

be rendered to the work of this great Australian idealist. I realise that in my remarks on this occasion I am specially privileged as a new member. Hon. members have listened to me with considerate attention, and although there have been a few interjections, rather than be frightened of them I welcome them. It has been a pleasant experience to win a seat in Parliament, and I hope I shall emulate the spirit and character of the late Hon. J. A. Greig. If I fail in my desire to emulate them, I trust hon. members will be kind enough to appreciate that it will not be because I have not the desire, but because I am not able to.

On motion by Hon. J. R. Brown, debate adjourned.

LAPSED BILLS (2)—RESTORED.

Assembly's Message.

Messages from the Assembly received and read requesting the Council, in accordance with the Standing Orders relating to lapsed Bills, to resume consideration of the under-mentioned Bills:—

1. Main Roads.
2. Plant Diseases Act Amendment.

As to Second Readings.

On motions by the Colonial Secretary resolved: That the Bills having been read in this House a first time last session, the second readings be made Orders of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

House adjourned at 5.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 13th August, 1925.

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

QUESTION—DUTY ON KEROSENE AND PETROL.

Mr. THOMSON (without notice) asked the Premier: Is he aware of a proposal now before the Tariff Board suggesting a duty of 2d. per gallon on kerosene that in this State will amount to £19,595, and of a proposal to increase the duty on petrol from 1d. to 3d. per gallon that in this State will mean an additional contribution of £41,000? Has he, or will he, protest to the Federal Government against these suggestions?

The PREMIER replied: I read in the newspapers that these taxes were proposed, and immediately the announcement appeared, I telegraphed to the Federal Government strongly protesting against any such taxes being imposed.

BILLS (7)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Land Tax and Income Tax Act Amendment.
- 2, Group Settlers Advances.
Introduced by the Premier.
- 3, Jury Act Amendment.
- 4, Real Property (Commonwealth Titles).
- 5, Electoral Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Justice.
- 6, Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment.
- 7, Traffic Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Works.

LAPSED BILLS (2)—RESTORATION.*Main Roads Bill.*

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved—

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council to the following effect:—"The Legislative Assembly requests that the consideration of the Main Roads Bill, which lapsed during last session of Parliament, may be resumed by the Legislative Council."

Mr. THOMSON: Before the motion is put—

Mr. SPEAKER: There can be no discussion. This is a formal notice of motion simply to restore business to the Notice Paper. If there be any objections to its being taken as formal, of course, it cannot be proceeded with.

Mr. THOMSON: I was wondering whether it would be possible to get a statement from the Minister as to whether this House will have an opportunity to deal with the Bill.

The Premier: It will come here.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion is merely designed to restore the Bill to the position it occupied last session.

Mr. THOMSON: Will this House have an opportunity to discuss the Bill?

Mr. SPEAKER: Of course it will, at some stage.

Question put and passed.

Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill.

On motion by the Minister for Agriculture, resolved—

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council to the following effect:—"The Legislative Assembly requests that the consideration of a Bill for an Act to amend the Plant Diseases Act, 1914, which lapsed during last session of Parliament, may be resumed by the Legislative Council."

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [4.42]: I am sure I voice the opinion of members on this side of the House when I say how gratified we were at the impression that the Premier made in England. Whatever we may say to or against one another in this Chamber, we cannot but be pleased when the representative of the State, be he Labour or National,

acquits himself well and upholds the credit and prestige of the State. This is the first occasion on which the present Governor has delivered the Speech to Parliament. I should like to express my appreciation to the Premier's department for having enabled me to accompany His Excellency on his first trip to the outside country. The people of Westonia and Walgoolan are proud of the fact that the Governor's first trip was made to those towns. On another occasion I met His Excellency at Kellerrin. His Excellency's predecessor, Sir Francis Newdegate, endeared himself to the people of the State and established a very fine reputation here, but I think Sir William Champion bids fair to rival Sir Francis in that respect. His Excellency seemed to be ubiquitous in moving about and acquiring knowledge of the State and its requirements and, as the Americans would say, he was a real "go-getter." Regarding the prospects of the State, the last three years have witnessed considerable progress, and we can now congratulate ourselves upon the turn of the tide. It is gratifying that the revenue is so buoyant, and though the £262,000 of additional interest and sinking fund paid last year represents a burden that must be seriously reckoned with, it should not occasion undue anxiety, provided the progress of recent years can be maintained. There is just one thing I wish to mention particularly. I have been questioned in the country about the large sum of £280,000 under the item of reimbursements. Indeed, I may say that in the train, on the tram, on the track, and at street corners I have been asked how it is that so large a sum was imported into our accounts for one year.

The Premier: It is gratifying to know that the man in the street takes such an interest in the finances of the State.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I attribute a good deal of that interest to the fact that a good deal of what we do and say in the House is now being very fully reported in the "Daily News." Many members of the Chamber have not too much time for the proprietary of that paper.

Mr. Latham: That is a very unfair statement to make.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am not speaking about the hon. member interjecting. I say "many members." Perhaps I may qualify my statement by saying that in the past

many members have not been too favourably disposed to that proprietary. The reports in the "Daily News" have been and are being read, and there is among the public a better understanding of the members of this Chamber and the work they do.

