the Denmark district there is the genesis of a very good method for group settlers. I notice that since Mr. Angwin took charge of the scheme a certain number of the group settlers are allowed to keep a cow. They are also engaged in getting their gardens going. That is a good system of training. With regard to the question of piecework versus day work, I fail to see how any other method than the present could have been adopted. It is the best method up to a certain point. The settlers have to be trained in some way, and training camps would be more expensive than the present system. They should be paying for their own tuition. If they are placed under a foreman to ring timber, to grub, or burn off for a month or two under sustenance, they can then be put on to piecework in twos, threes, or fours, as the case may be. I think this would be the best method. I am altogether opposed to the clearing of land by piecework at the hands of gangs of clearers. We could not get enough experienced men for the work, and it would be just as expensive as the present system, if not more so. The clearing of wheat land is altogether different. When a man takes up a wheat farm it does not greatly matter whether or not he knows anything about clearing. In the South-West, as in Gippsland, every man settled on timber country has to know something about the methods of clearing. The only way in which the Britisher or the Australian can learn is to be given training at it, and that training can best be given under group foremen first on the sustenance basis and then on the contract basis. I take strong exception to the reference in the majority report to the wives of British migrants. We are told that all this evidence was based on fact. I do not disbelieve that, but I maintain that when a man is looking

for facts he should not look for them on one side only. In this instance I hardly think enough was brought forward for the other side. In support of this view I should like to read an extract from the minority report as follows:—

I cannot endorse the pessimistic references to the wives of immigrants. The part played by the women in the development of the scheme is an important one and, in most instances, they have taken kindly to their new life in the Western Australian bush.

The Commission's report will be circulated everywhere, including the Old Country, and for that reason both sides should have been dealt with. I have not been on all the groups. Before the Premier went to England he visited certain groups at Denmark in company with Mr. Angwin. I was with them for part of the time. We visited Group 116, which is one that was organised by Colonel Newcombe in the Old Country. He came out specially to see how it was getting on. He wanted to know the conditions under which the people were working, and if they had any complaints. The party saw the wives as well as the settlers on that group, which is situated 35 miles from Denmark. There were 105 children on the group and 20 or 22 families. Nowhere was there any complaint. Both the Premier and Mr. Angwin addressed the gathering of settlers, but all they said they wanted was a school, a railway, a telephone service and a few other facilities of that kind.

Hon. T. Moore: Had Group 116 been there long?

Hon. A. BURVILL: It has been there 12 months.

Hon. T. Moore: How long had it been there on the occasion of your visit?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I also wish to refer to Group 114, which was established shortly before that.

Hon. T. Moore: It had just arrived. Of course there were no complaints.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) happened to be at Denmark at the time. The wife of one of the migrants had ascertained that she could get a cow at Denmark on certain terms, and had walked in 22 miles to secure the animal. She wanted the cow, to lessen her expenses on the group. She had come from a place in England where things were very different from what she was then going through. She also wanted a crosscut saw. Mr. Wansbrough happened to have one and sent it out to her. The next day this lady

walked back to the group leading the cow and carrying the crosscut saw. She had 11 children. During the 12 months, in addition to the clearing that was being done under the group system, she and her children had cleared 14 acres of their own particular block. When we read the contents in the majority report concerning the wives of these settlers we must come to the conclusion that there are some facts to be brought forward on the other side. I take strong exception to the discourtesy that has been shown to these courageous wives. I admit the influence of the wives is conducive to keeping a man on or off the land. These settlers are total strangers to the country, and, considering the isolation of their surroundings, I consider that the spirit most of them display should have been referred to in the majority report. I had expected that certain recommendations would have been made in the report, but I cannot find them. The first surprise I had was to find nothing was said about the side lines, which must have a great bearing upon group settlement. I refer to small orchards, potato and onion growing, etc. In their journeys around the groups I should have thought members of the Commission would have visited some settlers who were on similar land to find out how they got on, and how they managed to pass through the initial stages of settlement.

Hon. T. Moore: We asked you to show us men who were making good at dairying in the district, but you could not do it.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I pointed out quite a number.

Hon. T. Moore: Dairying?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The only one the Commission wanted to examine was the man who was making money out of dairying only, and on karri land. I could find only one. What I wanted the Commission to observe was the manner in which these men had made good, and I pointed to quite a number. The Commission saw their land, but there is no reference to this in the report. I agree with what Mr. Willmott said the other night, that these settlers should have small orchards and should go in for side lines. There is not the slightest doubt that the main key to group settlement is the cow, and the next key is the silo. Then the question of transport is of the greatest importance, and in the minority report we see very little about it, whilst in the majority report there is nothing said about silos. A redeeming feature

of the minority report is the short reference to silos.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Have the Government advanced money for silos on these holdings?

