

railway facilities for those districts which to-day are producing large quantities of commodities but have not the needful facilities to get those commodities away to the markets that are offering.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1924.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Standard Survey Marks.

2, High School.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £1,863,500.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 7th August.

Hon. E. H. GRAY (West) [4.38]: I desire to associate myself with the congratulations and welcome extended to the Leader of the House, to the Honorary Minister, and to the new members. In my opinion the present session will be one of the most momentous in the history of the State. Although we have had Labour Governments before, we have never had one at such a time when the whole trend of popular opinion the world over has been in the same direction. I congratulate Mr. Drew. I did not know him before I entered this Chamber, but long before he was returned on this occasion, I had heard him spoken of from both sides of the House in terms of high commendation. My short acquaint-

ance with him satisfies me that he will uphold the reputation he made previously when he occupied the position of Leader of the House. The Colonial Secretary has a very difficult task in this Chamber, but I think Mr. Drew will be able to carry it out with credit to himself and good to the country. Various speakers on the Address have stressed the non-party character of this Chamber. That shows how utterly divorced they are from public opinion. This House is in very bad odour with the common people.

Hon. J. Ewing: This House?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes, owing to the class-nature of its legislation; and it is held in contempt by numbers of members of all political parties because of its rash conservatism.

Hon. J. Ewing: I wish they would put it to the test.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Why, it is more democratic than the other place! We have been told so.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The truth of my statement is demonstrated by the very small number of voters that go to the poll in any constituency where Labour is not well represented on the rolls. Members should sit up and take notice of the trend of public opinion and endeavour to meet the demands for progressive legislation that have been made through the Lower House.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Why are they not represented on the rolls?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Because the constitution of this House is one of the most conservative in the British Empire.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: You do not know anything about it.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If this House met the demand for more progressive legislation, it would make for a more effective Chamber.

Hon. J. Cornell: How do you account for a 44 per cent. poll at the Federal elections?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Wherever there are working people within reasonable access of the booths, far bigger numbers of electors go to the poll than in other parts. We have the astounding state of affairs that the working people in some parts of the State have no representation whatever in this House. In the timber areas there are hundreds of men who, through the nature of their calling, can have no say whatever in the constitution of this House. It is time an alteration was made, so that every man and woman over the age of 21 should have a say as to who shall represent them in this Chamber.

Hon. A. Lovekin: How many do not pay 6s. per week?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Mr. Hamersley commented upon the absence of a guard of honour and other display at the opening of Parliament and asked the reason. I think the Premier accurately interpreted public opinion by abolishing the guard of honour. I would rather have a guard of honour representing bibles than bayonets. But

if a guard of honour were necessary, it should be drawn from the boys and girls attending the public schools in the metropolitan area, so that members would be reminded that the legislative efforts they were about to put forth would have a vital effect for good or evil upon the rising generation.

Hon. J. Cornell: Whom would you draw upon if the Japs came here?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I confess to having a weakness for display and brass bands. It has been stated in the Press that it is time Parliament obtained a new flag on account of the present one being somewhat dilapidated.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you going to put up the red flag?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I suggest that a new Australian flag be purchased.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Why?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Because it represents the national aspirations. The man that sticks close to the Australian flag sticks close also to the Union Jack. In order to conform with public opinion I would also have the League of Nations flag flying beneath it. I am of opinion that the working class and all people that think at all have come to the conclusion it is time we had more international understandings. If we had, there would be a better chance to abolish war. Mr. Holmes and Mr. Lovekin made lengthy speeches harshly criticising the late Government. I do not intend to imitate that attitude, but will let the dead past bury its dead. Mr. Holmes stated in his speech what were the aims and objects of every party. In his opinion, the aim and object of the Labour Party, when going before the electors, were State trading and day labour, while the other parties preferred private enterprise and contract work. Heaven forbid that the things ascribed by Mr. Holmes to the Labour Party should be their only desires for the benefit of the common people.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Who are the common people?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The people who work in shops, factories, and so forth.

Hon. J. Duffell: What is the difference between the common people and the under dog?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: There are various degrees of common people and of under dogs. Generally speaking, "the common people" means the people who are about a week off starvation. Legislation should be passed enabling those people to obtain a share of the benefits of life and of the wealth produced by the labour of the community. The Labour Party's chief object is to make things better for the majority of the people, and thus confer a benefit upon the whole nation, including those classes that are now comfortable and happy. The 44-hour week regulation

issued by the Government was discussed on the Supply Bill. I was surprised at the relay of speakers against the Government. Why should not that regulation have been passed, seeing that the Government's policy is a 44-hour week? The least we look for from Governments is that by living up to their ideals they should set an example to other employers. In reintroducing the 44-hour week the Government were merely keeping their word given to the people during the general election. Mr. Seddon's remarks were apparently intended to prove that industry was resting on the apex of the pyramid and not on its base. They are a sign to me that some people stand with their heads buried in the dust of conservatism and with their feet in the air. To show how wrong Mr. Seddon is, let me point out that similar arguments were used 82 years ago in the British Parliament, and later on in Australian Parliaments, whenever progressive legislation was introduced. I propose to quote certain arguments used at Home in 1842, 82 years ago. Let me express the hope that 80 years hence some Australian member of Parliament will read Mr. Seddon's arguments against the introduction of the 44-hour week and show how frivolous Mr. Seddon's reasoning was. In 1842 things were at a low ebb in the coal mining industry of the Old Country. I am taking this information from a book written by Mr. A. A. Wilson, M.L.A., which, besides describing the low condition of the industry, gives excerpts from the British "Hansard" of that period. At that time progressive thought, as represented by members of Parliament, had arrived at the conclusion that the work of women and children in coal mines should be abolished. A mass of facts and figures was adduced to show that the abolition ought not to take place, as it would spell disaster to the country. The Marquis of Londonderry of that day said—

Some coal seams required the employment of women. He believed that if the employment of female labour was interdicted, the result would be that the working of many collieries would be abandoned. With regard to the age at which boys should be employed in these collieries, he thought they were as fit for work at the age of eight as when they were ten. If they refused to permit boys to be employed in this work before they arrived at the age of 10 years, how were the colliers to bring up and educate their children?

Lord Wharncliffe is reported as follows:—

With respect to the employment of females, he thought it had not yet been satisfactorily proved that it was advisable to prevent women from working in collieries. He hailed with satisfaction the alternative allowing boys of ten to work.

To-day in Collie we have the remarkable spectacle of men working six hours a day and producing more coal, per man, than any other coal miners in the world.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is the contract system. Those miners all work under contract.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes, that is not day labour.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is taking place 82 years after members of the British Parliament spoke against legislation for taking women and children out of the mines and letting them live in God's pure air. The possibility of the shorter hours is due to the application of science and invention to industry. It is not suggested for a moment that men working the 44-hour week should give all their spare time to idleness. Is it not a fact that every business concern in the British Empire which has adopted the short hours principle has won success? Take the Sunlight soap people. They were one of the first firms in the Old Country to introduce short hours, and what firm has gained more splendid success than they? Again, there is the Cadbury chocolate firm.

Hon. A. Lovekin: How many hours do Cadbury's work?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: They were working eight hours, I think; but when they introduced the eight-hour day other industries were working 16 hours. Yet the eight-hour firm beat the others in the markets of the world.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Those firms had the benefit of protection in England.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Take the Ford motor-car people. Mr. Ford has actually said that it would be better for men to work only 36 hours a week; and where does one find a greater industrial success than his? Organised labour is beginning to see that reduction of hours is the one true gain that the worker cannot have filched from him by the machinations of capitalism, and that it reduces unemployment. As has been demonstrated here time and again, high wages can be taken away from the worker; but a reduction of hours cannot be taken from him either by rigging the market or by any other means. It is amusing to hear the strings of arguments against the 44-hour week which are adduced by men who generally begin to work at 10 a.m. and finish at about 4 p.m.

Hon. J. Cornell: I plead guilty to not working at all.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I would not plead guilty to that. During the recent Parliamentary tour through the Midland Junction workshops we saw what machinery can do. There was a dog-spike machine turning out 13,000 dogs per day, whereas a few years ago it was only possible to turn out 400 per day by hand labour. Boiler plates were shown to us being fixed up by machinery.

To-day three can be dealt with in a day, while less than 20 years ago it took one week to do one plate. Surely the workers should not be denied a share in the benefits derived by industry from science and invention. I was somewhat taken aback by Mr. Cornell's contention that Government employees are for the most part an appendix that is necessary to the continued well-being of the institutions controlled by the Government, but that they produce no wealth. That statement will hardly be received with any degree of enthusiasm by the thousands of workers in the Government service. I always understood that any man who did labour, as long as it was well directed, produced wealth or increased wealth.

