

with regard to the tonnage crushed has been under 20 per cent. It is evident that with the decline in the number of men engaged in looking for new ore bodies and the decline in the tonnage treated by State batteries, a serious state of affairs exists. While many suggestions have been made for improving the position, we have to recognise that though much money has been spent by the Government to assist the industry, to assist the prospectors and on boring and geological survey, there does not appear to be any plan for co-ordinated action for the development of ore bodies. Discoveries have been announced from time to time and geologists have been sent out and have made a more or less superficial survey. I am not blaming the geologists; they could not do more because the time and money at their disposal would not permit of a detailed survey being made. Fine work has been done by the geologists in plotting out the goldfields, but they themselves admit that it is only superficial. One of the suggestions made at the Mining Conference was that there should be a detailed geological survey, and stress was laid on the fact that such a survey applied to the Kalgoolie field alone would reveal favourable indications and would probably disclose new and large ore bodies. There appears to be need for a policy on those lines. If the Government concentrated their efforts on one portion of the State, arranged for a detailed geological survey, and followed it up by prospecting—

Hon. J. Cornell: If critics of the Geological Department perused the information available they would be silenced.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I am not criticising the department. The work done has been magnificent, considering the time and money at their disposal. The geologists in their reports state that the surveys have had to be restricted and are superficial. Further examination, however, would probably result in the discovery of indications more promising than any of which we so far have evidence. The carrying on of prospecting on a plan prepared by the geologists would be the more scientific way of assisting the mining industry than the desultory method at present being followed. The efficiency of our State battery system would be improved considerably if by means of geological surveys we could indicate the existence of ore bodies.

Hon. J. Cornell: They can only be determined by development.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The point is that the amount of money being spent at the present time, if spent on a plan that makes available scientific knowledge, will increase the output of gold by leading to the discovery and development of new ore bodies. A few more words in conclusion. We all wish to see the State prosper. We all realise the very heavy burden the people have to bear. We realise, too, that many are

doing splendid work in the way of improving efficiency and realise the need for diverting labour into more directly productive channels. The result must mean increased production and wealth for all. It is to our own production that we must look for the years to come if we wish to see the State advance; we cannot always go on borrowing big sums of money. This, of course, is impossible until we have placed ourselves in a better position than that in which we find ourselves to-day. We recognise that there should not exist any antagonism between capital and labour, though unfortunately, at the present time, that antagonism appears to be growing. It is only by capital and labour working smoothly together that we can carry on our activities. If it had not been for the harvest of last year we would be found starving to-day. So the whole advancement of the State depends upon the way in which we conserve the wealth we are able to produce. The more we are able to conserve and store, the more rapidly will the State advance. Therefore to secure that advancement it is necessary that we should concentrate on improved production per head and conserve. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply and assure the Government that whatever measures they bring forward, if in my opinion they are in the best interests of the State they will have my best support.

On motion by Hon. J. Duffell debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th August, 1924.

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

QUESTION—EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TEACHERS' SALARIES.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Has the Education Department written to certain teachers holding "B" certificates and employed in Class VII.

schools to the effect that, unless they agree to accept a reduction of salary to the amount prescribed for teachers holding "C" certificates, their employment will be terminated? 2, Do the Government approve of this apparent attempt to upset the award of the Public Service Appeal Board? 3, If not, will he prevent this reduction of the wages of the country teachers concerned?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Teachers who are not on the permanent staff have been informed that, if they wish for temporary employment in schools of Class VII, with less than 20 children in average attendance, they will not be paid at a higher rate than that provided for the highest grade of permanent teachers employed in such schools, that is, the "C1" grade. 2, The Government sees no reason to pay such temporary teachers at a higher rate than it would pay to permanent teachers, nor does it consider that this is an attempt to upset the award of the Public Service Appeal Board. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, NEWDEGATE TO ALBANY.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: 1, Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House the report prepared on the land from Newdegate to Albany? 2, Will he carry out the promise made by the ex-Premier and instruct the Railway Advisory Board to inspect and report on suggested railway from Newdegate to Albany?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Not at this stage. In the meantime the honourable member may read the file at my office.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.35]: At the outset, Mr. Speaker, allow me to congratulate you upon attaining the high and honourable position as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I feel sure that you will carry out the functions of your office with dignity and with fairness to all sections of the House. I also desire to congratulate our old friend, the former Leader of the Opposition, upon having become Premier of the State, and I extend those congratulations to his Ministers as well. It makes me feel—

Mr. Corboy: That you made a mistake.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: —that my long association with the members sitting on the Government side of the House was not in vain, because I had something to do in assisting the great Labour movement before, shall I say, my enlightened days. I believe it would have been wiser, however, had the Minister for Works, before embarking on the 44-hour week problem, introduced a Bill dealing with the matter, so

that members could discuss it. The action of Ministers speaking at social functions and announcing that it was the policy of the Labour Government to have the 44-hour week applied to industries in Western Australia is likely to undermine the work of the Arbitration Court which was set up to deal with such problems. Surely it would have been better if legislation had been introduced first! I desire to compliment the Minister for Works upon what he has achieved during his short regime and also the Minister for Lands, who is in charge of group settlement work, upon what he has done since he has been in office. In fact, all the Ministers have been engaged in touring the country to find out the requirements of various districts. They have been sympathetic, not only to myself, but to members representing other interests, irrespective of party. We desire to see that spirit continue. I feel that we are assembled in this Chamber all possessed of the one desire, to work for the best interests of the State. Many faces are missing from this Chamber, faces of men whom I had learnt to like and who had done their best for the country. I regret their absence although I know that their successors are imbued with the same desire to work for the State. We have also lost one member who has made history. I refer to Mrs. Cowan, who, as member for West Perth, was the first lady member of Parliament in the Commonwealth. We all regret her absence. The Governor's Speech indicates the intention of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission concerning group settlements. I welcome that move because I know there are dozens of grievances to be attended to. To make the group settlement scheme a success, it is necessary to have the administration and the men doing the work on the groups in accord. It has been said that those men receive sustenance payments; I do not regard that expenditure as sustenance. I wish to sound a note of warning to the Minister in charge of group settlements. It has been stated that to-day the State is lacking in land available for settlement adjacent to railways. I know that groups are being settled 20 and 25 miles from a railway in parts where the Agricultural Bank has lost a lot of money in past years. That result arose from the fact that it was impossible to secure transport facilities. Despite that fact, groups are being settled there to-day. That point alone requires investigation by a Royal Commission. I am fully aware that there is vacant land alongside railways in the South-West, but those lands are tied up because of the control exercised by the Forests Department. If a couple of trees are growing on the land there, the Forests Department claim that the area must be reserved for forestry purposes. A man with any knowledge of the subject would at once recognise the suitability of the land for agriculture. But the Conservator of

Forests, because of very bad legislation passed some time ago, is able to control the position and the Minister for Lands has no power to overcome the difficulty until amending legislation is introduced. I do not wish to speak disparagingly of the Minister controlling the Forests Department, but I believe that the Lands Department and the Forests Department should be controlled by the one Minister. If that were done the waste of time owing to questions having to be dealt with first by one department, and then by the other, would be obviated. If the present unsatisfactory position were overcome, large areas of suitable land would be made available for settlement. The cost of clearing the groups also constitutes another problem. That work is expensive, but we do not desire to block it. Linked up with the group settlement question is the immigration policy. We are bringing people to our shores and although the work of clearing the land is costing two or three times more than it should, the newcomers must be provided for. The men must have employment, the women must have their homes and the children must have their schools. All those considerations add to the cost of the scheme. When he spoke the other evening, I do not think the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) criticised the quality of the land in the South-West. He told us how we could clear the land for much less than it costs to-day, but mentioned that it would take from seven to 10 years.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I said from five to seven years.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have not the "Hansard" report of the hon. member's speech. He advised ring-barking, keeping the suckers down and gradually clearing the land. We know that is the best method for carrying out the work, and that land in the South-West could be cleared by an expert with a good bullock team at a third of the cost at which the work is done to-day. The member for Guildford, however, was wrong when he said that the land was sour. His statement showed that he had no knowledge of the question. Had he traversed the country during the last two years he would not have made such a statement.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It would not become sweet in a few months.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have seen two or three crops grown on virgin land around green timber. The hon. member must have sourness imbedded in his mind, for his statement was untrue.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do not forget that I had to straighten out the Denmark trouble.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know that the hon. member straightened anything out at Denmark, but I know that he made crooked efforts in other directions. Settlers have grown two or three crops amongst the green timber in the South-West, and they have got that result on virgin land. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) has been down there recently. To-day clovers

and other fodder grasses are growing among the karri trees as well as on the old pastures and that applies to the country around Bridgetown and Balingup. I wish to impress upon the Minister controlling immigration—

The Minister for Lands: You want to close the damned thing up!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I wish to thank the Minister for Lands for his attitude when deputations have called upon him. I know he is endeavouring to make land available about Bridgetown and Greenbushes and he will be able to do so if he succeeds in breaking down the Forest regulations. As they operate to-day, however, those regulations do not admit of that. If two loads of timber are represented in trees growing on an area that is suitable for agriculture, that land is reserved. The loadage may be spread over several acres. In the Upper Blackwood district, the Forests Department officers will not let go land where there are some trees that may go as high as ten loads, but those trees may be scattered over upwards of 1,000 acres. Something must be done about these two departments. There must be more cohesion and the Minister must clip the wings of the Conservator of Forests. To cope with the difficulty legislation will be necessary. I hope the Royal Commission will inquire into every phase of group settlement. Road boards are experiencing many difficulties. The Commonwealth road grant is of no value to this country. The grant has been an encumbrance and I believe even a curse to the road boards. One board is credited with having had £38,000 spent in its district but that money has been spent on the road from Pemberton to Northcliffe, which road should never have been constructed. The late Administration made the error of building roads instead of a railway in that country. I am pleased that the railway has been started. The first 20 miles of it is going to cost £20,000 or £30,000 per mile, but in addition to that the district is credited with having received £38,000 from the Commonwealth grant.

The Minister for Lands: You have had a lot spent at Northcliffe.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But it has been wasted. The railway should have been built instead of wasting money on the road. The Commonwealth were to make a grant of £96,000 for road building and the State Government were to find an equal amount, and on account of this, the road boards are not receiving any money from the Treasury. They would be a long way better off if the Minister gave the road boards the £110,000 and cut out the Commonwealth grant altogether. It is merely a sop and, owing to the restrictions imposed by the Federal authorities, it is impossible for us to get the work done. What is the good of having to clear miles of road for a width of 22ft. and make roads 20 feet wide? The settlers want to get their produce to market and they can do that with a road 12ft. or 13ft. wide wind-

ing amongst the trees. So long as the road has a good surface, it is sufficient. Instead of that, we have a road built with a surface like that of St. George's-terrace and the money has been thrown away. Yet the Premier talks about financial stringency. The Minister for Works has told various deputations that he intends to give the local authorities greater powers. We do not want the dictatorship we have had in the past. We want more powers and we also want more money. I am anxious to see the Main Roads Bill that the Government intend to introduce. If it is going to impose taxation without representation and create another huge department, it will not receive any sympathy from me, but if it is going to provide for a board outside the department, able to raise a certain amount of revenue by a tax on tyres, vehicles, petrol or something else, I shall be prepared to support it.