Hon. A. BURVILL: The Government have never suggested it. I desire to show that the Commission had evidence enough about the value of silos. Mr. Kingdom, the local Agricultural Bank inspector, said in answer to a question that to farm successfully was to conserve the feed when the growth of grass was good. Mr. Flay, a supervisor at one of the group settlements, gave his experience at Denmark. He said—

With silos and the conservation of fodder it should be possible to use in a more economical manner the stuff that is grown. The land undoubtedly improves by stocking.

Take another successful farmer—there are not many of them at Denmark. Mr. Frank Bayley, who has been farming there for 12 years, was asked by Mr. Latham whether he thought that silos were essential in that district, and his reply was—

Ultimately every hill farm must have one. The cows cannot be maintained in full milk without a silo. By this means it should be possible to milk the cows all the year round. Lucerne will grow on the best land, and this, with ensilage, should see the farmer through.

Later on he was asked whether he was satisfied with the prospects of dairying in the district and he replied—

It is the cheapest dairying country available for the man with small capital. A man could make a living with 10 first-class cows and pay interest on £1,000. He should be able to build up gradually to a herd of 20 cows.

Yet on that evidence, and evidence that might have been got elsewhere, we do not see any mention in the report about the conservation of fodder. Throughout Western Australia silos are needed. They are required in the wheat belt and in the South-West, more than in any other place in the Commonwealth. They are required because the rain falls mostly in those periods of the year when we have a great abundance of fodder for the stock and does not fall when fodder is needed. It has been found in the wheat belt just as much as in the South-West that to farm properly and economically, and to get the best out of the land, it is necessary to have silos. The apex of the rainfall is in July; in Gippsland it is in October. Even in Gippsland farmers are now constructing silos. I fully expected that the Commission would have

gone to the Bunbury butter factory and got some information there about the progress of dairying. In its early stages that institution struggled because the farmers would not take on dairying. Now the factory is turning out 17 tons of butter per week in the season. Farmers, however, still cling to their side lines, potatoes and so on. The Commission could have got a great deal of valuable evidence there as to how those farmers that are supplying the Bunbury factory with cream have progressed. Another place to which they might have devoted some attention was that of Mr. Malcolm, of Wagin. Mr. Malcolm has a herd of prize cows. He is in a dry district and does not possess the best wheat land. He has the requisite silos and many people are continually visiting his place in the hope of being able to follow his example. He has proved that it is possible to keep his cows in milk all the year round with the aid of silos, and he is never short of feed, but can provide the stock with succulent fodder all the year round. His neighbour, Mr. Austin Piesse, is doing the same thing as regards sheep. He has silos built and has found out that he gets a better percentage of lambs and can carry more sheep to the acre. Instead of discouraging people in the manner that they did, and saying that dairying was drudgery, the Commission should have given more encouragement to the people on the groups and drawn their attention to the value of silos and to the proper methods of cultivation. Those people could also have been told that later on they might have been able to secure milking machines, the introduction of which have eliminated to a considerable extent the drudgery associated with dairying. Mr. Malcolm has a milking plant on his place. It cost him about £120. I do not say that we should secure milking machines for the group settlers in the early stages, but it was due to the Commission to point out that dairying was not all drudgery, and that it was possible to advance in the manner that Mr. Malcolm had done.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Milking machines spoil the cows.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Not when the machines are properly understood. A man has to be trained to use these machines correctly, and then the old method of milking cows from before daylight until dark can be done away with. In aristocratic language we might say that with the milk-

ing machines it is possible to extract the lacteal fluid from the female of the bovine species. The Commission might have recommended the erection of a concrete silo in the cheapest way possible on each group settler's holding. I am glad that the minority report said something about silos because they will play a great part in the ultimate success of dairying. Another matter I would like to mention in connection with the minority report is the necessity for a telephone service.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the hon. member in the time at his disposal is justified in going over every detail in the report with which he does not agree.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It is important that there should be telephone communication with the groups. Mr. Harris, when giving evidence, pointed out the urgency of this in the event of sickness, and he added that at Group 116 there were 105 children. I know that this is a Commonwealth matter, but I would like the Minister to find out why the promise that was made that a telephone would be supplied, has not been fulfilled. Last summer Senator Graham took up the matter with the Commonwealth Government, but the latter now ask the State Government to subsidise the service to the tune of about £500. I should like to know whether there is any truth in that. Another point that was missed by the Commission was that relating to transport. There are two groups composed of migrants from Cornwall and Devon who have been on the land for 12 months. They are in need of railway communication. The railway has been authorised but no attempt has been made to construct it. Some members complain of railways being built to certain places, and not to where farmers were carting wheat for a distance of 22 miles. I would like members to view the position of group settlers as the Commission found it, especially at Group 116 at Denmark. Mr. Harris, when examined, said—

We want railway communication in order to relieve us of the high transport charges, which now amount to 3s. 10d. per cwt. I hear the rate has now gone up to 4s. 6d. This eats up a lot of our £3 a week sustenance. The road is partly made to within two miles of the camp, but the officials stop at that. It has taken us two days and two nights to bring provisions from the Nornalun-road. Sometimes one man is engaged in this work every day in the week. One individual did nothing during last winter but transport things that we needed for the group. We have had to

carry goods as far as 14 miles. My monthly charges for carting would pay for my groceries for a week. It costs 28s. 3d. plus cartage for 156lbs. of flour.

