

made by the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith). He said he came to the House believing that any promises given in the House would be duly honoured, and it had come as a great shock to him that a breach of faith of this nature had been committed by the Government. I am not singling out any one Minister, but I am speaking of the Government generally. I say a definite promise was given and is recorded in "Hansard" that the Como tramway should not be constructed without the approval of Parliament having first been obtained. That was a sacred promise to this House, and through this House to the people, and no argument has been brought forward which could condone the breach of faith committed. We have heard the considered views of several members on this question. Some have been irreproachable; some have said that the tramway would pay and some that the tramway was wanted, and so on, but these points do not enter into the question at all. If members require an expression of opinion on the construction of this tramway, I refer them to the evidence of the Royal Commission. The position becomes even more confusing when one reads Mr. Taylor's evidence dealing with the Como tramway. I cannot understand why the Royal Commission did not, in its report, make some reference to this House; but it is silent on the point. Prior to its construction, no estimates were prepared, showing what the cost or the revenue would be. The point that appeals to me is that there has been a breach of faith against Parliament and the people of the State. By the action of the Government every member of this House has been dishonoured. The people of Great Britain believe that the Britisher's word is his bond. How do we account for the success of Great Britain in her control of alien countries, except by the fact that the people of those countries have implicit faith in the word of England? That is what has distinguished Great Britain from other countries in the control of alien races. Sometime ago I was attached to the firm of Guthrie & Co., in Fremantle, for a period of 3½ years. Most of our business was conducted on verbal contracts, many of which involved thousands of pounds. These contracts were never broken, no matter whether we lost or gained. When we dealt with merchants in the East we preferred to do our business with China, rather than with Japan. The word of a Chinaman is as good as his bond, and we could count upon it. It was, however, different with Japan, and we did as little business as possible with that country. It is a serious thing that the honour and integrity of this House has been besmirched by a deliberate breach of a promise made to it, no matter what the ground may be. I regret that such an incident should have occurred. A dishonour has been done to me and other members of this Chamber. In conclusion, I regret that such a grievous breach of faith has been committed, as I

honestly believe that that dishonour will live for some considerable time in the memory of the State.

On motion by Mr. Teesdale, debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,763,950.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

*House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.*

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## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 23rd August, 1922.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED—SWAN BY-ELECTION.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.33]: I desire to lay on the Table of the House papers connected with the Swan by-election, because it may not be possible to give publicity to the matter through the Press in the usual way.

The Minister laid the papers on the Table.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY GRADES, PINJARRA-NARROGIN.

Hon. J. A. GREIG asked the Minister for Education: 1, (a) What is the steepest grade on the railway line from Pinjarra to Narrogin going east, via Dwarda; (b) what is the steepest grade on the same line from Narrogin to Pinjarra going west? 2, (a) What is the steepest grade on the line from Perth to Narrogin, via Spencer's Brook; (b) what is the steepest grade on the same line from Narrogin to Perth? 3, (a) What is the difference in tonnage that an engine would take to Narrogin, via Spencer's Brook, versus via Pinjarra and Dwarda; (b) what is the difference in tonnage that the same engine would take from Narrogin to Perth, via Spencer's Brook, versus Pinjarra? 4, Do the Commissioner and the heads of branches of the Railway Depart-

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

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

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. T. Moore: Only ducks.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