Hon. J. Cornell: The man I had in mind produces no more wealth than a member of Parliament, and that is very little.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Mr. Nicholson made a mild attack upon the Bill to fix rents which is to be submitted by the Government. He put up what seemed a good case for the mass production of houses. The trouble is that there is no money available for a large production of houses by the Government, owing to the deplorable state of the finances. Therefore the Government must do the next best thing, which is to introduce a law to fix rents. That law will not affect the landlord who tries to do a fair thing, but it will affect the landlord who is absolutely bleeding the whole of the people, and not only the business people, in the metropolitan area. It is high time such a measure were enacted, and I am pleased to see it mentioned in the Governor's Speech.

Hon. J. Cornell: What is the good of the Fair Rents Act in Sydney?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The trouble is that there is no Labour Government in operation in New South Wales. Parliaments can pass Acts by the dozen, but they are valueless unless enforced. I wish to refer to the report of the Education Department that was laid on the Table of the House last week. It contains a very important paragraph of which I think members should take notice. It refers to the employment of school children and says—

There is urgent need of legislation which will prevent the improper employment of children of school age. It is useless to make education compulsory if children can be employed in such a way that their health is injured and that they cannot gain the benefits that the school should provide. During the last year some shocking cases have been brought under the notice of the department. Until legislation is passed, it is impossible to take any effective action. One boy aged 12½ starts delivering papers every morning at 5.45, finishing his round at 8.15. He is naturally unfit for school. The medical officer states that his health is adversely affected. His father and

elder brother are regularly employed in the Government service.

I know what I would do in a case like that; I would take drastic action and sack the father. The department recognise that there is urgent need for legislation, and it is high time that it was introduced to prevent this sort of thing occurring. I hope the Leader of the House will stand to the report of his officers and if possible this session introduce a measure that will have the effect of abolishing child labour.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: But it is mentioned in the report of the department. Still further dealing with the Education Department, and remembering the state of the finances and the fact that most of the metropolitan schools are overcrowded, as well also as the fact that a number of students have to pay their railway fares in order to reach the places of learning, I think there is every need in this respect to overhaul the accounts of the department. I have no desire to detain members at any length on this subject, but there is a special item in connection with the Education Vote to which I wish to refer. A sum of £13,629 was voted for driving children to school. What I intend to tell the House is information gathered from actual experience. The sum could be greatly curtailed, at any rate to one-half. The object of the vote is to enable children living long distances from school to get there by means of a conveyance. On the other hand, the department admits that the vote does not accomplish what it sets out to do. For instance, there are schools where the attendance does not exceed eight, nine, or 10. A new settler going on the land very rarely has a spare horse that his children can ride or drive to school; he must wait 12 months or two years before he can acquire a horse for this purpose, though I admit, in some instances, it is possible for him to borrow his neighbour's horse. In the main, however, the new settler does not benefit from the driving allowance, and, on the other hand, it causes a lot of expense to the department by reason of the department having to pay for the conveyance of the children of wealthy farmers, who are not slow to take advantage of this vote. In many instances well-to-do farmers have received as much as 15s. a week from the department in this respect. I suggest that this is a matter into which the Minister should make inquiries.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: I thought you objected to one law for the rich and one for the poor.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I do. City children have to travel sometimes four and five miles to school and they must pay their own fares. I have no objection to assistance being given to country people, but a broad view should be taken of the position, and, if necessary, the distance could be extended from three to five miles.

Hon. J. Cornell: Where in the metropolitan area do school children travel five miles?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Many have to travel from Cottesloe to Perth.

Hon. J. Cornell: Yes, to attend secondary schools.

Hon. J. Ewing: The position is exactly the same in the country.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I object to workers children having to walk or to pay, while the children of well-to-do farmers are assisted from the Education Vote.

Hon. J. Cornell: My boy gets a pass to school and he is only in the seventh standard.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: There are any number of boys and girls in the sixth and seventh standards who have to pay. If the hon. member will inquire at the department to-morrow morning he will find that my statement is correct. I am not in the habit of making mis-statements in this House, and I repeat that this vote should be overhauled and then reduced. One boy driving to school receives 6d. a day and if there are five in the same family the amount is 2s. 6d. and so on. There should be a maximum allowance ranging from 6d. to 1s. 6d., according to the number in the family. Another education matter to which I desire to refer deals with stationery. The amount spent annually on books and stationery and other school requisites runs to nearly £13,000 and the parents of the pupils have to pay that amount. The stationery is generally purchased in small shops which usually yield a big profit. I suggest that if the Government cannot afford to provide school requisites free of charge, they should start their own store and handle all the materials with the aid of the teachers.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Most of these things are fads of the department.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Children attending school could then acquire their requisites at a much cheaper cost, because the Government would secure them at wholesale prices and would not need to make an enormous profit. In this way everybody would benefit. I know that the shopkeepers would not like this, but the Government should never hesitate to do that which is of advantage and a benefit to the community. I congratulate the North-West representatives on the enthusiasm they display whenever they refer to that part of the State. I have seen a little of the North-West myself, and what I have seen induces me to share their enthusiasm. The North-West has been locked up and progress stopped through mal-administration and on the part of the previous Government's action in extending the pastoral leases in the manner they did. I do not hesitate to say that if Mr. Miles inserted an advertisement in the paper to-morrow morning, inviting 400 young fellows to go to the North, he would have no difficulty in getting many more than that number, provided, of course, that he as-

sured them good homes and decent living conditions. The hon. member must have received any number of letters from people who desired that their sons should go to the North. I know that many have come my way. Finding avenues of employment for the young men of to-day has become a serious problem. Hundreds of lads deteriorate because they cannot get work to do. Boys who leave school are not big enough to take men's jobs, and the consequence is that they waste a valuable period of their lives in city employment.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the apprenticeship question?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: You cannot find work for apprentices. What is the position to-day? I know of a case where a high Government official trained his lad to be an engineer and, on account of there being no proper outlet, that boy is now serving behind a counter.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And yet you are advocating the establishment of more high schools.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The question of apprenticeship will not solve the difficulty.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is there not a scarcity of bricklayers and carpenters here?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That will not solve it either. Moreover, there are any number of them out of work to-day.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They do not want work.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I can find all the carpenters the hon. member wants in two hours.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What is your proposal that will solve the difficulty?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is a suggestion. We have in the North-West 7,000 whites, whilst in the Kimberleys the number is 2,000. Against these figures there are 23,000 aborigines. Of the total number of natives only 4,000 men, women, boys and girls are working. You cannot send the youths from the southern parts to the North-West. I have devoted some attention to this question and have interviewed a number of station managers and pastoralists themselves, and I have not met a man yet who has advocated sending lads from 16 years of age upwards to the North to work. They almost invariably reply, "Let them remain in the south until they are men because of the dangers arising from the native question." Seeing that there are 23,000 natives in the North, and a very small proportion of them only working, a scheme ought to be prepared by which the natives could be segregated with big reservations in different parts of the North, where no white men other than officials should have access. If that were done it would then be possible for the youth of the State to go to the North-West after leaving school. The average youth has read about the North-West and in fact every part of Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We want group settlers up there; close settlement is what is wanted in the North.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Motor cars, telephones and other things have completely transformed the North-West. There is no doubt that they are splendid people who live there. All the comforts, advantages and enjoyment of the North, however, are concentrated around the homes of the station owners or the managers. In order to effectively deal with the native question there should be small settlements around every station. Take a million acre proposition on the Gascoyne—