Later on he stated, "With one or two exceptions, we are all satisfied." The supervisor had something to say about transport as follows:—

Is the scheme charging 4s. 6d. per cwt. for transport to group 116?—The cost is 2s. 6d. per ton per mile.

Earlier in my remarks I spoke about flour being carried 120 miles for 3s. 3d. The cost to the group settlers to get a bag of flour from Denmark, after paying the charges to Denmark, is 5s. per bag. Yet the majority report says not a word about the Denmark railway being extended so that those group settlers could free themselves from this enormous additional cost. How can we expect group settlers to pay their interest or anything else when they have become established unless the railway is built? Another surprise is that the majority report says nothing about drainage. I fully expected that members from the wheat belt would have taken notice of the water difficulty, because in their districts the problem is to conserve water. They pointed out that some areas would be useless unless drained, but they said nothing about draining the country before it was settled. In their general remarks reference was made to one place in the South-West that needed drainage, and the Commission doubted whether the land would stand the extra £1 per acre for drainage. If the land is of any quality at all, there should be no difficulty about its standing that cost for drainage. At Herdsman's Lake it is costing £100 per acre to drain the land. If railway facilities are given to the group settlers, if the piecework system is introduced and the men are permitted to clear the land under contract after having received certain instruction, there is a chance of success. Group settlement is certainly a far quicker way of breaking up the South-West land than was the old individual system. There is an enormous market within the State for the produce of the groups. The State last year imported £1,075,000 of produce that could have been grown in the South-West. Butter represented £539,000, which was an increase of £33,000 over the previous year. Bacon and hams, £217,000, also showed an increase. Onions to the value of £28,000 were imported. There is no reason why group settlers should not have, say

half an acre under onions so long as they are near the railway. Some people argue that it is unnecessary for group settlers to be near a railway; they maintain that motor transport would be sufficient. That contention is altogether erroneous. All the men who are doing well on that class of land are within five miles of a railway. Plenty of men who have started on small side lines grow nearly all their own needs and have a surplus to sell, and gradually they are working up to the stage when they can keep cows and make them their mainstay. Jams, fruits and jellies can be produced by group settlers. Last year £140,000 worth was imported. Fruit and vegetables in liquid to a value of £61,000 were imported. The group settlers should supply that demand. Given a railway, the department should act as the transporter from the producer to the consumer, almost without any agents. In South Africa there is in vogue a system that is being adopted here, and which I think might well be applied to group settlers, as it would prevent them from getting into debt while they were waiting for their cows to reach the profitable stage. That is the C.O.D. system. I recommended that system to the ex-Minister for Railways, Mr. Scaddan, and he referred it to the Commissioner. As a result we secured the flat rate of 1s. 6d. per case on fruit, but it did not touch vegetables and other lines. Later on the present Minister enforced it in regard to merchandise, but I would like to see it applied to vegetables. In South Africa the outback farmer is often 1,000 miles or more away, but he consigns his produce to the town, say Durban. It is addressed to the consignee, to whom it is delivered by the railway authorities, and the consignee pays the cost, freight and commission. The money is transmitted to the station-master whence the produce was consigned, and the producer receives the proceeds minus the freight and commission. The system has been working so well in South Africa that lately the commission on perishable produce such as fruit, jam, etc., has been reduced. I wish something could be done by our Railway Department to compensate for the land tax imposed upon producers last year. It would be a great help to the group settlers if they could get into communication with workers in Perth or Fremantle, and consign their produce direct to

them. It would obviate the difficulty created by motors taking traffic from the railways, because the railways could have their own vans to deliver the produce. It would get rid of the agents; the produce would be fresh when it reached the consumer; the producer would be sure of his market and would know exactly what price he was going to get.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: That system would take a good deal of organising.

Hon. A. BURVILL: We have South Africa to give us a guide.

The Honorary Minister: A lot of that is being done now.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You would still have the middle-man.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I was surprised that the Royal Commission did not refer to the fact that the whole of the group settlers so far comprised moneyless men. The Commission propose that the State should mark time in the matter of group settlement. I think it would be a fine thing if we could get migrants with capital. They could come from counties and form groups of their own. If such men settled amongst moneyless men, their presence would be very helpful to the State. There is no reason why we should not get men of capital to settle on our land.

