

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

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 12th August, 1926.

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

QUESTION—MINING, MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

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

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

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

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

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

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

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

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

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

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

pleasurable because of the congratulations of the old members and their intimation that they are pleased to see us amongst them again. Mingled with the natural feelings that such congratulations engender, there is a distinct note of regret respecting former members who are no longer with us. I think it was your good self, Mr. President, who assured me, when I was first elected, that the longer I was in the Chamber the more I would become convinced that it was a non-party House. I am sorry to say that my experience so far has not borne out that assurance. I was one of the organisers for the Federal election campaign and took some part in the organising work for the last Legislative Council election. I found during the former campaign, that the party spirit and party division was most manifest, and I found it equally so during the Council elections. I cannot help believing, in spite of the assurance you gave to me, Mr. President, that if we are divided along party lines outside the House, we must, to a great extent, be divided similarly on the floor of the Chamber.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Unquestionably.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: If we have regard to the division lists on Bills last session, we find the party division was as clearly marked then as in the Assembly.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is not correct.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It is just a question of the point of view.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The party spirit was shown all along.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That is so.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. members interjecting are in a different position. They do attend caucus meetings, and are party representatives. I do not attend caucus meetings. That is the difference.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: No matter how desirable or capable an individual may be in these times, if he is standing against the interests of a stronger party, he must go to the wall. With respect to the Address-in-reply there seems to be a tendency to belittle the references contained in that Speech. I have heard it said that there is not much in the Address and that little new legislation is indicated. I differ from that contention. I do not take the fact that many new Bills are not mentioned as an indication of lack of material. The fact that a large number of Bills may be before us inclines some people to believe that important work is to be

done. We are inclined in these days to consider that the remedy for all social and industrial ills is to pass a Bill, or to secure an award in the Arbitration Court. I would much prefer to give intelligent attention to legislation already passed and I contend that is what we are not doing. The tendency is rather to heap Bill after Bill upon the statute book. My idea about legislation is that 50 per cent. is not honoured, and respecting the remaining 50 per cent. even lawyers do not understand it! Not long ago in the Federal arena we had the spectacle of eminent legal authorities giving opinions on important questions arising regarding deportation. Those legal gentlemen informed the Federal Government that they could do certain things, but when the matter was taken to the High Court it was found that the legal opinions obtained were all wrong, thus indicating that even the lawyers do not understand the legislation passed.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They differ, that is all.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: They were unanimous in saying that the Constitution Act Amendment Act was legally impossible.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That was the High Court. The lawyers differed regarding the advice tendered.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: That is so. I cannot subscribe to the assertion that the Governor's Speech was not important. In taking up that attitude I do so because never before in the history of responsible Government in Western Australia, have we been faced with such large financial propositions for the future. It is intimated in the Speech that millions of pounds are to be spent, and if we did nothing else but watch how that money was spent and gave consideration to how it was to be spent, then the present session might be regarded as more important than many past sessions. We are told that we can obtain this money cheaply. I hope we do not look upon the money in the same way as Mark Twain regarded the proposition when he purchased a million mousetraps—because they were cheap. He had to hawk them about for the rest of his life because he found that other people thought the mousetraps should be cheaper.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He should have imported a few more mice!

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I am not persuaded that it will be good for the State

to avail ourselves of the money, merely because it is cheap money.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Would you not like to have some yourself at 1 per cent.?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It will be no good to us unless the money is spent judiciously. I understand that the money can be obtained at 1 per cent. and that the interest rises to 2½ per cent. and ultimately to the ordinary rate. My contention is that when the time arrives for the repayment of the principal, at which time it will be carrying the ordinary rate of interest, if we have not developed the country along the best possible lines, it will be seen then that it would have been better had we never availed ourselves of that money.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Seeing that the expenditure of these millions is mooted, I regard the Governor's Speech as one of the most important that has been presented to any Parliament of this State. Certainly the biggest financial considerations are contained in it. I listened with interest to Mr. Gray's speech and thought he was rather inconsistent. He said he believed in the abolition of the Upper House; he objected to the franchise for this House and then almost immediately told us that he was awfully pleased to be back.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He looks it, too.