Mr. Richardson: What about the sour west?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have referred to the South-West, and I object to anyone calling it the sour west. The Government propose to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the mining industry. I hope the Commission will not overlook the little town of Greenbushes, which has been the biggest centre of tin mining in Western Australia. Greenbushes is languishing for want of a little Government assistance. We do not want the Government to construct houses for managers at a cost of £1,000 or more apiece and have it charged up against the mining vote. We want the Government to do something practical. I want the Minister for Mines to visit Greenbushes and consider the advisableness of diamond drilling to locate the tin lodes. I have worked on the lodes, and I know that tin exists there. We want just a little practical assistance. I do not wish to be parochial in my views. Great assistance has been given to the agricultural industry, and I shall support goldfields representatives in their efforts to get assistance for mining, but I hope they will not overlook the claims of Greenbushes. Last year I spoke at length on the building of certain railways in the South-West. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnston) says we have too great a mileage of railways in proportion to our population. There is only one way to open up this country, and that is by railway communication. It may be advisable to build roads for tractors and similar means of transport in the eastern areas, where for nine months of the year the country is dry, but it is not advisable to do so in the South-West. It would cost more to build roads for heavy transport in the South-West than to build railways. We have not sufficient railways to open up and develop the South-West, and some of the railways there have been built in the wrong places. We have to thank Sir James Mitchell and the late Government for opening up and developing

that part of the State. Every member agrees that it is a great asset, and that there is a big future before that country. Some day, as a result of the development there, we shall overtake the State's needs and be able to stop the importation of food-stuffs. It is a disgrace that we should be importing such quantities of foodstuffs to-day. I understand the advisory board have just recommended the construction of a railway to the Warren district. When the Bill for the construction of the Pemberton-Nornalup railway was before the House, I said it was not warranted in comparison with the railway to the Warren. While there is land along the Pemberton-Nornalup line equal to anything in the State, there is land in the Warren district 40 miles from a railway that has been settled for many years. The railway, I understand, is to commence from Boyup Brook. Last year I suggested it should start from Yornup or Wilgarup, and I quoted figures to prove that the timber obtained along the first 20 or 30 miles would pay ten times over for the construction of the line. I believe the advisory board, owing to the grades between Bridgetown and Balingup, suggest that the railway should run from Cranbrook to Boyup Brook, by which route engines would be able to haul 700-ton loads as against 150-ton loads over the other route. I am desirous that the old pioneers living out-back should be served with a railway. Along the route from Boyup Brook 479,320 acres of land have already been selected. That is an enormous area. Of that, 16,046 acres has been cleared outright at a cost of about £10 per acre. Of part cleared land there is 23,000 acres, the work on which must have cost £2 10s. to £3 per acre. The stock on that area consists of 90,686 sheep, which to-day are worth about £2 each. There are 1,616 horses, and fine horses they are, worth anything from £10 to £12 each. There are 1,333 dairy cows, which to-day are not producing anything for the market because of the distance from railway communication. On top of that there are 500 pigs in the district. I hope that when the Premier sees the report of the advisory board he will give instructions for a survey to be made immediately, and for the railway to be built, because the opening up of this country will mean so much to the State. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston), every time he speaks in the House, advocates the construction of the Narrogin-Dwarda line. The railway I am suggesting was promised in the time of Sir John Forrest, but we have never had any pull in this House. Previous members, perhaps, did not have the energy of the member for Williams-Narrogin. There must have been a certain amount of pull in the past because members on Mr. Johnston's own side said the Narrogin-Dwarda line was not warranted. There was an awful hurst up here and certain members for a time did not speak to each other in the corridors,

all on account of the Narrogin-Dwarda railway controversy. The present Minister for Lands happened to be Minister for Works when the Bill for that railway was introduced, and the member for Williams-Narrogin was then a valued member of the party. The Bill was passed despite the advice of members on this side of the House, who pointed out that the construction of the line was not warranted. However, it was carried by the vote of the present Premier. If we have to wait for some railways owing to financial stringency, those railways promised 20 years ago should receive first consideration. The member for Guildford says a certain railway is not warranted and other members say that other railways are not warranted. A Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the whole question.

The Premier: Another Commission! Why not let us build them all now?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am advocating a railway for those settlers who have been out in the back country for so many years. The building of a line is warranted by the statistics I have quoted. If any railway be warranted, let it take precedences over others. Another railway is required from Manjimup linking up with Mt. Barker. That line would serve a great deal of valuable country and some old pioneers of the State. If the group settlement scheme is to be a success, this railway must be built, because there are settlers at present located 20 to 25 miles from a railway, and no settler can make a success of his holding so far removed from railway facilities. If we refer to the Agricultural Bank, we will find that not one thousand, but many thousands of pounds have been lost to the State through sending settlers out there as far back as 1911 and 1912. The people who are so far away from means of transport cannot hope to make good. Yet in spite of the fact that the Agricultural Bank made big losses, principally on account of the absence of railway facilities, we find that the Government are now sending group settlers to the very same place. I will leave the question of railways in your hands, Mr. Premier, because I believe you intend to give a fair deal to the South-West. You will carry on the good work that was started by my chief three years ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I hope that the Government during the present session will not find it necessary to rely upon any particular section to keep them in office. I intend to remain as a unit of the Opposition, but will promise to give all the assistance I can to bring about good government. Regarding the little coterie of friends on my left, I trust the Government will not find it necessary to make a call on them for assistance in order to retain office, because if the Government do so the little coterie will be bound to let the Government down with a

loud bang. One particular gentleman—I will not mention his name—declared that he welcomed the advent of Labour. I do not say that he is not right, but I am wondering, when the time arrives for the Government to raise money, whether this gentleman will still welcome the advent of Labour, remembering too that the Government have introduced a 44-hour week and have promised to levy a little more taxation. With respect to taxation, I am waiting for this, because I am anxious to assist the Government to impose a tax on unimproved land. I am wondering whether the leader of the little coterie will be told by his chief what course to follow.

The Premier: Only yesterday or the day before he was your leader.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: My dear friend, he was never my leader.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The Premier: Yes, when you were in the ranks.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was never in the ranks; I was always supposed to be on the fringe, a sort of opportunist always looking for something to appear on the horizon. At one time I thought you were going to ask me to return to the fold.

The Premier: I have not given up hope yet.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: My position was made quite clear at the last elections and I cannot possibly now go back into the fold. A matter of vital importance to the South-West was referred to by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers). That hon. gentleman explained the position so well with regard to the need for harbour accommodation, that there is very little for me to add.

The Premier: Another little million will not do us any harm.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Something must be done with regard to harbour facilities at Bunbury. The port has been sadly neglected in the past and a concrete scheme must now be laid down. If the Premier can see his way clear to spend a few pounds in the direction of commencing what will ultimately prove to be a concrete scheme, he will then be giving proof of his bona fides. The Government have been able to get money to spend on the Geraldton harbour. I do not know whether that work is or is not necessary. The Government can also raise money for the Fremantle harbour. I suppose that is because there are two Fremantle representatives in the Cabinet. We in the South-West regret that the Government is made up of goldfields and metropolitan members. We are bitterly disappointed on that account: at least one member representing South-West interests might have been included in the team.

The Premier: Had you been in our party that might have been possible.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That went through my mind.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You missed the bus.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But joking apart, we do need a definite scheme in connection with harbour facilities at Bunbury. It does not appear to be right that so much money should be spent at Fremantle while Bunbury is languishing. Nor is it right that produce should have to be taken to Fremantle for export instead of to its natural port.

The Minister for Railways: The Geraldton people have had to wait for 30 years.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then I am pleased that at last they have a live member in Parliament and I hope that they will not have to suffer for another 30 years. I hope that the grave blunder that has been made in the past with reference to Bunbury will not be repeated. If the Government will only prepare a scheme and spend a few hundred thousand pounds to begin with, it will prove of benefit to Bunbury and the South-West generally. Our geographical position demands that what I suggest should be done. All we require is a fair deal. Another matter that materially affects the South-West is the taking over of the railway between Pemberton and Jarnadup. This line is about 17 miles in length and is controlled by the State Sawmills. The Government have promised for a couple of years past to take it over. Hon. members will remember that the Premier promised to take it over 12 months ago.

The Premier: Which Premier?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not the present Premier; he was not in office then. The State Sawmills are running this railway merely to suit themselves; they do not study for a moment the convenience of anybody else. The line is part of the scheme to connect Jarnadup with Nornalup and on that account the Commissioner of Railways, before he takes it over, desires to be quite certain about its safe working. All the same, it is not fair for the people who are on group settlements in that part of the State to have to depend on the time table furnished by the State Sawmills, and if it is desired to lift a few tons of fertiliser or anything else, they must depend on the courtesy of the sawmills officials, otherwise the stuff is thrown off regardless of the weather and allowed to remain in the open at the mercy of anyone. The Minister said the other night that he proposed to institute a time table in the near future. As things exist at the present time, when goods arrive at their destination they are often dumped anywhere, and in order to reach them one must go up to one's knees in a quagmire. I have asked the Minister to erect some kind of a station there, and to appoint an officer. The reply he gave, however, was vague. Another matter of importance to this part of the State is the question of establishing a townsite at

Pemberton. The whole of the group settlements in that part are linked up with Pemberton, and there is no townsite of any description. I would like to know why the Government are continuing to block the erection of that townsite. Are they not aware that there are many people at Pemberton who are looking for accommodation? Pemberton is the geographical centre of the whole of the group settlements.

The Minister for Railways: The railway runs through Pemberton.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Is it not possible to proclaim a townsite? Why do not the Government do so? It must be because they have State monopolies there and because they are getting big rents from the billiard rooms and barber's shops. What do they get? I suppose about £9 or £10 a week from those places. That must be the reason why they have not proclaimed a townsite. One cannot get accommodation at Pemberton, let alone a drink. Everybody, including the group settlements, must go to the State store for all their requirements, and we know that the store there is one of the adjuncts of the State sawmills. It will be remembered that I presented a petition to Parliament signed by everyone at Pemberton asking the Government to proclaim a townsite there, and I flourished the petition just as a predecessor of mine once flourished a dingo skin in this Chamber. I urge again that the townsite be proclaimed. In fact, it must be proclaimed. As a matter of fact, I believe that the Government do intend to proclaim a townsite and that they propose to call it Barronhurst. This will probably be three or four miles on the Bridgetown side of Pemberton. If it is established there it will not serve anybody. The Premier in his policy speech referred to the necessity for a Redistribution of Seats Bill. Undoubtedly such a measure is required, but I do hope that before making the redistribution, whether it is made through commissioners or from the floor of the House, the Premier will bring the rolls up to date. To-day the Electoral Department is in a deplorable condition. I can say that authoritatively, because in my district I know of many people who have lived there for years but are not on the roll, and also of people who are dead but whose names are still on the roll. I trust the Premier will, if necessary, revert to the old system of having the rolls kept by the police; or else that he will adopt the Commonwealth system, although I have no sympathy with Commonwealth officers taking our affairs out of our hands. Nevertheless, the Commonwealth has a better system than we have. It pays on results. Many of our electoral officers are old civil servants and do not care for results, but draw their salaries month after month and rarely look at the rolls. A matter on which I wish to congratulate the Minister for Agriculture is

his action regarding tick cattle introduced into the South-West. Originally the Minister thought that tick would not live in the cold parts of the South-West, but that as soon as the first rains came along the tick would die. In the past a dairy herd in the South-West was lost through tick, and that winter was more severe than the present one. At present we have tick in the South-West and at Manjimup. What is the use of establishing the dairy industry on our group settlements if we allow tick to be imported into the South-West? It would be better for us to pay two or three times the present price for meat than to bring the tick into the South-West from the North, where it belongs. At first the Minister for Agriculture ridiculed the possibility of tick living in the South-West, but upon proof being brought to his notice he sent an officer to investigate. I feel sure that as the result of that investigation the Government will frame a regulation debarring northern cattle from being brought to the South-West. In connection with cattle, I draw attention to the failure of the late Government to make provision for stocking the group settlements with decent cattle. The present Minister for Agriculture is, however, to be congratulated on his action in supplying every group settler with a cow and a pig. It was a big thing for the group settlers, and a thing which I have been striving, unsuccessfully, for a long time to get. As regards stocking the groups with cattle, when there was a drought in New South Wales and we had a bountiful season, I urged the then Minister for Agriculture to send an officer to New South Wales to buy dairy stock. The Minister replied, "We are making every provision for that." I do not believe that any provision was made. The proper course is to get good pedigree cattle for the groups. The Dardanup estate, which the Government bought and then unfortunately passed on, would have been very suitable for a stud farm. However, there are other estates obtainable cheaply which can carry good bulls and young heifers; and the progeny could gradually be passed on to the group settlers. Failing the adoption of this plan, the Government will have to go into the market for dairy cows; and when people know the Government are buying, they put up the price by at least 50 per cent. I believe the agricultural societies would take charge of the stock for nothing; otherwise an estate or two could be bought for the purpose. Unless we breed up good herds, the group settlements will prove a failure from the aspect of dairying. No doubt these are matters which will receive attention from the Royal Commission to inquire into group settlement.