Hon. J. Duffell: It sounds very well.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I have made inquiries from settlers bailing from the Old Country, and more than one has informed me that men of capital would certainly be prepared to settle here, but that they would want good land near to a railway. If the Denmark line were extended, there would be plenty of good land available. If we could get moneyed men to settle there, the only safeguard that the State need impose would be to require them to bring the land to a productive stage.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What about the Denmark settlers?

Hon. A. BURVILL: They had very little money. That land, at £20 per acre, was too high. They had had no experience of farming or financing, and what with interest on the borrowed money and land rent, they lost heart.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: One would have thought some of them would be successful.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Some have been successful.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Very few.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The report of the Commission shows that some have been successful. I admit that there have been a good many failures among the Denmark settlers, but there are reasons for it. Plenty of men settled along the Denmark line are making good for the reason that they are close to a railway. Many of them had a certain amount of capital, and have been able gradually to work their way up. Hardly any of them are on the Agricultural Bank. I consider that the Denmark line should be extended at once. At the end of the railway is the tingle-tingle forest, which should be reserved up to an area of 7,000 acres. On the edge of the forest are thousands of acres of tingle-tingle and karri that could be profitably milled. There is a big demand for timber; the price of hardwood is high, and if this timber were milled by private or State enterprise, the freights accruing from it would pay the working cost of the line and provide work for group and other settlers in the district. That forest of tingle-tingle should be worked as soon as possible. The trees are over-matured by hundreds of years. The sooner the old forest is cut out and a new forest allowed to come up, the better. The asset is a wasting asset, though it does not waste very quickly. The trees should be brought to profit for the State as speedily as possible. I am pleased to learn from the Governor's Speech that reforestation has emerged from the experimental stage. There has been much talk about forestry for many years in Western Australia, but nothing has been done yet. So far as I know, dedication of forests is not yet an accomplished fact. The forests are one of our finest assets. Our railway system gets more revenue out of the forests than out of any other one industry. On account of the heavy wheat harvest it might be thought that railway earnings from wheat were greatest, but the position is otherwise. According to the returns the earnings of the department from wheat were £393,253, whereas those from timber were £404,200 odd. The average haul of timber, moreover, was only 71¾ miles, while that of wheat was 131 miles. Our forests should be defined permanently. With regard to pine plantation, as long as I can recollect there has been in the Albany Lands Office a plan marked "Pine plantation." There is only one State of the Commonwealth which has native pine

—Queensland. A report recently made by Mr. Grenning states—

Previous to the war Queensland supplied her own softwood requirements, and was able to export several million superficial feet per annum to other States. Now the demand has exceeded the supply, and Queensland will import a greater quantity of softwood every year. Fortunately, as will be shown later, there is every prospect of securing our requirements—at an ever-increasing cost, however—from overseas for many years to come, though not indefinitely. Against the threatened shortage of overseas supplies in the future we must prepare, and the only possible method is by establishing plantations. Unless we make a serious effort to forecast the future situation and to meet that situation, we will fail in our duty.

The report from which I quote continues—

Summing the position up, Australia should be able to secure her softwood requirements for at least 30 years from the West Coast of United States of America and Canada. Mr. Grenning points out the possible necessity of the Commonwealth Government embarking on a planting scheme so that Australia's requirements may be produced most economically by growing the most desirable species over large areas of localities most suited to their development. What has Australia done to date? The figures giving areas of plantations are very depressing reading:—New South Wales, 8 square miles; Victoria, 21 square miles; Queensland, 2 square miles; South Australia, 40 square miles; Western Australia, 2.5 square miles; total, 73½ square miles. During the year 1922-23 seven square miles were laid down. The area we should plant annually to meet our future requirements is 40 square miles.

Mt. Barker last year sent away 100,000 odd export cases of fruit, and probably sold over 100,000 cases locally. I speak of the particular centre of Mt. Barker, without reference to the fruit growing districts in its immediate neighbourhood. There is no reason why Mt. Barker should not do as Tasmania has done, and increase its sales of fruit to a million cases. It means that inside 30 years considerable quantities of softwood will have to be imported. According to Mr. Grenning's report, softwood is going up and will continue to go up. Unless we plant our own pines, we shall have to pay very dearly for softwood. In France many years ago pine trees were planted in the drift sand on the coastal areas, for the purpose of stopping the drift. The *Pinus pinaster*, which was planted, has not only stopped the drift, but has turned out a revenue-producing asset. We have thousands of acres all along our coast line, better soil