Hon. G. W. Miles: There are not any.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I have seen some. Most of these big properties employ only about 12 men. If six of these men were married, the station owner, if he were a progressive man, could build for these six families a residence on the station, and the families could be reared there. The children could be educated on the place, even if they had a trip to the coast once a year, at a cheaper price than many children in the agricultural districts can be educated. Furthermore, they would be brought up to station life. It strikes me that there are good opportunities in this direction, provided the native question is dealt with, of raising a race of young Australians inured to the conditions and the climate instead of at present, possibly raising a polyglot race. That is a question worthy of consideration. Considering the enormous wealth that is produced on these stations, an obligation is cast on these owners to make an attempt to solve the difficulty. It would not be an expensive matter to erect homes for the men who are employed, and I hope that station owners will see the advantage of adopting the suggestion. Interwoven with the question of populating the North is the shipping question, and that of meat markets. The present Government are fully alive to the necessity for increasing the State Steamship Service and abolishing the black labour boats along our coast. Alternatively, let them abolish the black labour boats and increase the white service boats.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You do not propose to cut out the four boats altogether?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I want to see more boats on the coast. The present service is unsatisfactory. We frequently see black labour boats cutting against the State steamers and they serve no good purpose whatever.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would you subsidise the white service boats?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is for the Government to say. I would do anything I could to get rid of black labour on the ships. There is no doubt Western Australia is held in the merciless grip of the meat ring, both by land and by sea. It is the function of the Government to break that ring. In order to properly grip the situation a study of the stock statistics is necessary. The

total number of cattle in Western Australia up to December, 1923, according to the published reports, was 953,764, an increase over the year 1919 of 73,120. The number of cattle in West Kimberley to December, 1923, was 287,282, and to the end of December, 1922, it was 283,410, a decrease of 1,128. The number of cattle in East Kimberley to December, 1923, was 302,318, and to December, 1922, it was 283,992, an increase of 18,326. The cattle position is not good, but it is not unsatisfactory. With regard to the sheep, however, the state of affairs is alarming. The number of sheep in the State to December, 1922, was 6,661,135 and to December, 1923, it was 6,595,867, a decrease of 68,268. The demand for sheep on the part of our farmers and the high price of wool have no doubt led to the present high price of mutton. Whilst these high prices might be reduced slightly if the Government took control of the trucks that take the sheep to market, I do not think much can be done to alter the position for the next 12 months. The figures covering the cattle and sheep shipments to Fremantle from the North-West ports, for 12 months June 30, 1924, will give members some idea how much we depend on the North-West for our meat supplies. The number of cattle shipped from North-West ports up to June 30, of this year show an increase of 2,857, the total number being 14,136. The number of sheep shipped to June 30 this year was 40,478, an increase over 1923 of 7,052. It is then necessary to compare these shipments with the cattle and sheep slaughtered in the metropolitan area, and the various activities of the big men who are connected with the meat ring. I suppose there are no more than six big operators on the meat market and two associated firms, namely, Messrs. Dalgety Ltd. and Elder Smith and Co. These people control the position and have done so since January last. Speeches have been delivered by members concerning the bad management of the Mitchell Government. I consider that their callous action in neglecting the opportunity to control the ring constitutes the biggest impeachment that could be made against them, and cannot be compared with their operations in connection with the group settlements or even sandalwood.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How do you propose to remedy the position?

Hon. J. Ewing: What is wrong with group settlement?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Sir James Mitchell started a new thing when he began group settlements.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They have been in operation in Victoria for many years.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Although it may be very costly in the beginning, like all new things, I think this will pan out all right.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is the most generous statement I have heard from any of your party.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Does your Government say that to-day?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I am speaking for myself. The statistical department and the agricultural department are possessed of all the data concerning sheep and cattle and everything connected with agriculture. Those departments could remedy the evil, but they sit back and let the big operators work the market as they please. Ever since last January we have been buying beef at twice the price that has been paid in the Eastern States. Recently there appeared a series of articles in the "West Australian" by an American explorer through the Northern Territory, and he mentioned that bullocks were being sold for £12 10s. That has been the average price in Adelaide for the last six months, and in Melbourne and Sydney the price has ranged from £12 upwards. On the other hand we have been paying £29 12s. 6d. in the metropolitan markets. The Government should have stepped in and remedied that position by first of all stopping the exportation of Wyndham beef.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: And break a contract.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: My reason for speaking at this length is to place the seriousness of the meat position before members. One of the first things the Leader of the House did was to handle the meat question. He did this promptly, and was instrumental in consignments of beef being sent from Wyndham, which materially affected the market for a week or two. Unfortunately the bad administration of the late Government effectively prevented people from obtaining cheap meat.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is not correct. Unfortunately, I have no opportunity of replying now, but I am quite prepared to make a statement on the subject.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: There is a department specially engaged in collating these figures. They can be used by anybody, and should have been used in the interests of the people by the late Government. Every facility is given to the heads of the different firms to avail themselves of this information. It does not require an expert to handle such figures. If anyone cares to sit down before the statistics he can arrive at the whole position in a very little while. There is no doubt we have been the victims of this merciless ring for at least three years. I have a suggestion to make that should remedy the difficulty. The number of cattle slaughtered in the metropolitan area in 1921 was 23,545, in 1923 it was 23,444, and in 1924 it was 27,057. There were 362,122 sheep slaughtered in the metropolitan area in 1922, 345,784 in 1923, and 278,592 in 1923-4. The number of cattle slaughtered this year showed an increase of 3,613 over 1923. The number of pigs slaughtered this year showed a decrease of 92, and there was a small increase of 130 in the number of calves slaughtered. The number of sheep slaughtered showed a decrease over 1923 of 67,192, and over the

year 1922 a decrease of 83,540. One does not require to be a Rhodes scholar to understand the reason for this, and the need of looking to the North-West for supplies.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You want to be an athlete to eat some of the beef.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The figures can easily be obtained. The late Government had the staff available and should have taken action. Instead of sending our beef to Belgium at an average price of 3d. per lb. it should have been brought into the metropolitan area, and so reduce the price by about 50 per cent.

Hon. J. Ewing: Then let the Government do it now.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Unfortunately the Government cannot do it immediately, because their hands are tied by the actions of the late Government. The output of the Wyndham Meat Works was sold to the Belgian Government.

Hon. J. Ewing: They have their opportunity this year.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: And they will take it.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Was that not the intention of the Labour Government when they started the Freezing Works?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The first intention was to relieve the metropolitan market.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That was the idea.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: These figures prove that we must look for our meat supplies to the Kimberleys. For the 12 months up to June 30 last, the number of cattle and sheep killed for the metropolis represents a shortage equal to 3,800 head. I would like to stress the point mentioned by Mr. Ewing that we have spent over £1,000,000 on the Wyndham Meat Works. And yet the late Government did not see fit to use the Wyndham meat to relieve the position in the South!

Hon. J. Ewing: You do not understand the position.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let the hon. member proceed.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That was one of the worst features of the trouble. In 1920 the average price for beef in the metropolitan area was 7½d. per lb.; in 1921 it was 5½d. per lb.; in 1922, 5½d. per lb.; in 1923, 5d. per lb.; and during 1924 it has ranged from 7d. to 8½d. per lb.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you quoting wholesale prices?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes. If hon. members studied the market reports in the Eastern States, they would see that the average prices over a given period represent about half those figures and range from 3½d. to 4d. a lb.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Where does the major portion of the beef for the metropolitan area come from?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: From the Kimberley districts.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And you have not the boat space necessary to bring the meat down! That is the crux of the position.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: We could bring large quantities of beef down by the motor ship "Kangaroo." That vessel has space for 300 tons of frozen beef.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That is for chilled, not frozen, beef.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The "Kangaroo" could bring down 300 tons of frozen beef, and 150 tons of chilled beef.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do the people like chilled or frozen beef, or do they demand fresh beef?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Until this year with a combination on the part of the master butchers, who were opposed to frozen meat being utilised, the people showed a strong preference for fresh meat, but now, thanks to the efforts of the Colonial Secretary and his department, that has been changed.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Did not a man get the sack from a Claremont institution for assisting the frozen beef industry?

Hon. E. H. Harris: He has since been reinstated.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That man was sacked for taking frozen beef at the price of fresh beef. He should have been kept out of his position, in my opinion. In 1921, despite the fact that there were no additional ships operating, 20,698 cattle were shipped from the North-West to Fremantle. This year only 14,000 head of cattle have been brought down. There may be some reasonable explanation for this, but I know that on one or two occasions the State steamer "Bambra" has come down the coast empty.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do not forget that this has been a bad season.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Had there been anything like good management displayed, cattle would have been shipped down to relieve the position. Seeing that the sheep position is so bad—