The Premier: I think that the more the public read of what is said here, the more confused they will become.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Perhaps the Premier may be right. Possibly it is like listening to two men arguing. One man gives his side, and listeners think the other fellow has not a leg to stand on; but when that other fellow starts, it seems as if the first man had a great cheek to get up and speak at all. The ordinary man in the street has not, in the past, taken too much notice of what goes on here, nor has he realised what members of Parliament are doing. However, that is away from the subject. As regards the large amount coming in as reimbursements during one year, it strikes one as an extraordinary occurrence, and makes one wonder whether two years' reimbursements have gone into one year. Though I am not really prepared to speak to-night, yet there are one or two matters on which I must say something in connection with the Address-in-reply. From one aspect they are matters which may perhaps be regarded as parochial, but from another point of view they are of State-wide importance. First I will refer to the settlement of new lands. According to the Speech, a vigorous policy of land settlement is taking place, and is to be proceeded with further. The migration agreement, having been fixed up, we can expect a large accession of people in the near future. At present I am continually being written to by young fellows who are after land. One of them, a fine young fellow who would make an excellent settler, but who of course has to take his chance with other applicants, informs me that he was one of 64 applicants for a block. Almost needless to say, he did not get that block. On four other occasions he has also failed. The other day he came to me in something like distress about his failures, and seemed to think there was no possibility of his getting land. I told him to keep on with what he was doing—he is gaining experience on a farm—and offered to assist him by recommending him to the Land Selection Board if that would help him at all.

I also said to him, "In time you will get your block all right." I pointed out to him that one and a half million acres of land had been surveyed between Pithara, Dalwallinu, Bullfinch, and Westonia. I have seen a summary of the classification of that land. The problem of settling the country in question, particularly as one gets out to the east and north-east of the area, will have to be approached with much caution and care. Near Dalwallinu and Pithara, and on to Beneubbin, there is an assured rainfall; but as one proceeds east the rainfall rapidly falls off, and north to east, of course, it becomes still less. The other evening the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) gave some figures of which I think the House did not quite grasp the importance. He pointed out that the Bullfinch rainfall is something over 11 inches, and that in South Australia on land with a similar rainfall, land at one time considered valueless, crops of 11 and 12 bushels are being grown. The hon. member is getting further figures on the subject, and they will, I am sure, be submitted to the Minister for Agriculture. The member for Toodyay emphasised the fact, which I desire to emphasise now, that the fine block of country in question will have to be settled by practical men, men who will farm well. Further, as the hon. member stated, if the Government are going to assist in development there, they must call the tune that is to be played. The men taking up that country will have to farm properly. Before they take up the country, some form of transport will have to be provided for them, and water supplies will have to be found. Having had a good deal of conversation with the Honorary Minister in charge of water supply, I know that considerable activity is being displayed by the department. I am gratified to learn that the Government are doing what I urged at the beginning of last session, namely taking steps to ascertain beforehand the character of the land, and the possibilities of water supply. The whole of that country—with the exception of a small stretch east of Jilikin Rocks, to which surveyors are being sent this week—has already been surveyed. On the opening day of Parliament I gave notice of a question as to the Railway Advisory Board inspecting that country, and I have since learned that on the day prior to my question being answered they had set out to

extend their inspection on systematic lines to Bullfinch and Westonia, taking in the whole of the area in question. Thus an adequate idea will be obtained as to the plan which should be laid down for railways to serve that district. I have also asked some questions in regard to the Stronach-Dutton railway system, and as to other light line systems. I do not know that the Stronach-Dutton system is going to fill the bill here; neither do I know that the light lines used in the trenches during the war, and which I believe did excellent service there, will meet our needs. But I do know that while I was a resident of the goldfields I went to a certain place to find a woodline, out from Kamballie, going in from Broad Arrow, and that I discovered that the railway had been moved a distance of many miles from its original position. That railway has been transported just as requirements called for change of position. We know that only a limited number of miles of railway can be laid down in the near future. We know also that the people in the Newdegate and Ravenshorpe districts are calling for assistance in the form of motor lorries, or any other means of getting their products to market. Cannot something be done by the light line system to meet the needs of those people, and of settlers in the huge area east of Salmon Gums? Are those large districts to lie idle, possibly for years, until we are able to build railways of standard gauge through them? A son of mine who was at the war, and many friends of mine who were at the war, have told me of the wonderful work done by the light line railways behind the trenches. Perhaps the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) may be able to give the House some information on that point.

Mr. Panton: Those light lines would not be suitable for the agricultural areas.

Mr. Corboy: The member for Avon has not seen those railways.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I know I have not seen them, but these matters are worth inquiring into. There is more in them than meets the eye. The Stronach-Dutton system, at all events, has been tried and proved. Never mind if the light lines behind the trenches were not a success. We have had a new system described in the Press by Mr. R. F. Fitzgerald, D.S.O. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) may be able to prove that there is nothing in the system; still, it is

worth inquiring into. If the Stronach-Dutton system is useless, and if the light line systems are useless, then millions of acres of our country will have to lie idle indefinitely, awaiting settlement.