than that on which pine was planted in France, and in all that country we should plant *Pinus pinaster* or *Pinus insignis*. Pine will grow anywhere around Albany. Nearly everyone there has pines planted. The mild climate of Albany suits the pine. Mr. Kessell, the Conservator of Forests, recognises this fact. There would be no difficulty at Albany in getting a plantation of 10,000 acres of pine growing at once. So far as I know, the Forests Department is the only department well in funds—indeed, it has a big surplus. I hope that when pine plantations start, Albany will not be forgotten. With regard to the carriage of fertiliser I omitted to say that I consider the fertiliser, wheat, flour, and grain rates should be so adjusted that shipments will go to the nearest port. If that is done, the day is not far distant when we shall have fertiliser works not only at Fremantle, but also at Geraldton, Bunbury, Albany, and Esperance. The special fertiliser rate represents a great drain on the railways, especially when the fertiliser is carried over long distances. Once the Railway Department persuade the wheat buyers to ship wheat at the nearest port, wheat growing will increase around every port, with the result that the demand for fertiliser, which is also used in potato growing, grass growing, and dairying, will so increase as to afford sufficient inducement for the establishment of fertiliser works at various centres. At present the average haul of fertiliser is 147½ miles. In the case of Geraldton fertiliser at the cheap rate has to travel over about 300 miles. This season, while the fertiliser was going to Geraldton, the wheat was travelling in the same direction. Yet fertiliser is supposed to be carried at a cheap rate, because it represents back loading. There was no back loading in that instance, as the wheat and the fertiliser were going in the same direction. And the very same thing obtained at Bunbury and Albany. I may mention that in Albany half a ton of fertiliser to the acre is used for potato growing. To show how wheat is centralised, I need only say that the average haul of wheat for this year was 139 miles.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Who has been responsible for the wheat not going to Bunbury and Albany, as you say? You cannot blame the Government for it.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Mr. Baxter will discover that if certain differential rates, and certain matters connected with the railways, were altered, wheat buyers would be per-

suaded to ship wheat at the nearest port. A special concession is given by the Railway Department to help buyers to ship wheat and flour at one port. The proof that that is being done is to be found in a comparison between the 139 miles average haul for wheat and the 147 miles average haul for fertiliser. I trust that next season the Railway Department will not shut down on fertiliser in certain areas where it is being used for top dressing. There is a special concession for potato growing areas, which can rail their fertiliser any time of the year. In the wheat growing areas, however, fertiliser can be taken as back loading up to a certain date only. In parts of the Kojonup district, where a great deal of wheat used to be grown, the farmers are going out of wheat into sheep and grass, and are top-dressing heavily. They do not want the fertiliser for top dressing at the same time as the wheat is moved. Special arrangements should be made by which these people will be able to get their fertiliser when they want it. Now I wish to say something about proposed railways and decentralisation and development. A fortnight ago I asked for a return of railways authorised since 1896. I have the return here, though I will not read the whole of it. In the last 30 years 59 railways have been authorised. So far as the port of Albany is concerned—I am going to let other hon. gentlemen speak for Geraldton and Esperance—

The PRESIDENT: Hon. members. They may be gentlemen for all that.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Five of those railways were passed, though not all constructed, for the Albany zone: Katanning-Kojonup, 33 miles, £44,000; Katanning-Nyabing, 37¾ miles, £80,513; Tambellup-Ongerup, 58½ miles, £149,526; Nyabing-Pingrup, 21½ miles, £91,373; Albany-Denmark, Nornalup section, 33 miles, £197,500. That railway has not been started yet although I would point out that the railway from Bridgetown to Jarnadup has been started for some considerable time. It means that in those 30 years there have been 186 miles of railway built in those parts, costing £555,000 odd. The total mileage of railways built in the State during the 30 years was 2,679, the aggregate cost being £8,417,084. Thus, in the southern end of the province there has been spent, in 30 years slightly over £500,000 as against £8,000,000 spent in other parts of the State. As to the railways on which

the £8,000,000 was spent, they have been so constructed and so managed that nearly the whole of the benefits accrue to the centres of Perth and Fremantle. When it comes to a consideration of our harbours we find that Albany has been neglected in the same way. During the past 30 years £2,471,000 has been spent in the Fremantle harbour, while at Geraldton £77,000 has been spent, in Bunbury £519,000, and in Albany £163,000. In Fremantle they spent as much money in trying to make a dock as they spent altogether on the Geraldton and Albany harbour works.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Anyhow, that was a long time ago.

Hon. A. BURVILL: But it was a needless waste of money. So long ago as 1908 a motion was passed in this House at the instance of Mr. Kirwan. The motion set out that the dock at Fremantle should not be constructed. The motion was passed by 13 votes to six, but the Government went on with it. Half a million pounds was spent in making a hole.

