

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Premier said that he hoped the electors would put me in my proper place, and I am here.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Electors sometimes do very stupid things.

Hon. J. Cornell: We agree with you.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Mr. Harris also said that the old age pension was deducted from the payments to these men.

Hon. E. H. Harris: So it is.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: How could the invalid pension be taken from these men? To get the invalid pension one must be in bed.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not necessarily.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: It is impossible for a man to earn 5s. a week and draw the invalid pension at the same time—that is, if the department are aware of the weekly earnings. If anybody is in receipt of an income, he cannot collect the old age pension. The Commonwealth Government were asked to allow a deduction to worn-out miners, and those men were getting £4 6s. as a basic wage. A statement appeared in the Press, however, that the Commonwealth Government would not allow the deductions. It is far better for these men to be in the State's hands than in those of the Commonwealth.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The fact is that the State Government are dodging their liabilities to the extent of £1 a week.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: How can they be dodging their liabilities if they are paying the men the basic wage of £4 6s. a week? What more does the hon. member want? Mr. Harris said there was no continuity about it. What more does he want than for a man to get £4 6s. a week until he dies; after he dies, his widow gets £2 a week, and 8s. 6d. for every child under 16. If that is not continuity, I do not know what it is.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Can you show me where it is provided for in any statute?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Yes; it is in the regulations.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Government told me in reply to my question that there was no such regulation.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Then they side-tracked you. If there has been any trouble regarding the Miners' Phthisis Act it has been brought about by goldfields members for political purposes; for nothing else.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Who were they?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: You, Mr. Cornell, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Dodd, and the President. They are all in it, and I do not know why want to continue to misrepresent. I

can understand any man who is straightforward and honest and truthful.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to cast reflections on other members by saying they are not truthful.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Well, I will have to withdraw again. It is very hard. I withdraw. I suppose I must withdraw this next statement also.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. R. BROWN: I do not mind what political views a man may hold, so long as he fights fairly and squarely, but I do not like this dog-in-the-manger policy. These people will not do anything to relieve the miner, and as soon as the Government attempt to do something to that end, they are abused. Where does the abuse come from? Not from the bona-fide workers. Mr. Harris said the men on the goldfields were kicking up a row. I say the only people kicking up a row are the few who run to the Press. The men themselves do not bother about these things; they wait until they are kicked right out before they rise. I had a few other things to say, but as I am not allowed to breathe life into my statements, I will let the rest go. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. G. A. KEMPTON (Central) [8.48]: I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Presidential Chair. I hope the years you will spend in that office will be as much of a pleasure to you as I know they will be of profit to the House. Although Mr. Brown has said it is inconsistent in members to congratulate those entering the House and at the same time to mourn the loss of others whose places they have taken, I wish to thank older members for their welcome to new members. I hope that when my time comes to quit, members, as well as my electors, will be able to say of me, "A good and faithful servant." Although I may be lacking in Parliamentary usages and knowledge, it will be my pleasing duty to help to solve the problems that come before the House. Mr. Miles has spoken particularly of the North, Mr. Mann has spoken particularly of the South-West, and other members have referred to various parts of the State. As a new member I feel more disposed to sit and listen than to speak; nevertheless as there are certain matters of importance to my province, it would be wrong for

me to remain silent. For a number of years we have had in the Geraldton district a conference of local authorities and industries. I initiated it some years ago, and it has been attended by practical men who have pioneered the farming and pastoral areas of the Victoria district. One thing that has been prominent before that conference is the great trouble we have had in respect of land settlement, petitioning Government after Government for more land, so that the sons of our pioneer farmers should have a chance to make good for themselves. A little while ago the Government purchased the Mendel Estate for 10s. an acre and subdivided it into 17 blocks. For those blocks there were 152 applicants. We say that if there are so many young fellows in want of land, it is up to us to supply their want. Let me mention the splendid wheat averages we have had in the districts surrounding Geraldton. At Yuna last year the average was just under 20 bushels, at Mingenew and at Yandanooka it was 16.7 bushels, and at Mullewa it was over 13 bushels, the average for the whole of the Victoria district being 13.9 bushels, whereas the average for the whole of the State was only 9 bushels. It shows what a magnificent area for primary industries there is surrounding Geraldton. In reading the report of the "W.A. Activities" I notice that Mr. Drew is stated to have said this—