The Minister for Lands: We are not going to wait for that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am pleased to hear it. I shall do the best I can to assist the Government. There are various Government measures foreshadowed on which perhaps I shall have a few words to say. A subject on which I could speak for hours is the marketing of our products. In the South-West we realise that we have a local market in respect of the goods now being imported from the Eastern States; but we have no market for our fruit. In that connection the extension of the Bunbury harbour will be a great help. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) told us recently that the Westralian Farmers Ltd. and the co-operative movement had proved a great boon to the people of Western Australia. Undoubtedly that is the case. Co-operation resembles unionism, and must be good. But when the member for Guildford told us that the Westralian Farmers Ltd. had nothing whatever to do with the Country Party, I had to contradict him, because I knew he was wrong. I pay a tribute to the Westralian Farmers Ltd. for what they have done to further the co-operative movement. That movement has already been of great benefit to the farmers, and will continue to benefit them. However, when a section of the farmers get together and say that they are the only "diakum" Country Party, and that other men representing country electors are not country party and take no interest in the farmers, I say that is a very narrow view. Every one of us is here to do the best he can for all sections of the community; otherwise he is not fit to sit in this Chamber. I did not win my seat on the Country Party ticket; I won my seat because the electors of Nelson thought, when I went up again this time, that I was the best representative they could get. Every section of the community will receive from me as much assistance as I can possibly render. I thank hon. members for the very fair hearing which has been given me.

Mr. HERON (Leonora) [5.20]: I shall take my cue from the member for Menzies (Mr. Pantou) and not detain the House long. In moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply that hon. member said he thought members should cut their speeches as short as possible. At the outset let me congratulate members occupying the Treasury bench on their accession to office. I have already congratulated them personally, but I should like to congratulate them also here on the floor of this Chamber. I have worked with most of the present Ministers for a number of years, in perhaps a different sphere from that which is theirs to-day. I know those gentlemen to be sincere and conscientious. From what they have done in

the past for the organisations to which they belonged, it is certain that they will give of their best to the country which to-day they control. Being the representative of a small section of the people of this great State, a section far distant from the seat of government, I hardly know how to make the voice of my constituency heard. However, the Premier has given us to understand that he will not have much cash to spend. About two-thirds of the members who have already spoken have each of them asked for about a million of money to be spent in his electorate, and so I hardly know whether it is worth while for me to request the expenditure of public funds in my constituency. I assure Ministers that at present I am not asking any special concessions for my electors. I realise, however, that when a request reaches me from my district and I have occasion to go with it before a Minister, fair consideration will be extended to it. I have once more to congratulate the members of the Government, and especially the Minister for Works, on the speedy action taken in connection with the 44-hour week. We knew at the outset that if the Ministry dealt with that question, they would receive knocks from all over the State. However, the party to which we belong stand for the 44-hour week. Now I wish briefly to state the conditions that have arisen in the pastoral industry around out-back centres. It is freely stated that mining is dead; but that is not my opinion, nor that of members who represent mining interests. However, in my electorate of Leonora, and also in the Menzies electorate and right through to the Murchison, we have another industry that has developed and is developing very fast—the pastoral industry. A few years ago one could travel through the area covered by those electorates and see only a few head of cattle running; but in the very near future we shall see there, instead of a few hundreds of cattle, many thousands of sheep. Starting from Menzies one reaches the property of Mr. Elliott, which within the last few months has been sold to a South Australian company at a big figure. Before the company attempt to stock, they intend to spend about £20,000 in developing the land, in sinking wells, and in agreeing dog-proof fencing. A few days ago I had the opportunity of going through that property, and on every side I saw men engaged in the work of development. Within the next year or so instead of that property carrying a few head of cattle, it will be carrying tens of thousands of sheep. The railway to Leonora runs right through the property. Adjoining Elliott's, now owned by the South Australian Co., we have Laffer's property, recently purchased by Mr. L. Wilkie. He also is spending a vast amount of money in improving the property as a preliminary to stocking it with sheep. On the east side of the line is part of Horan Bros'. Glenora property, now owned by the Mr. Malcolm Pastoral Co. For the last three

years they have been shearing up there. Two years ago they had a lot of sheep overlanded from the North. Despite the fact that in travelling down from the North the sheep became infested with road tip, the wool from those sheep brought 6d. per lb. more than the wool from the sheep left on the northern property. So it will be seen that we have up there a pastoral country of great value. On the west side of the line there is another part of the Glenora property, bought by Robertson Bros. two years ago. They put in dog-proof fencing and ran about 4,000 head of sheep. Less than six months ago the property again changed hands, passing this time to Nicholls, of South Australia. He got rid of 2,000 head of sheep and is now spending a large sum of money getting ready to stock up again with improved strains. He assures me that he expects to have in two years' time, 10,000 head of sheep on the property. He is interested in a station in South Australia, and is bringing stud sheep across from there. Leaving Leonora and going along the Lawlers road, we have Willis' property, a very valuable one. At present he is running only a few sheep, just so many as he requires for his butchering business, but he assures me that in the near future he will put in dog-proof fencing with a view to running large numbers of sheep. Those members who visited Leonora nine months ago will remember Kennedy's station, Sturt Meadows. Kennedy has been running cattle but, like the rest of the pastoralists in the district, he has realised that sheep are the better proposition, so he is turning his property into sheep country, using miles and miles of dog-proof fencing. When we visited his place last October, he told the party that he had on his property between 50 and 60 wells, varying in depth from 5ft. to 108ft., or an average of 40ft. Almost in any part of that property good water is available, a lot of it potable and the rest quite satisfactory for stock. Anyone who knows anything about stock-raising will realise the value of so magnificent a water supply. The well at the homestead on Sturt Meadows is only 13 feet deep, but those members who visited the property in October will agree that it contains water of the highest quality. On the other side a property, held until recently by Bissett, has changed hands and is now owned by a South Australian company. Only three weeks ago they shifted all the cattle off it and are now busy fencing. Within 12 months or two years it will be all stocked with sheep. So I could go right on through my electorate and those of Mr. Chesson and Mr. Marshall. However, I do not wish to detain the House. My object is merely to draw attention to what is taking place right in the heart of the mining areas. This development is going to mean a great deal to our railway revenue, for in addition to all the station requisites that must be carried by rail, there will be the wool as back loading. So even if mining should become still fur-

ther depressed there will be great pastoral development in that part of the State. Of course in between the larger properties I have mentioned we have smaller properties held by men who have not the capital to fully develop them. So important do I regard the industry that I have no hesitation in suggesting that the Government should assist those smaller men to prepare their holdings and stock them with sheep. This would serve to make the industry in that district a very great asset to the State. We have miles of rails running through that district, and when mining dies out, if it ever does, there will be very little railway freight beyond that of sandalwood; so it behoves us to do anything we can to hasten on the development of the pastoral industry up there. One aspect of the question should appeal to the Minister for Lands. We understand that he requires a large number of horses for the group settlers. I know from personal observation and from reports in the Press, that there are up there hundreds of horses of just that handy type required by the group settlers. The owners of those horses assure me that it does not pay to muster them and send them down here, because, after the paying of heavy railway freights and the agents' fees, very little return is left for the pastoralist. I suggest that the Government should approach the owners of those horses and make arrangements to secure the animals at a low price with a view to sending them to the group settlements. The pastoralists, I know, are prepared to meet the Government in this. We are importing horses from the Eastern States while shooting hundreds up there on the stations.

The Minister for Lands: How would it pay the group settlers to have those particular horses?

Mr. HERON: From personal interviews with the pastoralists, I know they are prepared to sell the horses to the Government at a reasonable figure.

Mr. Taylor: I could put the Minister on to 200 or 300 head at not more than £3 or £4 each.

Mr. HERON: I could do the same. To bring the horses down to the group settlements represents nothing more than a book-keeping entry between one Government department and another.

The Minister for Lands: Are those horses broken?

Mr. Taylor: Yes.

Mr. Hughes: Can they trot?

Mr. HERON: Yes, and gallop, too. If the Government are prepared to take them, the horses could be secured cheaply. Their carriage means only a transfer from one State department to another.

The Minister for Lands: No, it means transferring them from a private individual to the State.

Mr. HERON: I am sure those horses could be put on the group settlements at from £14 to £15 per head. The pastoralists are shooting them, because they do not pay to market

in the ordinary way. If the Government would take delivery of them as they are required, and send them to the group settlements, it would represent a considerable saving to the department concerned, and in turn to the settlers. I am not going to indulge in carping criticism about the low railway freights on superphosphate for the farmers, any more than I am going to gird at the heavy railway freights charged in my electorate. The railways can apparently afford to carry superphosphate to Malcolm for 14s. a ton, and could bring wheat back as 13s. a ton. A man who desires to start the sheep industry up there requires miles of dog-proof fencing, but it would cost him 47s. 5d. to land his wire there by the truck. It would also cost him £8 1s. per ton to send his wool back. Surely the Government could reduce the freight on wire and wool. Probably there is not a very big tonnage of wool, but it is just as necessary to keep the sheep industry going as it is to support the wheat industry.

The Minister for Lands: Probably there is not so much profit on the other.

Mr. HERON: Even if the freight on wool were allowed to stand, the freight on wire should surely be reduced.

Mr. Taylor: It is too expensive now.

Mr. HERON: When a pastoralist wants to send down horses or cattle, it costs him £29 a bogie truck. The pastoralists in my district are struggling along. If the Government can assist them to develop their industry, as well as assist mining, it will confer a great benefit upon the State. I have received a letter from a lad of 15, whose father died just before the visit of the Parliamentary party to Leonora and Wiluna, and who was left a property of some 35,000 to 40,000 acres about 40 miles away from his neighbours. He is running about 35 head of cattle, 10 horses, and has a mob of goats of good class. I expect the Premier and other members will recollect the case. The boy has spent all his life in the district and has never been to school. When I was passing through his property a few weeks ago I found him living all alone. When I called there was a foreman from an adjacent lease with him. The only time he has any company is when he sees that foreman, either on his own place or on the adjoining place.

Mr. Taylor: Is there not an old chap with the boy now?

Mr. HERON: No. The boy could not tell me what he was going to do, because the property is still in the hands of the solicitors. There is no chance of matters being fixed up for a time. I told him if he intended to leave I would do whatever I could to help him. The letter I have received will show that, in spite of his lack of education, he is able to write well. It is as follows:—

Just a few lines to ask you if you are still willing to help me as you were when we last met. You know I have a small place here with some cattle on it,

but as cattle will not thrive in this country they are of no use. Sheep are things that do well here, and everyone here is going in for them. What I ask of you is, will you or your Government let me have enough financial aid to enable me to fence and stock it with sheep? I know this is a lot to ask from you, but I hope you will grant me the request I am here asking. Hoping to have your early reply, and that you will not think this letter too absurd to answer, I remain, Yours gratefully, Ben McLernon, Nuendah Station, Mount Keith and Wiluna Road.

This letter shows the class of lad he is. I have tried to get rid of the property for him. Unfortunately, he is too young to warrant the Premier in assisting him. I hope something can be done for him. I congratulate the Minister for Agriculture upon the prompt action he took in dealing with the dingo pest. Last session a Bill came before this House for the granting of a uniform bonus for dingo scalps throughout the State. Because of one clause that was inserted by the ex-Minister for Agriculture, the Legislative Council would not pass the Bill and it was dropped. This has left the vermin boards in a very unfortunate position. One board that had paid £1 per scalp for dingoes was rendered practically bankrupt. It had paid the £1 per head, and expected the Government to raise the bonus from 5s. to 10s. The ex-Minister for Agriculture, however, did not deal with the matter, and it has remained for the present Minister to take prompt action. He has now stated that the Government are prepared to raise the bonus from 5s. to 10s.

Mr. Taylor: It ought to be £1 a head.

Mr. HERON: The vermin boards and the pastoralists are raising the other 10s., which brings the bonus up to £1 a head.

Mr. Taylor: All boards should be on the same basis.

Mr. HERON: That may be so. I understand that, in the case of any road board district that is prepared to form a vermin board, the Government are prepared to increase the bonus in the way I have indicated. Although the party to which I belong is said to be opposed to pastoralists and farmers, shortly after the Government took office this important matter was promptly dealt with. Most of us realise the benefits that accrue to the State from the pastoral industry, and feel that assistance should also be rendered to it where necessary. I wish now to deal with the sandalwood monopoly, as it is called.

Mr. Taylor: It is not that now. That propaganda has done its duty.

Mr. HERON: The position is not satisfactory.

Mr. Latham: It is giving satisfaction to the old pullers up our way.

