

Another 50 or 60 families could have been settled on the acreage I refer to. Then, eastward, there is the Lake Magenta and Lake Damnosa country, which, I am reliably informed, is of equally good quality with the land at Newdegate. I hope this land, too, is being surveyed and classified for closer settlement. Sooner or later a railway, or several railways, will run east of the Great Southern line to Tammin, to new territory only awaiting willing hands and stout hearts to make it one of our best agricultural districts. The price of land in Western Australia is very low compared with the price of land of similar quality in the Eastern States. Five or six years ago the average price of farm land in my district was from £2 to £2 10s. per acre. Now it is £4 per acre. In Victoria, however, such land would be worth £10 per acre. What is the reason for the discrepancy? In a few years' time, however, land holders in Western Australia will find themselves so affluent that they will not know what to do with their money. When that time arrives I hope they will realise the benefit which kind Parliaments and Governments in this State have bestowed on them in the shape of cheap land. Certainly they should not grumble at having to pay a little extra taxation in order to assist in the development of Western Australia. Mining has played an important part in the growth of this State, and there are still many tracts of mineral wealth, the development of which has not yet been even attempted, either by the Government or by private enterprise. I believe that many new finds will be made in Western Australia if assistance is granted by the Government, and I hope the Premier and the Minister for Lands will show a spirit of optimism and furnish funds to enable more prospectors to go out and open up new fields as yet untouched. In the Kimberleys alone there are mountains of auriferous country, though whether the gold is present in payable quantities remains to be proved. Still, the Government might well spend some money in the North and also in the Marble Bar district, where payable ore bodies, not only of gold but also of copper and lead, are to be found. We shall yet startle the world with the wealth of some of those fields. I ask hon. members during this session to endeavour to assist our primary industries. Any measures having that object in view will, I feel sure, meet with favour. Their

enactment will redound to the credit of Parliament, will prove to the outside world that Western Australia is on the map, and will show that we are determined to take our place and our part in Australia as a whole. I sincerely trust that this session will prove as successful as the last, and that next session the Premier will have an equally favourable financial report to submit to Parliament.

MR. LAMOND (Pilbara) [7.50]: I desire to congratulate the Government on the successful results of their first year of office. Hon. members have called attention to the splendid season experienced by the agricultural areas during the past 12 months. The resultant bountiful harvest, however, does not altogether account for the achievements of the Government, seeing that during the last two years the North-West underwent the worst drought known for 20 years. Thus the revenue lost in the North-West stands as some set-off to the prosperity engendered by the bountiful harvest in the South. As regards unemployed in the metropolitan area, much of the flooding of the labour market from the country district could be avoided. However, it is well known that to-day in Western Australia it is almost impossible to get work, and particularly Government work, without coming into the metropolitan area to secure it. During last year this was especially brought under my notice. Deputation after deputation waited on Ministers, and those gentlemen, in replying to the unemployed, said there would be no work for country people in the metropolitan area, and that country people must not come to the metropolitan area looking for Government employment. But when there is a country job, men are drawn from the metropolitan area to fill the vacancies. As regards the North-West I had occasion to bring under the Government's notice the fact that the whole of the men employed at the Wyndham Meat Works were taken there from Perth. I asked that arrangements should be made to absorb all the unskilled labour unemployed in the North-West before unskilled men were taken from this locality, and I understood that my request would be acceded to. But after informing several old friends in the North-West that if they put in applications for employment on the Wyndham Meat Works, those applications would be favourably considered, I learnt

that the furthest those men got was to be placed on the emergency list. The same state of things exists in the shearing industry. It is impossible for a man to get employment in shearing unless he comes to Perth once a year. Practically every man engaged in the pastoral industry is secured from Perth through employment bureaus. To-day North-West residents who used to get a little work on stations are pushed right out, simply because they are not here in Perth. The men are engaged here, and are sent up by parcel post to the North-West.

Mr. Taylor: All the Wyndham Meat Works employees are engaged at the Trades Hall in Perth, are they not?

Mr. Panton: No.

Mr. Taylor: They were two years ago.

Mr. Panton: That was done by the late Government. The present Government have altered it.

Mr. Mann: The difference is that the names are submitted to the Trades Hall.