Mr. Corboy: I did not say that. In the army, however, there were millions of men available for that sort of labour, if required.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Does the member for Avon realise that this supposedly experimental light lines system has been worked out in Western Australia for the last 20 years?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Let me read an extract from Mr. Fitzgerald's communication—

The light lines that were used during the war under emergency conditions are a striking illustration of what was done under the most trying circumstances. A bold scheme is necessary in order to get these millions of acres under the plough, and immediate action is imperative, and an amendment to the Railway Act should be brought into operation and the Commissioner given power to lay down rails (light) and sleepers alongside existing roads or through private property, when necessary, out to localities where good lands exist at distances of up to 30 miles, light engines only to be used and to travel at a slow pace. The wheat country generally is fairly level, no ballasting would be required, and there would be little to do in the way of bridge-building or of culverts. Light rails or rails taken out as defective on main lines could be used for years on such tracks, likewise sleepers not up to standard. It must be remembered that usually there is no rain in the summer months, the roads are firm, the period during which the lines need be used is comparatively short, and that immediately the wheat and manure hauling is over the lines might be shut down until the next season. The present commissioner has seen the value of the light lines often thrown hurriedly across shell-torn country during the war, and residing in this State is the man who was officer commanding light line construction with the A.I.F. abroad. These lines were constructed under the most adverse conditions, often over boggy country; they were continually in use for carrying heavy loading and yet they were a success. Consequently there is little to militate against the success of the scheme in this State, but on the contrary, everything to commend a project which in a very short time would bring thousands of acres of virgin country under useful production.

I give that to the House because I think it is useful. If it is proved to be useless, we shall see what the Engineer-in-Chief has to say when he reported on the Stronach-Dutton system or on any other system that may come under his notice. The Stronach-Dut-

ton system is one in which there are light lines upon which the load only is run, the traction power being taken along the road. Dealing with the question of railways, I am to introduce a deputation to the Premier from the Goomarin and Lake Brown settlers. I shall not say much about that question, as it will be dealt with on that occasion. As regards the Yorkkrakine-Yarramony railway, that line has been promised for 17 years or more. Despite that fact we see that although the line is the next in rotation of those authorised for construction, the next line to be gone on with is one that has not yet been authorised. I am as keen as anyone else to see the goldfields linked up with the coast, but I hardly think in the circumstances it is equitable to delay the construction of the line I have mentioned. I do not think that line should be started before the Yorkkrakine railway. Some of the people of Lake Brown, Jilakin and Campion have been in their districts for many years, and their requirements should be catered for. I wish to pay a compliment to the Minister in charge of water supply on his efforts to meet necessities of the settlers regarding water. I do not pay him that compliment idly. There are the centres of Boddalin and that south from Burracoppin, and the people there have been languishing for a water supply. I thank him for the assistance he has rendered to these outback districts and I hope he will be able to continue this work. The Premier or the Minister concerned will be told to-morrow all about this subject as well. He will be told, too, regarding the position at Campion, although he knows it pretty well as it is. The settlers wish to get something definite regarding the provision of water supplies. Dealing with the ambitious policy of land settlement and migration, I shall have something to say at a later stage regarding the report of the Group Settlement Royal Commission. For the moment it is sufficient to say that there is a good deal to be said both for and against. So far as I have read the report, there would appear to be a good deal to be read between the lines. The minority report contains much in harmony with the majority report. However, the document will take some time to study but I believe that as time goes on, the group settlement scheme will be brought into its own and Western Australia in those days will no longer be largely a one-product country but will be

able to supply her own requirements in dairy produce and other lines as well. When speaking regarding our light lands last session the member for York (Mr. Latham) wanted to know what I knew of that subject.

Mr. Latham: You had a farm at one time, and I thought you would know something about it.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I do. I have been interested in light lands for years, and the Agricultural Department has been supplied by me with no end of information on the subject. Seven or eight years ago the present Director of Agriculture (Mr. Sutton) stated that there was one method of bringing that country into its proper productive state. It was simply a question of putting in crops of oats or other fodder crops and running sheep there. That contention has been borne out by experience. That method is now in operation. Many farmers are making a good living by growing oats, feeding the sheep on the crops, and thus fertilising the ground. I was pleased to know that such good results have been obtained from the sand plains at Tammin. In such country members will find in many places that the sand continues for about an inch down and then there is a hard bottom. The subsoil is very fine indeed, and there is no reason why the light lands should not be brought into successful cultivation, and that will be done in due course. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) and others have been interested in the Queensland Marketing Act and some members, including the member for Swan, visited that State in order to make inquiries. Last session when I moved a motion for the appointment of a select committee to gather information regarding marketing questions, the House turned down my proposal. I was told that it was good propaganda work on my part. When my motion was rejected I turned myself into a select committee. I have got a mass of information together and have gone very fully into the question. I have drawn up a synopsis of the information I have gleaned, and I intend to publish the matter very shortly. My deductions have been placed before the Minister for Agriculture as I promised they would be. The Premier at the time said that he would like to receive the information. It has been placed before him, and if it has proved of any use, my efforts will have been of some avail. We hear a lot of talk both