Hon. G. W. Miles: You cannot expect the sheep grower to sell his sheep while he can get such high prices for wool.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No, I do not complain about mutton, but I do claim that we should get cheaper beef. Unless additional shipping facilities are available next season, the Minister will require to bring down 1,000 or 1,200 tons of frozen beef to relieve the position.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is a good idea.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And more live stock should be sent down, too.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: In view of the large amount of capital locked up in the Fremantle Meat Works, that concern should be used as a base to keep down prices. I will next deal with the comparison of prices as disclosed by the market reports published from time to time. On the 5th January the London price for frozen beef was 4½d. per lb., while in Perth bullocks were sold at from £23 to £25, and in Melbourne the price for a bullock ranged from £16 to £18. On

the 11th February the Perth, Melbourne, and Sydney market reports disclosed practically equal prices. I have not got the March figures, which I could not find when I was searching the files. On the 29th April the Melbourne prices for fat bullocks were about £13 10s., while in Perth the figure ranged from £22 10s. to £23 10s. I might explain to hon. members that I took these figures haphazard from a file I have in order to show the price of cattle since last January, as disclosed by the market reports dealing with Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth. On the 11th May the Melbourne prices for fat bullocks were from £13 to £14 10s. and in Perth, from £21 to £23. On the 10th June the Sydney price for a prime bullock was £12, while in Perth the price obtained was from £23 to £23 10s. On the 22nd July the Perth price was £26 10s., and on the 24th July the Sydney price was from £13 to £13 10s. On the 4th August cattle brought £17 in Sydney, while in Perth the price paid was about £29 12s. 6d. The meat trade is practically in the hands of five men and two selling firms. Despite the fact that to date the Minister for Railways has not seen fit to abolish the present system under which the control of trucking is in the hands of the associated agents, I think that system is wrong in principle. I have endeavoured to ascertain particulars showing actual injustice done to farmers, and although I have none to place before hon. members, I still say that the principle of handing over the people's property to the associated agents who are interested in securing high prices for their clients, is bad.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What is done?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Under the present system, if I desire to send 2,000 sheep to the markets, I can be prevented, practically, from doing so. The firms can write advising that the market is overstocked, and I am blocked from sending the sheep forward. At the present time a farmer must procure trucks from the Western Australian Farmers Ltd., who are operating in a small way, from Dalgety's, or from Elder, Smith's. I know that the Minister, too, has been endeavouring to ascertain whether any injustice has been experienced by the farmers.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But cannot you get a truck privately apart from those three firms?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Then that should be altered.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The trouble is that this means the whole of the stock and trucks are handed over to those concerns.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is a scandal.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not necessarily a scandal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is. Why should three firms have that right?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: This matter was mentioned at the recent Road Board Conference, but delegates seemed to think that it was all right. It is a bad policy to pursue to enable such concerns to impede operations, because it is so easy to rig the market. I hope the Government will decide to control the trucking question departmentally.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The Minister has been in office for three and a half months, but he has allowed this to go on.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I remarked just now that I hoped the Minister would alter the system. Last year 40,000 sheep were trucked down. The mutton market is scarce and all the available space on the ships trading along the North-West coast has been booked up to November. Actually 45,000 sheep will be shipped down from the North-West and landed at Fremantle before the end of November. If a small pastoralist desires to get space for his sheep he will not be able to get it until next January. When it is realised that the people controlling the position are agents for the steamers, that they operate in stock, that they are big butchers and deal in meat, that they are also interested in big stations up North, and control the railway trucks, hon. members will appreciate the fact that the rigging of the market does not present a big problem to them. It is only to be expected that the butchers whose business it is to get the highest prices possible, will endeavour to secure that end. But I contend that the interests served under this system are those of the employers and not of the State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You must remember that the steamers are different from the railways. You must look ahead whether the ships are State owned or privately owned.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is so, but is it not remarkable that only 40,000 sheep were shipped last year, and yet this year the steamers are all booked up to land 45,000 head before the end of November. It shows that it is in the interests of those concerned to keep up prices. I was pleased to find that the Minister had been dealing with this question, and I believe the Government have grit enough to compel the departmental heads to move, so that we may have better conditions operating next season. It is hopeless to accomplish much this year, but in order to make the position better next year something should be done at once. I understand that the Minister has taken steps in that direction. I will not deal with the financial position, because several excellent speeches have been delivered on that phase. Dealing with the bread-making industry, I am convinced that an investigation is required. We have to-day some 73 master bakers operating in the metropolitan area. There are less than a

dozen big men, so that most of the master bakers are small men. The master bakers are like the big farmers, for the big baker shelters behind the small man, just as the big farmer shelters behind the small farmer when computing his costs of production. The big master bakers in the metropolitan area have not been affected by the rise in the price of flour. If it were possible to go through the metropolitan bakehouses and stores we would find them fully stocked up with flour bought before the rise took place. The dogs were barking in the streets long before flour went up that there was to be a big rise in prices. I do not blame the master bakers for taking advantage of the position; it is their business to do so. If, however, there were a closer understanding between the farmers, the millers, and the Government this infringement of the public interests would not be permitted.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not the farmer; he is never consulted.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: We are to have this year a 20 million bushel harvest, and the local consumption, I understand, will be about two million bushels. I hold that there should be some understanding to secure a standard price for wheat for local consumption. I have heard Mr. W. D. Johnson speak very effectively upon this.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It would mean dear bread.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No, it would not. I do not see why we should be subject to these fluctuations in the price of flour that mean so much suffering amongst the consumers.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Is there a way out?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes there is. Apart from this, we have often noticed that the people do not squeal about the cost of production until there is a world scarcity. Today, whether wheat be dear or cheap, the cost of production and of distribution of bread is altogether too high. We have 73 master bakers in the metropolitan area. We could very well cut out many of them and divide the metropolitan area into zones, thus reducing the cost of distribution by over one halfpenny per loaf. Master bakers tell me that it costs from 1d. to 1½d. per loaf to place bread in the average house. That is scandalous.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Bad debts and baking cost more than that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The time has arrived when a commission should be appointed to deal with the whole position. We could have expert bakers on it. The majority of master bakers who are doing well at present would welcome any scheme for reducing the cost of distribution.

Hon. J. Duffell: And reducing the price of flour.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is so. The commission could inquire into the cost of the production of flour and of bread, and of the distribution of bread.

Hon. J. Duffell: The master millers have an association.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes, they manage their affairs much as do the master butchers; they have a capable organisation. The Fremantle requirements have been placed comprehensively before the House by Mr. Kitson. Down there we want quite a lot of things. At the same time we have live members to see that we get our share of the small amount of money available. Fremantle requires a dock and a new railway. I am not proposing to waste the time of the House putting forward a list of our requirements at present impossible of attainment. I rely on the sense of justice in Ministers to give Fremantle, as every other district, a fair share of improvements when the money is available. However, some things are imperative and must be dealt with apart from considerations of finance. When in Collie the other day, I was surprised that Mr. Ewing, until recently a Minister of the Crown, should have been satisfied with the condition of the Collie hospital. I will never rest until better facilities are provided in Collie for the treatment of sick and injured persons.

Hon. J. Ewing: Your Government say they cannot find the money this year.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I am sorry they cannot. Any man who has been at Collie will admit that the existing hospital facilities constitute a reflection on our humanity and civilisation.

Hon. J. Ewing: It is not as bad as that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes, it is. If any health authority were sent down from Perth he would condemn the place. It is a scandal. Collie is the centre of a mining area and is surrounded by hundreds of men at work in the timber industry. My conscience will not allow me to rest until I see better hospital accommodation for the people of Collie and the Collie district. Through living in Claremont and being in close proximity to the Hospital for the Insane, I am interested in that institution. I have spoken on this question in the House before, and hon. members will remember the agitation that was set going by the Returned Soldiers' Association as the result of what I had to say about the inhuman conditions to which returned soldiers were subjected at the asylum. All that was bad enough, but why make a distinction between soldiers and the civil population? The asylum is more like a dungeon than a hospital. Indeed it is a gaol. It is of no use abusing the management. The late Government had plenty of room for improvement. We ought to realise that we are treating patients at the asylum inhumanly, for which of course we, as representatives of the people, must accept our share of responsibility. Drastic alterations are required in the asylum. Seeing, too, that the patients have been drawn from all classes of society, it is high time the Government, indeed all of us, took active steps

to improve the conditions. If it is a scandal and inhuman for returned soldiers to be kept there, it is also inhuman and a scandal for members of the civil population to be kept there. In dealing with this question, we cannot await improvement in the finances, but must get the necessary money where we can. The Old Men's Home is another institution calling for improvement. Personally I would rather go to Fremantle Gaol than to the Old Men's Home. I know both places pretty well.

