

these days will our position not be correspondingly improved by virtue of the increased per capita payments? We are getting some £560,000 in per capita payments, and that will be added to materially if in the course of the next few years we can increase our population by 40,000 per annum. If we cannot do that, we are going to do very little for Western Australia. As we develop our industries, we shall have our population increasing by at least 40,000 per annum.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I hope you are right.

Hon. J. EWING: I am sure I am right. This State is going to make the greatest development of all the States.

Hon. V. Hamersley: When you say 40,000, are you referring to sheep or to people?

Hon. J. EWING: To people, of course. If we get an increase of 40,000 per annum over a period of 10 years we shall have an increase in the per capita payments of well over half a million, which means that we shall then be getting £1,000,000 per annum instead of the present half a million. The Chief Secretary is laughing, perhaps at my suggestion of an increase of 40,000 people per annum; but let him just consider the room there is for development in his own district. I am not indulging in any exaggeration.

Hon. H. Seddon: Our population has not increased by 40,000 since 1900.

Hon. J. EWING: Well, let us see about increasing it by 40,000 each year. It will be a strange thing to me if we do not achieve that increase within the next few years.

Hon. H. Seddon: I think you are in the clouds.

Hon. J. EWING: No, I am not. I cannot believe that this country is going to stagnate for the next 10 years. Every person coming into the State means an increase in the per capita payments to us. I say we are bound to get our population in course of time, and that whatever our increase may be it is certain to be a big increase. Sir William Lathlain said we did not do ourselves justice.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: I said nothing of the sort. I said we blamed Federation for the whole of our evils, and that we said nothing about the evils we had created ourselves.

Hon. J. EWING: I do not think we have created many. At all events, these proposals are going to hurt us materially.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Especially if the present Government remain in office.

Hon. J. EWING: This is a non-party question. Whatever Government may be in office, if they do not do their duty, the result will be as I have stated. Dr. Earle Page said this question had no bearing upon unification. However, I say that everything whittled away from the State leads towards unification. As we are weakened by the inroads of the Commonwealth, we shall suffer as a State, and so in a short time we shall become a mere vassal of the Commonwealth. I support the vigorous national policy that the Federal Government have carried out, but I ask them now to stav their hand and not interfere with the great Australian States. Let us become a united and prosperous people, and not lose our sovereign rights as States.

On motion by Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READINGS.

1, Federal Aid Roads Agreement.

2, Agricultural Bank Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [6.10]: Let me at the outset express my appreciation of the kindly words that have fallen from all the previous speakers and from others within the precincts of the House. It is only natural that one entering an august body such as this for the first time, should feel a little strange. I can assure members that the welcome they have extended to me and to the other new members has tended to remove one's embarrassment and set up in its place a sense of easiness. Then, Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your elevation to the President's Chair. As one who has known you in other walks of life for a good many years, I feel that the office is one you have justly earned, and one in the possession of which you are but reaping a reward for services rendered to the House and to the State over a long period of years, services rendered disinter-

estedly and for the betterment of all classes and sections of the people. In this relation I wish to extend to you a message I received in a letter this afternoon from the executive and members in Sydney of the Australasian Provincial Press Association, conveying the congratulations of 900 newspaper friends in the Commonwealth and in New Zealand. Previous speakers have dealt exhaustively with the question of finance, and it would hardly become me as a new member to attempt to cover any of the ground they have gone over. Consequently I propose to direct attention to other more or less important things in respect of which, perhaps, I have a little greater knowledge. I was pleased to read in the Speech the paragraph relating to migration. I believe the future of the State is bound up in the efforts being made or about to be made to populate the State as quickly as possible. It was suggested by, I think, Mr. Potter, that I should deal with the subject of group settlement. It is but fair that as a preliminary I should congratulate the Minister for Lands upon his recent speech on this subject. It was perhaps the best speech the Minister has made on group settlement, and it covered almost the whole of the ramifications of the scheme.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Before tea I was referring to the able speech delivered by the Minister for Lands on group settlement. I read it most carefully, because I believed that the time was opportune when some fairly extensive statement should be made upon the subject. I often wonder how many people in the State fully visualise what the scheme means. I have also wondered how many grasp the fact that group settlement is not only a scheme designed to people the State, but that it is having the effect of bringing to our shores many persons who are mostly city bred, and have spent practically all their time in the great cities of the Old Country but are now being ruralised and turned into producers on the soil. Many of these persons have not the haziest idea of agriculture. I do not know what was in the minds of those who first launched this scheme, but the problems created by the introduction of these people have been great. For many years I have lived in the South-West, and in that portion of the

State where there are now 50 groups. I have had an opportunity of coming closely into touch with many of these new settlers. Amongst them I have met men from all callings in life. Some of them are middle-aged, and are endeavouring for the first time to take up this new industry. The radius from which they are drawn is very extensive. I have met amongst them a master of modern languages, a master of arts of Edinburgh, an ex-manager of a Bradford textile mill, ex-bank managers, bank clerks, London policemen, firemen, tram conductors, and in one case a man who had been a dress designer. Another man prided himself on having for many years earned his living as a pugilist. These are the types of men who are in the groups. I do not suggest that all these men are unsuitable for the work. Many of them have grit and determination. In the aftermath of the war they have been squeezed out of employment, or suffered adversity. Because they have had a little pluck and determination they have come to Australia to go on the land. Not many people realise that in the 2,246 new farms established under the scheme there is almost an equal number of problems, most of which are minor but some very big. It is impossible to create farms on the principle of mass production in the motoring industry. Each vehicle in that industry is a replica of its predecessor, and all the cars are carefully designed and produced by machinery, which cannot err to the thousandth part of an inch. In group settlement I am afraid that there has been a tendency on the part of those in control, perhaps unconsciously, to endeavour to apply the principle of mass production to the settlers. While this is a very desirable thing in respect of motor cars, in the matter of group settlement, where flesh and blood and the personal equation enter very largely, the proposition is entirely different. Mr. Potter referred to the psychology of the groups. That is a good term, and expresses what I have been endeavouring to convey, namely, that this side of the personal equation must be taken into consideration if the scheme is to prove a success. Those who are inclined to criticise group settlement hardly realise how great are the problems. On scores of occasions men have expressed a desire that I should take them over the groups for a couple of days. Most people think the groups are so many farms seat-