for and against the Queensland Marketing Act. If the Queensland Marketing Act follows along the lines or contains the fundamental principles that govern the Californian legislation, it will be for the betterment of this State if similar proposals are made here. In considering the position of the fruit industry it must be remembered that neither our fruit nor our marketing conditions are the same as those existing in Queensland. We approach more closely to the conditions prevailing in California itself. Mr. Aaron Sapiro drew up a contract dealing with the position in California. He is a Californian lawyer and was for years attorney for the marketing bureau of California. In America they have bureaux and departments that deal with co-operation and marketing generally. It is astonishing what wonderful results those people have been able to secure as the outcome of careful and scientific investigations, resulting in the methods now in vogue. This particular individual went to Denmark and studied the conditions existing there. Subsequently he investigated the marketing conditions in other countries of Europe as well. He then returned and studied the position of the co-operative movement in California. There some were most successful, others were partly so, while others again were more or less failures. He found that there were certain guiding fundamental principles applying to those companies that were successful, and that these principles characterised the successful companies in other parts of the world. Where the co-operative movements were partially successful most of the principles were observed, while those co-operative movements that applied only a few of the principles were mostly failures. By careful analysis of the investigations and the results, he drew up a plan that he has called the marketing plan, and he has laid down the conditions definitely.

Mr. Lutey: You will make the member for Swan jealous!

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am trying to help the member for Swan, because I have heard so much criticism regarding the Queensland Marketing Act that I believe some of it is not altogether fair. When the Government's Bill is produced I wish to be able to understand intelligently what the contents mean and whether the Bill follows the lines

that I have read about. The basic principles in the Californian plan are as follows:—

- First:—A legal acreage minimum for each state, represented usually by not less than 50 per cent. of the commodities to be handled.
- Second:—A legal iron-clad binding contract which cannot be broken, and which is enforceable in the courts.
- Third:—A State-wide seasonable pooling system in which every grower participates equally on the basis of variety, quality and grade.
- Fourth:—Organisation upon a purely commodity basis in which each organisation handles only the commodity of its members.
- Fifth:—Organisation under a long term contract with member growers.
- Sixth:—The employment of commercial experts to handle the business of the organisation.

In one of his pamphlets he states—

Given these factors, such an organisation then becomes the dominant selling agents in the markets, controlling supply, time of shipment, and the quality of its product. Under the California plan, a fruit or other selling organisation does not incorporate until it first obtains its legal acreage minimum. In this respect the California plan differs from the usual type of local, so-called co-operative, organisations, because under this an organisation makes sure of the fact that it has enough volume of business to actually dominate the market before it sets up its machinery for doing business.

I shall not dwell any more on this question, but will discuss it further when the Bill is before us. Some of my friends have written to me saying that the Bill may be all right, but that they do not want compulsion and do not wish to be forced into doing something they do not desire to do. I have told them that so far as I can ascertain, there will be no compulsion, nor will they be forced to do anything unless they agree to do it on the voluntary basis, as in California.

Mr. Sampson: Unless there is control, you cannot have the organisations. Voluntaryism has failed.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I believe the pastoral outlook is good. I do not know much about it in this State, but I hope to travel through the pastoral areas in order to gain some knowledge of these parts. The Minister for Agriculture, I believe, made a statement that in the pastoral areas the country was taken up for some 300 or 400 miles beyond the old-time limits, and that stock was being carried 200 miles further out than had been the position in past years. That was good news, because we on the wheat belt are inclined to think that no one but ourselves is moving. I hope to hear

next of activity in the North-West. I am firmly convinced that once we can get a little further down here we shall then succeed in forcing attention to the North-West, so that it may come into its own. A friend of mine from up there declares that we do not seem to understand what their difficulties are, nor the wonderful resources they have, not only in the way of minerals and precious stones and the pastoral industry, but also in certain forms of agriculture. "Some day," he said, "you will see wonderful work going on in that part of the country." It is reported in His Excellency's speech that the output from the timber industry is quite up to the average, and indeed improving. I belong to the Forest League. It is surprising to see the wholesale devastation amongst native timbers, with so little preparation made for the future. However, it is pleasing to notice that afforestation has emerged from the experimental stage and is now being carried on with a good deal of activity. A friend of mine in the Forests Department tells me quite a lot of what is going on, and so it was no news to me when I read that paragraph in His Excellency's speech dealing with forestry. When one learns what is going on in France and other parts of the world, one feels that we all should seriously consider whether we could not give a little more attention to forestry and endeavour to get people to become tree lovers. How much better that would be than indulging in what is going on in the city to-day, where beautiful avenues of trees are being converted into nightmares. Those responsible for the desecration may be looking to the future, but if so it is not apparent. Still, perhaps we must give them the benefit of the doubt. I have seen a great deal in the newspapers about the reported decision of the Minister for Agriculture to appoint an educationist as principal of the new agricultural college, and I read the other day the outpourings of a gentleman who declared that the appointee should be a man with a string of letters after his name. I was privileged to visit the Hawkesbury Agricultural College when Mr. H. W. Potts was principal. He had no string of letters after his name, but he was a shrewd organiser, a man who knew how to handle men, and he had some practical knowledge of farming. He conducted that college most successfully, and I was very much impressed with what I saw. I