Hon. J. R. Brown: When in Rome you must do as Rome does.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: If I was of opinion that the Upper House should be abolished, I would certainly be consistent to the extent of not taking a seat in it. Mr. Gray might find it difficult to get some people to believe him. I believe him, but thousands would not when he says he wishes to see the Upper House abolished. The hon. member appears to be highly contented and comfortable in his seat, and I am sure he is not sincere in his contention that this House should be abolished. In almost the next breath the hon. member said this House was a wonderful power for good. If it is a wonderful power for good, why abolish it? Those two statements were in absolute conflict.

Hon. J. Cornell: I thought he said that it could be a wonderful power for good.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: There is a Minister in another place who seems to be in a terrible state of anxiety about this House and its franchise. Quite recently he said

that the country had thought fit to send him to Parliament, and that he had been appointed to one of the most important political positions in the Parliament of the State. "At the same time," he added, "I am denied a vote for the Upper House."

Hon. E. H. Harris: We know it is his own fault; he is qualified two or three times over.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I believe that gentleman, before he entered Parliament, had a job as industrial advocate, carrying a very tasty salary. He has been in Parliament for six years drawing another decent salary, and particularly during the last couple of years, he has enjoyed a top-notch salary. This worthy Minister tells us he has a terrible set on capitalism. If what he states is correct, that he has not a vote for the Upper House, he must be one of those miser capitalists who is socking his wealth away, not putting it into houses or doing something that would make work for his less fortunate fellow beings; and so he is doing what a genuine capitalist would never do. If a man, pretending to take a leading part and occupying a high position in the political life of the State, has not a vote for the Upper House—well, he ought to have one. When a man occupies a responsible public position and has no stake in the country, we have a very slippery hold on him. For my part, I would kick him out.

Hon. J. R. Brown: A lot will go before he does.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I cannot believe that some members are so anxious to see this House abolished. There is a good deal of the tongue-in-the-cheek about their expressions. I know the people who particularly desire the abolition of this House; they are not members of Parliament, but are the people in and behind the Trades Hall.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The rank and file.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It is said that Parliament can never rise above the level of the people who elect its members, and if the industrialists and the rank and file of the Trades Hall consider that this House should be abolished, the members representing them in another place have to wear a smiling face and pretend to go about giving effect to their wishes. Ministers in another place have often said under their breath, "Thank God we have an Upper House." They know the fallacy of the cry

for the abolition of this Chamber, and they know the chaos that would result if it were abolished.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Queensland has managed without an Upper House.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: We require more experience of Queensland without an Upper House before we can judge. I listened with considerable interest to Mr. Ewing's speech. There is an old adage that coming events cast their shadows. It was true a long time ago, and it is equally true to-day. I congratulate Mr. Ewing upon his speech, which was the best I had heard from him, but any casual visitor to this House, listening to him, might have been pardoned for concluding that he was speaking, not on the Governor's Speech, but on Sir James Mitchell.

Hon. J. Ewing: Why shouldn't I?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: During this debate a member is entitled to talk about anything.

Hon. J. Ewing: And he is worth talking about.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I was about to say that. I give Sir James Mitchell all the credit due to him. He has been one of our statesmen. He was prominent in inaugurating the agricultural policy of this State. He had the courage of his convictions on the question of settling the outlying areas. He sent civil servants out there when practically everyone else thought he was making a mistake. The result of his foresight was that not five per cent. of those civil servants proved a failure. But I cannot subscribe to the view that the satisfactory condition of our finances generally is due to Sir James or that he deserves so much credit as Mr. Ewing would give him.

Hon. V. Hamersley: To whom would you give the credit?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I give Sir James Mitchell a share of the credit. For the past nine years, however, we have enjoyed consistently good seasons and consistently good prices for our produce. It has rained when rain was needed; the sun has shone when sunshine was needed. We have had wonderful production and wonderful prices, and these considerations, more than Sir James Mitchell or any Government, are responsible for the financial position of the State. During the critical month of September of last year, the Premier remarked in the corridor that he was more

concerned about the weather than was any farmer in the State.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He had heard the song, "It ain't gonna rain no more."