Mr. HERON: That may be so, but there are very few who can get any wood to pull. It is giving satisfaction to one or

two, but there are dozens of pullers who never get an order.

Mr. Latham: There is some difficulty about getting registered.

Mr. HERON: They are all registered.

Mr. Taylor: There are too many.

Mr. HERON: It is not worth their while becoming registered, because they have to go to the monopoly for an order before they can go into the bush. No new orders are being issued to make it worth their while. To-night I received a letter from a man who has been given an order for four tons. Some 12 months ago I pointed out that once the tender had been accepted, all kinds of things would occur to the detriment of the men in the outback centres, whose voices cannot be heard in their own interests, and I suggested that they would be felled in all kinds of ways.

Mr. Panton: So they are.

Mr. Taylor: I do not think the hon. member was quite correct in his statement.

Mr. Panton: Correct in what respect?

Mr. Taylor: In regard to your prices of sandalwood.

Mr. HERON: He was correct. It is said that the sandalwood is not of fair average quality. If a firm can say that, it can pay any price it likes. I have said before that if this kind of thing is to go on, the sandalwood pullers should have a representative down here to watch their interests. Those who get a chance to pull sandalwood are prepared to pay their quota towards such representation. The ex-Minister for Forests made a great feature about setting aside 750 tons of sandalwood for prospectors. He was told at the time that this was of no use. That is now discovered to be the case. Applications were invited from prospectors who desired to be registered, and who wished to take up a portion of the 750 tons. There were so many applicants that the proportion worked out at 1½ tons per man.

Mr. Taylor: The applicants included publicans, pastoralists, storekeepers, and so on.

Mr. HERON: The hon. member was behind the late Government, and will doubtless support that party now. He knows that the prospectors could not come in under that head. Even the police were sent out to make inquiries as to whether the men were genuine prospectors or not.

Mr. Taylor: I was not aware of that.

Mr. HERON: The hon. member should not speak out of his turn.

Mr. Taylor: I am not doing so.

Mr. HERON: I am talking about things I understand. I never bring anything before the House without first making the necessary inquiries. I have been to the Mines Department and have seen the names that were submitted, and I know the conditions that were laid down before permits were granted. I also know what the hon. member is sore about. This matter was brought against him during the election campaign.

Mr. Latham: He was returned to Parliament all the same.

Mr. HERON: He had not too much to spare.

Mr. Taylor: Go for your life.

Mr. HERON: The hon. member is an old campaigner. I am talking facts. When the applications came in they had to go before the Mines Department for recommendation. The department sent them out to the registrars, the police and the inspectors of mines, to ascertain whether the applicants were bona fide prospectors. The proportions worked out at $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per man.

Mr. Taylor: I do not contradict that statement.

Mr. HERON: The Conservator of Forests realised that this proportion was of no use to anyone. No man could send down less than four tons of wood in a truck. After an interview between the Conservator and the Mines Department the proportions were made up to four tons per man, and that is the position to-day. The letter I have is from a man who got the four tons. He did not get that until he had written to me and I had been to the Conservator. He has his permit, but he could not get an order from any firm.

Mr. Taylor: I have a dozen letters like that, and I cannot get a load for anyone.

Mr. HERON: The regulations are not satisfactory to those who are pulling. The letter from the prospector in question is as follows:—

Your letter of the 30th inst. to hand, with many thanks for same. I note the enclosed letter from Conservator of Forests. Since writing you last I received an order for four tons. Now, as you know, sandalwood is pulled out for many miles around, and we have to go a long way out to get wood, and we cannot get teams to go out for four tons unless we give half of what we are getting. That means that we have to work for nothing.

What is the good of an order for four tons to the prospector? I have in mind the prospector who has been working a show and is low in funds, and therefore wants to pull a few tons of sandalwood. He does not come under this arrangement, according to the definition which has been given to me by the department. I am informed that the men who previously pulled sandalwood can still pull sandalwood if he gets an order from the monopoly. The sandalwood industry seems to be tied up for a few months yet; but I hope the Government will see that the industry is not tied up longer. The Conservator of Forests has pointed out that the men complained to him that the old pullers were getting all the orders. He said that was as it should be. I would not stand for that, and I said so in this Chamber before the monopoly was granted. If some of the men who have been working for years in our mines want to go sandalwood pulling in

order to get their lungs free of dust, they should be granted permits. We are not going to have a monopoly for the buyers, nor for the pullers either.

Mr. Taylor: Let there be open play and free competition, and see how you get on.

Mr. HERON: I made my position plain when I spoke on this subject before.

Mr. Latham: You say now there is some good in the arrangement.

Mr. HERON: I say so now, and I said so then. But those who want to go out pulling should not be restricted. If there were no buyers for the wood, the pullers would have to go back to their previous occupation, and so the position would regulate itself.

Mr. Taylor: The price is fixed, and also the quantity to be pulled. The trouble is that there are too many desiring to pull.

Mr. HERON: The opposite side of the House almost invariably looks to the law of supply and demand, but in this instance the Opposition do not want to let that law operate. The position would have regulated itself.

Mr. Latham: Surely you do not want us to cut out all the sandalwood in a few years?

Mr. HERON: That cannot happen if only a small quantity is required annually. A man who cannot sell sandalwood is not going to pull it. The member for York (Mr. Latham) cannot come at me with that. Turning from sandalwood, I come to mining. Just now there is a big stir because of a Labour Government taking possession of the Treasury bench, and everybody connected with mining thinks the Labour Ministers can turn everything upside down in a day. Those Ministers cannot do all that is asked, but they can do, and will do, a good deal to assist mining. They have already shown themselves sympathetic towards the mining industry by reducing the price of water in various centres. I trust that the money which the redemption represents will be used for development of the mines. That is not so in all cases. Some of the money so saved has gone to pay increased fees to directors. I shall deal more fully with that point later. When I spoke on last year's Mines Estimates, my electorate was under a cloud. Its chief mine, the Sons of Gwalia, was closed owing to the unfortunate fire of 1921. However, the mine was re-opened on the 20th October of last year. I take this opportunity of thanking those hon. members who visited it upon its re-opening. I fancy it must have been an eye-opener to some members to see the conditions under which people live in the outback centres, and, on the other hand, to see the extremely capable manner in which the mine is managed. The fact that the mine is working to-day is due solely to the efficient management. People who know the mining industry do not need to be told what it means to a centre to have 200 or 300 wages men working there. If we had more mines man-

aged as capably and economically as the Sons of Gwalia, there would be a very long life for mining in Western Australia. Just after the fire, I said, the local management were most anxious to re-open the mine, but the London directors were not prepared to face the cost involved, as they realised that the ore was of low grade and that the installation of a new plant would prove expensive. Fortunately for my district, there was in London at that time a man who had been attorney for the Sons of Gwalia Company here; I refer to Mr. W. A. McLeod. That gentleman, backed up by Mr. Klug and the local management, succeeded in getting the mine re-opened. One of my opening remarks was that some people were convinced that mining is down and out; but from every newspaper we learn of new developments all over the State. One that is attracting a great deal of attention was mentioned in yesterday's newspapers—a find in the Cue electorate, indeed almost in the town of Cue. Carlson and Son crushed 67 tons for a yield of 897 ozs. I am quite sure that there are many shows of great value yet to be found in this State. Then there is the district formerly known as Ivan Jones' Find, and now known as Mount Gray. This also is in the Cue electorate, although all the traffic goes through Leonora. About six weeks ago there were reports from a number of prospectors who had been sent out with Government assistance, to the effect that they had found gold in that district. Since then the men who were assisted have paid back nearly all the money lent by the Government, and the leases are being opened up. As late as last Saturday I was in the Leonora district, and there I saw prospectors who had just returned from the new find. They told me the surface indications were those of a very good chance. As mining men are aware, one cannot tell from surface indications what the mines are going to be; but in this case the surface indications appear to be excellent. A man who showed me some specimen stone said that his party were not yet through the lode, but that it looked highly promising. A little further east there is excellent development on Thompson's lease; and on my return to Perth I received a report confirming the statements of the prospectors. Six weeks ago that country was practically uninhabited, except for a few travellers on pastoral country. To-day in that one centre alone there are 30 or 40 men; a store has been opened, and there is a weekly mail service with Lawlers. If we could open up a few good goldfields, this State would become populated very quickly. It is realised, of course, that a number of those on the new finds have shifted from Kalgoorlie and other centres; but a large-scale mining development will attract population from all parts of the world. Seeing that we are opening up various fields, the Government will no doubt do their utmost to assist mining as much as possible.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. HERON: At the tea adjournment I was dealing with the development of the outside mining centres. I had referred to the economies effected that extended the life of the Sons of Gwalia mine. By a strange and sad coincidence, Mr. Beech, one of the men who played an important part in effecting those economies, was the engineer on the mine, and although it was only an hour or so ago that I referred to the matter, I regret to say that as I went to tea this evening I was handed a telegram intimating that that gentleman had passed away. Many members were personally acquainted with Mr. Beech and knew his sterling worth. His death represents a loss to the State and to the Leonora district in particular. Regarding the developments at Mt. Gray, although that centre is in the electorate represented by the member for Cue (Mr. Chesson), all the traffic passes through Leonora. Because of that, the people in my electorate are more interested in the developments than are those represented by the member for Cue. If developments prove that good mines exist there, the Wiluna railway, if constructed, should proceed from Leonora.

Mr. Holman: There is better country in the other direction.

Mr. HERON: No, there is not. Before urging the Government to extend further assistance to the mining industry, it is necessary, to a certain extent at any rate, to take stock to ascertain where we stand. Labour members have always advocated greater assistance being given to companies to assist in the development of the mining centres generally. A reduction in the price of water for the mines was urged particularly by the members representing electorates in and around Kalgoorlie, but before we go further with that question it is necessary to ascertain the true position. As indicating what I mean, I will draw the attention of hon. members to a report of the annual meeting, held in London, of shareholders of the Lake View and Star mine. It is interesting to note from that report that while Labour members agitated in favour of a reduction in the price of water, reduced railway freights and so on in order to extend the life of the mine, in this instance the shareholders saw fit to increase the salaries paid to the company's directors. This, too, when the Labour members have been concerned about the rates received by men on and below the bread line. The paragraph I refer to in the report of the annual meeting of the Lake View and Star mine, which appeared in the "West Australian" of the 7th August, read as follows:—

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the report, addressed the meeting at considerable length and dealt in detail with the accounts and principal developments. In the course of his remarks he said he was pleased to be able to report

that the outlook with regard to their property was much brighter than it had been for some time past. The reasons for this were the satisfactory and efficient manner in which the new plant had been running and the recent good developments at the 1,680ft. intermediate level. He would like to say how greatly they appreciated the action of the Western Australian Government in reducing the price of water from 7s. to 3s. per thousand gallons. The saving in the cost of water, together with the reduction of 1s. 6d. per shift in the basic wage—

That is another point—

—resulting from the recent Arbitration Award, would have the effect of bringing into payable reserve a considerable quantity of low-grade ore which hitherto could not be profitably treated. During the year the ore reserves had increased by 8,000 tons to a total of 235,407 tons, and the value of the total tonnage had increased from 27.95 shillings to 28.71 shillings per ton. . . .

This is where the sting comes in again from the Labour man's point of view—

The report was adopted and a resolution voting the directors £1,000 as additional remuneration was approved.

Mr. Holman: That is called "greasing the fatted pig."