tural halls are necessities if we are to have a contented settlement. The absence of these facilities is one great factor that helps to maintain the eternal drift to the cities where these adjuncts of social life are ever increasingly provided. I was pleased and surprised to notice that Mr. Macfarlane, when speaking of economy in the various Government departments, went on to say that he considered there should be a reduction in the number of members of Parliament in both Houses. In view of his previous remarks in favour of increased population in the country districts by means of immigration and the necessity for increasing production so as to place the State on a sound financial basis, I presume that Mr. Macfarlane meant a substantial reduction of members representing the city and suburban areas. According to statistics, 46 per cent. of the population of Western Australia, which represents one-third of the Commonwealth, reside within a radius of 20 miles of Perth, while 4 per cent. of the production of the State is within that area. That means that 96 per cent. of the State's production is outside that radius. Reduction of members, therefore, on a production basis has much to commend it. It would cut down considerably the number of members of Parliament representing the city and suburban districts while not interfering with country representation. This would perhaps result in the cutting-out of much unnecessary debating. It would also release a number of city statesmen who might represent country constituencies much better than they are doing at the present time. On the other hand, some of these members so released might be employed as a board of control to manage the Perth and suburban tramways, electric lighting scheme, water supplies and so on, these works to be sold to the Perth authorities and controlled by them. The money so released could be better utilised for the benefit of the great vacant spaces in Western Australia. Again, the reduction of members on this basis would result in stopping that tremendous political pull that now obtains, and which results in public funds being spent to such a degree in the city, thereby causing all the more drift to the city. As to the doubling of production under the immigration scheme, it is intended to double wheat production by advancing money through the Agricultural Bank to farmers who are already established. This is a good proposition. According to my views, this is how it will work out. A wheat farmer with 1,000 acres has probably already spent in cash and with his own labour £1,000 for machinery, horses, wagons and harness, £250 for a house and furniture and stables, £450 in clearing 300 acres, £150 in fencing and so on, and £50 in such incidentals as a few cows and sheep. These items make up a total of £2,200. Such a farmer will now get an advance of £450 to clear another 300 acres at the rate of 30s. per acre. There would be a little extra cost in cropping and harvesting

this larger area, but the net result would be that his production would be double, for at least one quarter of his original cost in starting the farm. Money spent in this way will bring a quicker return than under any other part of the Premier's scheme, and it will place settlers now in a struggling position on a firm foundation. As to the immigration scheme as a whole, despite the adverse comment by Mr. Lovekin, I am satisfied with the terms on which the loan of six million pounds was borrowed. Although that hon. member argued that possibly we could have done infinitely better, I do not propose to go into that phase of the matter. It strikes me as being rather late in the day. I agree with him, that if the whole scheme is carried out, the amount of money borrowed will not be sufficient. There are two points regarding the scheme upon which success will probably depend. The first is the selection of the immigrant before he leaves Great Britain and, secondly, the proper care of the immigrants when they reach Western Australia and after they have actually been placed upon the land. Mr. Lovekin stated that 11 per cent. of failures had been registered in Canadian settlement. If we do as well as that, we will be very lucky. I would suggest to the Premier and to the Leader of the House that, if possible, organised assistance already in England should be employed to procure settlers of the best type. I understand that there were certain organisations that were particularly successful in selecting settlers for Canada and that they had a very low percentage of failures. I wish particularly to speak regarding that part of the Governor's Speech which deals with the settlement proposals for the South and South-West, especially with that area stretching between Denmark and Pemberton. I have had almost a lifetime's experience in that class of country in Victoria and also in Western Australia. I claim, therefore, to speak with some knowledge of the subject. If the Premier's scheme for that part of the State is carried out in its entirety, it will ensure a greater prospect of success than has obtained before in that class of country, as well as quicker actual production than has obtained under any previous methods. I do not say that the scheme is perfect, but it shows a tremendous advance on all previous methods adopted in that type of country. The country between Mt. Barker and Wilgarrup and between Denmark and Pemberton has an average rainfall of between 30 and 40 inches. It has an equable climate and is very similar to Gippsland, both as regards soil and rainfall. The Gippsland rainfall, however, is lighter in winter and heavier in summer. This is compensated, in the South-West, by its climate, for the temperature there is far more even. The land in the South-West is variable, ranging from dense forest to lighter but heavily timbered country with sparsely timbered country, and large patches of treeless country of poorer quality, and areas of very rich