tered over a small portion of the South-West. As a fact the groups are scattered over an area half the size of Victoria. Because of this they embrace different classes of country and require different management. Members may gather an idea of the extensiveness of the area comprised by the scheme from the fact that if they started to go round the groups on the 1st January, and devoted each of the 365 days until December 31st to interviewing six settlers on their holdings, on the last day of the year there would still be some they had not seen.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is, assuming they were all accessible?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. There would still be 30 or 40 settlers to be seen. This statement should create a group atmosphere in the Chamber, and enable members to visualise the magnitude of the undertaking. Despite the many mistakes and disabilities that were to be expected, group settlement has made steady progress. There have been no precedents on which the work could be founded, and by which the pitfalls that were encountered could have been avoided. I believe with all my heart that group settlement will succeed. The length of time that will elapse before their effectiveness can be seen in its fullest sense will depend upon the policy that is followed in the future. Group settlement has always appeared to me as being made up of three phases. The first phase is that of clearing, or the preparatory stage; the second is that of cropping and production; and the third is the marketing stage. The first stage, with respect to most of the groups, is practically completed. The second, and most important, stage is now being entered upon. It demands the very greatest care and attention because production is going to be the key to the whole position.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And the personal equation will come into it more than anything else.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I quite agree. The marketing stage, we need not worry about very much just now because we shall be fully occupied in overtaking our own requirements. That in itself will occupy several years. Therefore I hope the Government will do what is necessary to concentrate on the question of production along right lines. In the past, group settlement has been controlled by an advisory board headed, in the first place, by Sir James Mitchell and later by Mr. Angwin. I was pleased to hear Mr. Glasheen refer to Sir James Mitchell as a

statesman and I fully concur. In regard to group settlement I place Mr. Angwin in the same category. Both those gentlemen have been and are still imbued with the ambition to make land settlement a distinct success, and in their efforts have accomplished wonderful work. I wish it to be clearly understood that any criticism I may have to offer regarding the Advisory Board is offered merely as my own opinion. I have the greatest regard for the gentlemen comprising that board. Each is an expert in his own line. With the Minister, they have fashioned the machinery that has been created to carry on group settlements. I am not, however, of the opinion held by the Minister for Lands that in the stage upon which we are now entering the Advisory Board as a board is the best method we can have to control the groups. I know that the Minister is very proud of the Advisory Board and that he will not listen to a word against it. I honour him for that. One of my chief objections to the board is that it is out of touch with the group settler. It is quite impossible for the members of it who reside in Perth and who devote only a small portion of their time to group work, to be thoroughly conversant with what is being done. Each of these officers is connected with other phases of departmental work and it cannot be expected of them in the brief time that they are able to give to the work of the groups, that they can be familiar with everything that is taking place. They may take the problems that arise and arrive at a decision as to the best means of overcoming them, but they are so far away that they are unable to see for themselves the actual effect of their decisions. I believe that the whole of the energies of the Group Settlement Department from now on must be concentrated in assisting the new settlers to produce crops. That is what the land was taken up for. A man on a block must become a journeyman farmer. His term of apprenticeship should be as brief as possible and he should receive tuition in the higher branches so that he may be able to put that knowledge into effect and later receive some reward for what he has done. In a great many cases group settlers have cleared sufficient land to enable them to make a good start. It should be the department's duty to see that every acre cleared is placed under cultivation. I am sorry to say that has not been done. I have had not one, but many complaints from settlers that their land

which has been cleared for 12 or 18 months and even two years, remains unploughed. A complaint of that description was made to me quite recently. It is wrong and it is stultifying the idea of group settlement if you are to allow the land to be cleared and then permit it to remain unploughed and find the scrub growing up again. The Government should see that every acre cleared is put under crop of some description and a return obtained from it. There are many group settlers who are anxious to receive tuition. Only a fortnight ago a man from one of the groups in the Margaret River area, an estimable man who had taken up land with two sons and who came to this State with a little money, told me that he had worked hard and earnestly and had made quite a little show place of his block. He said—to use his own words—“I feel that we are reaching a dead-end. I did not know very much about agriculture when I came here, but I have endeavoured to learn; I feel I am a little bit too old but I want the boys to learn. I have taught the boys all I can teach them and I feel that someone should come along and give us some guidance as to how we are going to reap a reward from our labours of the past.” Up to date the department have done very little in that direction. They have had a system of group foremen, senior foremen, and field supervisors. The group foremen generally are a very good type, but not always practical farmers. They are very good men at clearing perhaps, with a small knowledge of mixed farming, but hardly sufficient to be able to give a settler the information he should have. The senior foremen are mostly on the road conferring with the foremen on the groups. The field supervisors have to cover big areas like Manjimup, Northcliffe, Pemberton and Busselton, Margaret River, and Augusta. Each has one of the three group districts and his time is largely taken up with office work and occasionally racing out perhaps to settle a dispute or a problem at a particular group. It will be seen that because of the lack of officers who can give the settlers the tuition that they want, there has been some languishing. I have urged the appointment of local advisory boards, my idea being that they should not be too unwieldy. I suggest that three men who had made good from scratch on land in the South-West should constitute a local committee. I would have men who are familiar with local conditions