Mr. HERON: While we have been advocating the claims of those who work for a wage that is below what I regard as a living wage, and while the Government have agreed to reductions in order to enable the mine to carry on, the shareholders can see their way clear to increase the directors' salaries by £1,000! This clearly demonstrates the necessity for taking stock of the position. It would not be fair to cut off support to companies that are genuinely trying to effect economies merely because other companies take advantage of a reduction in the basic wage and of decreased freights and charges, to increase the salaries of the directors. While not penalising the companies who are endeavouring to effect economies, some means of dealing with those companies who do not act fairly should be devised. Although the Government have been in office for a short period, considerable attention has been given to the mining industry with a view to lowering treatment costs so as to enable ores that cannot be profitably dealt with now, to be turned into payable propositions. The price of water has been reduced in two or three centres and I wish to compliment the Minister who controls the goldfields water supply branch on the way he has dealt with this matter. While the manager of the mine was pleased with the reduction, he was not so pleased with the proviso that was added. I trust the Minister will see his way to do away with the proviso. The decreased price of water was granted but the proviso set out that the mines would have to pay for a certain minimum daily supply, whether

they used the water or not. The result has been that since the decrease in the price of water, the managements have found that, because of the proviso, they have to pay more for their supplies than formerly. This is a matter that should receive the early consideration of the Minister. During the election campaign the Premier, in the course of his policy speech at Boulder, said he was prepared to go into the question of railway freights to ascertain if it was possible to reduce them. I know the Government have given this matter consideration to ascertain if they can effect economies and so reduce freights to these outside centres. To show what an important part railway freights play in the working of a mine, I might mention that the train that arrived at Gwalia the day before I got there recently, brought supplies to the management of the Gwalia mine, in respect of which £100 had to be paid as freight. The next train that arrived brought further supplies and the management had another bill for £150 for freight. That shows the big effect those freights have on the cost of mining in Western Australia. I hope the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Mines will confer with a view to ascertaining if freights cannot be reduced. The Eulamiinna copper mine has been closed down because the railway freights were increased to a figure that could not be paid by the management. At one time supplies of copper ore were taken from that mine to Cuming Smith's superphosphate works and the freight worked out at about 14s. 6d. per ton. Later on that rate was increased to 16s. 6d. per ton. Despite such a heavy charge, the management could not get the trucks if they were required anywhere else. The company had to put a new lift in the shaft, and improved their plant. They had cut out their ore reserves and that necessitated further efforts being made. The late Government, however increased the freights to 22s. 6d. per ton with the result that the mine was closed down and from 15 to 20 men who were working there, were thrown out of employment. The Government lost the freight that was earned by trucks that otherwise came to Perth empty. Men employed at Cuming Smith's works were put off because of the lack of ore supplies, and the result is that the product necessary for the manufacture of superphosphate has had to be imported. I know the Minister for Mines is sympathetic and wishes to assist the industry, and I hope he will be able to render some assistance in this matter. I would also like to refer to the Comet Vale mine. I know the Government are making inquiries to see whether they can assist that concern and I appreciate the keen interest the Minister for Mines is taking in the matter. Coming to the question of State batteries, hon. members will agree that those conveniences have proved of great assistance in opening up mining centres. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to have the batteries put on an up to

date basis so that one may be dealt with to the best advantage. Some three years ago the then Minister for Mines called for tenders for the lease of the State battery in the Leonora district. The people there were not inclined to allow a State battery to fall into the hands of any one individual, for they knew that in such circumstances the conditions would be satisfactory. Under such an arrangement, while they may not be actually robbed, they lose gold they would otherwise receive. We kicked up a fuss, and the battery was retained; although the Minister had practically said the battery must be either leased or closed down, we induced him to leave it and put it in order. Since then it has crushed a great deal of stone, winning considerable wealth for the State. If only the cost of living could be reduced, there would soon be a large number of workers in that district. Probably we should be able to crush our ore at a lower price if a reform were instituted by the amalgamation of the two offices, inspector of batteries and inspector of mines. In districts where we have inspectors of mines stationed we could do without battery inspectors. Most of the mining inspectors are highly capable men, and since they have to travel over the same route as the battery inspectors they could very well attend to both duties. In one instance up our way the inspector of mines goes through on one day, and the inspector of batteries on the next. This, of course, means the cost of two motor cars and two men where one would do. It is a question the Minister could well consider. The Minister has been asked to appoint a mining engineer and metallurgist with a view to effecting economies. I hope that if the Minister does decide upon such an appointment he will not let the question of salary stand in the way of his getting a good man. Only a few days ago I was speaking to a highly capable man of wide experience, one who has been the means of lengthening the lives of some of our mines. That is the sort of man we want in such a post. We should endeavour to secure from the Federal Government a bonus on gold. If by that means the price of gold were raised a little, we should have working a good many shows lying idle to-day because they are just below the profit line. I should like to say a word about the condition of our public buildings. Of course, the present Government have not yet had a chance to even look at them, let alone decide upon improvements. For a number of years past have our public buildings been neglected. Some in outback districts can only be described as a disgrace to any Government. We often hear complaints of money wasted in the effecting of repairs. On a previous occasion I related in the House that, on learning of a well that required cleaning out, the Water Supply Department sent a man 200 miles to clean it out and, of course, 200 miles to return. Since then the ex-Minister for Works has put a number of wells under the local authorities. When the necessity for repairs to a Government building is reported, an in-

spector is sent along to view the job, notwithstanding that frequently the cost of sending him there exceeds the cost of repairs. Not very long ago a storm in a district away up North blew down part of the school and some buildings at the State battery. The battery manager, a capable man, was able to procure iron in the district and at small cost effect the necessary repairs to be battery buildings. Having finished that job, and seeing the condition of the school, he made an offer to the Education Department to repair their building also. He had the materials there, and the job would have cost only £50. However, the Education Department or the Works Department, whichever was responsible, could not have an officer of the State Batteries Department doing their work. So they sent an inspector to report on the job. Apart altogether from the value of his train fare, his motor fare from the railway to the town cost £9, and the trip kept him away for a week. Incredible as it may seem, he went three trips to that job before a nail was driven! So it cost £27 in motor fares with three weeks' away-from-home expenses before a hammer was raised.

The Minister for Works: When was that?

Mr. HERON: Actually the job was done since the appointment of the present Minister, but it ought to have been finished before the elections. People outback become disgusted with the unnecessary piling up of expenses by the sending of costly inspectors to look into every little job that is required to be done. The repairing of that school would have cost less than the expenses of the three trips put in by the inspector. Another thing, the man who got the contract lived in Leonora. There is nothing against that, except that he had to travel a long journey to and fro, taking a labourer with him and paying the coach fare for both. All that of course, had to be added to the cost of the job. Another feature of that particular job: the battery manager who wanted to do the job in the first place had his material at hand, whereas the department that eventually did the work brought timber 110 miles from Lawlers. Now it is bad enough to think of the cost of transporting that timber 110 miles, but the real objection raised by the people of the district was on the score that the material carried all that way and put into the school building was taken from a stable that had been in active occupation by animals for 20 years past. It is not possible for the Minister to journey to every small centre in the State, and so I regard it as our duty to bring under his notice little things like these that come within our personal knowledge. Education is of the utmost importance to people living in outback districts. The youth of those districts are entitled to the best education the State can give them. Before we had the disastrous fire at the Sons of Gwalia mine we had in Leonora continuation classes.

However, after the fire a number of families had to leave the district, thus reducing the school attendance below the number necessary for the maintenance of continuation classes. To-day we have again on the mine 350 men, as against 80 or 100 a year ago, and there are now quite a lot of lads and girls in the district. I hope that if, as the result of our representations, the Minister for Education should come to the Treasurer for a grant for continuation classes at Leonora, the Treasurer will accede to the request. The Government should take steps to see that the State is better advertised in our schools. There are many people who have been reared on the gold-fields, in the South-West, or in the farming areas and have not had an opportunity to visit other parts of the State. On the gold-fields are many men and women born and bred there who have not been able to see anything more of the State than was visible from the train during a trip to Perth. If the department could make available views depicting the agricultural, dairy, and timber areas, for display on the school walls, it would be an important factor in the education of the children. Many fine views are displayed in the Tourist Bureau, and I understand the negatives are available at the Government Printing Office, so that my request should be capable of being met at very little cost. Associated with nearly every school is an organisation of parents and citizens, who have working-bees on Saturday afternoons and do what they can to brighten the schools. On Saturday last there was a busy bee 50 strong at the Gwalia school. If views of the State were provided in the schools as I have suggested, they would be a means of education to many of the parents also. The children are taught about many things outside the State, but they are taught altogether too little about the activities of the people within the State. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) said he did not have any roads that required attention.

Mr. Davy: I said it was a matter for the City Council.

Mr. HERON: Application for assistance was made to the previous Government on behalf of my district, but we received no consideration. I trust the Minister for Works will see that my district is not overlooked when the Federal grant is allocated. If something could be done to reduce the cost of living, it should make possible the working of many low grade mines. The price of bread has been increased from 5½d. to 6d. per loaf in the city, and from 6d. to 7d. on the fields, while meat is as high as 1s. 9d. per lb. I had an argument with a butcher the other day and he said it was not correct that meat was 1s. 9d., but he admitted that he was selling it at 1s. 6d. With the reduction in wages, such increases in the prices of necessary commodities make it impossible for people in the outside districts to live in reasonable comfort. We

want people to go out into the back country, and we do all we can to encourage them to go out, but it is impossible for them to live on the basic wage with commodities at their present high prices. I hope the Minister controlling the Wyndham Meat Works will make provision in future to keep a check on the price of meat at this season of the year. To show that the people in my district are doing all they can to check any increase in the price of commodities, there is a strong co-operative society at Gwalia which, if it has not been able to reduce the cost of commodities, has certainly prevented them from rising to any extent. If customers pay a little too much on one item, they are recompensed in the form of a bonus at the end of the half year. The society is paying 8½ per cent. on money invested by shareholders. It has gone so far as to provide amusements for the shareholders and make a playground for the children. The playground is equipped with swings and merry-go-rounds, together with a small pool for paddling. It was impossible to have a swimming pool, but the society did the next best thing by providing a paddling pool. The pool is surrounded by lawns, and altogether the playground is a very attractive spot. Recently the Minister was asked to assist by reducing the price of water, and I believe he has been able to meet the request. On behalf of the co-operative people of Gwalia, I thank him for that assistance. I mention this to show how people in the out-back districts do try to help themselves. I am satisfied that the Government will be willing to help, so far as they can, miner, mine owner, pastoralist, and all who are seeking to keep the outside districts going.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [8.9]: I am pleased to be back in the House after an absence of seven years, and renew old acquaintances and, I hope, make many new friends. Looking around the House, I notice a great change in the personnel on both sides. When I tell members that during my three years I saw three Governments come and go, they will understand that times then were not too quiet.

Mr. Latham: That is the kind of government we like.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: But on this occasion I think we shall have a more peaceful time.

Mr. Latham: There is plenty of time ahead, you know.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I have the usual budget of local matters to which I wish to direct attention, but before dealing with them I want to mention the I.A.B., which in my electorate is a matter of considerable interest and has been for a long time. I was in the House 10 years ago when the Scaddan Government introduced the Bill for the inauguration of the I.A.B., and I claim that my comrades of this small party, who were in no greater numbers than they are to-day, took a hand and as-

sisted the Government to improve the measure. The remarks of the Minister for Lands the other night considerably relieved my mind as to the future operations of the board, more particularly as regards the treatment to be meted out to certain clients. There was considerable apprehension amongst many clients when the final notice was sent out during the regime of the previous Government that extreme measures would be taken at the end of June, because it meant that the unfortunate ones would either have to sell their farms or submit to foreclosure. I congratulate the Government on their decision to introduce a Bill giving the trustees power to write down some of the obligations of clients, and thus give them an opportunity to carry on. I would have liked the Minister to be more definite on this subject, but when the Bill comes before the House I hope he will listen to suggestions that the board may not only write down the liabilities of clients, but may shift many of the settlers to more suitable blocks.

Mr. Latham: Where would you shift them?