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: With all due respect to Sir James Mitchell's foundation policy, the succession of favourable seasons has been mainly responsible for the improvement in our finances. We have heard something about taxation. Mr. Ewing said that unless we were careful how we taxed the primary industries, and unless we relieved them of some of the burden of taxation, before long our primary producers would be taxed out of existence. Let me revert to the 1924 session. Practically one of the first things the Labour Government did was to tackle the taxation of land on the unimproved value. At that time there was a tax of 1d. in the pound on the unimproved value with an exemption of £250. A Bill was introduced providing for an increase in the tax from 1d. to 2d. and absolutely wiping out the £250 exemption. Though that multiplied the previous tax by two, it was not so bad. Since then land valuers have been going through the country and have completed their work over a great portion of it, and in a great percentage of cases they have increased the basis of valuation by 100 to 150 per cent. Therefore, the Government receive not only double the amount of tax but, because of the increase of valuations, get a multiplication of it by about four.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Do you suggest that the valuations are wrong?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I will not say that, but I will say that the system whereby the valuations were arrived at is wrong. The evil, however, does not stop there. Some of the road boards have been compelled to accept the basis of values laid down by the taxation officials, and where this has been done, the road board rates also have automatically doubled themselves. The sop that allowed that Bill to pass through this House was that an amount equivalent to what was raised by the additional taxation would be handed back in the way of reduced railway freights. For the life of me, I cannot see the slightest difference in the bills for railway freight that I pay, and I am sorry to have to confess that there is a vast difference in the cheque I have to send to the Taxation Department.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The railways reduced whisky 1s. per ton and cigarettes 5d. per ton.

Hon. J. Cornell: The tax will be reviewed again this session.

Hon. H. Stewart: Anyhow, this Chamber is guiltless.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It was fixed up in conference.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Touching taxation generally, we hear protests in every direction about the imposition of taxes upon primary industries. We hear protests everywhere against the freight charged on goods transported over our railways. We hear protests against income tax; protests against everything. I think it was Mr. Nicholson who said that unless we tackled this problem in a sincere and practical way, it would not be very long before primary industry disappeared. I intend to show that under the existing social or political progress, or any other kind of progress, it would not matter a tinker's curse tomorrow to the primary industries if the whole of the freights they pay were entirely wiped off the slate and their goods transported for nothing. They would not be the slightest bit better off if the land tax, every farthing of it, were taken off, it would not matter if every shilling of income tax was removed as well. They would be in the same position, if they had not to pay one farthing by way of direct taxation, as they are in at the present time. I defy anybody scientifically to contradict me. We will assume that the whole of these burdens were lifted from the primary industries and were placed upon the city. What would be the immediate result? Do you think they would stay there. Not a bit of it. The first indication that we would see of the transition stage would be in the banking institutions. The bank rate would be raised because of the increased taxation in the city. Then every insurance company in the city would raise its premiums in order to get square. That would necessitate the business people sending up the prices of commodities, whether manufactured locally or imported, to the extent of the tax that was levied upon them. Then it would come upon the bottom dog, the industrial wage earner. He would go to the Arbitration Court where he would get a corresponding wage rate. The banking rate would go up, the insurance premiums

would go up, the manufactures and the cost of the distribution of goods of all kinds would go up on the same ratio, and the farmer would pay the difference in the price of his fencing material, furniture, machinery and all the other things of his calling, and he would not be to the slightest extent in a different position from that which he occupies now.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then your contention is that nothing matters.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It does not matter.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then why worry?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Unless you can devise a system of taxation whereby the tax will stay where it is put, the primary industries will ever become poorer. A lot is said about how the farmers rob the country. I wish to goodness that were so. When I say that somebody must devise a tax that will stay where it is put, a tax that cannot be shifted, I wish to revert to a wonderful underground method of robbery that the present system allows to continue. If we go back into the history of this State, say, about 60 years, here in the heart of the city you could have bought the best ten acres of land for as many pounds or perhaps not as much, per acre. I ask any hon. member here to assess to-day the value of ten acres of land in the city. Then I will ask: Who has created the values? Did the owner of the land do so? The owner of the land in many cases had less to do with the creation of the value than the little newspaper boy who sells papers on one of the street corners. The value was created by the community, and that value, created by the community, should belong to the community.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You will have to join the Labour Party.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Yes, you are twisting.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I am not twisting. I am drawing attention to a system of economic robbery. Our system of justice to-day is that if a starving kid stole some bread in any part of the ten acres I have referred to, he would be immediately put into gaol. This is a big subject, and I intend to say no more about it now.