and who have made a success of their own farms, men who can be depended upon to continually move amongst the group settlers, and give such advice as will enable them to become successful. The Minister has not been too sympathetic towards the idea of advisory committees, but I am glad to think that although he does not agree with my contention that local committees would be of great advantage to him and would lessen his work and help the scheme along considerably, he has quite recently, I believe, made a rearrangement, modelled somewhat on the lines that I have suggested. Three controllers to be appointed, one for the Peel Estate, one for the Margaret River-Augusta and Busselton districts and the other for the Manjimup-Pemberton area. I understand it is the Minister's idea to appoint another man under each of these controllers to get out amongst the settlers and render assistance on the lines that I have been urging in the past. That is getting a long way on the track that I have advocated, and I am hopeful that the Minister will yet see that the suggestion regarding local assistance will prove of great advantage to him. I hope that in selecting men to be sent out amongst the group settlers, he will be careful to choose men with an unquestioned record of agricultural work. There are too many men wandering around the country who profess to be successful agriculturists when they have been little more than what I may describe as successful failures.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: When they have been failures, they have been made foremen.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The proposal to appoint a controller in each area must make for the advancement of the scheme. It is decentralisation, and it is following the lines that the Agricultural Bank trustees have found it wise to adopt. At one time the Agricultural Bank had the whole of its records and did the whole of its business in the metropolis, but now there are branches in the country districts where records are kept and much of the local work is being done. I do not wish to belittle the efforts of the advisory committee in any respect, but the more local control and local administration that can be adopted for group settlement, the better will be the chance of success and the quicker will success be achieved. It was suggested that I might have something to say on the question of the limitation of advances. I do not wish to take up the time of the House

with a survey of the administrative acts of the department or a recital of the many ideas that have been advanced for the working of group settlements. I believe the Government's action, which made necessary the issue of that now famous or infamous circular No. 88—limitation of advances—was one of the most serious, if not the most serious, of the blunders perpetrated since the inception of the group scheme. Had the advisers of the Minister possessed the perspective and vision that could reasonably be expected of them, group settlers would never have been launched on unlimited contract work. I fully realise the disadvantages attending the sustenance system. I favour, and have always favoured, limited contract work in connection with group settlement, but when the department instituted unlimited contracts, it did not need anyone very well versed in group settlement to know that sooner or later the whole scheme would break down. For two or three years the group settlers had been working on £3 per week sustenance, and what was more natural than that, when unlimited contract work was available, they should take every opportunity to knock up as big a cheque as possible. I know men who earned £30, £40 and £50 per month clearing under contract on their own blocks, and I understand the Minister for Lands has stated that some men earned as much as £70. To do that they had necessarily to neglect their cropping and all the other things most urgent and important towards putting to profitable use the land already cleared. Further, as should have been patent to everyone, including the departmental officials, the blocks could not carry the capitalisation that was being forced upon them. A man earning £40 a month on contract would, in 12 months, knock up £480, which would be extra capitalisation on his block, and it did not require much reckoning to show that very soon the block would be over capitalised to such an extent that it would be impossible for him to carry on. Ultimately the Minister and the advisory committee saw the mistake they had made and sought to recede from the position by issuing that circular. It was for the benefit of the settler and the department, too, that the circular was issued, but a lot of damage had been done. The group settler was fairly content under sustenance, but he was a very discontented man when the opportunity for unlimited

contract work was withdrawn. I mentioned the avocations of group settlers to show the wide range of crafts and trades from which some of these men came, and also to show that they did not realise what they were taking on. They had entered a new walk of life, and before they could fully realise the benefits that later on would accrue from their work, they were pushed into unlimited contract work, with the result that a great many of them became unsettled and many troubles were heaped upon the department. The damage was done by the introduction of unlimited contract work. After the circular was issued, that in itself did not make the position much better at the time, though I believe ultimately it will be better. Circular No. 88 laid down that a man with two cows could have advanced to him £10 10s. per month. Those with cows in excess of two would suffer a reduction of 30s. per cow until the number reached 15. The circular also laid down that a settler should suffer a reduction by reason of cows that had died. Why that was done, I do not know, because it is obvious that dead cows could not contribute anything to a settler's upkeep. It was bad enough for a settler to be saddled with the capital cost, but to be further mulcted to the extent of 30s. for a dead cow was enough to make any settler stand up.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And to make the poor old cow come to life again.

Hon. W. J. MANN: In the circular no provision was made for the sons of settlers. I understand the Minister recently stated that these were one-man farms and that sons did not enter into the question, but I make bold to say that the very essence of group settlement was to bring young people on to the land and keep them there. The lack of provision for settlers' sons was a grave omission. The department, having issued that circular, again admitted that it had been ill-thought out, because they have since issued another circular to cover it and have increased the amount of advance to £20 10s. They have agreed to delete dead cows to the number of five, and have made small provision for settlers' sons. They have agreed to advance an amount of £3 per month for each son who spends the whole of his working time upon the holding, provided he is of the age of 16 years or over. The amount set down as the earnings of a cow—this includes calves, and pigs,