am convinced that it is not a mere educationist who can successfully control our own new college. If the man has some educational ability, so much the better; but what is necessary is a man with a sound knowledge of farming and with marked ability to control other men. I, in conjunction with the member for Beverley (Mr. C. P. Wansbrough) intend to move a motion not altogether dissociated from the agricultural college. That motion will affirm that steps should be taken to stop the polluting of the river Avon from the overflow of the County Peak lakes, and that the arrest of all contributions of alkaline matter be taken in hand by the afforestation of suitable plants on the banks of creeks that discharge into the Avon. That is what I wanted the select committee to report upon last session. Those lakes at County Peak seldom overflow, and if we were able to dam that water back during the overflow, all would be well with the Avon. I know of places along the river that have been purified by the planting of suitable shrubs. It is the overflow of the County Peak lakes that brings down tons of salt into the Avon. Now we come to rabbits.

Mr. Taylor: Now you will shine.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I know it is not necessary to impress upon the Minister for Agriculture the extent of the ravages of our several pests, rabbits, dingoes, foxes, kangaroos and emus, all over the place. The rabbit, in common with other pests, has been affecting even such shrubs as sweetbriar and blackberry. A friend of mine has written to me as follows:—

I never saw rabbits so plentiful as they are this year. We calculate to lose 10 per cent. of our crops, and this in spite of the fact that we have trappers and the poison carts going regularly. As for the dingo, he is becoming more cheeky than ever and strays right up to the home paddock.

In Baandee, only a small district, 39 farmers this year are going to lose 4,330 acres of crop, worth about £13,000. If that can occur in one small centre, what does it mean for the hundred and one other places round about, in some of which the rabbits are even worse? Some of the men on the Industries Assistance Board have been able to get wire netting, but the shortage has precluded the supply to others. The Federal netting has long since been over applied for. I hope serious efforts will be made to induce the

Federal Government to render available a further supply of wire netting, so that we may see whether something cannot be done to compel the Tariff Board to cease from over-riding the obvious intention of the Federal Parliament. The Federal Parliament decided that wire netting and wire should come in duty free, but the Tariff Board has put on a dumping duty of quite an excessive rate. When, on the opening day, I asked certain questions about pests, I heard a whisper go round, and the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) remarked that I myself was a pest with my activities. Perhaps so, but there are some pests I know who do nothing. Of course, I am not referring to the member for Coolgardie. Members smiled when I declared that vermin and pests were going to be responsible for the loss by 39 settlers of no less than £13,000. Members did not know how true that statement was. I have referred to the question of water supply, and have asked the Minister to take particular notice of the figures that will come from South Australia and be placed before him very shortly. I am sure this House can study them with a good deal of advantage, so that in the future settlement of the outback country, where the rainfall is scanty, members will have some means of comparison with other parts of the State. They will see that many of those places, which are now looked upon as risky, will some day have a chance of coming into their own, with the employment of correct methods, because the rainfall there is quite as good as it is in South Australia where wheat is successfully grown to-day. There is one local matter I should like to refer to, namely, the reply I received from the Honorary Minister when I asked about a subsidy on the pound for pound basis for an X-ray plant at the Kelleberrin hospital. The Honorary Minister replied—

Yes, such approval was recorded in January, 1923. The previous approval was confirmed in July, 1924, but on the understanding that no funds would be available until this year's Estimates were passed, and the Committee was so informed. No funds are now available, nor, unfortunately, are funds likely to be available during the current financial year, unless available from the proposed State lotteries.

This reply is dated the 9th October, 1924.

Mr. Sampson: It sounds like repudiation.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I do not think it is. I think the Government are willing to honour

their promise when funds are available, but they are not yet forthcoming. I am told now that these people have struggled and got together the balance of the money for the plant, but that it is taken for granted the Government will not be expected to carry out their promise. That is what I read into the answer.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And it is pretty correct, too.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Then it is repudiation.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I do not repudiate things.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A definite promise was made that these people should have the subsidy.

Mr. Taylor: When was the promise made?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: In 1923.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: If that is repudiated, it is not playing the game.

Mr. Sampson: The Kelleberrin people help their hospital, and they are therefore allowed to do the lot.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You promised it to them; why did not you give it?

Mr. Sampson: The promise would have been honoured, but, unfortunately, the hon. member assumed the portfolio.

Mr. Marshall: It would be the first time you ever did honour anything.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I do not think the Honorary Minister will repudiate the promise, and I believe he will let them have the money.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: We shall first keep the promises made in the case of hospitals that are badly in need of help.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I know there are some places that are in distress. I do not like the idea of this promise being entirely repudiated, and I cannot think the Honorary Minister would do such a thing.