swamp land, admitting of a great variety of production. This land is specially suitable for dairying, for stock raising, potato growing, fruit growing, and intense culture. There are large forests of marketable timber, principally tingle-tingle, karri, and jarrah. These alone will be an everlasting asset to the State if properly managed. The railway traffic from the timber products alone would be sufficient to pay not only the running costs, but the actual cost of the lines without the traffic which will come from settlement. The capabilities of the land do not need much stressing, as they have been proved not only in this part of the South-West, but at Bridgetown, Bunbury, and other parts. The success of the Mt. Barker fruitgrowers is well known. The same applies to the district along the line between Mt. Barker and Albany. On the Denmark spur line potatoes, tomatoes, and all products of intense culture are successfully raised. Dairying is only in its infancy there, but quite enough has been done to prove that this part of the State will eventually become the great centre of this industry in Western Australia. Just as we are becoming one of the great wheat-exporting States of the Commonwealth and are beginning to export apples—I believe we shall become the principal apple-exporting State—so I am sure the South-West will become one of the principal parts of the Commonwealth exporting butter and cheese. The opportunity there is unique. We have the advantages of climate and virgin forest; we are a week nearer to the European markets than the Eastern States, and we have other markets in India, Malaya and the islands of the north. Denmark estate, a cut-out forest of 22,000 acres acquired by the Government some years ago, has suffered from costly experiments by the Government and to a degree from want of knowledge, capital and experience by the original settlers. This, to a great extent, has been overcome. It is being recognised that dairying, stock, and fruit are the main lines for reliable revenue, with pigs, potatoes, tomatoes, etc., as side lines. The mistake made there and in other parts of the South-West and South has been that the settlers have depended on the side lines such as potatoes and tomatoes for which there was only a local market, and have failed because of glutted markets. Now things are changing. The settlers are beginning to make butter the main line, with other products as side lines. This is what was done in the Gippsland district years ago, and the settlers there have made a success of it. To give an instance of the productivity of the karri land, the Denmark State farm during the last 12 months has kept 22 head of cattle in prime condition on 37 acres of land. The value of food purchased during that period was slightly under £50. The grasses grown are principally subterranean and other clovers. Maize is grown and fed green, but is principally used for silage. A silo was erected to provide an even supply of fodder, and as an object lesson to the settlers. Silage has been sold to the settlers to demonstrate its benefits and to

induce the settlers to build silos of their own. Provision is now being made for the Agricultural Bank to advance money in approved cases for the building of silos. As proof that the settlers can make good, and are making good, it was only necessary to visit the Denmark show held in February last. Several exhibits of maize were shown up to 12 feet high, and magnificent lucerne, clovers, millet, and other fodders. Besides, there were apples and other fruit. During the last two or three years a quantity of fruit has been exported to Europe. It is well recognised that this part of the State is backward, and I wish to touch upon the principal reasons for its backwardness. There has never been an organised system of settlement. The timber mills cut out all the marketable timber from Torbay to Denmark and beyond. The country has been burnt haphazardly, which has caused undergrowth, scrub and saplings to spring up. By the time the land got into the hands of settlers it was in many instances worse to clear than virgin forest. There may be seen now at Scotsdale, near Denmark, a fine piece of land, overgrown with karri saplings. It is hopeless to clear that at a reasonable cost, and it has now been suggested that a paper mill be started there. I saw this land some years ago, just after the timber had been cut and a heavy fire over it, and there was nothing on the block but stumps and charred logs. To clear that land sufficiently to cultivate it and lay it down in grasses would then have cost £3 or £4 an acre. Settlement should have followed close on the timber mills. It would then have cost one-half, and some cases only one-eighth of what it is now costing to clear that land. If this had been done at Denmark and along the line from Torbay, which was cut out many years before, the freight provided by the settlers' produce would have been far greater when the mills closed down than is now the case. In addition the waste timber which has been burnt would have been a valuable asset to the settlers. In this class of country, having a heavy rainfall, some of the best land is low-lying bottle brush flats and swamps. The great difficulty is that there is no organised effective scheme of drainage, and the land is more or less water logged in winter. Often a patch of land is drained on to lower land without any adequate provision being made to pass the water on. The result generally is that the settler, railway, or road board concerned is put to the expense of passing the water on to someone else. The existing Drainage Act is very unsatisfactory, and a ponderous expensive bunglingly administered contrivance hindering settlement. I endorse the remarks of Mr. Potter as to the need for co-ordination of the departments. What he said regarding Jandakot applies to the South-West. Along the Denmark line, and at Elleker, four drainage schemes are under way, and at least two more are contemplated. This will mean under the present Act six drainage boards, besides the road board within one ward of the Albany Road Board. This will mean seven secretaries of boards, seven sets of board members, seven