etc., that benefit from a man keeping a cow—is 30s., but that is too high. That point has been brought under the notice of the Minister by several deputations, and figures have been advanced in support of the contention. I have looked up a number of authorities, and none of them represents the amount as being much more than 20s. or 22s. 6d. as the average monthly earnings for the cow. The Minister would be well advised to reduce the amount from 30s. to 20s. I believe 20s. would be a fair thing and would be as much as the settlers could afford at the present time. A request has also been made that the earnings of the group settler from contract clearing should not be confined to the month, but should be spread over a period of three months if necessary. The Minister, I understand, has decreed that each month without exception shall stand by itself. It has been pointed out that a settler might be ill for the greater part of a month and so unable to earn anything; but that phase apparently does not weigh with the Minister. Consequently such a settler will have no opportunity to make up leeway. The least the Minister might do would be to let each case be dealt with on its merits. If it can be shown that a settler has been unable during one month to do the work necessary for his upkeep, he should be permitted to make up the difference in the succeeding month. The estimate of 30s. per cow is, I gather, based on revenue received from cows on the Peel Estate during a period of five months. Such a period is not long enough to afford a fair basis. No man engaged in dairying to any large extent would accept a basis of five months; he would require a basis of 12 months, including all the fat months and all the lean months. I feel certain that the amount of 30s. is too high, if there is any analogy with the returns from the cows furnished by the Government to some settlers in the Busselton district last year. A number of settlers on the Abba River in the flush period of last year, when feed was at its height, were told that they should take 10 cows. The land was new pasture, and its extent was 25 acres. The man who tells a settler that on 25 acres of new pasture, even in his second year, he can keep 10 cows and their calves all the year round, has a fine imagination. It has not been done by the old settlers, and is not likely to be done by group settlers. I have heard it stated that the settlers de-

murred to taking 10 cows, and were then informed that they could keep 20. However, they attempted to keep 10, and with what result? As soon as the flush of the feed had been eaten off and the hot weather came, there was no feed for the stock. The department were forced to collect about 200 head of milch cows from the group settlers and remove them to agistment elsewhere. I believe I am perfectly correct in saying that close to Busselton 130 head of milch cows are being hand fed by the department and milked at the same time. Further, I believe the returns from those cows are such that the loss to the department, over and above the earnings from the cows, amounts to about 7s. 6d. per cow per month. That has been going on since last January. If I am not right, I hope that the Minister, when replying to the debate, will give me the correct figures. The actual amount cannot be ascertained except through the department, to whom I have not yet applied for the information. If such are the results obtained by the department, what chance has the group settler? Whoever was responsible for the purchase of those cows—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Were they imported, or were they bought in the State?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I cannot say whence they came. I understand that cows for the group settlements are purchased by the Stock Branch, and after testing are handed over to the settlers. I entirely exonerate the group settlement officers from any blame in this connection; but seeing that the Stock Branch are represented on the Advisory Committee, there must be something wrong in that quarter. The group settler knows of these facts, and they are likely to have a disturbing effect on him. For the sake of the scheme and for the sake of the settler, I hope that that kind of thing will speedily be remedied. I understand that the Advisory Committee's reply on this question is that last year was an extremely dry year in the South-West. I concede that the year was dry, but it was not so dry as to prevent other settlers from keeping their stock and maintaining their milk returns at about the average. The main cause of the failure was that the settlers were asked to carry far more stock than it was possible for them to carry at that stage. I say this although I hope the average settler will be able to carry 20 and even 30 head of stock later. I am pleased to say there is another side of the picture.

Numerous settlers all over the South-West have established what just now I called show places. If it were possible, I would be delighted to take hon. members to see some of those little farms. I am sure members would be gratified with the result of the labours of settlers who have been here only four or five years. Some of them, possessing previous experience and plenty of energy, have successfully engaged in intense culture.

Hon. G. Potter: One of the most successful settlers is an ex-bus driver from London.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have no doubt that that is perfectly true. By the exercise of energy and by means of intense culture some settlers have been able to obtain good profits from their cows, and are now sending cream to the butter factories. Only a week ago the manager of the Busselton factory told me with a good deal of pleasure that he expected to be receiving 200 cans of cream per day very shortly, and that a good deal of it would come from the group settlements. I know that the Bunbury factory will benefit in the same way. Further, I understand that a good deal of milk and cream is coming into the metropolis from the Peel Estate. Evidence is to be found everywhere that with a little tuition such as I have described, the group settlers will succeed and the State will receive a rich reward. I know of one settler who almost ever since he has been on the group has been making £2 per week from poultry. Dozens of settlers are making £1 per week, and others are making respectable amounts, from pigs. Others, again, are finding vegetables a profitable side line. So that already there is a steady stream of products coming from the groups; and that stream is bound to increase largely. Another phase to which the department should give attention is that of providing group settlers with efficient working tools and gear. It was my privilege and pleasure to accompany the Minister for Lands on a trip through various groups last year. On that occasion the Minister was the recipient of numerous complaints regarding tools and gear. I admit that some of the complaints were frivolous and should never have been made; but there were solid grounds for complaints regarding the carts which were supplied to group settlers. Those carts were a disgrace to any firm and to any department. In the case of some of the