Hon. J. R. Brown. Now I suppose they will want some water to put in the hole.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yet they are asking for a dock again! I would point out to those hon. members who are bringing forward that request that they can ask for many things in connection with their harbour on which the money could be better spent. They could also spend that money better in developing the outside country in the shape of constructing railways or some other useful work even in their own province. I suggest to them that they should erect a cooling shed for the benefit of, for instance, the Bridgetown fruit growers. The Bunbury harbour is not the best for shipping fruit, and until it is put in proper order I suggest to them that instead of putting up new grain sheds, they should agree to the proposal to erect a cooling shed at Fremantle so that the fruit growers may be able to have their fruit shipped in better condition. I have a few figures to indicate the districts that have been served to the greatest extent as a result of this expenditure. Of the benefits accrued from 8½ millions spent on railways, about half a million comes into Albany. A certain amount goes to Bunbury but, as I said earlier in my statement, the railways are so used that they do not run into, for instance, Bunbury. A lot from Geraldton

and from the goldfields areas pass through to Fremantle.

Hon. G. Potter: That is why we want harbour extension there.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Of the 3¼ million pounds spent in this State on harbour works, 2½ millions has been in the interests of Fremantle.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That was because it was necessary.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Under the operations of the Lands Department, £6,000,000 has been spent in the wheat areas and most of the benefit derived from that expenditure has come back to Fremantle.

Hon. G. Potter: And the Fremantle harbour has contributed handsomely to Consolidated Revenue.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Then there is the expenditure on water supplies, power plants, and so on. In respect of each of these the metropolitan area has received consideration. When it comes to concessions, however, there was a reduction in the duties to the extent of £23,000 in one slap in connection with the power house, and on additional plant there was a further reduction in duty.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Don't you believe in that?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes, but it should cut both ways. When it comes to a consideration of the farmers' position, they have difficulty in getting cheap wire netting, sugar for jam, or they have to shoulder a high tariff on their agricultural machinery. The farmers do not get any concessions.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They should buy agricultural machinery made in the State.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Mr. Potter talked about the construction of a dock at Fremantle, and when I said that we could build a dock for a quarter of the cost at Albany he said that we ought to have our goods in the show window and should not put such things in places where they could not be seen. That has been the trouble with this State. We want to make the Fremantle harbour our bay-window and put everything there, drawing the blind down on our trade entrances. We should keep our trade entrances open. We have a good one at Albany. When Sir George Buchanan came here originally he passed through Albany and said that the harbour was one of the finest he had seen. When

he had experienced the railway from there he said it was one of the poorest railways he had seen.

Hon. G. Potter: You do not blame Fremantle for that, do you?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No, but I would point out to Mr. Potter that at Albany we have a depth of 60 feet within 30 feet of the shore, and it is there that we could build a dock more cheaply than at Fremantle. However, I contend that that type of work should be undertaken by the Commonwealth. I am not afraid regarding Albany because it is situated on the corner of a trade route and is important for defence purposes. The money of the State could be better spent in developing the country, leaving the Commonwealth to deal with docks. Even the shipping people do not want a dock at Fremantle.

Hon. G. Potter: Only a section of them do not.

Hon. A. BURVILL: When are the people of Perth and Fremantle going to be satisfied?

Hon. E. H. Gray: It will take a long time yet.

Hon. A. BURVILL: They have preferential rates and all the rest of it. When will they allow the rest of the State to progress? The first settlement in Western Australia took place at Albany 100 years ago. Thirty years ago we were promised a railway from Denmark to Bridgetown. About the same number of years ago the people at Esperance were promised a railway and I am glad to know that in the near future the promise to the Esperance people will have been completed. The position is worse still in the North. However, there are very few more railways that Perth can get unless it be by an enveloping method around the back the effect of which would be to rob Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany. As to Esperance, the metropolitan area will find a difficulty there now and I think the city's game is up as far as that harbour is concerned. We have heard a lot about unfair competition from the Eastern States. We have had a Federal Royal Commission to inquire into the disabilities of Western Australia. There have been complaints regarding the Navigation Act. We have been asking a lot of questions about Federation, but we should take some of our own medicine.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Quite true.

Hon. A. BURVILL: What about a State Disabilities Commission? I want to know how you people in the metropolitan areas "navigate" these railways and run them into one port.