sets of advertising, etc., added to which is the general dissatisfaction regarding the bungling and ineffectiveness of the draining. The present Act should be amended to make it effective, and should be administered by the Agricultural and Lands Departments combined. The land to be drained should include the whole of the watershed, and should be classified by agricultural experts, with the aid of the Lands Department. The drainage should be laid down by a trained engineer, and the actual work should be carried out departmentally, or handed over to the drainage board or road board, with a view to having it done more satisfactorily and economically than is the case at present. The advantage of a system like this can now be seen in Albany where a local land development committee started clearing the bottle brush country. Hon. members know that bottle brush land is low-lying and generally more or less swampy and water-logged, and covered with low scrub. It is also difficult to get at. Two officers of the Agricultural Department, Mr. Scott, the irrigation expert, and Mr. A. C. Vaughan, have cleared, cultivated, and drained an area close to the town and put in grass. At one time this land was considered too expensive to clear, and moreover it was regarded as useless. The experiments, however, have proved so successful that the local committee experienced no difficulty in selling a good many of the blocks. Those that were sold more than covered the cost incurred in experimenting over the whole of the area. This is a decided contrast to the costly and often ineffective drainage schemes carried out by the Water Supply Department in the past, and even at the present time, and in spite of the fact also that that department is in the capable hands of the Minister for Works. Evidence of this has been brought before the House by Mr. Stewart. I have spoken at length on these difficulties and mistakes because they account to a great extent for the backwardness of settlement in that portion of the State, and principally because, I believe, that the scheme of settlement now being inaugurated will avoid similar errors. I wish now to compare the actual freight and the passenger traffic carried on the Denmark spur line, 27 miles in length, with the traffic on the Katanning-Nyabing spur line, 38 miles in length, and which spur line is in the wheat area, and I hope to be able to show that the traffic which emanates from the Denmark country is much more valuable than that of the Nyabing wheat area. I hope to be able to prove also the superiority of the south and south-western country from a railway as well as a closer settlement point of view, and to put the matter beyond doubt as to which is the more advantageous from a reproductive point of view. My remarks, too, will prove the necessity which exists for immediately opening up this country. The Katanning-Nyabing spur line is in wheat country and it is the nearest approach that I can find for purposes of comparison with the Denmark spur line. On the Nyabing line, for the 12 months ended

30th June last, the freight totalled 4,483 tons. The earnings from passenger traffic were £400. The principal freight was wheat, which amounted to 1,537 tons. Starting six miles from Katanning, and going 12 miles beyond, and the same distance on each side, the total area of land is 590,000 acres, two-thirds of which is alienated from the Crown. How much of this is in actual cultivation I cannot say. The average of the blocks is 1,000 acres. On the Denmark spur line the alienated land is approximately 50,000 acres, and with an additional 5,000 acres at the end of the Denmark line we get an approximate total of 65,000 acres as against the 393,000 acres on the Nyabing line. The unalienated land along the line, and at Denmark, is approximately 35,000 acres, making a grand total of 100,000 acres. Of the alienated land not more than about one-fifth is being cultivated, or roughly 13,000 acres. The traffic returns on the Denmark line show that the total freight both ways, for the year ended 30th June last, was 4,361 tons, and the passenger traffic for the same period represented in receipts £650. The principal freight was fruit, potatoes and vegetables, totalling 1,862 tons. The earnings per ton mile on these articles amounted to 1.95d. On wheat the earnings are 1.12d., or  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. less, while on timber the earnings amount to 2.18d. We find that the average earnings per ton mile for the whole of the railways last year was 1.96d., and that the total loss was £418,000. Timber proved to be one of the best paying freights, and I have gone to the trouble of getting statistics to show what actually happened at Millars' sawmills when Denmark was a going timber district. There are 22,000 acres in this timber concession. It was running for about eight years. There were three sawmills operating and sometimes two shifts were worked. The average runs out like this: Approximately 450 men were employed at that mill and there were 100 horses and bullocks also used in connection with the operations there. When in fairly full operation the expenditure was about £70,000 per annum, disbursed as follows:—wages £50,000, forage £8,000, stores and sundries £12,000.