carts it was almost possible to insert a lead pencil between the tyre and the woodwork of the wheel. To the Minister's credit I should say that as soon as he had realised the position he said, 'At the first post office I get to I will send a wire to despatch no more of those carts to the South-West.' Mr. Angwin's promise was redeemed within half an hour of its being made. Complaints regarding the carts were made many times before, and why the position had not previously been rectified I do not know. The moment the Minister came on the scene and saw what was wrong, the trouble was remedied. Similarly, in connection with other troubles, if someone in authority could personally inquire into them, much heart-burning would be saved. Single mould-board ploughs from the State Implement Works have been furnished to group settlers and found quite unsuitable for breaking up the heavy land of the South-West. They may be serviceable enough ploughs to work land that has been cultivated time and again, but to use them on new and heavy land that may be full of roots, is merely to court disaster. The result of this has been that on many holdings these ploughs are to be found strewn about in a condition such as they should not be. Recently the Advisory Board realised there was something wrong and now disc ploughs are being provided to the various groups for work such as I have indicated. I was informed the other day that on one group there are four disc ploughs available for the 20 settlers there, while another couple of groups have five ploughs each. Disc ploughs should have been provided from the outset and thus a great waste of energy and much heart burning would have been avoided. No experienced man would have tackled such a job with the ploughs that were provided at the outset, for they would have realised at once that they were unsuitable for the work they were to be asked to do. Then again, settlers were supplied with harrows. Hon. members who know anything about that type of implement will realise how inefficient those supplied to the group settlers were when I say that, after proceeding for half a mile or so in one direction, the whole of the tynes were bent back at an angle of practically 45 degrees. In order to get some further use out of the harrows, the settlers hitched the horses on to the reverse side and thus bent the tynes back again

Hon. members can readily imagine what happened after that course had been followed two or three times. The harrows were of the diamond point type and should never have been supplied. Had the men concerned known their job, they would have supplied the group settlers with the stump jump, or semi-stump jump harrows, with chisel-pointed tynes. That is the type required for the work that has to be done in the group areas. If local advisory boards were established, such incidents in all probability would never have occurred. If such boards are provided in the future, troubles of this description will be obviated. I do not intend to deal with the financial aspect of the group settlement scheme to any extent, but according to figures supplied by the Minister for Lands, the group settlements have cost to date £3,400,000, in round figures. As against that, since the inception of the group settlement scheme, Western Australia has imported over £5,000,000 worth of bacon, ham, butter, cheese and tinned milk. That means that those articles alone have depleted the coffers of this State to the extent of that huge sum. If we include the importations of live stock, including horses, sheep and pigs, another £1,100,000 has to be added to that figure, giving a total of £6,100,000 worth of articles imported since the inception of the scheme. Ultimately the group settlements will provide all the articles represented in the importations I have referred to. When that day arrives, that immense amount of money will be retained in circulation within the State, instead of being sent to the Eastern States, in addition to the State having the benefit of the established farms within its borders. The Government should persevere with the scheme and enlarge it. I trust they will put a little more vim into it. It is understood that another group will be established in the South-West next month, and I trust that the Government, now that the financial position is fairly clear, will accelerate the group settlement work, not only in the South-West but in other parts of the State where opportunities are provided, and where the work can be profitably undertaken. I have no wish to see all group settlements established in the South-West. If it is possible to establish groups in the North-West, by all means let us have them established there. It is sincerely to be hoped that the Government will

be able to undertake that work. I trust they will persevere and so bring in the 75,000 migrants that Sir James Mitchell agreed to put on the land when he first embarked upon his big scheme. We would like to see Western Australia become not only the principal granary in the Southern Hemisphere, but the principal portion of the Commonwealth from which Australia's dairy products and fat lambs will come. I believe that objective is possible of achievement and ultimately the goal will be reached. While I pay a tribute to Sir James Mitchell, and also to the Premier, Mr. Collier, for the work they have done in procuring cheap money for this great work, I believe that the Imperial Government have not yet realised the extent to which we are helping them. During the past 7½ years the British Government have spent not less than £340,000,000 in doles to the unemployed. That is a fabulous sum to be spent in such a way, and I am only sorry that the expenditure of money by way of doles does not make for the building up of the nation. On the 1st March last, there were 1,107,000 people in Great Britain receiving the dole. During the concluding stages of the war, Great Britain was paying about £6,500,000 per day to prosecute the campaign. The Mother Country, with 1,107,000 people receiving the unemployment dole, could well afford to give Western Australia at least one day's war contribution now and again, in order to take off her hands some of the people she has to keep by means of that dole. Among those receiving the doles there must be many who would make admirable settlers and Great Britain could well afford to make a gift of the contribution I have suggested, to the State Government, if we took those people off her hands. I do not think we would be asking a great deal, because it is a simple question of transplanting Britishers from one part of the Empire, where they cannot make good, to another part where they have every opportunity for advancement. That is all I have to say regarding the group settlements, and I will conclude by repeating that I hope the Government will accelerate the work under that heading, so that we shall see not only 135 groups established, but two or three times that number in different parts of the State. I do not wish to detain the House much longer, but there are one or two matters of interest to the South-West Province

to which I desire to refer before resuming my seat. Amongst them there is the question of harbours. Hon. members have heard a lot during the course of the debate concerning the various harbours of the State. There is an intimation in the Governor's Speech that the entrance to the Fremantle harbour has been deepened to the extent of 36 feet and that the work in connection with the Geraldton harbour is progressing satisfactorily. In the interests of all parts of the State, and of decentralisation, it is necessary to give the hinterland to the various ports immediate attention. Consideration should also be given to the harbour requirements at Bunbury, Busselton, Flinder's Bay and Albany, as well as at other ports that have been mentioned. Recently it was suggested that we are likely to have a record wheat yield this season, and that within the next ten years the wheat production of the State will be enormous. For that reason, it is the duty of the Government to prepare for the handling of the great crops that are anticipated. For years past various Governments have been unable to make up their minds definitely upon a comprehensive scheme for the improvement of the Bunbury harbour. The present position at that port is causing the people concerned much anxiety. The capital expenditure upon the harbour is £448,000, of which £255,000 has been sunk in the breakwater. Despite that large expenditure, the facilities available, from a shipping point of view, are little better than they were 15 years ago. Work done in the past suggests a none too successful experiment. Last year 138 steamers, aggregating 554,639 tons gross register, use the port of Bunbury. They handled cargo to the extent of 386,129 tons, the value of the export portion being £1,915,431. The exports are mainly timber, wheat, and coal. Perishables, such as fruit and vegetables, are relatively small because no provision has yet been made at Bunbury for shipping such commodities on any large scale. At Bunbury there are 10 berths where vessels may load to a depth of from 16ft. to 27ft. 6in., but of those 10 berths six are practically useless because the big modern type of vessel demands a draught of corresponding depth. Only four of those berths can be termed good workable berths. Two of them have a depth of 27ft. 6in. at the end, but this is quite insufficient, as has been instanced lately. A Norwegian steamer called at Bunbury last year with the idea of filling up