Hon. J. Cornell: The tax that it seems possible to escape is the bachelors' tax.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Some time ago an expression of opinion was asked from Professor Shann who, I believe, is the only

professor of economics in this State. He was asked to State whether a tax on the unimproved value of land could be passed on. Professor Shann's reply was to the effect that it could not be passed on, and there is not one political economist that has not unanimously agreed that it cannot be passed on.

Hon. J. Cornell: If he was as sound on that as he was on the question of the issue of paper money, his opinion is not worth much.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do I understand you to say that the land tax has been doubled?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Yes. What I say is that it does not matter what form of taxation is imposed. If there is no taxation on land, the man at the end of the gun is in the same position—he indirectly pays the lot.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The landowners in the city had their tax doubled at the same time as the others.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Yes, but the land tax in the city is nothing; it is infinitesimal compared with the unearned increment.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: I wish you had to pay mine.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: You pass it on. I am not going to say that this is good or bad; I am pointing out that the primary industries are in the same boat whether they be taxed directly or not. We must get down to scientific tin tacks and think solidly about it. Something has been said about satisfactory migration figures. I believe they are very satisfactory indeed, but I am sure we all regret that up to the present time we have not got the type of migrant that will fetch some capital with him.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You will get him if you pay proper wages.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I will have something to say about that directly. On this subject I read a letter in a newspaper the other day the effect of which was that all that it was necessary to do was to go to the Arbitration Court, get an award and, hey presto, everything in the garden would be lovely. I think that sometimes we are inclined to go a long way from home when we might do better work closer to home. At the present time the State does not indulge in propaganda work or in the distribution of literature in any of the Eastern States. In spite of that, however, we are beginning to advertise ourselves every day

in the Eastern States. Capital is coming here, particularly from South Australia, and all those who bring their thousands here, create a great deal of employment for other people. The poor men that we bring here do nothing of the kind. Seeing that the Eastern States, by the pressure of population are placing their citizens away out into the dry regions of the mallee, where some of them are starving, it occurred to me that we were showing a regrettable inattention to possible migrants within our own borders. Some time ago Sir James Mitchell, with his usual foresight, arranged excursion trains to go through the wheat belt and in that way indicate to the business community the great possibilities of our land. I would like to see the principle of advertising our wheat belt extend a bit farther from home. I do not know whether there are any complications on the Commonwealth line that would prevent the possibility of a suggestion I have to make taking practical shape. That suggestion is that we should have an excursion train run from the Eastern States to our wheat areas, when everything is ripe for inspection. People here should see the possibility of inducing men with capital to visit the State and they would excel themselves in the way of entertaining the visitors. The trip of inspection could be made at the time when the Royal Agricultural Show was in progress. I know of no more practical suggestion, the effect of which would be to draw the attention of the Eastern States to the great possibilities of this country.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What would you have to show them on the Nullabor Plains?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: We would not invite them to inspect the Nullabor Plains; our desire would be to show them our wheat belt. Let me refer to the subject of arbitration to which Mr. Gray alluded just now. The Arbitration Court is something like the story from the Arabian Nights treasure house. All you have to do is to put in your application for an award and then take your pick. If an award of the court is given now, every thing in the garden is lovely.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Who said that?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: You said so. If the rural workers were brought under the operation of an award of the court whereby the farmers had to pay higher wages, the unemployed problem would be solved. That is the hon. member's contention.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It would intensify the unemployed problem.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Of course it would. Let us follow this reasoning a little further. I will try to trace one of the sequences of arbitration awards and I will take the Wyndham Meat Works. We have an Arbitration Court award there in all its nakedness. I believe that when a man signs a contract to be employed for a certain time at Wyndham, there is almost a provision as to the amount he is to receive while he is signing his name. All these pettifoggish little considerations are arranged for. If a man went to Wyndham forgetting his py-jamas and had to come back for them he would be allowed his travelling expenses. Let me draw attention to the following extract from the Federal "Hansard." I do not know whether the statement is true, but I know it was made by a senator, that it has not been denied, and that were it not true it would have been denied. Here is the excerpt.