Hon. J. Cornell: Do you know the gaol from the outside or from the inside?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I know both of them. The Old Men's Home could be made a splendid institution, but the hospital accommodation—I understand there is to be a big alteration effected—is altogether too small. The whole place requires enlargement and the provision of better facilities. I am not exaggerating when I say that for cleanliness, for food and for ordinary conditions of life I would prefer to go to the Fremantle Gaol rather than to the Old Men's Home—provided, of course, I was allowed out when I wished. Of the two institutions, the gaol is by far the better. I am not suggesting any mismanagement at the Old Men's Home, but the place is overcrowded.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Persons put into the Fremantle Gaol have to stop there, whereas the inmates of the Old Men's Home come out, get covered with vermin, and go back and give a lot of trouble.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I am speaking of the men in the hospital, men who cannot go out. There is no doctor there.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Old Men's Home is altogether on a wrong basis, and is greatly congested.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Now I want to touch upon infant welfare. Dr. Saw, I expect, will say something about this later. A strong effort is being made to place Western Australia and the metropolitan area on the basis of the other States, where considerable progress has been made in the movement. It is only reasonable to ask the Government to subsidise municipalities in their endeavours to finance infant welfare centres. As compared with New Zealand, our vital statistics are unfavourable. Hundreds of our babies are lost every year through ignorance on the part of mothers, and also through lack of facilities that ought to be provided for all. It is high time the Government gave serious consideration to this question and encouraged the formation of infant welfare centres throughout the State. In conclusion I may say I am proud to be associated with the Labour Government. I realise the difficult task confronting them in consequence of the finances of the State being in a parlous condition, as ably demonstrated by those of my colleagues who have already spoken. However, I believe the Government have quite sufficient ability to successfully tackle

the various problems awaiting them, and that as the result of their efforts the State will progress as never before. I have pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.57]: Several hon. members have commented on the absence of a guard of honour and Royal salute from the opening of Parliament. I do not intend to pursue that subject, except to say that although no guns were fired at the opening of Parliament, there has been a considerable discharge of heavy cannon in this Chamber during the debate. Especially has it been directed towards the ranks of the defeated enemy by those who, one might say, were the allies of the present Government in assisting to defeat the Nationalist Government. I join with other hon. members in congratulating Mr. Drew on his re-election to the House, and on his again assuming the office of Leader of the Chamber. When in 1915 I first entered the House, Mr. Drew was Leader. So it seems like old times to find him occupying the same seat. Mr. Drew to-day probably realises what a very different House it is from what it was when I entered it. No doubt he is looking forward to an easy task this session. I remember that in 1915 I thought the Minister had a very hard task. I must confess that I did not envy him that task; for, although he had a band of loyal and devoted followers, numerically somewhat small, behind him, and although he had the respect and confidence of all members, yet he was faced by a large majority of somewhat hostile critics politically. To-day the position is entirely different. He still has the same devoted band of followers, somewhat similar in numbers to what he had then, but the composition of the rest of the House is entirely changed. Judging from the speeches of this session and indeed of last session, when they were busily engaged trouncing the Mitchell Government, Mr. Drew has every reason to expect that he will get the support of those members who by their hostile criticism of the National Government undoubtedly assisted in causing the defeat of that Administration. Mr. Kirwan alluded to this when he said that the hostile criticism of this Chamber had driven the late Nationalist Government out of power. I agree with him. I said that at the elections and have continued to say it ever since. But Mr. Kirwan went further. He said that the criticism of Mr. Lovekin and Mr. Holmes—I regret that neither is in his place, because I shall have something to say about Mr. Lovekin at any rate—more than that of the previous Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Collier, had been responsible for turning the late Government out of office. In other words, he said that, whereas Sam had slain his thousands, David in the person of Mr. Lovekin had slain his tens of thousands. You, Sir, who, like myself, were brought up with a very intimate knowledge of Holy Writ, will

remember how in the book of Samuel it is related that Saul and David returned from the slaughter of the Philistines. They were met by the women of all the cities of Israel who came out from the towns dancing and singing and saying one to another, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands." I regret to say that this displeased Saul, who said, "They have ascribed unto David tens of thousands and to me but thousands, and what can he have more but my kingdom"; and Saul eyed David from that day and forward. I trust that will not be the fate of Mr. Lovekin, and that the remarks of Mr. Kirwan will not cause any disharmony between those two gentlemen, Mr. Lovekin and Mr. Collier. You will remember, Sir, that Saul attempted to slay David with a javelin and David subsequently had to escape to the cave of Adullam, where he gathered around him all the discontented of the kingdom to the number of several hundred. I do not know whether we are going to have a parallel again and whether Mr. Lovekin is going to escape to some cave in King's Park and gather around him there some of the discontents of the metropolis. On Saul's death David was called to the throne. I do not know whether fortune also has that in store for Mr. Lovekin; but stranger things have happened. You will remember that Mr. Gladstone, the rising hope of the stern unbending Tories, became a leader of the Liberal Party, that Joseph Chamberlain, once a Radical and, I believe, a Republican, became the glory of the Conservatives. Lloyd George, who was looked upon as the Limehouse mob orator, for many years was kept in power by the Conservatives. Mussolini, one of the most extreme socialists, is now the leader of the Fascism, and I suppose the most autocratic ruler in Europe. I notice in one of the papers, the "Leader" I think, that already the "Worker" newspaper is acclaiming and praising Mr. Lovekin. I notice that Mr. Lovekin's invective against Sir James Mitchell is being continued; in fact he made an extremely hostile speech the other day against Sir James Mitchell. Although he told us that Sir James was a man whom he almost loved, such a tender solicitude for one's victim has, I fancy, not been known since the days of the walrus and the oyster, some verses that I think Mr. Stewart quoted last session—

"I weep for you," the walrus said,
 "I deeply sympathise."
 With sobs and tears he sorted out
 Those of the largest size,
 Holding his pocket handkerchief
 Before his streaming eyes.

A great deal has been said about finance and the deficit and in hostile criticism generally of the late Government. Those criticisms to my mind have been ungenerous, inasmuch as they have entirely omitted to mention the special difficulties that have

faced every Government in this State since Federation, and particularly the difficulties that have beset us during and since the war. Mr. Lovekin, when it suits his purpose, ascribes all our financial ills to the fact that we have entered Federation. I am not sure that he does not even wish to upset the Federal pact, but when it suits his purpose, he also ascribes our financial position to the actions of Sir James Mitchell. I consider the criticisms have not been at all generous, because they have entirely overlooked the fact that during the last two years the Mitchell Government reduced the deficit from something like three-quarters of a million to under a quarter of a million. That undoubtedly was a very remarkable performance. Mr. Collier was very much more generous when speaking a couple of years ago on the Estimates. According to "Hansard" of the 19th September, 1922, page 798, Mr. Collier said—

The Premier set out with the statement that he is going to end the year with a deficit of £389,000, that is to say £343,000 less than the deficit of last year. If the Treasurer's estimate should be realised, he will have done wonderfully well. If the State can manage to reduce its deficit by so substantial a sum as £343,000 in one year, we need have very little fear for the balancing of the ledger in the year immediately ahead of us. On a previous occasion in this Chamber I said we should do very well if we were able in a year to reduce the annually recurring deficit by £100,000. I still believe if we can see the end of these deficits in five or six years, we shall do very well indeed, and it will not be wise to impose taxation in order to accelerate the reduction of the deficit. Certainly if the Treasurer realises his estimates of revenue and expenditure and so reduces the deficit by £343,000 for this year, he will have done remarkably well. But I do not think for a moment the Treasurer will achieve the result he expects.

The actual deficit turned out to be £405,000 an amount very close indeed to Sir James Mitchell's estimate. In the subsequent year, as I have shown, Sir James Mitchell was able to reduce the deficit to less than a quarter of a million. That was something that Mr. Collier said would be a remarkable performance, and Mr. Kirwan, in speaking here the other day, admitted that his own forecast as to what would be achieved had been wrong. But I have not heard of those members who speak on financial matters passing any encomiums on Sir James Mitchell and the undoubtedly wonderful performance he put up in reducing the deficit.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: What about revenue resulting from loan expenditure?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Whatever the result from the expenditure of loan money may have been, Mr. Collier was perfectly aware of it when he uttered those words in 1922. That was after Sir James Mitchell

had returned from the Old Country, when we knew that the group settlement scheme was to be carried on and that loan money would be available and would be spent in that way. Undoubtedly the expenditure of loan money has assisted to improve the revenue because of the additional buoyancy it has given to the State. Sir James Mitchell undoubtedly deserves credit, and his policy, I consider, was quite the proper one for him to adopt. I was glad to see the remarks in the Governor's Speech indicating the policy of the present Government on immigration and land settlement. I welcome the proposal to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the operations of the group settlements. I trust that the personnel of the Commission will be such as to give the whole country confidence in its conclusions. Nay, more, I hope this question of group settlement, to which we are undoubtedly committed, will be lifted out of the arena, or should I say out of the mire, of party politics, so that all of us may do our best to bring it to a successful conclusion. There are several reasons why this should be done, the most important being the defence of this great continent. It has been dinned into us often enough that so long as Australia remains with a small population it cannot be safe, and if we have not listened, it is not the fault of those who have continually harped upon the subject. We cannot adopt the means requisite for our defence nor have we the man power to adequately defend Australia. Close to us are very hungry nations, and it is no use disguising the fact that our White Australia policy, in which I am a firm believer, does give great offence to the Asiatic races, and rightly so. My opinion is the time will come when we shall either have to fight for the policy of a White Australia or reverse it, because those nations are not for all time going to submit to the implied stigma that it involves. So we must people this great country. The rate of progress of our own population is so slow that we must get outside assistance from Europe, and preferably from our own kith and kin. So far as I know, there is no portion of Western Australia that would appeal to the inhabitants of Northern Europe, including the British Isles, more than would the South-West. The climatic conditions render it one of the most desirable portions of Western Australia. For nearly 100 years this State has been populated and the South-West has made comparatively slow progress, the reason for which is obvious. It is so thickly timbered and the cost of clearing it is so great that up to the present it has not been an economic proposition to deal with it on a large scale. Those who are competent to say—and I am not one of them—have expressed the opinion that there is no better method of settling that country than by means of group settlement. That may be so; I am prepared to accept the opinion because up to the present those fine areas of good soil in a wonderful climate have not