Mr. Angelo: It is only put off.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I hope to hear something from the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) with regard to scientific farming, and the application of science to industry and other branches of activity. We have heard some fine speeches from him on that subject before. This is one direction in which I believe we have a good way to go, and a good deal to gain. So far as the Avon, Toodyay, and other electorates are concerned, there is any amount of occupied territory from which better results could be achieved than are being obtained to-day, if only people would apply scientific knowledge to it. Some people seem to balk at the words

"scientific knowledge." They look at them as if they are frightened of them. After all, they only mean accumulated facts and correct knowledge. By the application of correct knowledge, and by putting into practice correct principles, the country will come into its own as regards production, and will swell not only the revenue of the export figures but the revenue of the State. When one sees the immense amount of country yet to be developed, and how little has been done, and how puny our individual efforts are, it makes one pause and ask oneself whether we are doing any good. All we can do is to keep on battling and doing all we can. This country has a great future before it. I was pleased to hear the Premier described as the champion optimist, who was going to wrest that honour from the Leader of the Opposition. I presume the Premier has been influenced by what he has seen in other parts of the world, and that he has returned to this country finding it is a good place to be in. Evidently he is more convinced than ever of the greatness of the opportunities it affords. I hope one or two of the matters I have brought before the House will be of use to members.

MR. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [5.37]: It is not my intention to waste much time in eulogising the wealth and potentialities of the North, but I wish to spend a few of the minutes at my disposal in once more urging the Government to do something for the benefit of the people up there, in order that they may be relieved of some of their hardships. I do urge the Government to afford immediate relief in the way of health facilities. I admit the people have received some assistance in that direction by a subsidy for the instalment of an X-ray plant at the Broome hospital. This has proved of great advantage, and is highly appreciated by people in the out-back parts of Kimberley. There are still some matters that demand immediate consideration at the hands of the Government. Let me refer first to the necessity for appointing a medical practitioner at Hall's Creek. There is an inland mission hospital, or a nursing station, at Hall's Creek which has done excellent work in nursing sick and fevered patients. The institution has earned the respect of the entire community in Kimberley. In order to place the position more clearly before members, I wish them to understand that Hall's Creek is the

central township of the East Kimberley cattle areas. It is surrounded by cattle stations, whose employees represent the bulk of the population of the district. These people are miles away from civilisation, and are liable to serious accident or illness. In such a case they would have to travel 240 miles to a medical officer, which means a journey of 14 days with a pack-horse. The appointment of a medical officer at Hall's Creek is vitally necessary, and would cost very little to the Government. Many Government positions at Hall's Creek are filled by Federal Government employees, who are subsidised by the State Government. These positions could be held by a medical officer stationed there at a minimum of cost to the State. I have written to the Minister for the North-West about this matter, but, as on many other questions, I have received bogus replies concocted by some departmental head who knows nothing about the district, and cares less. I hope the Minister controlling the Health Department will give this request his immediate attention. The difficulties of settlers on the outskirts of this State have been referred to, but they are nothing in comparison with the difficulties confronting the people in my district. Whilst I sympathise with the claims of those members whose districts are within, really, a stone's throw of the metropolitan area, I do urge that consideration should be given to the Kimberley people, who cannot get on a train or a motor car and reach Perth within 24 hours, or two days at the outside. Every cattle station in Kimberley should be equipped with a first aid outfit, but I say definitely that not one in twenty can produce such an outfit when called upon. This was brought under my notice during my recent travel through the electorate. An aboriginal who was attached to a droving outfit between the Fitzroy Crossing and Derby was nearly burnt to death through sleeping too close to the fire. The unfortunate man was taken to the nearest station, and instructions were given to send him to the Fitzroy Crossing by the mail coach, due in two days. When the mail contractor arrived and saw the aboriginal, he found that he was in a critical condition. The contractor is an honest and a humane person, and suggested that the aboriginal should be sent the other way, to Derby, for medical attention. This was not done until several days after

the accident. The mail contractor was both humane and honest, because he could have taken the aboriginal to the Fitzroy Crossing, as instructed, and received £5 for his fare, but he was sympathetic enough to say that the other course was the better one for the injured man. The Chief Protector of Aborigines was, I take it, appointed to look after the interests of the natives and bring about some sort of reform. The aborigines are still awaiting that reform, and ever will await it so long as this highly paid official is allowed to sit in a comfortable office in St. George's-terrace and dictate who shall and who shall not be penalised. The proper place for the Chief Protector is in Kimberley, not in Perth, and I would suggest that the Minister should make exhaustive inquiries into the matter without delay. I visited the two aborigines' reserves, Violet Valley and Moola Bulla, and I can pay the highest tribute to Mr. Burness, the manager of Violet Valley. He had some 400 odd natives to care for, and in my opinion the reserve is conducted in a creditable way and, as was intended, purely a feeding depot for the natives. Moola Bulla is a different proposition, and while being an example to other stations in regard to development the fact seems to have been overlooked that it was established for the care and welfare of indigent natives, for now it has developed into a business proposition. I also paid a brief visit to the lazarette at Derby, and on that visit I was accompanied by the medical officer of Derby. I congratulate Dr. Hodge on his sympathetic treatment and attention to the unfortunate people who are under his care. I am at a loss to know, however, why this medical officer has not had more assistance from the Aborigines Department. There is no place whereat he can treat diseased natives, excepting a tin and bough shed. There is nothing in the nature of a compound, which is necessary for the segregation of the sufferers and other diseased natives. They appear to be able, of their own free will to go in and out of the town and to mix with the natives in the town. Under existing circumstances it seems to be impossible to prevent that sort of thing. Had the Aborigines Department paid any attention to the matter, they would at least have established some form of compound, if only to keep the diseased natives away from the town. It is no wonder that there