Some time ago meat works were established at Wyndham, in the north-west of Western Australia. Theoretically it appeared a good proposition to assist small cattle-breeders, who had difficulty in finding a market for their stock; but on March 28, 1925, the Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, who administers the department controlling the meat works, said that during the preceding year 107,000 head of cattle had been treated, for which £450,000 had been paid, and that during the same period £577,000 had been paid in salaries and wages. In other words, the Government paid £4 8s. 6d. a head for the cattle, and paid those who handled them £5 13s. 9d. a head for skinning and dressing them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is quite right.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: The report continues—

Those figures, which do not include shipping and other charges that had to be incurred in order to place the meat on the London market, indicate the extent to which development is being retarded in this glorious country, with its vast open spaces. Similar figures could be produced in connection with many other primary industries in Australia.

Now let us follow the sequences of my friend's reasoning. If it costs more to skin a beast than the producer gets for growing that beast, how unsound is the position!

Hon. E. H. Gray: The farming industry has to go a long way yet before that position will be reached.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Unfortunately the industry is very near it now. However, that is the position set up by the excessive costs resulting from an Arbitration Court award. So the squatter who may be producing cattle or sheep cannot show a profit, and

in consequence does not provide himself with material to the extent he would if his position were more satisfactory. He requires windmills, wells, transport, practically everything that every other primary producer requires; yet because of the excessive charges on his production, he is compelled to curtail his activities, with the result that he employs less labour than he would otherwise do. Let us follow my friend's reasoning a little further. Lately we were told that the Federal authorities had wiped off approximately £800,000 on account of soldier settlement. I want to know why that had to be done; it was because the soldier settlers could not pay wages. Yet my friend would have them compelled to pay under an arbitration award that, in his opinion, would create an industrial paradise. Take our own group settlement: they are hard up against the financial wall, and if an Arbitration Court award were inflicted upon them tomorrow, they would have to pull out.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Group settlers do not employ labour.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: That is an extraordinary statement, for everybody doing anything at all has to employ labour. Then our conditional purchase settlers with liabilities to the Agricultural Bank are hard up against it and cannot get any further. If an Arbitration Court award were imposed upon them, the possibility is they would walk off their holdings. So if that is the plan my friend has for creating an industrial paradise, I disagree with him.

Hon. E. H. Gray: If you turn up "Hansard" you will find I said nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It is not what is in "Hansard," but what is in your head.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There is nothing in that.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I am pleased to see that considerable progress in railway construction has been made and a number of further railways promised, including the Kalgarin-Kondinin railway. That is a wonderful district, and it has a wonderful people. They have waited years for this line.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How long have they waited for it?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Some people in an adjacent district have been there for 20 years, 30 miles from a railway. It has been said that because of the evolution of motor traction there

is not much necessity to-day to build railways to within 12½ miles of settlement. At the Kondinin end of the proposed line we have had a valuable experience. People out 30 miles from Kondinin, with no railway, could not get their wheat in. Consequently they floated a motor company amongst themselves and carted their wheat per motor lorry at a cost of 1s. per ton mile. There was good back loading all the time, and the motor lorries did other work in addition, notwithstanding which within a year the company failed and became bankrupt. I contend that despite skilled mechanics such as that company employed, a motor company formed expressly for a given purpose, such as the transport of wheat, cannot hope to succeed. So we must not give much credence to the statement that in view of motor traction it is no longer necessary to bring the railways to within 12½ miles of the settler. After all, it is not the question of getting the wheat to market, but of the cost of getting it there. No settler should be more than 14 or 15 miles from a railway. We were all pleased to see that the Brookton-Dale railway was to be constructed under the Imperial Migration Scheme. It is announced in the Press that that line was to be the first so constructed. However, the Denmark-Pemberton line has now been given priority. I sincerely hope that as soon as that line is finished the gang will be put on to the Brookton-Dale railway. That railway is of more than parochial importance when we consider the long-promised Brookton-Armadale line. The whole of the wheat of the Kalgarin area has to loop the loop twice. First there is a loop of 40 miles round Narrogin until Brookton is reached, and then another loop of 40 odd miles. So this meandering route is 100 miles longer than it would be if it went direct. Lately we have learnt that some 22,000 powerful tractors have been imported into Russia for the purpose of wheat production. Previously Russia planted her wheat by out-of-date methods and thrashed it in mediæval fashion. Incidentally, German organisation is creeping into Russia with all that new machinery. Given German organisation, adequate machinery, a vast people and a vast territory, Russia, it is easy to see, will render the future of wheat at least uncertain. It is all a question of efficiency, and we cannot afford to have our wheat trans-