The PRESIDENT: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but I would like to know what he is trying to prove in connection with his speech on the Address-in-reply.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am trying to prove that this country, if it is opened up, can be made a better producing proposition than any other that can be opened up by a new railway, not only in this State but in the Commonwealth, by reason of the fact that freight will accrue from the mills and also from settlement. I wish to point out that a considerable sum of money will be distributed in wages by reason of the operations which will be taking place.

Hon. T. Moore: But the mills are closing up.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I will touch on that point directly. If the mills were running at the present time the position at Denmark



would be that instead of £50,000 per annum being spent there in wages, under existing conditions the total would be more like £90,000, and that the amount spent on forage and stores would be greater by a third than the figures which I have quoted. The total would thus be something like £150,000 to be distributed in connection with a concession of 22,000 acres. The freight from this area would be 2,400 loads per month, or approximately 4,000 tons. This would represent a freight of 48,000 tons per annum, to say nothing of the inward freight on stores, chaff, and sundries, as well as passenger traffic which, in itself, could be put down roughly at £1,000. I would like now to offer a few remarks on group settlement on the area between Denmark and Pemberton, and between Wilgarup and Mount Barker. This method of settlement is the best yet carried out in this part of the State. It is infinitely better to get 20 men to work together under a capable officer than to allow each man to work out his own destiny without supervision, as was done in Gippsland in the early days. The idea of clearing four or five acres, and partly clearing an additional area, is a good one. If that is done on every block before the man is put on it, it will represent a tremendous advance on anything of the kind ever done before. It will bring production far more quickly than will any other method. I believe it is also intended to erect the house, and to put the man on the land with merely the liability for the first five years of paying the interest on the actual cost of clearing the land and building the house. Portions of the land in that district would no doubt be better settled by individuals with a fair amount of capital and with the necessary experience. Such men would get on excellently, because the land is suitable for fruit growing and for fattening cattle and for sheep raising—the last more especially in the district around Mr. Barker.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How will they get on if they have no capital?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Then the group system is the best thing for them. During a period of 12 months the men intended for the group system will be gaining experience; and once a man has got into the way of it, he can grow pretty well nearly everything he wants, except flour and tea and sugar.

Hon. H. Stewart: How would cotton growing do in that district?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am not a believer in experimenting. Now with regard to forest lands. The area of forest lands between Pemberton and Denmark is estimated at 1,800,000 acres. Between Wilgarup and Denmark there is about the same area. At Busseton, I believe, there is about 665,000 acres of forest country; but I shall say nothing of that, because I have never been there. Of the other areas which I have mentioned, 1,732,000 acres is known to be suitable for settlement. But in that acreage there is a great deal of forest land. I tried to get an accurate esti-

mate of the forest land, but the department were unable to supply it. However, to give hon. members an idea of this timber country let me say that in one patch 65,000 acres are reserved—an area three times the size of Denmark. In another patch there are 37,000 acres of prime karri. Then there are patches of 27,000 acres and 22,000 acres of mixed timbers. In addition, there is an area of 202,000 acres of forest land which the Government have lately released for settlement. That country is only one-third of the way from Pemberton to Denmark. Then, again, there are 100,000 acres of timber land nearer Denmark, unclassified, so that one cannot say how much timber this stretch of country actually carries. Near Nornalup there are 270 square miles of tingle-tingle, a timber somewhat similar to karri and jarrah.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Much lighter though, is it not?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Between the two. Some of it was cut at Denmark in the early days, and sent to London for testing. It has good tensile strength, and will be useful for structural purposes. Whether it will last as well in the ground as jarrah is doubtful; personally, I do not think so. In my opinion, the Government should not permit any of these forest areas to be alienated. There is an intention, I understand, of releasing some of the land which is lightly timbered, the timber being good, but not sufficient in quantity to warrant reservation. However, it is a mistake to allow timber land to get into the hands of settlers, even though they intend to preserve the timber, before the sawmills have been through the forest. As soon as timber is rung, it is spoiled. The idea of saving green timber on cultivated ground is impracticable. Such timber is a nuisance to the settlers, and the sawmillers find it a very expensive matter to get such trees. The best way to work the timber country is to construct a railway through it immediately and get a sawmill going.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: A State sawmill?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No. Let it be done by private enterprise. The Government have put quite enough money into State trading concerns already.