Hon. G. Potter: That is the magnet that draws the steel.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Through the courtesy of the officers of the Lands Department I have been able to get a plan to help hon. members to better understand the position in the South-West. I have spoken about the Newdegate-Albany railway. We have heard it said by Mr. Kirwan and others that at Newdegate there is some of the best wheat country that the State possesses. There are such centres as Damnosa and Ravensthorpe and the area north towards Forestania. In that part of the State there are at least a quarter of a million acres of the finest wheat country we possess. When the line is completed, Newdegate will be 240 miles by rail from Bunbury. We should have a railway from Newdegate to Albany. It is only 174 miles.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What about Hopton?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Hopton is hopeless. I doubt whether it could be made into a harbour.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is a long way better than was Fremantle a few years ago.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If we got 83 miles of railway from Ongerup to Newdegate, Albany would then be easily the nearest port to the district. From Newdegate to Albany via Ongerup the distance would be 231 miles or, alternatively, via Wagin it would be 261 miles. From Newdegate to Bunbury the distance is 240 miles, while from Newdegate to Fremantle it is 318 miles.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It would be rough on the Ravensthorpe people to take the line to Albany. Why not to Hopton?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Albany is 87 miles nearer than is Fremantle, and 76 miles nearer than is Bunbury. There is no opposition to this proposed line to Albany. If a railway is built from Armadale to Brookton and on down to Newdegate, it will bring Newdegate nearer to Fremantle than it is to Bunbury.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The objective should be the opening up of the Damnosa country.

Hon. A. BURVILL: This proposed line will take in the Pingrup extension, and the whole thing will then be looped up. According to Mr. Kirwin, Ravensthorpe has a railway absurdity.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The railway at present is an absurdity, and will remain so until linked up with Newdegate.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If this proposed railway were put in it could be made to pay. According to a table I have here, the Hopton railway has a length of $34\frac{1}{4}$ miles and it cost £79,000. But it has two dead ends, and so when anyone down there has to ship wheat, it goes round to Fremantle. When the Railway Department wanted a new boiler down there they took it to Newdegate and carried it 114 miles by team from Lake Grace down to Ravensthorpe. The money spent on the Ravensthorpe line could easily have built this connection I am now advocating. There is no reason to stress the fact that there is to be found in the district to be served by the proposed railway a quarter of a million acres of the very finest land. Down near Albany the land is poorer, especially for the last 75 miles. There are out there settlements with a history going back to 1838, the people of those settlements being in their third generation. Other settlements in that part of the country are 30 or 40 miles from a railway. A lot of once despised plain country down there has been brought under cultivation. Recently I saw some of it being treated. At one place it was done by tractor, and the total cost per acre for clearing, ploughing, fertilising and seeding was only £2. On one farm rape was doing exceedingly well, while the next door neighbour had harvested 25 bushels of oats to the acre. This is the plain country that, a few years ago, nobody would look at. Of course, if a man has that class of country he wants a good deal of it, and should have, in addition, 300 or 400 acres of timber land in which to keep his breeding stock. This plain land is very cheaply brought under cultivation.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Is there any bottle brush country in it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: A report made on the country down there was published in the newspapers and proved very misleading. Mr. Surveyor Payne, after a horseback inspection, reported that it was not worth a close classification. But had anybody read the report carefully he would have seen that the surveyor was referring only to Crown lands, not to land alienated and under cultivation. The land along the Salt River, or Pallinup, 30 or 40 miles from the nearest railway, has grown 40 bushels of wheat to the acre. There is an immense tract of good

land down there, but the best of it is farthest from the railway.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member has dealt with it very fully.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Perhaps it would be of interest to know what the electors of the South Province and of the Yilgarn Province think of that proposed railway. I have here a letter from the secretary of the Lake Biddy Agricultural Hall Committee, in which, after congratulating those who are trying to get this railway, he says—

I hope you will be successful in bringing about this great Godsend to the Great Southern portion of Western Australia, which would be the means of putting into the farmer's pockets pounds that they now spend in keeping Perth and Fremantle.

I do not think all metropolitan members are serious in their endeavour to rob other ports.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: I think they are doing it very successfully.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I drew Mr. Lovekin's attention to a few points concerning distances in respect of this proposed Newdegate railway.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you read every word of your speech?

The PRESIDENT: I ask the hon. member not to interrupt.

Hon. J. BURVILL: What Mr. Lovekin said was as follows:—

The point most of us quite agree upon is that railways shall be so constructed as to permit of produce being carried to its natural port. No settler should be penalised for all time by a policy of concentration.

Now I come to another point of great importance to the Newdegate railway. I allude to the Ravensthorpe copper mines. I got into conversation with Mr. Porteous, a mining expert now at Gnowangerup; he was a mine manager in Kalgoorlie in 1897 for Messrs. Bewick, Moreing & Co. Mr. Woodward, once Government Geologist of this State, was engineer with him up there. Mr. Porteous has been all over the Ravensthorpe copper fields, and this is his opinion of those fields. With your permission, Sir, I propose to read his report.

Mr. PRESIDENT: It will not be long, will it? You have been speaking two and a half hours already.

Hon. J. Duffell: And he has not warmed up yet!