ported an unnecessary 100 miles. I understand there is some little division as to the route the Brookton-Dale railway should take, but I hope the contending parties will arrive at some compromise, after which no doubt the Government will construct the line. I do not subscribe to the idea that the Minister for Health is the best we have ever had. He has put up the best results, but not because he is the best Minister for Health. I believe we have had others just as good as he. The point is that the entertainment tax has been devoted to hospitals.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What do you think of the incidence of that tax?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: It is all right. Because of that increased amount at his disposal, the Minister has been able to do more than his predecessor. The Government have allowed him good latitude in point of money, and in consequence he has done good work. Our hospitals are very necessary, but principally they are dealing with effects; they are not getting down to causes. I saw in the Press lately a statement regarding the Minister for Health in New South Wales, and the ravages of cancer in that State. If members will look at the Commonwealth Year Book they will see from the figures what the position is. We know that medical and surgical science has gradually overcome practically every form of disease, but the Commonwealth Year Book discloses the information that the inroads of cancer are such that there is a large increase in the number of deaths per thousand as compared with other diseases. At the meeting in New South Wales, where propaganda was inaugurated for the raising of funds for cancer research, it was stated that if the present growth of cancer continued, in respect of the ratio of deaths per thousand of the population, in 20 years' time, I think it was, cancer would claim as its victims one out of every five persons who die. That is an appalling position. I suppose these people knew what they were talking about. If it is the case, the question of public health in this State becomes far more important than we have realised. If the people of New South Wales have seen fit to raise funds to fight this scourge, the people of this State should be animated by the same purpose. What is applicable in the one case is applicable in the other. Although the Minister for Health has done excellent work, and could hardly do more than he has done without the

public being behind him, it would be well that he should make an endeavour to follow the lead given by New South Wales, and it behoves the people of the State to support him. I was particularly interested in Mr. Ewing's remarks concerning the generation of electric power at Collie. That is a work which is long overdue. I remember reading a statement long years ago by Mr. Edison. He said he could not believe that we could be so out of date, almost mediæval, as to mine coal, transport it thousands of miles over oceans and railways, and dump it down in some place where we generate electricity, when we have the simple expedient of setting up electrical power at the pit's mouth and transporting that power over wires at very little added cost to the community. The truth of that statement is borne out to-day. We talk about abolishing unemployment and other industrial difficulties, but we should first get down to the basic principle of efficient production of electricity, and devise a scheme for transporting that electricity at a cheap rate. This is a matter of national importance. I commend the Collie people for bringing forward the scheme, and I am pleased to know that it may shortly be carried into practical effect. I regret there is not a word in the Speech concerning the Albany Harbour. I do not know why it was omitted. There is no finer harbour in the world, and geographically it is well situated. I was amazed to read the statement in the Press that was made by the Premier to the effect that the people of Albany were whiners, and that they were the chief and biggest whiners in the State. No matter how they might whine they have cause to whine still more. The port has been sadly neglected, and I believe it will continue to be neglected, because no provision has been made in this year's programme of works for attention to be bestowed upon it. I hope the Government will bear it in mind as well as the production of the vast district that lies behind it, and that we shall be able to get some amount put upon the next Estimates. I am not sure whether I believe in preference to unionists, but I do think that if there is a union that is fighting for a man's interests, whether it is a farmers' union, a business union, or an industrial union, and it is instrumental in obtaining benefits for those who are associated in that walk of life, a man is morally bound to join it.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Quite right.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I do not, however, believe in Government interference with the application of the methods. I know that Trades Hall stands for the betterment of the worker, although we may disagree with its principles. I believe in a farmers' union, and in a business men's union. My contention is that these unions should be governed entirely by the persons who belong to them, and should never enter into the sphere of Parliament, or be interfered with by Governments or anyone else. As things are to-day, it has been laid down by the Government, or they have supported the principle, that every man employed on Government works involving the expenditure of State money, shall be compelled to join a union. What would our Labour friends say if to-morrow the United Party came into power, and said that people could not get a job in which public money was involved unless they politically and industrially subscribed to their union?