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: That is a problem, but the House ought to be able to find a solution. According to the figures submitted by the Minister for Lands, there are not many areas to which these people could be shifted. The present condition of many of the settlers, however, is not entirely due to their own fault. The Agricultural Bank authorities were responsible for settling many of them on unsuitable land. Mr. Richardson, head of the soldier settlement scheme, was an advocate of light land, and he insisted in many instances upon the funds of the bank being expended on the clearing of light lands. He argued that settlers could get considerably larger areas, and that the returns would be greater. That was all right for the first three or four years, as many who have had experience on that class of land are aware, but after that time settlers failed to get adequate wheat returns. This does not condemn the land for mixed farming, but unfortunately most of the areas under the I.A.B. are infested with vermin—the dingo particularly—and without provision for fencing and stocking the settlers have no hope of making good. That is responsible more than anything else for many of the I.A.B. men being down and out. Because they were not able to carry sheep as an adjunct to their farming operations they have been brought to the state in which we find them to-day. I hope when the Bill is brought down clauses will be inserted in it that will not only give power to the trustees to write down the liabilities but also power to move these clients elsewhere. Other factors have tended towards the present condition of many of the settlers. There is the late delivery of the requisites to ensure the client obtaining an adequate return from his farm. I refer particularly

to the late delivery of superphosphates. Even in the early stages of the board men complained that they could not get their requisites in time to crop the area they intended to crop. There are many instances such as that of a man who had 200 acres of fallow this year that had to stand out of crop owing to the late arrival of his super. These things must be taken into consideration by any body that is dealing with the clients of the board. On the other hand there are settlers who have made no attempt to improve their position. To them I should give short shrift. It is no use the board carrying such people, because for the most part they have shown their lack of fitness for further assistance. In many instances, too, the interest charges have been responsible for half the present indebtedness of I.A.B. settlers. I could quote a number of cases to prove that statement. Of course the payments have been spread over a long term. The debts that were originally incurred by clients to outside creditors and to the board have to-day increased by 50 per cent. because of the interest. That does not apply in all cases, but it does in many. It would be useless for the board to turn the present occupant out of his holding and put another in his place, unless there was a writing down to improve the position in some way. If this writing down was done the man who has proved his bona-fides should be given an opportunity to carry on. After all, home is home. Many of those men have reared their families on the place and have certain conveniences there they would have to build up again if they were moved everywhere. It is because of that, so many of them do not desire to leave their holdings. I fought my election on the question of group settlements in the South-West. I am not opposed to the principle of group settlements, but I am opposed to the present scheme upon the information we were able to glean from those who sponsored it. I know I shall be up against members who represent the South-West, but I happen to have the courage of my convictions on this point. From the inception no one could understand from the sponsor of the scheme what it all was.

Mr. Latham: That is not true and is most unfair.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I obtained my information from the public Press of the State.

Mr. Latham: You ought to get more reliable information.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: We have not been able to rely upon any of the information we have had in the past. The scheme was an experiment, and as such the expenditure of a huge sum of money in its initial stages was not warranted. The announcement of the Minister for

Lands that at least 1½ million is required to carry the scheme on for this year, is sufficiently startling to warrant me in supporting the proposal to appoint a Royal Commission to let daylight into the subject. My opinion is that many people are to-day battenning upon the group settlement scheme in the South-West, and are getting more money out of it than they should. The group settlers themselves are satisfied to stay on so long as the 10s. a day lasts, but the time will come when they will have to produce sufficient to meet their interest and sinking fund charges. Judging by the figures given the other night, their capitalisation is too great to enable them to meet their interest and sinking fund charges. I have yet to learn that from 25 acres of land, no matter how good it may be, a man can pay his way on the capitalisation of £2,000.

Mr. Latham: It has been done in other States, and this country is just as good.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I am not opposed to the scheme of group settlement.

Mr. Latham: But you are killing it with kindness.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: But it must be established on fair and reasonable lines. The expenditure of a large sum of money in any particular area is not warranted. I should like to see the scheme established on mixed farming lines in the wheat area, or along the Great Southern and the other railways, where there is any amount of land available at prices that would be remunerative to present owners. This would afford the settler a better life and tend towards quicker production and the better advancement of the State than the present scheme, confined as it is to the South-West. The sponsor for the scheme said, as did also the Minister for Lands, that dairying, with the allied industries, is the main principle behind it. The mixed farming areas of the State will be far more likely than the South-West to give the requisite returns if sufficient support be given to a proposal to embrace them.

Mr. Latham: Would you give the land away?

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: No. The best asset upon it was destroyed when the timber was cleaned up, instead of being used, as it could have been, for firewood purposes. The Minister for Lands gave us some figures showing the number of group settlers in these areas, the total being 2,269. Roughly 30 per cent. of those who had gone in for the scheme had either been dismissed or had abandoned it. I saw in the "West Australian" a little while ago that 50 per cent. of the Australian group settlers had taken their departure. That is another argument to prove that the proposition is not a good one. The average Australian can see at a glance what his prospects are, and I do not blame him for getting out.

Mr. Latham: There was almost complete depopulation in some of the agricultural centres, which have now been found to be amongst the best in the State.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: That may be so. The average Australian is better able to judge the suitability of an area than the average overseas settler.

Mr. North: The Minister for Lands said the scheme would succeed.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: Yes, but the Premier said we could not expect any return in interest charges from those people under 10 years. If we had expected the wheat areas to be worked on those lines, where would we be to-day? For these and other reasons I welcome the appointment of a Royal Commission, not only from the point of view of the group settlers themselves, but to clear up the question of those who are battenning upon them. I endorse the remarks of the member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) concerning the condition of the public buildings in goldfields areas. I wish to refer to the condition of State hotels. I have not seen one that does not need a good coat of paint. Particularly in the country districts, including the wheat areas, it is noticeable that the State hotels do the best business. They take no part, however, in the promotion or support of anything that has to do with charitable objects or amusements. In most other districts the hotel proprietors are very liberal, and take the lead in promoting anything that is for the welfare of the district. The managers of State hotels are handicapped in that respect, so that the hotels themselves are reaping the benefit of any local effort that is made in this direction without contributing anything towards it.

The Premier: We are going to allow them three per cents.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: Furthermore, State hotels contribute nothing towards the rates and taxes of the town or district in which they are situated. I say candidly that people in my electorate would welcome it if the State institutions were turned into private ones. I believe that would be a beneficial move, though I do not suggest it is possible. After all the interest and sinking fund charges and other expenditure that is incurred in running State hotels are met, it would be a good idea if the balance of the proceeds were made available for charitable institutions in the districts in which the State hotels are situated.

The Premier: Is that done by private hotel-keepers?

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I believe that if that were done the hotels would serve their purpose much better than they are doing it now. Generally speaking, the State hotels are merely drinking shops, though conducted on proper lines. I am not insinuating anything against the management of the State hotels. I have every respect for the managers, from whom I have

invariably received splendid treatment. Now I come to what is, in my case, a hardy annual—the agricultural college. I know the question will be decided by the present Government, but I had hoped that ere this we would have had an announcement from the Minister controlling the matter. The district I represent has always been an applicant for the facility represented by an agricultural college. I am sorry to learn there is a proposition to purchase a property for the purpose of establishing a college. That would not be an economic move, seeing we have Crown lands on which the institution can be established. The Avon estate should not be left in its present condition, which renders it an eyesore to the district. Moreover, it pays no rates and taxes, and has not been run even as an ordinary farm should be. Next I come to the enormous losses arising from what is wrongly known as the “Beverley sheep disease.” The name is a complete misnomer, because the disease did not originate in the Beverley district, having been widely prevalent in Western Australia before it was met with in the neighbourhood of Beverley. The explanation of the wrong name is that at the time the disease made its appearance in the Beverley district, that district had many prominent sheep breeders, who took the matter up at an early stage; and so the trouble was called “the Beverley sheep disease.” It retains that name to this day. The Government should cause inquiry to be made into the nature of the disease, which is responsible for enormous loss to Western Australia every year. We would be appalled if we knew the total value of the sheep succumbing to this disease in the State annually. Now I wish to refer to educational matters. I should like to see more consideration in this respect given to outback districts where there are children to be taught. Frequently the schools are not furnished with proper quarters for the teachers, and this circumstance makes it difficult for country children to obtain the necessary educational facilities. Where there are enough children to warrant the erection of a school, and where the residences of the parents are situated at an unreasonable distance from the school, suitable quarters should be provided for the teacher. The result of the present position is that there is a certain school closed in my district, and that 35 children are not receiving the education to which they are entitled. The residents of such areas are just as much entitled to education for their children as city dwellers are. While on the subject of education I wish to refer, though not in any personal sense, to the class of teacher sent to country schools. Frequently they are quite young ladies, and as all the school children are not very young, some of them know nearly as much as the teacher. The policy of the Education Department should be to keep young lady teachers here, under the eye of superior officers, and let them be brought up to the state of profici-

ency which will qualify them to be given full control of country schools. Railway matters affecting my district are the demurrage question, and the regulation which limits the carriage of super at reduced rates to a fixed period. That regulation I consider altogether a wrong move, especially as regards the areas which are not applying themselves to the production of wheat. Taking my district in particular and the Great Southern district as a whole, and without in the slightest degree decrying that portion of the State, I must point out that we cannot grow wheat in sufficient quantities to be payable, and that therefore we have to devote our attention to stock as the main business. In those areas it is not a question of using super for seeding purposes alone: super must be available during any month of the year. Those who go in for stock-raising, top-dressing, and so forth must get their super in March if they want to avail themselves of the reduced super freight; and then they are obliged to carry the super over until July or August. Those acquainted with the subject will recognise that that is not an economical proposition. The bag trouble in connection with super is in itself a vexed question among the farmers. The regulation retards progress, because after the end of March the freight on super is too heavy to permit of the economical use of super as a top-dressing. I should like to see a little more attention given to the advancement of the agricultural districts by the present Government than was given by their predecessors. Every credit is accorded to the present Leader of the Opposition in his claim that he has done much for the agricultural areas in by-gone times; but he is not entitled to all the credit he claims, because while he did take advantage of the opportunities afforded him as Minister for Lands and Premier, he has much to be thankful for in respect of the lead given to him by the pioneers before he was even thought of. I myself was farming in the central eastern areas during my boyhood, 32 years ago. There were men who blazed the track for Sir James Mitchell, and who provided the material which enabled him to base his arguments. The Opposition Leader claims that he settled the wheat areas. He helped considerably, and I give him all the credit that is due to him; but in many instances he did not follow up his policy of land settlement on the lines that were necessary. Even to-day many of those agricultural settlements lack facilities for development. Something more is required than merely settling the land. For instance, water and transport facilities have not received the necessary attention. I am anxiously awaiting the Bill which is to amend the law relating to income tax. Hitherto I have scouted and opposed any idea of land taxation, but our unfortunate financial position

puts us at the mercy of the Government if they see fit to introduce a heavy land tax.

Mr. Davy: There is another place.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I do not pin too much faith on that place. I hold that another place would pass the necessary Bill if convinced that the Government required the money in order to carry on. I hope the unimproved values of land and also the rating will be fair. The measure should also contain provision for appeals. The question has for many years been before the association of which I happen to be a banner-bearer here to-day. I believe that if a vote on land values taxation had been taken at the recent conference, the proposal would have been carried. The association has fought the proposal tooth and nail for a long time, but every year has shown an increased number of supporters. I am not wedded to any particular form of land taxation. I do not know sufficient about the principle to give an authoritative opinion; but naturally, with other land owners, I am jealous for the land, and any attempt to tax land unduly will meet with my opposition. The proposed concessions on railway freights should go a long way towards securing support for a land tax measure. I hope the concessions will be large enough to compensate land owners for what I regard as an interference with the rights of land owners. However, we cannot do away with the income tax, as that would mean penalising one section of the community and letting another section off lightly. Several members have referred to the question of wire netting. I was indeed pleased to hear the Minister for Lands in explanation of that matter the other evening. For the working of light lands an adequate and cheap supply of netting represents a solution of the problem. The areas of light land I have in mind are so situated that unless the vermin, both rabbit and dingo, are got rid of, cultivation cannot prove a success. I have the usual budget of local railways that I would bring before the House; but as my district is in the fortunate position of shortly expecting a visit from the Minister controlling railway construction, I shall say nothing upon the matter, except that I hope the Minister will see fit to give to those interested the first section of the Brookton-Armadale railway. They had been hoping for a long time, but at the tail end of last session we were fortunate in having the necessary Bill passed.

The Premier: Only last session! Why, the Narrogin-Dwarda railway was authorised 10 years ago.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And that is the most important line of all.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I hope that when the Minister is in that locality he will grant the most essential facility for marketing produce to those settlers, some of whom have been there for 60 years. Before concluding I wish to refer to some remarks made concerning the political

party with which I am associated. More particularly would I draw attention to the statements of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) last night. In his usual manner he saw fit to indulge in adverse comment regarding the leaders of that party, and particularly abused Mr. Monger. His speech contained the first note of malice I heard during the debate. The member for Murray-Wellington could not permit the peaceful atmosphere to remain undisturbed. He was bound to make slurring references to a gentleman who has done as much during the last ten years for the betterment of the section of the community I represent as the hon. member has done during his 30 years of public life.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Much more.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: I do not wish to say anything that will tend to widen the breach. The olive branch was held out last night but it was heavily laden with a crop of prickly pears. I am proud to belong to the Primary Producers' Association, of which Mr. Monger was the president until to-day. I am not afraid to announce myself as one of the banner-bearers of that organisation. Various measures will be introduced during the session, and I will reserve what comments I have to make until they come before us. I hope that as the session progresses the Government will find that all sections of the House are behind them. I will exercise my right of criticism and, if necessary, I will vote against any measure I do not think are in the interests of the State.