has been a big noise from Derby in connection with this question. With the expenditure of a few pounds, the department could have overcome the difficulty and prevented the possibility of the spread of the disease. The residents up there are indignant because they contribute by way of taxation towards the maintenance of the natives, and they do not expect cavalier treatment of the kind I have described. With regard to the pastoral industry, one would think from what has been said in the course of this debate, that the industry had recovered from its temporary depression brought about by the lack of development when Nature failed with her usual blessing of rainfall. That is quite wrong, at any rate so far as Kimberley is concerned. The pastoralists in the Kimberleys have lost 50 per cent. of their herds, and the worst feature of the loss is that the majority of the stock that has died consisted of breeders. It will take two or three years at least to recover from that loss. When dealing with the far North last session my friend the member for Roebourne, Mr. Teesdale, referred to it as the workers' paradise. I am sorry the hon. member is not here because I desired to reply fully to what he had to say. In his absence, however, I will content myself by refuting two of the statements that he made. The first was that cooks employed in the industry were paid from £12 to £15 a week. Hon. members must realise that that is quite untrue. As a matter of fact, if I had been offered one of those positions at £15 a week, I would have resigned my seat in the House and taken on the job. It would have been a much better paying proposition for me. That was second-hand information, I have no doubt, and does not do any good when it is spread. At the same time the member for Roebourne forgot to mention that most of the work is only seasonal.

Mr. Latham: Kangaroos are paid throughout the year.

Mr. COVERLEY: I will deal with them later on.

Mr. Latham: I know of a chap who bought a farm on what he made out of kangaroo shooting up that way.

Mr. COVERLEY: The employees in the cattle industry are engaged only in the busy season, and after that they are put off their job. The second statement made by the member for Roebourne was that the towns-

people at Hall's Creek objected to an aboriginal female being treated at the Inland Mission nursing station. That statement, too, was quite wrong. It was not true in any shape or form. The townspeople at Hall's Creek knew nothing at all about it until they read of it in the hon. member's speech. I wish again to appeal to the Government for some assistance for the holders of small pastoral areas, who have not had anything like fair treatment in comparison with what the holders of big areas pay. The latest reappraisements of pastoral holdings put the small holders on the same footing as all the others, that is, they must pay 10s. per 1,000 acres. Hon. members may say that £50 is not a big sum of money, but I assure them it is a considerable amount when you have not got it, and I know it. I have a lot of sympathy for the holder of a small pastoral lease who is in straitened circumstances.

Mr. Sampson: Is not 100,000 acres sufficient for them?

Mr. COVERLEY: In my opinion it is not. Every holding should be 500,000 acres in extent, no more and no less, but it depends on the class of country, and the hon. member who interjected, in conjunction with his colleagues in the previous Government, committed a crime in the Kimberley districts when they extended the period of the leases. If the Government had commandeered the whole of the areas and split them up into blocks of a maximum of 500,000 acres each, we would have had in the Far North ten times the population that is there now.

Mr. Sampson: It was long before my time.

Mr. COVERLEY: I apologise to the hon. member if he had nothing to do with it. Again I appeal to the Government to give the small pastoral holders some assistance. If they do not, we shall have a repetition of the small holders carrying their swags from the Kimberleys. No one wants to see that happen. We require population in the Kimberleys, about which so much has been said by other members as well as myself. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) interjected last evening that it was a good thing to have foreign capital coming into the country. I am sorry to say that it has proved a retrograde step so far as the Kimberleys are concerned. In the Kimberleys, prior to the influx of foreign capital, kangaroo shooters were paid 2d. a scalp and were allowed free meals. Some of them made good money, and some did not. With the influx of foreign

capital, a lot of stations were bought up, and immediately the dog tax and the kangaroo scalp fee were wiped out. The 2d. a scalp for kangaroos was ammunition money for the kangaroo shooters and when that was stopped, and they had to find themselves in tucker, the kangarooers immediately packed up and left.

Mr. Latham: They did well, because some of them paid a few thousand pounds for farms.

Mr. Marshall: Talk sense!

Mr. COVERLEY: One of the greatest drawbacks in the Kimberleys is the absence of decent roads. It is essential that there should be these facilities for transport in country like the Kimberleys, where there are no railways and not even a road of any description. I do not know what members describe as bad roads, but I can tell them that we have no roads at all. A track is merely cut by the first wagon that leaves for an inland station, laden perhaps with stores, and then other vehicles follow that track, and so that becomes the road. Then when the rainy season comes, the track is obliterated and the same thing happens again after the rains are over. I ask the Minister in charge of the Federal roads grant to be a little more lenient towards my electorate when allocating the money to be spent in the North-West. Let me mention what happened with the grant of £12,000 that was set apart for the North-West last year. Of that sum £1,000 was given to the Wyndham Road Board, and it was spent under the supervision of an engineer, and only 60 chains of road was constructed. The Wyndham Road Board has 500 miles of road to control, and if £1,000 will only go towards making 60 chains of roadway, I really cannot say when the district will get enough to cover its requirements. If it were possible to provide decent roads so as to improve the means of transport, there would be cheaper and quicker deliveries of stores, and that would make a power of difference to station holders and workers alike. I was pleased to learn from the Address that agricultural surveys were being pushed ahead at Elephant Hill. I assure members that the cotton industry will in time play a big part in the development of the Kimberleys, if not the whole of the North-West. Recently I visited Messrs. Hay & Overheu's cotton plantation, out from Wyndham. I cannot speak too highly of the work done