her coal bunkers, but as she was drawing 29ft. she had to go on to Fremantle. Last year also another vessel called for 1,000 tons of coal, but as she was drawing 27ft. 8in. she also had to pass along to Fremantle. These are not isolated cases. There have been others and in consequence Bunbury has suffered a big loss in wages and shipping dues. In Bunbury there is a large number of men dependent on shipping for a livelihood. They are being deprived of work because the Government have not provided sufficient water for shipping to be carried on. Pending the decision of the Government to embark on a comprehensive scheme, there is urgent necessity for some temporary relief. Amongst the older people of Bunbury there is an idea that the opening of the old boat channel at the shore end of the breakwater would cause a scour that would overcome a lot of the perpetual silting trouble. Siltage is a very serious question for Bunbury. Dredging there is very expensive, and does not seem to be making any great progress, for as fast as the channel is dredged the silt comes in again, and so the work has to be repeated. I want to say that the money that has been expended on the Bunbury harbour was fully justified, although I cannot say that it has been judiciously expended. The interest charges on the expenditure on the harbour amount to £20,000 per annum. Still the revenue for the last three years has greatly exceeded that amount. For the year ended 30th June, 1924, the revenue was £33,800, while for the year ended 30th June, 1925, it was £37,600, and for the year ended 30th June, 1926, it was £35,800. That slight decrease on the figures of the previous year was owing to the fact that the port lost revenue through not being able to accommodate steamers such as I have alluded to, and that the shipment of wheat was below that of the previous year. In 1924 the harbour trust paid into Consolidated Revenue £21,350, in 1925 £22,000, and in 1926 £21,000. The establishment of secondary industries at Bunbury will, I am sure, follow the coming of the power scheme, and shipping also will be largely increased. About four miles out of Bunbury the superphosphate people have acquired a large area on which to erect their works. That in itself will bring an increased quantity of shipping, and altogether there is every reason for urging the Government to provide some increased facilities for the port. The port of Busselton is designed to serve a

very rich and rapidly growing district. A few years ago there was practically no shipping at Busselton, but in the year just closed 50 vessels were loaded there. Like Bunbury, Busselton has had to suffer for lack of depth of water. There is at Busselton no silting problem, the only trouble being that the port has never had a fair deal in the provision of harbour facilities. Nothing has been done there since 1911, and in that year operations were confined to a little dredging. The people of Busselton were promised by the Mitchell Government that additions would be made to the loading end of the jetty so as to enable larger vessels to use the port. Also it was promised that there would be increased facilities for shunting and for tying up the vessels. I am sorry to say those promises have not been fulfilled. Since then similar promises have been made by the present Government. I understand the Minister for Works said that he fully recognised the just claim of Busselton to increased facilities on its jetty. However, the old question of finance cropped up and the matter seems to have been shelved again. Because increased shipping facilities have not been provided at Busselton, the people there have had the depressing experience of seeing thousands of loads of timber pass through the railway yards from country 40 miles further south-west and be hauled elsewhere for shipment. That is not fair to the people endeavouring to build up that part of the State. Members have frequently heard Ministers talk glibly about each port being entitled to the trade of its hinterland. In respect of Busselton that practice has been honoured far more in the breach than in the observance. I have not been able to secure the returns relating to Busselton shipping, because they are included in the records of the Railway Department. However, some idea of these figures may be gleaned from the fact that the railway revenue from Busselton for the 12 months ended 31st June last was £71,502. Goods and merchandise handled totalled 88,386 tons of which 72,450 tons were despatched either by steamer or rail. They are not enormous figures, but they do show a steady growth at the port and serve to warrant Government action in providing additional facilities. Further, I find that of late about 45 special trains per month have been run over the Busselton-Margaret River and Busselton-Nannup lines in timber traffic. Those trains of course were in addition to ordinary sche-

dule trains. What is required for Busselton is that the berthing head should be lengthened to enable ships to be moored safely. It is not sufficiently long for the big steamers that wish to come into the port. Then the jetty should be widened to permit of extra sets of rails necessary to shunting operations. When that is done it is estimated that the removal of the thin crust of rock at the bed of the berthing basin would enable the dredge to give all the depth of water required for many years to come. There is in the Speech a reference to the heavy expenditure on drainage in the South-West. The present abnormal winter has severely tested this drainage work done there by the Mitchell Government and by the present Government, and in every respect has the work been found successful. In view of the depressing report we heard last night from Mr. Burvill regarding drainage in the Torbay area, it is refreshing to know that the drainage schemes in the Busselton district are proving wholly successful. During the recent heavy rains I made a special trip out to see how the drains were working. Between Busselton and Quindalup there must have been 4 feet of water going over the gates for a width of perhaps half a chain, and the drains were taking away millions of tons of water which otherwise would have been spread over the land now occupied by group settlers. I hope the coastal country between Pinjarrah and Waterloo will be included in a comprehensive drainage scheme for the South-West. Some drains have been constructed at points along the line, but the expenditure has been relatively small, and a great deal yet remains to be done. The settlers in the Coolup, Waroona, and Yarloop areas have long sought relief from the excess water that runs over their country in the winter. I put forward their cases as deserving of special attention. The complete draining of the Harvey district has been long deferred, and should be commenced without delay. Some seven or eight years have elapsed since it was proved possible to carry the water from the Darling Ranges, in the vicinity of Harvey, into Lake Preston and thence into the sea. I am told that complete plans for such outlets have been in the hands of the Public Works Department for a long time. If the Government were so minded, they could commence the work within a few weeks. The estimated expenditure for the drainage of that big area is, I believe, only £40,000. That money would render cultivable 100,000 acres of rich swamps, which