Mr. Panton: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. LAMOND: I hope that next year some arrangement will be made to give North-West residents a chance to obtain employment at the Wyndham Meat Works. During last session I urged the Government to put an up-to-date steamer on the North-West coast in lieu of the "Bambra," and it is satisfactory to know that the Government have already called tenders for a vessel for that purpose. I am pleased to say that the mining industry in the North has brightened up, and I congratulate the Minister for Mines upon the valuable assistance he has rendered to the prospectors in that part of the State. His action in supplying prospectors with cheaper explosives has been very gratifying. The prospectors are now able to get their gelignite at rates that have been reduced by one guinea per box, detonators by 3s. 6d., and there has also been a substantial reduction regarding fuses. Further assistance could be given to the industry by the provision of pumping plants. Two of our most important fields that have always shown satisfactory averages in the past have been closed down for years on account of the workings having gone below water level. It is beyond the average prospector to carry on because of the water difficulty. Such men cannot procure a plant big enough to pump out the old shafts. If a pumping plant were made available, much good would result. While dealing with mining in the North, I

would draw the attention of the Government to the fact that, although we have thousands of tons of asbestos in the North-West, we are unable to work it at a profit. This is due to the fact that asbestos is one of the few articles imported into Australia in respect of which there is no protective tariff. I hope the Government will make representations to the Tariff Board and to the Federal Government with a view to having a tariff placed upon the importation of asbestos. A tariff of 20 per cent., which is that imposed upon manganese, would greatly assist the development of the asbestos industry in the North-West. A sum of £500 was placed on the last Estimates for the purpose of prospecting for a water supply for Port Hedland by means of a bore. I am afraid the effort will not be successful. This is largely due to the fact that the money has been wasted. I say that because I have done a good deal of boring for water in the North-West and have a fair knowledge of prospecting for water generally. I do not suppose that anyone would find half-a-dozen workers in that part of the State not capable of doing the work the Government officials are now carrying out. If the men were not able to do that work they could not secure employment in the North, because their chief work is that of boring for water and sinking wells. That is an every-day job on the stations, and it is carried out successfully by the men there. When the Government wanted someone to bore for water for the Port Hedland scheme, nothing less than an engineer would satisfy the North-West Department. Therefore they despatched an engineer from Perth to supervise the job, and I suppose that almost the whole of the money available has been expended in salaries and otherwise, which means, in my opinion, that the money has been to all intents and purposes wasted. I regret that the work was not carried out in the manner I suggested to the department. The proposition I put to them was that the work should be left to local men to carry out under the supervision of the local road board authorities, for they were directly interested in securing a water supply for Port Hedland.

Mr. Taylor: And those men would have had local knowledge.

Mr. LAMOND: Yes. At all events, the local men could have bored to the bottom, and that is a thing that up to the time I left,

those who had been despatched from Perth had not been able to do. I trust this is not the final effort that will be made to provide a water supply for Port Hedland. We have a report from Mr. Tindale, who was for many years the engineer for the North-West, in which he states that during one of the driest years experienced 3,000,000 gallons were drawn from a creek 20 miles from Port Hedland. That water was drawn for supplies in connection with construction work on the Port Hedland railway. With a small embankment across the creek sufficient water could be conserved for the requirements of Port Hedland, which are estimated at 4,000,000 gallons. I believe that with the money that was made available an adequate supply could have been obtained at Turner Creek and that would have saved the present effort. I hope to see Turner Creek tried at a later date, and I am very sanguine that water will be got there. I also wish to refer to the manner in which the lock hospital at Port Hedland is being run, or rather, the way in which an attempt is made to conduct it. I do not blame the orderlies in charge, but I blame that wonderful North-West Department!

Mr. Coverley: It does not seem to be too popular.

Mr. LAMOND: The lock hospital was established for the purpose of dealing with venereal diseases amongst natives, and it was hoped by this means to eradicate the disease. We find, however, that the money is absolutely wasted on this effort. I will endeavour to bring forward the facts relating to the institution. There are two compounds, one for the male patients and the other for the females. The sexes are supposed to be locked up in their separate compounds each night. The information I have from the orderly goes to show that if there is a boy who is just about cured, the work is negatived because there is no proper segregation. The partition between the two yards is so easily surmountable that either the male or female patients can climb from one yard to the other. When that happens, the patients are no further advanced than they were when they entered the hospital first. This sort of thing goes on month after month and year after year, until the disease has so established itself in the patient that it is impossible to effect a cure. We have, therefore, wasted time and money in trying to alleviate

the sufferings of these unfortunate people. Under the present Aborigines Act no power is provided to imprison a native suffering from venereal disease, with the result that the natives are alive to the fact and if they do not like the place, they pack up and clear out. The thing is absolutely useless. By the expenditure of less than £20 on wire netting an enclosure could be provided with perhaps barbed wire entanglements, and that would keep the sexes apart. This has been brought under the notice of the North-West Department for years, but nothing has been done.

The Premier: Barbed wire would not keep lovers apart.

Mr. LAMOND: It would have that effect if entanglements were provided in the native compounds. An attempt was made to deal with it by putting the netting underground but the natives scatched holes through it.