Mr. LUTEY (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [9.48]: I join in the congratulations showered upon you, Mr. Speaker, on attaining the high and honourable position you now hold. We are fortunate in having a man with the Parliamentary knowledge you possess. We know from your speeches that you have a knowledge of history that extends back, one might say, almost before history began. I congratulate the Government upon attaining office, and I am satisfied that all members, particularly those representing country constituencies, realise that the Ministry is a hard-working team, desirous of doing their best for the State. I welcome, too, the new members to the Chamber. We have had some interesting speeches during the course of the debate on the Address-in-reply but, bearing in mind who have spoken to-day, I have been wondering whether it was a put-up job to ask the heavyweights to proceed. We have had the member for Nelson, followed by the member for Leonora, both heavyweights. Then there was the member for Beverley, and now I, as the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe, have been asked to speak. It is strange that we heavyweights should be asked to speak on the one night.

The Minister for Works: Don't you complain about the cost of living.

Mr. LUTEY: At any rate, we cannot demonstrate that the increased price of bread has affected us at present. I notice that every member who has spoken has referred in kindly terms to the Government. I am almost suspicious of that kindness. It reminded me of a political opponent in my electorate who was one of the most kindly gentlemen I have ever known. When anything was brought forward he was always sympathetic. He always admitted there was a lot in our contentions, but invariably suggested the people should think the matter over and not come to a decision straight away. Perhaps when we begin to count heads later on when legislation is before the Chamber we will find the kindly members of Parliament voting against us.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: When the land taxation is being considered will be the time to ascertain that.

Mr. LUTEY: I do not know how the Country Party members will run the gauntlet at the present conference of the Primary Producers' Association. Apparently the St. George's-terrace farmers have not been so active as in past years. At one time the farmers were favourably disposed towards closer settlement, and unimproved land values taxation. I hope that will be so this time because it will benefit the genuine farmer. At the 1923 conference a committee was appointed to go into this question, and a section of the committee reported favourably.

Mr. Heron: The committee was about fifty-fifty.

Mr. LUTEY: I was pleased when I read such a report emanating from a committee of farmers. I do not know whether the question has been dealt with by the conference this year, but I hope the real farmers and the genuine producers will vote in favour of it.

The Premier: The member for Williams-Narrogin and I won a farming constituency on that issue once.

Mr. LUTEY: The only question apparently agitating the Opposition is the 44-hour week. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) was diplomatic and I hardly know where he stands on that question. I do not think his electors knew what his attitude was.

Mr. Davy: They knew I thought it was unwise to grant it, and that is what I stated in my speech.

Mr. LUTEY: The hon. member said that he would gladly concede the 44-hour week if possible.

Mr. Davy: Certainly, if we could afford it.

Mr. Latham: So long as everyone gets the advantage it is all right.

Mr. LUTEY: I thought that the member for West Perth might probably be

asked to make a fight on this question and that some evidence would be brought forward in opposition to the principle. On the contrary we have had mere bald statements that the granting of the 44-hour week would be detrimental to the interests of the country. Not one tittle of evidence was advanced in proof of the assertion.

Mr. North: The member for West Perth said it was a business matter.

Mr. LUTEY: If it is a matter of business, let us thrash it out on business-like lines. Let the Opposition put up a case against it. When Labour members speak on this question they are not without their book. It has been fought out before eminent judges, and many of them granted the 44-hour week. I am satisfied it was political influence that was brought to bear to take away that privilege from the workers here.

Mr. Latham: It was certainly political influence that gave it back to them.

Mr. Panton: Billy Hughes did not hand out political influence to Higgins, did he?

Mr. LUTEY: I wish the member for Forrest (Mr. Holman) would deal with the question because he is an expert and has thrashed out the point before the Federal Arbitration Court. While I accuse the Opposition of not producing evidence against the 44-hour week, it may be news to them that in 1917, during the war period, the Lloyd George Government appointed a commission to inquire into the operations at the munition works. The British Government were anxious to secure the maximum output, and various hours were being worked. The commission made exhaustive inquiries along scientific lines to ascertain what spread of hours would be best to return the greatest output. It may be surprising to hon. members to learn that they reported in favour of six-hour shifts, which they considered were the most economical and gave the greatest output.

Mr. Latham: And the workers were paid according to the hours they worked.

Mr. Panton: They were paid by the day, and you know it.

Mr. LUTEY: I was on a farm during my youth.

Mr. Latham: And you knew enough to get off it.

Mr. LUTEY: I do not wish to ever go back to a farm. My experience was that of many an Australian lad. They have been driven from the land by the slavery imposed by persons who should have had more sense and seen that children of tender years had a better time than was experienced by boys in the past. I remember paying a visit to Yorkrakine, where the settlers entertained a Parliamentary party. The older folks were in the hall telling the politicians that they had turned the corner and were

satisfied with their condition. Bearing in mind my own early experiences, I went outside where about 25 lads were grouped together. I talked to them and after I had gained their confidence I put the "hard word" over them. I asked them how they liked the land and what they thought of it. Without exception those lads wanted to get away from the land as fast as they could. The explanation of this was that the parents had had a trying experience and a terrible struggle to build up their assets. During that struggle they forgot the interests of the children, and expected them to exist as they had done. It is regrettable that large numbers of children are driven from the land in such circumstances. If at any time the settlers want a recreation ground or a hall, they will always find me in support of them; because I hold with the provision of recreation facilities, since they do much to render the people content with life in the country. Some seven years ago I knew a farmer in the western district of Victoria. On his farm all hands worked eight hours a day. During harvest time two shifts were arranged.

Mr. Latham: When was this?

Mr. LUTEY: Seven years ago. His name was Slater, and I think he is now a Labour member in the Victorian Parliament. Certainly he was a successful farmer, and eight hours a day was the rule on his farm. The member for York (Mr. Latham) is a very young man, with a lot to learn. Perhaps if he were to try the same system on his farm, he would find it of advantage.

Mr. Latham: I am nearly bankrupt now. That would be the last straw.

Mr. LUTEY: No man can work eight hours a day at heavy employment. If he is to be kept continually at work on hard labour for eight hours a day, he must adapt his pace to the strain. I have seen men working eight hours in the cyanide vats. Actually they did not work more than five and a-half or six hours, although while working they went at top speed. An uninitiated person seeing those men sitting back smoking might have thought they were loafing. However, the system they followed gave the maximum output of work. When it comes to output of work, no other miners can touch those of Australia. South Africa could not do it with her black labour, even before the war. In Kalgoorlie we had some American miners specially sent out here. They watched our men at their tasks and asked me if they always worked like that. I said yes, that our men never worked in any other manner. The Americans said that our fellows must be mad, and that for their part they were off back to the States where, although they had to work 10 hours instead of eight, they did not have to give anything like the same output of energy. Every time an attempt is made to reduce hours for the men, we have the same old outcry. It may surprise

hon. members opposite to know that in Durham, England, the six-hour shift on the mines has obtained for many years past. When the Eight-Hour Bill was being put through the House of Commons it was wired out to Australia that the Durham miners were opposed to it. This was published throughout the Australian Press, and much capital was made out of it. But the Australian people were not told that the Durham miners were opposing that Bill because for many years they had enjoyed the six-hour shift in their mines.

Mr. Wilson: Not Durham, Northumberland.

Mr. LUTEY: Well, that's next door.

The Premier: Somewhere in the vicinity.

Mr. LUTEY: I wish to take a little credit to my old dad who, in Bendigo 47 years ago, instituted the six-hour shift. He wanted the work done, and he wisely decided that the best way to get it done was to work four six-hour shifts and pay a higher rate of wages than that ruling in the district. In consequence he got the work done, and done well. All those reforms in the past were opposed just as strenuously as are the reforms of to-day. Another thing: in the bad old days when men were at the call of the boss all the time during waking hours, the men were almost savages. They drank hard because they knew no better. When they wanted to have a picnic down the Bay they could not hire a boat, because one year they had kicked up such a shindy that they managed to run two boats on a sandbank. The successors of those men to-day could hire any boat they wanted. Deservedly they enjoy the respect of the community, the improved conditions obtaining in their industry having helped to raise them to the level of their fellow men. Why do not the opponents of the 44-hour principle put up some tangible objection to it?

Mr. Latham: You are bluffing now.

Mr. LUTEY: I should be sorry to bluff the hon. member. Now I wish to refer to the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), who is not here, although I told him I intended to make reference to him. At the last election he was opposed to the bringing in of a Bill for the setting up of an organisation for the marketing of fruit as in Queensland. His opponent on the hustings was in favour of that Bill. The electors of Swan did not want that measure, and so they voted for the hon. member against the man who was advocating it.

Mr. Latham: The member for Swan had something more attractive.

Mr. LUTEY: No, he was in opposition to the man who wanted the Bill. But the member for Swan himself swung over to that Bill, until the "West Australian" newspaper came out with an article opposing it, whereupon the member for Swan was once more loud in his opposition to it. Since then he went to Queensland to scoff, but remained to pray. Now he is back again converted to the very thing his elec-

tors sent him here to oppose. Evidently he is trying to steal somebody's thunder. I am satisfied he was converted in Queensland, and I think it would be a good idea to send other members of the Opposition to Queensland. Probably they would come back favourably disposed to many useful measures on the Queensland statute-book. The member for Swan also told us there was no unemployment. We who know the position are aware that although there are in hand more public works than at the same period in any previous year—some 1,100 or 1,200 men are engaged on road construction—there is a great deal of unemployment in the city. I am sure that everything possible will be done by the Government to alleviate the position.

Mr. Latham: Is there not a chance of bringing country people here by providing work in the city?

Mr. LUTEY: That may be so to an extent, but the unemployed are already here. I should like to see the farmers put in extra fallowing, and so help to absorb the unemployed. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) said that land development was the only wise policy. Although our party is in favour of land development, it must be remembered that there are other things to attend to, such as the development of our mineral deposits. Each day brings its story of new developments in gold-mining. If the late Government had been permitted to carry into effect their proposed establishment of a monopoly over abandoned mining leases, such a find as that made in Cue—a lode 12 ft. wide with stone giving 13 ozs. to the ton—would have accrued to the monopolists, and the prospectors would have been thrown out of employment. I hope that prospectors in other districts will be as fortunate as their fellows who made this wonderful find in Cue. I want to congratulate the Minister for Mines upon the manner in which he is grappling with the problems of the industry. While in Melbourne he did good work for the mining community. The Leader of the Opposition criticised the Government's proposal to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into mining. He asked why we should have a Royal Commission, since there were so many mining members to advise the Government. I hold that there should be a Royal Commission, and that it should consist of a geologist, a metallurgist, and an expert mill manager. Moreover, I should like the Commission to be composed of men who have had experience in other countries. Twenty years ago our mining methods were as up-to-date as those of any other country, but we have not moved with the times. Since the war and in fact during the war costs increased considerably. In South Africa, however, managers and experts have organised the mining in such a manner that they are able to make 6 dwt. dirt pay handsomely, whereas on the Golden Mile our tributers must have dirt worth more than 15 dwts. to make their work profitable. We

have millions of tons of low grade ore at Kalgoorlie which, given an up-to-date plant, could be profitably treated. Advice is needed, and we should profit from the experience of other countries. Although we have good engineers and metallurgists in this State we should do well to avail ourselves of the experience of men operating more up-to-date plants in other parts of the world. In South Africa, despite the increase in the cost of mining requisites, the ore is being treated to-day at practically the rate that obtained in pre-war days. If this could only be done here, there would be a very long life before Kalgoorlie. The amalgamation of the Ivanhoe and the Lake View and Star mines has been brought about with a view to employing the more modern treatment plant installed at the Lake View and Star. The difficulty is that the two mines are not on adjoining leases. It would have been better for the Lake View Company if it could have amalgamated with the Horse-shoe or the Great Boulder. There is a danger attached to these amalgamations because the company may work one portion of the lease and, under the concentration of labour provisions, leave another portion unworked. In Bendigo years ago there was an amalgamation of a number of mines. These mines were equipped with poppet legs and winding engines, and miners were put to little cost to give them another trial. After the amalgamation the company sold the poppet legs and winding engines. This proved harmful to the district, because it was too expensive for the miners to provide fresh equipment necessary to give those mines a further trial. The cost of fracteur is £2 19s. 6d. per case and the freight to Kalgoorlie is 6s. 3d. Before the war it cost £1 per case less than it does to-day. I wonder if one of our legal members can explain how the law of supply and demand has caused that. During the war all the ingredients for the manufacture of fracteur were in great demand, but once the war was over one would have expected the cost to decline. Nobell's have established a small factory in Victoria and apparently intend to retain the monopoly of the manufacture of fracteur. They have amalgamated 37 different companies, but instead of reducing the price, have increased it. According to the law of supply and demand fracteur should be cheaper than it is.