Hon. J. Cornell: There would be a revolution.

Hon. J. R. Brown: They would join the union.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: When we signed on to legislate for this State we signed a declaration that we would legislate as far as possible equitably all round.

Hon. J. R. Brown: And we are doing it.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: If the Government are allowed to encroach upon that declaration, and insist upon this principle in connection with the expenditure of State money, they will be prostituting their true functions. No government should allow a principle of that sort to creep into its administration. The scales of justice should be held evenly balanced, and as fairly as possible. I protest strongly against this system. It is an insidious business which should never have been tolerated. No government that gives support to this kind of thing can, by any stretch of imagination, be held as coming within the meaning of the word democracy. The Minister for Works is responsible for the innovation concerning State insurance. I admire his humanitarian methods as we all must do. I lived in the mining world and I know the game. I know what the poor wretches engaged in the industry are up against. I do not need to be told that by anyone. A great mistake has in the past been made by the mineowners and the

workers. Not long ago the principal mines in Kalgoorlie were turning out a ton of gold per month. They were fabulously wealthy. It is easy to see that the horse is out of the stable when he has got out, but we do not think so much about preventing him from getting out. At the time I speak of, if these people had put by a proportion of their earnings to provide for a rainy day, not only with regard to miners' phthisis but with regard to the duration of the industry, and had distributed some of the rich ore over the low grade stuff, there is no doubt the mines would have had a long life still before them. The industry would not have blown out as it has done.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It was all blown up in champagne.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: The miners who are suffering most from disease were those who, in the early days, were making the highest money. To-day the poor wretches are down and out. They rushed back into the smoke, and filth and the dirt to make a little more money. I do not know what they did with it. If they had had the foresight to take out insurance policies for a rainy day, they would have been much better off. I foresee a danger in an innovation of this kind. I see no difference between workers in mines who are rendered physically unfit for further work by disease and other workers who are also rendered unfit for work as a result of occupational diseases of another kind.

Hon. J. Cornell: Compensation is only paid by reason of a man having been in a certain class of work.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: If a man has been in any ordinary employment he will have the same moral right to consideration as the man who has worked in a mine. Both should have insured their lives in times of prosperity. Once the precedent is established every man with every other disease, and in danger of his life, has the same moral claims for support. We do not know, therefore, where this will end. I admire the intention of the Minister, but I see grave dangers ahead of him. With other members, I congratulate you, Mr. President, on attaining your high office. I hope you will live long to adorn it and I am sure you are eminently fitted for the position.

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

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 12th August, 1926.

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

QUESTION—WHITBY FALLS HOSPITAL.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Cunningham): In view of the action of the board of visitors of the Hospital for the Insane in (a) directing the attention of the Minister that accommodation at the Whitby Falls Mental Hospital was not being sufficiently utilised; and (b) later interviewing the Minister on the subject and urging that more use should be made of this hospital, has action, giving effect to the recommendation of the board of visitors in respect to the added use of the Whitby Falls Mental Hospital, been taken? If not, will consideration be given?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM replied: The management of the Lunacy Department is in accord with the board of visitors in this matter, and as many patients as possible who, in the opinion of the hospital authorities, are fit and willing to go, are being sent to Whitby.

QUESTION—ROAD CONSTRUCTION, FEDERAL AID.

Mr. ANGELO (for Mr. Stubbs) asked the Minister for Works: In view of the announcement that the Federal Aid Roads Bill had passed through the Federal Parliament, and in view of the importance to this State of the early construction of roads to absorb the unemployed, especially during the winter months, is it the intention of the Government to bring in the necessary legislation to ratify the agreement with the Commonwealth Government before the completion of the Address-in-reply debate?