Mr. Clydesdale: Then what is the good of putting barbed wire on top?

Mr. LAMOND: In the instance I refer to a trench 6ft. deep was dug.

Mr. Taylor: These North-Westerns are pretty hardy gentlemen.

Mr. LAMOND: They are notorious. I have been asked in what direction in my opinion the North-West could best be developed. After 20 years continuous residence in that part of the State I have not hastily come to a conclusion on that subject; I have given it much consideration. I am satisfied that the only way the North-West can be fairly and properly developed is by means of a closer settlement scheme. Owing to the action of the National Government, the leases, I regret to say, have been extended from 1928 to 1948. We had expected that the whole of the leases would be thrown up in another four years. I am satisfied we cannot wait for an additional 20 years, and as we do not stand for repudiation, the only way left for the Government is to repurchase some of the stations. The whole North, from half way below the Fortescue and Onslow to the edge of the desert, is suitable for closer settlement. I suggest that that country should be cut up into blocks large enough to carry from 3,000 to 4,000 sheep. From 50,000 to 60,000-acre blocks would be necessary. In addition to wool growing, we should have side lines, such as dairying and hog raising. With seasons such as we have had since the breaking of the drought, I can say without exaggeration that millions of tons of fodder could be conserved, and so make it

possible to carry on dairying successfully throughout the whole year. The country lends itself particularly to hog raising. During the last 12 months 26 head of cattle on one station had to be shot in order to provide baits to poison swine. In one shoot alone 300 pigs were destroyed. Thus, a fine industry is being wasted. I hope the Government will give consideration to the question of settling the North-West. One matter of education I wish to bring before the Minister. I hope he will give more liberal consideration as regards continuation classes. Owing to the geographical position of the North, it is impossible for each and every family to send its boys to the metropolitan area to complete their education. If the Minister would arrange for continuation classes, there would be a chance to do something towards completing their education. Sixty pupils are required before a continuation class is permitted in a State school. If that provision is not liberalised in favour of the North-West, we can do nothing, because few of our schools have 60 scholars. In conclusion, I wish to protest against the attitude of the Government. Although I extended an invitation to Ministers to visit the North and see for themselves the boundless potentialities of that part of the State, no response was made to the invitation. If they desire to become acquainted with the conditions in the North and to assist to frame a suitable scheme of development, it is necessary for them to see it. We do not want any more joy riding along the beach; we want them to go right through and see what lies inland. I am still hopeful that they will visit the North this year.

MR. MANN (Perth) [8.18]: In speaking to the Address-in-reply, I am compelled to take notice of two documents that are before us—one the Governor's Speech, which is optimistic, and may I say, full of ambition and enterprise, and the other document the report of the Royal Commission on group settlement in the South-West. As to the latter, I am disappointed. Although the gentlemen comprising the commission had a free hand to inquire into all and sundry regarding group settlement and to report, it appears to me that their commission should have been framed differently to be in keeping with the report they submitted. The commission read—

To inquire into and report upon matters relating to group settlement schemes.

If it had read—

To inquire into and ascertain all the possible points relating to matters that will assist in condemning group settlement and the South-West—

then their report would have been in keeping with the terms of their commission.

Mr. Taylor: They must have read that into their commission.

Mr. MANN: I have failed to find that the commissioners in their report put up one constructive point. They have gone to extremes in condemning all group settlement and the South-West. From the report it appears that the South-West is not suitable for anything except the growing of jarrah and karri, and that when the present crop is cut out, we must lift the railways and leave that territory for 100 years until another crop of timber grows, and then we may start again to exploit the timber industry. It seems to me that the members of the commission were prejudiced wheat growers. The whole of the commission were wheat growers.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: What about the chairman?

Mr. MANN: There is a feeling throughout the wheat areas that those districts will have to carry the burden of the development of the South-West, and it may be that that influenced them in their judgment. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) said he was the explorer of the wheat belt and he told us of his exploits there, but he said nothing of his experience of dairying. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) has had a long and varied experience as a member and a Minister. Addressing this House on one occasion he spoke highly of the South-West, but in this report he failed to live up to his previous utterances as to its possibilities. Taking the commission as a whole, I feel that they were prejudiced by reason of their being wheat growers and because none of them had been a dairyman or had had dairying experience.

Mr. Sleeman: Are you including the member who signed the minority report?

Mr. MANN: That gentleman had had some experience of dairying and he did submit some constructive ideas.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Who wrote the report?

Mr. MANN: I submit that the South-West must be developed, that we must go on with the dairying industry and that we must go on with the production of bacon, because the necessities of the State demand it. To-day