Hon. T. Moore: The State Sawmills are paying well.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The railway should be built as soon as possible, because those forests are already over-matured. I have seen logs up to 27 feet in girth put into the Denmark sawmills. The forests I refer to contain timber up to that size. Special machinery is required to work a matured forest. Private enterprise now engaged in the sawmilling industry here has all the machinery and contrivances necessary to work the timber. The sooner sawmills get to work in those forests, the better. Settlement should proceed in conjunction with the sawmiller's operations. If the timber is cut out and the scrub allowed to grow up, the eventual cost of clearing the

land will be much greater than it would have been in the first place.

Hon. T. Moore: What is the land worth per acre when cleared?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Gippsland country, when first opened up, was valued at from £1 to £4 per acre; but it is now difficult to get that land at less than £50 or £60 per acre.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That applies to parts of it, not to all of it.

Hon. J. Mills: What will it cost to clear the land you are speaking of?

Hon. A. BURVILL: From £3 or £4 per acre up to £10 or £12, and some of it more yet. But my idea is that the settler should follow up the sawmiller. It is not necessary here any more than it was necessary in Gippsland to clear the land outright. It is quite possible to cultivate in between the stumps. To clear this land outright would cost perhaps £40 per acre, especially if the land is cleared in its virgin state and the timber on it is destroyed instead of becoming an asset. With regard to markets, I consider that the products of this district will be chiefly timber, and next butter and fruit. All these are exportable products. I know of the depression existing in the timber trade.

Hon. T. Moore: The people concerned are merely seeking to cut down wages.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am also aware that hardwood is getting scarcer the world over. There will not be the slightest difficulty about selling this timber. The Minister for Works stated last night that the Government had sold £3,000,000 worth of timber from the State Sawmills, and that the State Sawmills had disbursed £1,000,000 in wages. If the forests I speak of are properly managed and looked after, they will be an asset to this State for all time. As to butter, I think these districts, when opened up, will produce butter equal to that produced in any part of the Commonwealth; and it will have the same market, namely, the British market. In that respect the position of the fruit will be the same. Mt. Barker and Bridgetown are now able to get better prices for their fruit than is obtained for any fruit from the Eastern States. And then we have our local market. For the year ended on the 30th June last, butter imported into this State totalled 5,819,004lbs., valued at £16,355. The importation of margarine during the same period was 460,719lbs. Cheese imported from the Eastern States totalled 1,402,344lbs., of a value of £60,644. Preserved milk totalled 4,108,362lbs., valued at £215,534. That is to say, of the products of the cow £736,897 worth was imported into this State during the last 12 months. Bacon and ham were imported to the amount of 2,115,212lbs., valued at £137,000.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Before tea I was dealing with the quantities of produce imported into Western Australia from the Eastern States. Butter, cheese, condensed milk and powdered milk amounted to £736,897. Bacon and ham amounted to £137,149, potatoes to £40,539 and onions to £14,630, or a total, for the 12 months ended the 30th June this year, of £927,215. The whole of those products could be produced in the South-West, and still we could have enough for export. The annual production of potatoes in Western Australia to-day amounts to 13,605 tons, or only about two-thirds of the local consumption. During the last 12 months we produced only 669 tons of onions, whereas during the same period we imported from the Eastern States 2,455 tons. To the 31st December, 1921, we produced 2,658,135lbs. of butter valued at £199,631. Of cheese we produced only 1,073lbs., or a paltry £35 worth.

Mr. Cornell: You ought to have to eat some of it!

Hon. A. BURVILL: Of bacon and ham we produced £111,051 worth. In that line we have done more to overtake consumption than in any other. Of tomato sauces, jams, jellies, and fruits we imported in 1920-21 £241,221 worth, whereas in 1912 we imported only £197,760 worth. It does not appear that we are overtaking consumption in those lines. Yet the South-West is particularly well adapted for growing the fruit used in those commodities, and there is no reason why the jams, jellies, and sauces should not be manufactured in this State. Of live cattle, sheep, horses and pigs, we imported during the last 12 months £142,073 worth. So it will be seen that we have in this State an enormous market to catch up, after which we shall have just as good an opportunity to export to Europe and India as have the Eastern States.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Provided we produce the quality.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I think we can.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: In a number of lines we have not done so.