it present cannot be utilised for any purpose. It would also considerably benefit another 150,000 acres of higher land. In this way about a quarter of a million acres of fertile land within easy distance of the metropolis could be profitably farmed, and where there are now only occasional homesteads there would soon be hundreds of prosperous families. One great advantage the Harvey area enjoys is that it is favourably situated for irrigation. At no great cost another weir could be constructed in the hills, and from this source irrigation could be provided for orchards and the rich alluvial flats during the summer months. Our summer is a long, dry one, but the Harvey country could easily be irrigated and thus made a prolific producer. There is no doubt about the practicability of the scheme. I understand it has the endorsement of every civil engineer of note who has given attention to the matter. If this were carried into effect, the country from Waroona to Brunswick would benefit, including the Benger swamps which produce from £20,000 to £30,000 worth of summer potatoes every season. I hope the Government will, when possible, extend the drainage scheme to this area. I know the matter has been under consideration for a long time. I now wish to stress the claims of the people of Greenbushes for consideration in the way of grants to enable them to prospect for the lost tin lodes. Nearly £1,000,000 worth of tin has already been won from the district. The opinion has been expressed by old and experienced men that this represents but a small proportion of the deposits of tin at Greenbushes. If these lodes could be picked up by a series of bores, owing to the high price of tin and the probable permanency of that price, that part of the State would promptly find work for a large number of men, many of whom would be glad to leave the goldfields to go there, or to leave the metropolis to engage in work at remunerative rates. The Government should not hesitate to give some assistance in the direction I have indicated. I congratulate them on having taken a broad and statesmanlike view of the Collie power scheme, and the possibilities of electrical development in this State. I hope they will go into the matter with all possible energy, and give what assistance they can to bring the scheme to fruition. I want to see Collie electric power transmitted, not only throughout the South-West, but as far as the metropolis.

It would be possible in this State, as it is elsewhere, to eliminate a tremendous amount of the drudgery that falls to the lot of the man on the land, by the use of electric power. I now wish to refer to a matter that is not mentioned in the Speech, but, though it appears to be a small one, it greatly affects the State. I allude to our tourist resorts. Last year I made a trip around the seaboard of Australia from the most south-westerly point of the coastal railway at Flinders Bay to the most north-easterly point of Queensland, 1,250 miles north of Brisbane. I kept my eyes open to see what was being done in the tourist business elsewhere, and I came to the conclusion that in this State we have in this regard assets equal to anything in Australia. For many years our tourist places have received scant attention at the hands of Government authorities. Take the case of Cave House at Yallingup. That is a Government monopoly. No one else could enter into the business of catering for the traffic there with any reasonable hope of success. The Government are not providing the accommodation for visitors that ought to be provided. If Cave House were a private concern, the Licensing Bench would probably insist upon adequate provision being made for the trade. If the Government are determined to keep this as a State concern, they should be compelled to do what a private undertaking would do. It is the most picturesque of all our tourist resorts. Most members know it well. I am sure the Honorary Minister has happy recollections of it, for on many occasions when he has felt jaded by his departmental work, and has required a little relaxation and recuperation, he has gone straight to Yallingup. I know he is in sympathy with the establishment and that, if he had his way, assistance would be rendered to it. There is a crying need for new dining rooms. If these were provided on the site set aside for them, other portions of the building could be utilised for bedrooms. There should also be a refrigerating service, which does not now exist, although the motive power is available for running it. An up to date establishment such as Cave House ought to be provided with a proper hot water service. It is now a business proposition, and is showing a profit for the State. In 1919-1920 the expenditure was £10,985 and the revenue was £11,079; in 1921-22 the expenditure was £12,729, and the revenue £14,482; in 1922-23 the expen-

diture was £12,290, and the revenue £13,576; in 1923-24 the expenditure was £12,875, and the revenue £14,814. In 1924-25 the expenditure was £13,094 and the revenue £14,011, and last year the expenditure was £14,378 and the revenue £16,190. While the expenditure has increased during this period by £3,400, or 30 per cent., the revenue has increased by £5,000, or nearly 50 per cent. For years the establishment has paid full interest and depreciation, and a few hundred pounds over and above that, while the tariff is the cheapest in the Commonwealth for this class of trade. Although I have shown that the trade there has increased and that last year the expenditure was £14,378, and the revenue £16,190, Cave House at the present time has dining accommodation for only 78 people. By utilising the verandahs outside it is possible to seat another 36, so that the most that can be accommodated at one sitting is 114 people. During last Christmas week the staff at Cave House served 12,024 meals. The whole of the staff, including the manager and his wife, total only 36. During Easter week 10,525 meals were served. The figures would have been considerably increased had it been possible to serve others who required meals. That was the limit to which the staff could go. Hundreds of people took hampers out there and had meals in the grounds around Cave House. That points to a business loss by the State, and it is the duty of the Government therefore to see that sufficient accommodation is provided for everyone. The bedroom accommodation at Yallingup is limited to provision for 64 people, but by using balcony beds, 80 more can be accommodated. Everybody, however, on going away for a holiday, will not agree to have a balcony bed and use a cupboard in a common dressing room. People are prepared to pay for services, and consequently they should not be asked to put up with balcony beds or common dressing rooms. The Government should either enter for everyone or allow private enterprise to do so. It is the Government's duty to keep in the State as many holiday makers as they can and so prevent tourists' money going elsewhere. There is no garage accommodation at Cave House, although frequently as many as 100 cars are in the grounds. Hundreds and possibly thousands of people have been denied admission to Cave House. The Government have been well aware that these require-