Last year he visited one of the younger agricultural centres, Morowa, 220 miles north of Perth, one of the richest wheat centres in the State to-day, although ten years ago practically all virgin country. He was told that a large area of good agricultural land existed east of that centre. He was motored out on a tour of inspection and was very much struck with what he saw. On his return to Perth he asked the Lands Department to reserve the selection of the whole of the area pending classification. Recently the officer in charge of the classification reported that 200 square miles of first-class country had been discovered.

It seems to me very wrong that an area such as that, within 25 miles of a railway, should be held up. In the early days the people of the northern areas, such as Yuna, pioneered that country before the railways were built. Now the sons of those pioneering farmers are perfectly willing to go out and pioneer country such as that referred to by Mr. Drew. It would mean a tremendous difference to the wealth of the State if we could let them go out, as they desire. The

Agricultural Bank will not make advances on land more than 12½ miles distant from a railway. In the old days of horse-drawn vehicles, it was only right not to go too far from a railway for profitable wheat production; but with modern motor traction the distance can safely be extended to 25 miles. A man at Mingenew the other day said that when he had to cart in his wheat with horses he could average two loads in three days, whereas with motor traction he could easily bring in from five to six loads per day. It means it is now quite possible to profitably work those outlying areas. At Yuna at the beginning of last year there were 20 settlers on the Industries Assistance Board, they having been there practically from the initiation of the scheme. At the end of last year there were only two left, and for the 1925-26 season the Industries Assistance Board advanced something like £110,000 to those farmers. But the Industries Assistance Board received in proceeds from them £150,000, leaving a surplus of £40,000. That shows what immense prospects there are in those back areas, magnificent chances for men prepared to help themselves and so help Western Australia. Last year in the Geraldton district 51 clients were cleared from the Industries Assistance Board. In 1924-25 the whole of the crops grown in Western Australia, crops such as wheat, oats, hay, barley, maize, rye, peas, beans, fodder, potatoes, root crops, fruit and vegetables totalled in value £11,179,437. The value of the wheat, the hay, and the oats represented nearly £10,000,000. Surely if there is such an immense sum as that involved in wheat, hay and oats, it is only reasonable that we should give these men a chance to grow produce in areas that has been proved capable of growing it. There is a splendid lot of land out from Yuna called Dartmoor No. 1 and Dartmoor No. 2. It is a fine tract of country, all of which is practically taken up. It is absolutely necessary, to improve that area, that a good road should be constructed to it. It could readily be improved in the same way that Yuna, Northampton and other areas in the district have been improved. On the schedule a road is provided to run to Dartmoor. This should be constructed without delay, otherwise this fine tract of country will be retarded in its development. Some two days ago I received a letter from a friend of mine in Geraldton. I will read it to show members that the people in the district are

willing to put their money into these places and make them profitable, if the Government will give them certain facilities for the proper working of their holdings. The letter reads as follows:—

I take the liberty of writing re the Dartmoor wheat lands, knowing the keen interest you have always taken in the development of our agricultural lands. I have just returned from a week's visit to the Dartmoor area where I came into contact with most of the settlers and those interested in the land in that locality. It is an urgent necessity that the third preference grant for road construction should operate in this year's allocation. The present track to Dartmoor was cut and opened up by Mr. Olivier who is the pioneer settler of the locality. The road is used for horse vehicles with the result that it is badly cut up and is impossible for the transport of wheat. It is a hardship and a costly business for even light motor traffic. In addition the present track passes in parts through private property, and the passage through same may be blocked.