Hon. A. BURVILL: At Mt. Barker they have organised a co-operative company, owning their own packing shed and cool storage. The quantity of fruit sent from Mt. Barker in 12 months is approximately 200,000 bushels. Last season they exported to Europe 80,000 cases. The area under fruit in the Mt. Barker district proper is 2,500 acres, held by co-operative shareholders. Further out is another 200 acres held by other than shareholders.

Hon. E. H. Harris: How many shareholders are there?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I cannot say, but there is not a fruitgrower in the immediate district who is not a shareholder. Between Mt. Barker and Manjimup are further large areas of equally good fruit country. The co-operative company get their own fruit cases and farm requirements, their turnover in that direction being about £3,000 per month. Conditions for marketing are far ahead of what they were in Gippsland when Gippsland

was first settled. At that time they had no butter factories, and none but the local market, which was over-supplied. In those days butter was sold at 6d. per lb. They had no Agricultural Bank, nor any roads.

Hon. J. Cornell: Those settlers, like the Spartans, are all dead.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Some of them are still alive. They started without those facilities, but they won through. They have now butter factories, the Agricultural Bank, roads and railways, and are exporting butter to Europe.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Didn't they enjoy the benefit of the credit foncier bank?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Some of them made a success of it without that bank. I was in Gippsland in the early days, when there was no bank or any other of the facilities which we have to-day.

Hon. E. Rose: In those days the dairying industry was built up largely by bonuses.

Hon. A. BURVILL: That is true. Bonuses were given to butter factories, and for export. But the price they were getting for export butter was 1s. a lb., whereas to-day it is a little over 1s. 6½d. It would be better if we could have the bonus system here, but I understand the Commonwealth laws preclude it. I hope I have said enough to convince hon. members that the South-West contains the best land to be found in Western Australia, and is well worth development by all means at our disposal. The assets are there, and the coming of the industries can only be a matter of time. I believe the produce which will come out of the South-West will be found to be as good as, if not better than, anything that comes from the Eastern States.

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 7.45 p.m.*

the Swan by-election, because it may not be possible to give publicity to the matter through the Press in the usual way.

The Premier laid the papers on the Table.

#### QUESTION—PREFERENCE TO SOLDIERS.

Mr. CARTER asked the Minister for Works: Is it his intention to adhere to the Government policy of preference to returned soldiers in filling the position of Inspector of Furniture, applications for which were recently invited?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The appointment will be dealt with by the Public Service Commissioner, within whose province it is.

#### QUESTION—ROAD MAKING, FEDERAL GRANT.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Works: 1, What are the conditions under which the grant for road making in the State by the Federal Government is being made? 2, What amount will be made available for Western Australia? 3, When is the money likely to be available? 4, What method is proposed for the allocation of the grant to the various bodies in the State?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, The Federal Government are granting a total of £250,000 to the States, to be distributed amongst them on a per capita basis, subject to State's co-operation on a £ for £ basis. The money is to be expended on main and district roads outside municipalities to provide work for unemployed, with preference to returned soldiers, but not confined to them. 2, About £16,000 by the Federal Government. 3, When claimed. Works are being put in hand at once. 4, Allocation will be made to the most pressing works, and not necessarily every local authority.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eleventh Day.

Debate resumed from previous day.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [4.37]: I would have preferred to be an exception to the rule and not spoken on the Address-in-reply.

Mr. Underwood: Why do you, then?

Mr. TEESDALE: The "Sunday Times" says it is most impudent and improper to interject. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) should remember that. I am told, however, that it is the correct thing to speak on the Address-in-reply, and my electors might be cross if I did not avail myself of the opportunity. I will, therefore, make a few, what the "West Australian" calls, staccato remarks. Together with other members, I welcome the Premier back amongst us. I always feel that when Sir James Mitchell is on deck, all is well with the State. I

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

#### PAPER PRESENTED—SWAN BY-ELECTION.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.33]: I desire to lay on the Table of the House papers connected with