Mr. Davy: You say the law of supply and demand was interfered with.

Mr. LUTEY: So it was.

Mr. Davy: It will not work if it is interfered with.

Mr. LUTEY: A monopoly can organise and defeat it.

The Premier: I think we shall have to repeal that law.

Mr. LUTEY: The Premier should institute inquiries into the Nobell monopoly, and perhaps through the Commonwealth and British Governments he may be able to obtain relief for the mining industry. Railway freights are a serious matter for the outlying

districts, but I understand a round table conference is proposed to consider what can be done. There are good possibilities from deep boring at the north end of Kalgoolie. There have been fair developments recently, and I think it offers a good opportunity for small syndicates and small leaseholders to give it a proper trial. The Government are prepared to grant pound for pound for deep boring. The question of the concentration of labour has been agitating the minds of the goldfields people for many years. The North Kalgurli Company has not worked the mine for many years. The tributers have been keeping the mine going and fulfilling the labour conditions, and practically only a manager has been employed. With amalgamation I am afraid there will be some danger from the concentration of labour. Some of the leases have an area of 100 acres or more. This land is in the heart of the Golden Mile and carries a network of lodes, some of which are not being worked as they should be. The Great Boulder has produced £14,516,000 worth of gold and has paid in dividends £6,000,000. That gold was obtained from only a very small portion of the lease. Suppose Harvest-terrace represented the lode and all the rest of Parliament House grounds represented the Great Boulder lease, the gold has been won from an area equal to about half the roadway up to Mount-street. From the Boulder lode to the Perseverance very little has been done during the last 23 years. There are three lodes dipping from the Perseverance into the Great Boulder and in addition there are two known lodes in that ground, and yet so little has been done. If we had some of the go-ahead managers from other countries, I believe that ground would be given a trial. Some diamond drilling has been done, but men should have an opportunity to take tributes on the unused portion of those leases down to, say, 200ft. or 300ft. That would not interfere with any future operations by the company, and if anything were found the company could sink their shafts. If the opportunity were offered to-morrow, hundreds of men would take tributes. We have discussed the question of concentration of labour for many years, but have not found a solution. There is nothing in the Mining Act to compel a company to employ more than the requisite number of men to hold a lease. In Tasmania a conservative Government in 1912 secured the passage of an Aid to Mining Act, because a similar difficulty arose in the Zeehan district. In that district were leases that were not being worked as they should have been. When the measure was introduced, fear was expressed that the action of the Government would be tantamount to an interference with contracts, just as in Queensland the pastoralists complained of the Government's action over the pastoral leases. I am satisfied that the Tasmanian Act was quite fair and that companies willing to develop their leases to the fullest extent had nothing to fear. It has

not affected such companies and it does not mean confiscation, but it does give the Government a chance to work such leases. According to this Act the Minister has power to go on to any lease and prospect for gold. In the event of a find being made he gives the company an opportunity to buy the discovery, and in the event of the company not desiring to acquire it the Minister can let it on tribute to other parties, or the Government can work it themselves, and half the royalty goes to the prospector, if he is working it, or to the Government, and the other half to the lessee. Section 5 of the Act says:—

If any prospecting or mining operations carried on by or on behalf of the Crown or the Minister result in a valuable discovery or development it shall be deemed to belong to the Crown, and the following provisions shall apply: (1) The Minister shall first offer in writing such discovery or development to the lessee at such price and upon such term and conditions as the Minister deems reasonable, or the lessee may submit an offer in writing to the Minister for the same, in the event of the lessee desiring to acquire the discovery or development, and not coming to an agreement with the Minister as to the price or terms or conditions within a period not less than 30 days, to be fixed by the Minister, any such question in dispute shall be referred to the Warden of Mines, or the nearest Warden's court, sitting with two assessors, one to be appointed by each party, for determination in the mode described by the Mining Act, 1905, and the regulations thereunder, the provisions whereof shall accordingly apply. (2) In the event of the lessee (a) not desiring to acquire the discovery or development or (b) failing for one calendar month to carry out any agreement come to with the Minister, or (c) failing for one calendar month to comply with any determination of the Warden and assessors, or (d) failing to appoint any assessor required to be appointed by him or otherwise impeding the determination of the question in dispute the Minister may (a) let such discovery or development, and any land in connection therewith, or any part thereof upon tribute at such royalty to be paid to the Minister and the lessee in equal shares, and upon such terms and conditions generally as the Minister may think fit; or (b) dealing with such discovery or development whether by way of mining operations or otherwise for the mutual benefit of the Crown and lessee as the Minister thinks fit.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: This is putting a lot of power into the hands of the Minister.

Mr. LUTY: To a certain extent it is his property, but there is no question of confiscation. Even if the Government take the discovery and work it, half the royalty goes to the lessee and the other half to

the State. If only that an Act of that description operating in this State would solve the trouble of the concentration of labour. This is the only Act I have seen that will have that effect. In the event of the discovery being handled by the Government the profits do not go into the general revenue, but are put into a fund for the further development of mining. I hope the Government will see their way clear to introduce a Bill along these lines. If the facts were explained to mining investors in the Old Country I think they would understand that there would be no question of confiscation or breach of contract. I also think that the mine owners would realise that the Government were doing the best they could to develop the auriferous areas of the State and give the mining industry a chance. This, at all events, is one way of saving the industry. Several members have spoken of the capabilities of their own districts from the point of view of land settlement. I would point out that the member for Hannans and I represent districts that are wonderful for pig-raising. In one piggery alone more pigs were reared and killed than in any other piggery in Australia. Mr. Harvey reared and killed 32,000 pigs in eight years. He is now out of business. This occurred in Boulder. I hope the day will come when our agricultural districts will be extended to Kalgoorlie and beyond. There is no better soil anywhere in Australia than on the goldfields. Through the kindness of the Minister for Lands I recently visited some 80 groups in the South-West. I was particularly interested in what I saw. In the United Kingdom to-day there are 11,000,000 head of cattle. Into the South-West it would be possible to compress the whole of the British Isles. In the whole of the Commonwealth there are only 13,000,000 head of cattle, 2,000,000 more than there are in the United Kingdom. With intensive pastures and our excellent land in the South-West, we should be able to do what is now being done in the United Kingdom. I hope the time will come when we shall not be talking of any shortage of our essential commodities, and that both in the North-West and the South-West we shall be producing a substantial exportable surplus. If we can get the sinews of war, I believe we shall be able to bring the group settlement scheme to a successful issue. The subterranean clover and other grasses that are now growing in the South-West should open up a wonderful possibility for that part of the State. So far I can see no trace of any organised scheme of group settlement. I am sorry Sir James Mitchell is not present to-night, for he is a man I hold in the highest respect. I believe he had a brilliant idea, but there has been no organised scheme to carry it into effect. People have been brought here in thousands, and have been rushed straight from the boats to the groups. I do not blame the officers of the

department, because they have had no chance of dealing comprehensively with the matter, in which there has been no organisation and no statesmanship shown. It is astounding that such a gigantic scheme should have been launched and pioneered by the officers of the department without any proper organisation at the back of it. In the near future the settlers will require a large number of cows, but hardly any provision has been made to meet the demand. It was the height of madness to go on with the scheme without any provision of that sort being made.

Mr. North: What about the rinderpest?

Mr. LUTEY: They have never heard of it down there.

Mr. Latham: That created a shortage of stock.

Mr. LUTEY: It did to a certain extent, but the pest was confined to the Fremantle district. The cattle that were slaughtered were privately owned, and were not those that had been obtained for the groups. To use the rinderpest as an excuse, therefore, is idle. No doubt the loss of the cattle means that the herds will have to be built up again. Practical farmers know that it is quite wrong for this important subject to have been so long overlooked. The Minister for Lands said that next year a million and a-quarter would be required to carry the scheme on at the rate it is now going. Besides that, provision has to be made for schools, drainage, hospitals, roads, and other works. It seems to have come as a blow to many to know that still more money will be required to bring the work to fruition. I was appalled and astounded to notice the name of Massey Harris on nearly every plough on the groups. I should like to know who was responsible for this, for he ought to be given a hot time by the Minister. The State Implement Works turn out some of the finest ploughs procurable: that is admitted by the farmers. If there had been any organisation it would have been known that hundreds of ploughs would have been wanted, and an order would have been placed at the State Implement Works instead of an imported article being purchased.

Mr. Latham: Do you refer to single-furrow ploughs?

Mr. LUTEY: All sorts of ploughs.

Mr. Latham: The State Implement Works do make a good single-furrow plough, but do they make a good four-furrow plough?

Mr. LUTEY: There are 4,000 settlers on the groups, and if the order for the agricultural machinery and implements required by them could have been given two or three years ago to the State Implement Works, I am satisfied those works would have turned out any plough required and of good quality. There should be a searching investigation into the reason for the supply of all this foreign machinery, or machinery from outside, to the group settlers, instead of the work being given to the State Implement

Works, and the employment to our own people.

The Minister for Works: The State Implement Works have turned out 100 ploughs this week.

Mr. LUTEY: I am glad to hear it; but if there had been any properly prepared scheme in connection with group settlement, the State Implement Works would have got the order for all this machinery. The existing state of affairs indicates mismanagement, or lack of patriotism to Western Australia, or perhaps even antagonism to Western Australia. Our secondary industries must be looked after, and if a man is disloyal to Western Australia as regards her secondary industries that fact outweighs his loyalty in what is perhaps an interested direction. I sincerely trust the matter to which I have drawn attention will be rectified. I am glad that already, under a Labour Government, there has been an alteration, and that ploughs for group settlers are now being supplied from our State works. There are many other questions I might touch on, but I will leave them aside this evening. I hope the Government will have money available to carry on the development of the South-West, and also development throughout Western Australia. The best means of advancing this State is the introduction of an adequate tax on unimproved land values. The expenditure on the groups alone means huge unearned increment going into the pockets of land owners in the South-West, and that will continue as the expenditure goes on. We must put an end to that evil somehow. In Sussex 12 months ago a friend of mine bought a block of land for £33. To-day he would not sell it for £100. The value of property in that district has advanced immensely, and this has been brought about solely by the expenditure of public funds. An adequate tax on unimproved land values would benefit the country enormously by enabling the people generally to share in the enhancement of land values caused by public expenditure.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.19 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 19th August, 1924.

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

QUESTION—WILUNA BORES, ASSAYS.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Colonial Secretary: To relieve the anxiety of the goldfields community regarding the progress and assays of the bores on the Wiluna leases, will the Government publish a progress report of the results?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: Boring is still in progress at Wiluna. All cores are drawn in the presence of a supervisor appointed by the Government, kept under seal, sent in sealed and locked boxes to Kalgoorlie and deposited in care of the Union Bank at Kalgoorlie. Under an agreement no assays of the cores are being made by the Government until the company have first had their own assays and have decided that they will ask for Government assistance in their project. Up to that stage all information is the private property of the parties making the bores, and the Government have no right to obtain or disclose any report of progress. The Government is not paying any part of the cost of boring.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [4.36]: In addressing a few words to the Chair this afternoon I wish to first of all offer my congratulations to the Leader of the House upon his re-entry into the Chamber and assumption of the duties of leadership. I am sure every member of the Council is glad to see Mr. Drew back amongst us, and, as an old colleague, I can bear witness to his courtesy and to his impartiality. I sincerely hope he will have a successful term during his career as Leader. I also offer my congratulations to Mr. Hickey upon obtaining Ministerial rank, and, in common with other members, I join in extending a welcome to those who are here for their first session. Members of this Cham-