been made use of. If they can be made use of by means of the group settlement scheme, I consider it is our duty to do so. Furthermore, we owe a duty to those over-populated nations of Europe to find here in our empty spaces room for some of their people. It is desirable not only from a defence point of view but from a social point of view that we should fill up our empty spaces.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Before tea I was speaking of the reasons why a forward policy of immigration and land settlement should be adopted, and particularly of the advantages offered in the South-West by the system of group settlements, according to the opinion of people qualified to speak thereon. That system of group settlement has undoubtedly received the praise of various distinguished visitors to this State who had the opportunity of seeing the system in progress. It has also received the support of both the Commonwealth Government and the Imperial Government. When Sir James Mitchell went Home in the early months of 1922, he was able to interest the British Government and obtain an agreement with them, which agreement was ratified in the British Parliament by the Empire Settlements Act. It has been said in this Chamber, especially by Mr. Lovekin—and I am sorry that hon. member is not here, because I am afraid I shall have to make some remarks concerning his speech, and one has a certain diffidence in doing it during a member's absence—that that agreement was a bad agreement. Mr. Lovekin's remarks were so pointed, and to my mind so untrue, that I have no option but to take the matter up, even in his absence. Mr. Lovekin said Sir James Mitchell could have got better terms in respect of the group settlement scheme and the immigration policy than he did obtain. Mr. Lovekin called the agreement "stupid." He started by saying that Sir James Mitchell had not tried to obtain a better agreement, and subsequently said that Sir James Mitchell was too stupid to make a favourable agreement—that was the effect of Mr. Lovekin's words. I am perfectly sure that that is not true. I challenged Mr. Lovekin for his authority for the statement that Mr. Amery was at that time willing to concede better terms than Sir James Mitchell obtained. Mr. Lovekin said he had some private letters, and that I could see them if I liked. I have a constitutional objection to reading people's private correspondence, and I am perfectly certain that if Mr. Lovekin has private correspondence dealing with that matter, those letters were intended to be private, and were not intended to be shown to me. But even if he has letters which purport that, I challenge the authority, because nobody except Mr. Amery and the British Government themselves can say whether Mr. Amery and the British Government would have given Sir James Mitchell better terms. Sir James Mitchell

has told the public over and over again that these were the best terms he could obtain and that he was satisfied with them. He came back here and disclosed them, and said he considered them good terms. I guarantee that the majority of the people of Western Australia at the time thought they were good terms. Personally I thought so and still think so. If during the course of the last two years the Home authorities were willing to give better terms, it is no disparagement for Sir James Mitchell, who blazed the track. One might just as well say it was a disparagement to Lord Forrest because when he went across the first time to South Australia he used horses and did not use the Trans-Australian train, which, of course, at that time was not built. The same thing is pertinent to Sir James Mitchell. He was the first person to interest the British Government in the Empire migration and land settlement policy, and to get the Home Government to take it up and subsidise it. If in the course of events the British Government have seen fit to give better terms, then I say all the more honour to them that they treated the matter not in any buckstering spirit: but certainly it is no disparagement to Sir James Mitchell. Furthermore, we know perfectly well from what Sir James Mitchell said, that when he was making this agreement with Mr. Amery he asked Mr. Amery whether, in the event of other Australian States or any of the British Dominions obtaining a better agreement, Mr. Amery and the British Government would be prepared to let Western Australia participate in those better terms; and he obtained a promise from Mr. Amery to that effect. That promise has subsequently been ratified. So I think it is unfair to stigmatise Sir James Mitchell as either not having done his best, or as not having been capable of obtaining a better agreement. The great thing was to get the British Government interested in the scheme, and Sir James Mitchell succeeded in doing that. If the present Commonwealth Government have been able to get a better scheme, then I say that fact is largely due to the efforts of Sir James Mitchell, who pioneered this work. I was very sorry indeed to hear Mr. Lovekin say that Mr. Amery "bragged" about the agreement he made with Sir James Mitchell. I will quote Mr. Lovekin's exact words from the "Daily News," which publishes very complete accounts of our discussions. Mr. Lovekin had the temerity to say in reference to Mr. Amery—

Mr. Amery made the agreement, and when the agreement was fixed up in a most perfunctory manner, Mr. Amery went back to the House of Commons and bragged that he had been able to make a deal with Western Australia.

Mr. Amery is undoubtedly a friend of Australia, and I claim that in all his remarks and in all his actions he has proved himself a friend of Australia, and has been imbued with the right spirit of the relationship

between oversea dominions and the United Kingdom. For anybody to say that Mr. Amery "bragged" is too ridiculous for words. In the first place, as I have said, Mr. Amery is a statesman; and secondly he is an English gentleman. Whatever the faults and failings of an English gentleman may be—of course like every other class of people, English gentlemen have faults and failings—bragging is not one of them. As Kipling finely puts it—

Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds outside the law.

Certainly English statesmen do not brag. I read Mr. Amery's speech after he made it, in the "Times"; and I had a lively recollection of it when Mr. Lovekin was speaking; but I am glad that Mr. Lovekin's remarks have made me re-read Mr. Amery's speech. If hon. members have not read it, and if they want a real treat, I advise them to get the "Hansard" of the House of Commons which I have here and read the report. If there is in that speech a single word which can be interpreted as bragging, I will donate any sum Mr. Lovekin likes to name to any public charity he likes to mention. Mr. Amery was followed by Mr. Clynes, who evidently followed on behalf of the Labour Party in the House of Commons, then in opposition. Mr. Clynes was the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, and at that time, I fancy, the Labour Party were numerically stronger than the old Liberal Party. Mr. Amery's speech so much impressed Mr. Clynes that this is what he said when he rose to speak—

I cannot recall any recent occasion on which a Bill has been commended to the House by any Minister in terms of more genuine good feeling than the hon. member has shown. I wish to give him every credit for a wish to fulfil the ambitious purpose of this small measure of one clause which is before us now.

And Mr. Lovekin said Mr. Amery almost bragged! I would like to ask Mr. Lovekin, had he had the good fortune to be Premier of Western Australia, and had this State had the good fortune to have Mr. Lovekin as its Premier, and had he gone Home, does he think he would have got better terms from the British Government than Sir James Mitchell got? As to the terms of the "stupid" agreement, it is extraordinary that the head, the king pin, of the Country Party, Mr. A. J. Monger, in his presidential address to the annual conference of the Primary Producers' Association, held on the 8th August, 1922, said—after Sir James Mitchell came back with the "stupid" agreement—

I want to take this opportunity of congratulating Sir James Mitchell upon the success of his mission to England, and upon the financial arrangements made with the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments.

That is the "stupid" agreement. Now a few words on the question of the Peel Estate and the question of the number of cows that are required there, and, according to

Mr. Lovekin, cannot be got. Mr. Lovekin was one of the commissioners who sat on the Peel Estate and inquired into it. In this House, so far as I can gather, there seems to be much confusion as to how many cows were required—whether 6,000, as Mr. Lovekin said, or 10,000, as I fancy Mr. Baxter said, or some other number that somebody else stated.

Hon. J. Cornell: The expert said the settlers would want 10 cows each.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: But not all at once. I interjected when Mr. Lovekin was talking of the difficulty Mr. Hampshire had in obtaining cows, "Didn't the rinderpest outbreak have some bearing on this matter?" Mr. Lovekin replied "No; it was very unimportant." I then went further and said that I understood a considerable number were slaughtered. Mr. Lovekin said, "No; only a few cows were slaughtered, and the matter had no bearing." Candidly, I was astounded at that, because, like most members of Parliament, I read the papers and take a little intelligent interest in what happens, especially in such an event as the outbreak of rinderpest. I find that instead of a few cows being slaughtered owing to the outbreak, the number destroyed in dealing with the rinderpest trouble was more than 1,500, and that the most of them were dairy cattle. Consequently it seems to me that it has a most important bearing on the question of cows for the Peel or any other estate.

Hon. J. Cornell: Rinderpest was raging while the Commission was sitting.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I was prompted to make this remark because I remember perfectly well—taking the interest I do in these matters, and having read the evidence which again was supplied to us in the "Daily News" at great length—one responsible witness before the Commission said that the question of cows did have a most important bearing on the subject.

Hon. J. Cornell: Who said that?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I fancy it was Mr. McLarty.