Hon. A. BURVILL: This is the extract—

Regarding Ravensthorpe mines, Mr. Porteous has always held a decided opinion that

this is one of the finest, if not the very finest, and largest low-grade copper ore propositions in the Commonwealth, once it is worked on proper economic lines. He claims that the past methods of smelting the ores on the field are too expensive, and always held that it would not pay except by picking out the higher grade ores, of which there are too little in comparison to the large bodies of lower grade ores. His contention is that as the Broken Hill smelters had to be removed to Port Pirie, nearly 300 miles by rail, for economic working, so the Ravensthorpe smelters will never pay until similar action is taken, and the smelters erected at Albany, the nearest accessible port. Thus the railway to the Ravensthorpe mineral field is a necessity to run the smelters economically and to use the low-grade ores to the best advantage. To do this there must be cheap coke, lime, water, and iron ore. It is impossible to make a harbour at Hopetoun except at a prohibitive outlay.

Later on when the new smelting proposition was being experimented with at Ravensthorpe I got Mr. Porteous's opinion, as I thought it was of some value. His opinion on the field then was—

1, That it will carry 20,000 and upwards of population when they stop this hole and corner business of treatment. 2, With all due respect to the new method of treatment being tried there now, if proved successful, it will take a number of plants to meet the requirements of the field, and it should be recognised that one large treatment plant at Albany, and the mines to sell their ore on assay, is better than for the small mines to spend the whole of their subscribed capital on little plants of their own. This would be one-third more costly than in a large wholesale way of treatment. 3, You get every metal that is contained in the ore by smelting. Will the other process do that? The field is composed of a number of large low-grade lodes. No one knows anything about that large belt of mineral country, only where the little bit of work has been done. North of the workings the country has not been prospected. And it would be useless for anyone to go there until such time as there is a prospect of smelters at Albany, and a connecting railway to the field. When this is done it will create consumers for our production.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Where is the mineral country Mr. Porteous referred to?

Hon. A. BURVILL: At Ravensthorpe.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Why not have the smelters at Hopetoun, instead of bringing the ore to Albany?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Other prospecting has been done down there. Mr. Wellstead of Gnowangerup wrote to me the other day, pointing out that there are great prospects of finding copper and gold elsewhere. After

referring to a find made some 11 or 12 years ago he said—

I refer to an immense lode carrying very rich carbonate of copper, and assaying up to 30dwts. gold, quite near Jarramongup This in itself is worthy of a lot of attention. As near as I can remember it is a vast deposit lying between a granite hanging wall and a diorite footwall. It was very erratically prospected some 10 or 12 years ago and abandoned, being too far from Ravensthorpe smelters. A parcel of 10 tons was carted to Ravensthorpe and treated at the Government smelters. The manager, Mr. Shepherd, told me himself that that special parcel was the finest ore that had passed through the smelters at any time; very high percentage and very easy to smelt, to use his own words, "One could almost smelt it in a matchbox." Further on another 20 miles there is an immense outcrop of quartz trending north-east. I myself have napped this in scores of places. Heavy copper stains and specks of grey ore show freely for quite a mile along the line of outcrop These and others are well within the zone outlined for railway; very few know of them, nevertheless they exist, and perhaps many others. Little genuine prospecting has been done in the locality.

I will show members on the map the three places referred to by Mr. Wellstead. Mr. Kirwan will admit that there is some sense in the argument that the railway should go towards Albany.

Hon. T. Moore: Where would you get your coal?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Are there any engineering difficulties?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No. A party of us went with the district surveyor through that country. The line would go through the Stirling Range, through which there is a pass, offering no engineering difficulties. The railway could alternatively swing in another direction, and clear the range altogether. If that were done the distance would be not more than 174 miles. Albany receives its coal from Newcastle. Not far away is a coalfield known as Wilga, and it might be possible to get coal from there instead of bringing it from Newcastle. The railway from Needilup was promised in 1913, and from Mount Barker west, and from Cranbrook, railways were also promised many years ago. Within a period of 30 years, from Katanning to Albany, only one railway, 59 miles in length, has been constructed. It is time the Government considered the advisability of constructing another railway leading to Albany. Once we get the wheat to Albany it will make a great

difference to dairying and group settlements within that province. At present no flour is milled in Albany, but if the railway were built we would tap one of the best dry wheat areas in the State, and would have plenty of offal with which to foster the dairying industry. At present all the offal must come from Fremantle. I have tried to make it clear that the decentralisation policy of the past has not been in the best interests of the State. It is time some little attention was paid to Albany. We have heard of Dives and Lazarus. It is time we got away from that and heard a little more of the big brother movement. I should like to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that next year marks the centenary of Albany. In effect this means the centenary of the State. Instead of putting up a monument there to mark the occasion and having a big function to celebrate it, I would suggest that a birthday present be made to Albany in the shape of one of the railways I have been talking about. I congratulate the Government upon their prospects and the buoyant state of the finances. With a good season, such as is promised, I think the end of the deficit will soon be in sight. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. Duffell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.12 p.m.