The letter goes on to say—

Dartmoor is in its first stages of development and given a road from Yuna I am certain its progress will be rapid. Without early road communication progress will be considerably retarded. In conjunction with four other gentlemen I am interested in 10,000 acres in Dartmoor No. 2. Our holdings include 7,000 acres of first-class and 1,000 acres of second-class, all eminently suitable for wheat growing. We have put capital, energy and labour into the development of our properties, and are asking for no assistance beyond the early road construction from Yuna to Olivier's blocks. For your information I may say we have already cut a track through Olivier's block, a distance of about eight miles. We have constructed and conveyed to our area galvanised tanks of 6,000 gallons capacity. In the absence of surface water it is necessary to conserve at least that quantity for early development purposes. It is our intention to commence clearing operations at once, and we are aiming to have 300 acres cleared and under crop next season. Our equipment includes a new motor truck which has been purchased solely for the development of our wheat lands.

It is absolutely necessary that these facilities should be given to the outback parts, especially in the case of men who are willing to put up their own money, but require this assistance in order to develop their holdings, and help to make Western Australia into a better place.

Hon. A. Burvill: How far is Dartmoor from the railway station?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: It is roughly 25 miles. With a road for motor transport the district could be profitably worked. If a road is not given there will be an agitation for a railway, which is a serious matter. A amount of money spent on the road

would turn this district into a profitable one. Surely there is no better method of spending borrowed money than in opening up these huge areas. In that way we shall help to increase the amount of wheat produced, and make this particular district as good and profitable as the Yuna district. Whereas the State average is about nine bushels, the average at Yuna proper is nearly 20 bushels to the acre, and there is other land near by just as good. I now come to the question of land purchases. The time has come when the Government should go more fully into the question of repurchasing estates that can be profitably worked, and that are near railways. Numbers of people are willing to sell such estates. There is one near Mendel's estate called Cockatea. It is a splendid area. It comprises about 15,400 acres, all rabbit-netted, containing nine wells, 14 paddocks dog-netted, 2,000 acres cleared, over 10,000 acres of first-class land and 5,000 acres of good land. If the Government were to take over that estate I am sure they would achieve results just as good as in the case of the Mendel's estate.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is good land.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes. This is the opportunity to buy it. I suppose the land would cost about 30s. per acre, but there would probably be between 100 and 200 applicants for the blocks when they were thrown open, owing to the manner in which the Mullewa district is extending.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Is it true that no advances are made upon the Mendel's estate by the Agricultural Bank?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Not quite. I was asked to go into this matter while the board was sitting. I waited on the manager of the bank and the Minister for Lands. I find that the bank will not advance for plant or crops, but will advance for development. This is only a fair thing. I believe in the Government being as liberal as possible, but in the case of repurchased estates, where settlers have to pay interest probably for 20 or 30 years, if they have only a certain amount of capital it is difficult for them to get on. The bank will certainly assist them in the matter of development. I am in sympathy with the migration proposals, because we desire to get as much population into the State as possible. We should, however, consider the number of splendid young fellows whom we have in the State now. I refer to the sons of men who have pioneered the outback areas, who understand the conditions

and the climate, and know what they have to put up with. These young fellows should be given a chance of getting on the land and making good. I put in an earnest plea on their behalf, for I know what they have to contend with. Undoubtedly gold mining has been a fine thing for Western Australia. Without it the State would have been a very poor place. Instead of our population being nearly 400,000, but for the gold mining industry probably it would have been nearer 200,000. We have heard from Mr. Harris and others of the needs of that industry. Whilst I realise how necessary it is to help it, I must put in a plea for the lead mines. I understand more about these, and I know the difficulties under which they are working. From Northampton, the Prothero district up to Ajana and Galena there is country which with proper development will some day be a second Broken Hill. It is a mass of base metals, but the people are struggling under severe disabilities. The railway line is about $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Galena. Most of the mines have to cart their ore that distance to the rail head, from which it is railed to Fremantle, and then shipped to Europe, where the ore is treated. The trouble is the $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles of cartage. No doubt members will have heard about the Surprise being closed down, and will think that mining in the district is not good. That is not so. Close by the old Surprise, and another mine called the Two Boys is being opened up. The owners have spent £14,000 on plant and intend fully equipping the mine. All the experts who have been there say it will be head and shoulders above anything in the district. The Surprise was a wonderful mine. It is believed that with a certain amount of diamond drilling put in diagonally from the 300ft. level, considerable ore deposits would be found at lower depth, and it is assumed that the mine would prove to be richer than in the higher levels. The Two Boys mine is a big proposition. There are many shows in the district that could be worked with two or three men, and which would be likely to grow into mines big enough to employ 20 or 30 men or even more. Those that would employ but a few men are often more profitable than mines requiring larger outlay. Over the $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles the carting has to be done by teams, at a cost of 13s. 6d. a ton. It is nearly 400 miles from Ajana to Fremantle and the cost is 29s. 6d. a ton. From the port to Europe, including loading and discharging,