Hon. J. Cornell: As a matter of fact the rinderpest was not cleared up until the Commission had finished its report.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Over 1,500 cattle were slaughtered, and more than half were dairy stock. Yet Mr. Lovekin declared that only a few had been slaughtered, and that that few had very little bearing on the whole question. What are the facts? It is stated that we have not the number of cows required for the group settlements. When the Colonial Secretary replies I trust he will be able to tell us; but so far as I can hear—I am not in the possession of official secrets—the number of dairy cows that will be required for group settlements up to the end of the present year will be something like 2,000.

Hon. J. Ewing: Not quite so many.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Perhaps Mr. Ewing knows the position better than I do. It is apparent that all the cows will not be required at once. Admitting that the figure is 2,000, the slaughter of 1,500 during the rinderpest outbreak would have a considerable bearing on the question of shortage.

Hon. A. Burvill: Do not forget also that those 1,500 cattle had some calves.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: As we all know, dairy cattle have an increase each year. They could not be dairy cattle otherwise. I am sorry that Mr. Holmes is not present. Of course we all know the reason of his absence. Our sympathy goes out to him in the bereavement he recently suffered by the death of a brother. I should, at the same time, like to take exception to a statement made by that hon. member regarding migrants. He said that from the figures quoted, I believe by Mr. Angwin, far more native-born Australians who had gone on to the group settlements had left them, than the people who had come from overseas. That was Mr. Angwin's statement, and Mr. Holmes was confident, and declared he had reason for saying it, that the Australian-born knew what he was up against and had got out, whereas the migrant stayed on because he was in receipt of 10s. a day and had a house or a shanty in which to live. I consider that is a libel on group settlements. I do not for one moment believe the statement. My opinion is that the overseas people are staying on the groups because they are anxious to make a home for themselves, and I am going to ask Mr. Holmes, and other hon. members as well, to be careful about the statements they make in this House and outside, and not to discourage the settlers. God knows, they have a hard enough task to make a do of it, and for Heaven's sake do not make that task any harder by discouraging them. The spirit of discontent is raised easily enough. It is possible to do a great deal of harm, but I ask hon. members not to do that harm. That is the reason why I draw attention to the remarks of Mr. Holmes. I am going to turn away from what I suppose everybody regards as the most important matter we have to deal with to matters in fact, that I regard as of equal importance to the people, but which I am sorry to say the majority of our community fail to recognise as such. I am certain, at any rate, that the various Governments do not recognise the importance of the health of the community and the accommodation that is required in our hospitals. Mr. Gray alluded to country hospitals. I have seen some of them but I will leave the question of these institutions to those members who are more familiar with them than am I, and

will deal with the Perth Hospital with which I am familiar. Ever since my return from the war I have devoted a lot of time, in speaking on the Address-in-reply, to the requirements of the Perth hospital which is not a local hospital, but the hospital of the State inasmuch as it caters for the whole State. I have been continually hammering on the subject of the various requirements of that institution, and I am glad to say that three of the things I have been endeavouring to secure have been supplied. The first was the appointment of a pathologist. That appointment has been made. Then there were the questions of orthopedy and the better equipment of the institution with an X-ray plant. The second question I am glad to say has received attention, whilst with regard to the plant, it has been attended to in part, but that part is to a certain extent the result of the generosity of Mr. Lovekin. I would like to tender to Mr. Lovekin the thanks that are due to him in this respect. I am sorry to say, however, that the improvements in the X-ray department have not gone as far as they should. Last session I brought forward a motion urging on the Government the desirability of installing an X-ray plant known as deep-therapy for the treatment of cancer. I am glad to say that resolution was passed and was forwarded to another place where it was also confirmed, and then sent to the Government. I regret to say that the matter ended there; the Government took no action so far as I know. I am not altogether blaming the Government because, so far as I can see, part of the blame, at any rate, is due to the fact that the Perth Hospital Board has not had sufficient push to get the plant. That is my impression, and as I know, and knew at the time I brought the motion forward, that it did not have the sympathy of the principal medical officer who is also on the hospital board and is, of course, one of the board's technical advisers. I was disappointed, but I would not let the matter rest. Three or four months ago I selected at random eleven London hospitals and the Edinburgh Infirmary and wrote asking whether they would give answers to two questions that I would submit. The questions were, (1) Did they keep a deep-therapy apparatus installed; (2) Were they contemplating doing so, or taking any action at all. The institutions were good enough to reply, and this is the gist of the answers I received:—Seven London hospitals have already got the plant installed, the King's, the Cancer Hospital, London, Middlesex, St. Bartholomew's, Guy's—all of London. The Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, also has the plant installed, making seven hospitals in all. The Middlesex Hospital has an apparatus capable of treating four patients at a time. The Charing Cross Hospital wrote that they were likely to instal the plant in the near future. St. Mary's stated that provi-

sion was being made for it. The University Hospital declared that the question was under consideration. Only two hospitals gave an unfavourable reply, namely, Westminster and Thomas', both of which declared that they had stayed their hands to await further results. When we consider what everybody knows, that the London hospitals are extremely poor, and through the war, and since the war, have had a terribly strenuous and anxious time financially, because of the heavy taxation which has hit up the people of England who contributed so largely to the hospitals, we must realise that these institutions are having a bad time and that many of them have bigger deficits relatively than ever Sir James Mitchell had in his worst days. We have also to remember that, I suppose, London medical opinion is about the most conservative in the world. I will read a sentence from the report for 1923 of the London Cancer Hospital. Dealing with the work that institution did in that year with reference to cancer and deep-therapy, this is what is written:—

In a considerable number of cases, the disease previously active has been rendered quiescent. There is now a considerable group of cases of carcinoma of the breast where the tumours are much reduced and appear to be fibrosed and quiescent. Several cases of carcinoma of the uterus have responded well to combined treatment, radium being applied locally first.

When I spoke in the House on deep-therapy I did not represent that it was a cure-all. I stated that in my opinion cases that admitted of it were still best suited for operation, but that there were cases where operations were ineffective, and that for those cases deep-therapy should be applied. Already we have two private practitioners in Perth. These gentlemen have gone to the great expense of providing their own plant, and yet the main hospital has not got one. I am going to ask the Leader of the House if he will make inquiries into this matter and see whether he cannot push it along. My own opinion is that an apparatus should be installed, and that the services of one of the radiologists of Perth, or perhaps the two, should be secured. Of course they would have to be paid, because radiology is calculated to cause deterioration in the health of the operator.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The cost is not excessive.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: It would probably cost £1,500, perhaps less, to instal a plant. Or if the services of the private practitioners were secured, selected cases could be treated privately by them at the Government expense. I think the best method would be to put the apparatus into the Perth Public Hospital. I am sorry to say that hospital is suffering financially. An appeal is now being made to the people with the object of getting in

enough money to remedy the present position. There is also a shortage of nurses. Nurses are still asked to work 62 hours a week.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Shame!

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: A probationer in her first year gets the magnificent remuneration of 7s. 6d. per week, and she works 62 hours. Even when the nurses have got on a little, the pay is still miserably inadequate.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: There is a want of accommodation at the hospital, not only for patients, but for nurses. That is one of the reasons why the nurses have to work such long hours. There is not enough accommodation to enable the hospital authorities to take in nurses to relieve the situation. There is a long waiting list of patients owing to the lack of accommodation at the institution. Patients who require operating on for hernia, varices, and other things which require attention, but can be postponed, are very numerous. Sometimes they have to wait for months after putting down their names. That is not right. It is time this position was remedied. I believe the present Government are anxious to do what they can to remedy the social conditions of the people. It is their duty to do so and I intend to help them.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It will make a big difference to the appeal.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: There is also the mental reception ward. The resident medical officer, Dr. MacKenzie, has been grumbling about the place ever since he was there. A promise was made that a new reception ward would be provided. An effort was made to put it down at Claremont. Mr. Gray, who favoured its establishment, joined forces with us and we had it removed from that place. I believe the Government have now bought a site near Applecross. I have not seen any bricks laid yet, but perhaps there is a shortage of that commodity. In the meantime the patients are being kept in the present ward to their own detriment and to the detriment of other patients. Then there is the question of skin diseases. Many of these are of a revolting nature. Those people are grouped with the other patients to their own detriment and to the detriment of others. They should be in a properly isolated ward. I do not say that they are dangerous to others, or that the diseases are infectious, but they are not nice to look at, and the other patients do not like to see them. The most reassuring thing is that fortunately the public conscience in this matter has been awakened. It is the duty of the State to care for the sick. Those who are not in a position to pay for competent medical attention should be looked after by the State. It is time our hospitals were brought into line with modern ideas. At present the Government are not doing this. I have referred to this matter on