ments are necessary because plans for increased accommodation have been prepared for some time. I have heard of them for four or five years past, and knowing that this is a business proposition, I cannot understand why the Government refuse to go on with the work. Some idea of the growth of the traffic can be gathered by the fact that 1,000 people entered the Yallingup cave last Christmas week. Each person is charged a fee of 3s., so that this, too, is in every way a business proposition, and the Government should not hesitate to do their part. A small amount should be spent on lighting some of the other caves. The Mammoth Cave, I suppose, is one of the finest down there, particularly from the scientific point of view, and it should be lit up by electricity. The first cost possibly would not exceed £500, and a proper illumination would enable some of the better features of the cave to be displayed. The railways obtain a great benefit from the traffic to the Cave House and could obtain more revenue by providing cheap week-end excursions to let people see what attractions we have within our own State. I made inquiries at the Tourist Bureau at Perth for accommodation at Cave House next Christmas and I found that even at the present time, the middle of August, the whole of the bedroom accommodation there has been booked. The same thing occurred last Christmas. During last summer, extending from December to April inclusive, it was necessary to book months ahead if one desired to secure a room at Yallingup. Hundreds of people who could not be accommodated went for their holidays to the Eastern States and elsewhere, and Western Australia was the poorer for that. It is therefore quite time that the Government woke up to their responsibilities in that respect and made a real effort to retain the tourists' money in this State. It is time we got into line with the other States and overseas countries. Every visitor to our shore leaves behind him new money and takes away impressions which are good or bad, according to the ideas formed. We should further extend our tourist activities by having agents in every capital city. We should foster what I heard called the "tourist conscience" and get the people to spend money in the State and induce others to spend it with them. During my travels in New South Wales I learnt that Sydney receives, on an average, 6,000

visitors every week of the year. It would be a very moderate estimate to say that each visitor left £5 in that State. That would amount to £30,000 a week, or a million and a half pounds in the year.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Treble it and you will be nearer the mark.

Hon. J. Ewing: I think you could multiply it by four.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I do not wish to be accused of exaggerating, and that is why I put down the figure at £5. If we merely doubled it we would get three millions in the year, and even then we would be well inside the mark. As a final illustration I would quote New Zealand, a country that appreciates the value of the tourist traffic. That is evidenced by the fact that the authorities there are not the least bit concerned that the expenditure on tourist traffic in 1924-25 resulted in a loss of over £19,000. They were perfectly satisfied to lose that amount on their tourist activities, knowing that the sum would be returned many times by the capital brought into the Dominion by visitors and spread over the whole of the country. For many years past New Zealand has subsidised its illustrated papers. I did see what the figures were, but I have not been able to lay my hand on them and so cannot disclose them to the House. The object of subsidising the illustrated papers is to induce people to visit New Zealand by the publication of pictures in those papers. This method of advertising has been very successful. The previous Government in Western Australia are to be congratulated on having brought into existence the present Tourist Bureau, and the Government of to-day may be given some small meed of praise for enabling that institution to continue. They would get a good deal more praise, however, if they treated the Bureau more liberally. My personal experience of the conduct of the bureau is that the director and his staff are fully alive to the advantages of tourist propaganda. In the director we have an officer equal to any to be found in a similar position in other parts of Australia. I believe him to be superior to some that I could mention. He is doing his best with the limited money at his disposal. More attractive and commodious offices could be provided. If I were running the concern I would take a shop front in the busiest part of the city and there make a display that would create a demand for tourist

trips throughout the whole of the State. I do not know whether members have been in the bureau lately. If not, I would advise them to drop in and have a look at the stalagmite display and ask themselves what the effect would be of a similar exhibition in a shop window, where it could be seen by all passers by. I am sure it would bring patronage and would awaken a desire amongst people to visit that part of the State even during the slackest months of the year. I realise there are heavy calls upon the finances of the State, but it cannot be argued that money spent in encouraging tourist traffic is lost. Rather is it a sound investment, as the experience of other countries has shown. I hope to see an extension of the tourist business generally, and I trust that the Government will see that the long overdue expenditure for the Caves House is provided before next summer. I regret that I have occupied the time of the House longer than I intended. I hope my initial effort has not proved wearisome to members—

Member: It has been very interesting.

Hon. W. J. MANN: But I ask them to give me credit for being earnest in what I have advocated for the benefit of the whole State.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan) [9.31]: Before dealing with the Governor's Speech, permit me to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your elevation to the high and honourable position you now hold. It is a position that I readily admit you are peculiarly fitted to adorn, and I trust that good health will be vouchsafed to you during your term of office. I recognise how trying it must be to sit in the Chair for several hours listening to sometimes rather prosy speeches without being able to indulge in the ease available to other members. Therefore, I trust good health will be your portion to enable you to carry out satisfactorily the duties you have undertaken. I join in the welcome extended to new members. I have had the pleasure of knowing them for a good number of years, and I can assure them they will find the work interesting. Of all the questions dealt with in the Speech, that of migration is the most important. On it depends the immediate and future development of the State, and to it we look for relief from deficits and the strangling burden of taxation. I congratulate the Govern-