the cost is 19s. a ton. We have for a long time been agitating for the construction of $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles of railway from Galena to the rail head. If an ordinary wood line were put in it would cost about £22,000, and would answer the purpose. This would lead to the employment of a great number of men in the district. In the years to come I believe the district will prove a very valuable one for the State.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You mean a spur line.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: A light line, called sometimes a wood line. For the year ended May last, there were 4,012 tons of concentrates shipped away. The value of the concentrates was £89,901. This is a burning question in Geraldton and the people are looking forward to the time when the Government will build that small line and provide the facilities to open up a lot of splendid country. I wish to make a few remarks about the North-West. Mr. Miles has gone deeply into this question. He thoroughly understands the subject and we can congratulate ourselves that the North has an advocate like Mr. Miles, because, whether he be right or wrong, whether we should or should not hand over our North-West to the Commonwealth, he certainly is in every sense of the word a true Nationalist. He feels that what is done in Australia is for the good of the Empire. I listened with much pleasure to his speech in connection with the North-West. I do not think, however, he is quite right. My opinion is that the time has not arrived when the whole of the North-West should be handed over to the Commonwealth Government. He said that the Commonwealth Government judge us by the way we are working our North-West. At the same time we judge the Commonwealth by the way they have developed the Northern Territory. They certainly did not do that very well, but they say they intend to do better in the future. So shall we with regard to our North-West.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Where shall we get the money?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: If there is any chance of any part of the North-West being handed to the Commonwealth Government, I would rather see, as Sir Edward Wittenoom has suggested, that part from the 20th parallel, instead of the 26th parallel, handed over. The 26th parallel is a little above Meekatharra, somewhere in the

vicinity of Peak Hill, and it would take in Carnarvon. At the present time the pastoral leases in Queensland are falling in, because of the conditions imposed by a labour Government of that State, and the eyes of the Queensland pastoralists are upon our North-West. There is no room for expansion in New South Wales or in any of the other States, and that is why they are turning their attention towards the Western Australian pastoral areas. With regard to mining, it will not be long before there will be a distinct development in our North-West. I believe that part of the State will yet be the biggest jewel in the crown of Australia, and on these grounds I do not consider that we should hand it over to the Commonwealth at the present juncture. Still, I have a fairly open mind. If it could be proved that handing it over would be for the good of the North-West, as well as for the good of Western Australia, and Australia and the Empire as well, I would be in favour of the Commonwealth taking control, but I do not think that time has arrived. We have been offered something like £2,700,000. The principal part of that amount has been spent north of the 20th parallel, on the Wyndham Meat Works and a little lower down on the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway. When the Commonwealth took over the Northern Territory from South Australia, I have a faint idea that the amount paid to South Australia was something like eight millions sterling; I am not quite sure of the exact figure. Anyway, it was a big amount of money, and the Commonwealth agreed to build the North-South railway from Darwin to Oodnadatta. There is a greater chance of a North-South railway paying in Western Australia than a similar line constructed through the Northern Territory to Oodnadatta. Another matter that may be stressed is that the position in the Northern Territory is totally different from the position in our North-West. Adelaide was as inaccessible to the people of the Northern Territory, as was New Guinea or New Zealand, whereas the people in the north-western part of this State are closely connected because of regular shipping service along the coast. Were the North-West to be handed over, it would become a sort of Crown colony administered from Canberra. My opinion is that it is much better to govern the West from Perth than from Canberra. Most of the members in the