many other occasions, but unfortunately the only thing I get is a harsh word. I will, however, continue along these lines until something is done. I now wish to refer to the question of education. I hope the Leader of the House, if he has not already done so, will read the report of the Education Commission—of which I was a member—that was handed in three years ago. He will find therein that we specially stressed the need for rural schools, where, in addition to the ordinary school curriculum, there should be special training in rural subjects, thus influencing young people in regard to their future activities. We also drew attention to the technical side of education, in which we found a deficiency. I am not aware that this deficiency has yet been remedied. Undoubtedly our technical education is not as well advanced as is our ordinary elementary education. That should not be the case. I should like to see a closer connection between technical education and the training of apprentices. In my opinion apprentices should not have to go to a technical school during their own time, when they are too jaded and tired to take a proper interest in their work. Some arrangement should be made to enable them to get off during working hours. I hope the Government will not neglect the needs of the university. This is a lusty youngster. Its activities far exceed the expectations of those who inaugurated it a few years ago. Although we have more students than is the case with the Brisbane University, we receive a smaller subsidy. As Chancellor of the University, I have discussed this matter with the Premier. I am sure Mr. Kirwan, who is a member of the Senate, will help me in anything that is necessary for this admirable institution. I hope the Premier will be able to see his way to grant us some of the things we are asking for. Chief amongst our requests is the appointment of a registrar. Up to date this duty has been thrown upon the professors. They are not men with business training, and this duty takes them from their legitimate functions. We had a registrar in the early days of the war, but he went to the Front and was unfortunately killed. Since then the professors have generously done the work in their spare time without extra remuneration. The law students also require the establishment of a faculty of law. The Barristers' Board has agreed to this, but I am sorry to say the matter hangs. No doubt the finances have something to do with that. There is also a little lack of sympathy in this direction. I would put it to the Government that if that was the idea of the late Government they were wrong. It is important to the State that the legal profession, from which our judges are supplied, should be raised to the highest possible status, and also that our law students should have the greatest educational advantages, as is the case with other professions. If we had a faculty of law, we could do something to improve the conditions

of law students. We also want new buildings. The late Government gave us one, but we hope the Premier will see his way to put something on the Loan Estimates for the erection of another building. We are miserably housed. It is not in the interests of the university that it should remain much longer in the present buildings. The time has come when we should get into proper buildings. Although it ought not to count, undoubtedly the nature of the buildings in which the university is housed has a great deal to do with the respect in which it is held. A girl student from one of the other universities in the Eastern States passed through here recently, and when I pointed out to her the University buildings she actually laughed. I do not want that sort of thing to go on. It is time we had our permanent home. We are not extravagant in our requests. We wish the Government to move us piecemeal as the finances permit, and, at any rate, to continue the work that was begun by Sir James Mitchell. A free University is all very well, but it does not go far enough. Of far greater importance is the establishment of suitable scholarships, so that those boys and girls whose parents cannot afford to keep them at the University can get their maintenance while undergoing study. We are apt to forget what the old universities of the world have done in the matter of education. Many of the colleges of Cambridge, for instance, were started out of funds that, I regret to say, probably came from the suppression of the monasteries. This was the fund that started most of our educational institutions in England. If harm, however, was done, good has come out of it. Trinity College was founded by Henry VIII., largely from funds that he derived from the suppression of monasteries. Our charter says he endowed it himself, but we know where he got the money. That foundation was started with a large number of fellows, men of education who received an annual grant for doing college work and carrying on the teaching of undergraduates, and also with 60 scholars. The world to-day does not realise the benefits that education derived in the old days from the system of scholarships, in which respect Western Australia is sadly lacking. Very little has been done in this State, and it is the duty of the Government to step in.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: We also want correspondence classes.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: When the finances improve we shall place quite a number of requests before the Premier. Correspondence classes for the people in the back blocks is one of these.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: We want a true Western Australian university.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: We do what we can, but we have not yet been able to

bring in these correspondence classes. With regard to an agricultural college, the Education Commission put that in the forefront of their report as being a work of such importance as to warrant its being undertaken at the earliest possible date. I have been very much disappointed that it has been so long delayed. I see the question has been narrowed down to two sites, but I do not know how long it will take to decide between the two.

Hon. J. Ewing: Has that not yet been decided?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: No. I hope it will not be long before it is fixed down to one site. I commend the action of Mr. Stewart, a member of this House. A year or so ago he set apart a portion of the funds that had accrued to him from the increase in salary granted to members, and gave that in trust to the University for an agricultural college. I hope his example will be followed by other citizens, especially by pastoralists and wealthy people who derive their money from large estates and from the land, and that they in their turn will do something for the agricultural college. I am in sympathy with the remarks that have been made with regard to infant welfare. There is an excessive mortality amongst children of tender years in this country. That has always been the case. There are two reasons for this. One of these is ignorance on the part of mothers. I do not know how that is to be removed. In spite of publicity campaigns, mothers go on without knowing how to feed their infants. If adequate instruction could be given to mothers by nurses, so much the better. Then there is the question of the milk supply. Until we get a pure milk supply we shall in the summer have a terribly heavy mortality amongst children. Germs multiply rapidly in milk. Some of these are of a putrefactive nature. One will see a child thriving to-day, but in 48 hours the child is dead. In the hot weather milk putrefies and most deadly organisms grow in it, which have an almost immediate effect upon the life of the infant. This state of affairs is largely due to ignorance. Then there are the infantile diseases which are not so acute, but which, owing to bad, stale or impure milk, cause the child to waste. Then there is another factor entering into this matter. We have very enervating hot summer days here, which, to a certain extent, undermine the health of a child. In New Zealand there has been great improvement along the lines of infant welfare. The mortality has been very greatly diminished there. That Dominion ought to be proud of its record and what it has done in this respect. There is one advantage that New Zealand has over Western Australia and always will have. That is in the matter of cool summers. Until Providence gives us cool summers we cannot do as well as New Zealand

does. We ought, however, to be able to do better than we do. I now wish to refer to the retirement of Mr. Walter, Police Magistrate. This is reminiscent of one of the first actions taken by the Labour Government some years ago when Mr. Roe was removed from his position as police magistrate. The Premier says that the action of the Government in removing Mr. Walter was not due to any vindictiveness concerning what Mr. Walter did on the goldfields during the war. Of course I accept the Premier's explanation, but all I can say is that Mr. Collier is the unfortunate victim of coincidence in that the retirement of Mr. Walter should have coincided with the advent of the Labour Government to power. Mr. Walter had been away on long service leave and came back to Western Australia prepared to resume his duties. He had gained no inkling from any source that he was to be superseded, and the first intimation he received on his arrival was a communication in which his resignation was demanded. He did not resign his position and he was then compulsorily retired. I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Walter was one of the best magistrates that Perth has had during its history, and I regret that he was retired. I do not think it redounds to the credit of the Government. I am sorry they did it, and I think this action has left a bad impression on the minds of the people. When I entered this Chamber I did so with the idea of not being what is known as a party politician. I came here with the intention of carrying out, as far as I could, one of the traditions of this House and one of its functions, namely, to judge every Bill on its merits according to our views, and to allow only that particular Bill to influence our arguments and convictions when we had it before us. This Chamber is not concerned with the fate of Governments. We are not here to put out Administrations, or to do anything in that direction. We are here to judge measures as they are presented to us and to express our opinion regarding the general policy of Governments. I intend to deal with Bills according to my knowledge and to deal with them on their merits. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion before the Chair.

On motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 12th August, 1921.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £1,863,500.

QUESTIONS (2)—ROAD MAKING, FEDERAL GRANT.

Expenditure in Great Southern.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (for Mr. Thomson) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it correct that the Government propose to expend the whole of the funds allocated to the Great Southern district, under the road grant, by day labour under departmental supervision? 2, If so, will the Government reconsider their decision, and hand over to the local road boards the expenditure of the money and the carrying out of the work, thus utilising local plant and labour?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. It has been decided to construct by day labour in the following districts in proximity to the Great Southern Railway:—Katanning, Dumbleyung, Kent, Woodanilling, Plantagenet, Tambellup, Kojonup, Preston, Broomehill, Gnowangerup. 2, Local plant and labour will be used wherever possible, but compliance with Commonwealth conditions must be the deciding factor.

Allocations of Money.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, What allocations have been made of the first and second years' grants in connection with the Federal grant for road-making? 2, In which road board districts has construction work actually commenced? 3, Are those boards that are capable of carrying out the work proposed in their respective districts to be permitted to do so? 4, In which districts are Public Works Department employees doing the road work?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, A statement showing the allocation of the first year's grant has been laid on the Table of the House. The second year's grant has not yet been allocated. 2, Fremantle, Harvey, Swan, Denmark, Lake Grace, Gingin, Melville, Murray, Sussex, Warren, Albany,