Commonwealth Parliament know absolutely nothing about our North-West, whereas a majority of the members of both Houses of our State Parliament know a great deal about it. Many of them have lived there, and most of us have been there. Therefore, we understand the conditions better than they can be understood by the members of the Federal Parliament who have no first hand knowledge. Before the question is decided it should go before the people of the North-West so that their views might be ascertained. Mr. Miles declares that it should go solely before the people of the North-West. I do not think so; I consider that the whole question should be determined by the people throughout the State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did you read Mr. Keenan's speech? He declared the North to be a burden.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: At the present time we are paying interest to the tune of about £150,000 a year. If the Commonwealth Government are perfectly sincere in their desire to develop Western Australia for the sake of Australia, it is up to them to provide the State with sufficient means to develop the North.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: The Commonwealth Government wish to come in at the present time when a forward movement is about to take place. They wish to take over that part of our State and make a success of it and then be able to point to what we failed to do in the past. That is all I am going to say about the North-West. There is a local matter to which I wish to refer. The other day I had the pleasure of being taken over the Children's Hospital. I had not the slightest idea how important that institution was to the national life of the State. I knew that a number of people from the country sent their children to the hospital, and was aware that a certain number of the cases were from Geraldton. One of the members of the committee, Mrs. Shortland Jones, was in Geraldton and went into the question of help for the institution. I had the pleasure of taking the chair at a meeting held there. During the course of my visit to the institution I learned with surprise and great satisfaction of the valuable work that was done in an honorary capacity by a committee of ladies and gentlemen. Some of the hospital's statistics are worth quoting. Last year no fewer than 1,929 children passed through the institution. Out of

that number 139 died. There were 356 children admitted from the country, and I suppose if there had not been a children's hospital in Perth, out of the total of 1,929 treated, half of them would have died. I do not think many people in the metropolitan area realise the serious difficulties that face mothers in the back country. It is however, a source of gratification for them to know that if they can get their children to the city, those children can be treated free of all cost by specialists who give the same treatment as they would were the children sent to a privately conducted institution. This is the point I wish to make: The hospital is without a laboratory. If there were a laboratory and a pathologist appointed, more lives would be saved. The cost of a laboratory would not exceed £250, and a pathologist could be appointed at, say, £300 or £400 per annum. He would have the right of private practice. The matron and the sisters informed me that if they had a laboratory and a pathologist, 25 per cent. of the lives lost last year would have been saved. We are urging the Old Country to send us migrants. Surely for the small amount of money that I have mentioned, we should not hesitate to save the lives of infants who, through being born to the conditions prevailing in Western Australia, would be likely to develop into the best possible citizens. I urge the Government to go into the matter and see whether it is possible to provide the laboratory and the additional conveniences that would result in the saving of life. It would be possible to speak for quite a long time on matters mentioned in the Speech, but I do not intend to do that. There were just a few things I desired to bring before the House, and those things I have mentioned. As a new member I would have been quite content to sit in my seat, listen to other members and learn from them, and thus become more useful as the years go by. I thank members for their attention and have much pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply.

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

House adjourned at 9.32 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 31st August, 1926.

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

QUESTION—FEDERAL AID ROADS ACT.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he read carefully the Federal Aid Roads Act? 2, Does it contain a section providing that before any payment can be made for a road, the road must be completed and passed by an officer of the Federal Government?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, No.

QUESTION—CLAREMONT-COTTESLOE SEWERAGE SCHEME.

Mr. NORTH asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Cunningham): 1, Have the local authorities, who at present utilise the Swanbourne sanitary site, notified him of their intention to attempt a scheme of septic tanks throughout the Claremont-Cottesloe district, subject to certain definite safeguards? 2, If so, do the Government intend to introduce the necessary legislation this session?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM replied: 1, A conference of the four local health authorities concerned was to have been held on the 17th instant, but this was postponed. All these bodies apparently agree to the proposal, but finality is delayed pending the conference referred to. 2, If the local authorities agree on the proposed scheme, legislation will be introduced this session.