by those men. This is their second year on cotton growing, and they have 34 acres of well-developed white cotton plants, and they estimate that the crop will return 15 tons of cotton. That was the one moment in my life when I wished the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) had been with us, for he would have been delighted to see the display. With fair and proper treatment those men growing cotton will make a huge success of it. By "fair and proper treatment" I mean that they want as little departmental interference as possible. Recently I asked the Minister controlling the North-West some questions in respect to the conditions appertaining to cotton growing. I was not very well satisfied with the reply. Those men complain that they have received notice from the North-West Department stating that the Government are prepared to make an advance against ratoon cotton of approved quality. Here is the departmental letter—

Dear Sir.—With reference to your recent inquiry as to whether the State Government is prepared to make any advance against ratoon cotton of approved quality, I have to inform you that the Hon. Minister for the North-West has agreed to advance 3d. per lb. against such cotton on the following conditions, viz., that the cotton is permitted to be ratooned for one year only; the plants are to be cut down to within six inches of the ground, and all the previous year's stalks and debris to be burned; the last date at which this operation is to be completed is to be 30th September.

The Secretary of the North-West Department, who issued those instructions has had no practical knowledge either of cotton or of Kimberley. Those conditions, probably, he has gathered from Queensland where, perhaps, they are applicable. Certainly they are not applicable to Kimberley. Also I asked that the late tropical adviser be replaced, and I am pleased to learn that the Minister for Agriculture realises the necessity for filling the vacancy. I hope that he will call for applications at the earliest possible moment. To revert to cotton: 3d. per lb. is a very small guarantee for the cotton, because a man starting up there has a great deal of expense that is not incurred in other industries. He has special expenses in the way of extra freight and extra wharfage charges, and so on. Further, he has to wait a considerable time for any result from the cotton that is sold. Messrs. Hay & Overben sold a few bales of cotton some 12 months ago, and have not yet received their account

sales. On behalf of the people of Kimberley I wish to thank the Government for their action in improving the State shipping service. It is very necessary that we should have up-to-date boats on the North-West coast. I again appeal to the Government to do what they can to relieve the hardships imposed on the population of Kimberley. People up there are all too few, and we do not wish to lose any of them. Yet with extra wharfage charges and the high cost of living we are in grave danger of losing them unless we can give them some consideration. I had intended to say a little about pests, but I am afraid that unless I keep a restraint on myself the Minister for Agriculture will think I have dingoes on the brain. I assure the House that euros, dingoes, and other pests are becoming too numerous in Kimberley. I hope the Minister will put the kangaroo and the euro under the Vermin Act, for they do a great deal of damage in the pastoral areas. Not only do the kangaroos eat the grass, but in the dry season they pull it up and eat the roots. As a consequence, for a hundred miles from Derby, right along the main river, the ground is as bare as the road. I had intended to make reference to the Wyndham Meat Works, but I shall leave that for another occasion.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [6.7]: I take this opportunity to bring before the Government the severe hardship suffered by residents of the North-West through the ullaging of cargo of steamers trading along the coast. Hardly a cargo is landed but a percentage of the cases and packages have been ullaged.

Mr. Sleeman: Have those boats black crews or white crews?

MR. ANGELO: Both. In any case, the black crews cannot be blamed, because they do not do the loading and stowing, which is done by the lumpers. Where the ullaging takes place, nobody knows. That is what I want the Government to find out.

Mr. Sleeman interjected.

MR. ANGELO: But I am referring to local cargo.

Mr. Coverley: I once had to travel with a black crew, and my motor bike was pretty well stripped.

MR. ANGELO: The hardship is accentuated by a regulation of the Harbour and Light Department, which provides that the

department will not be responsible for cargo landed between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. Unfortunately, Carnarvon is so situated that nearly all our steamers are unloaded at night, and so we have no redress from the Harbour and Light Department. This grievance is no small one. While at Carnarvon the week before last I attended a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, where I was asked to bring this matter before the Government. Some of the statements made by the merchants and storekeepers of Carnarvon would stagger Ministers. In some instances it is found that nearly £100 worth of cargo has been taken out of the cases and packages.

Mr. Sleeman: Could you swear that the goods were ever put in?

Mr. ANGELO: The chief line of cargo that is ullaged is liquor. Certainly a great deal of liquor is consumed by somebody between the time it reaches the goods shed at Fremantle and the time it reaches the goods shed at Carnarvon. I urge the Government to see whether the Police Department cannot find out where the ullaging is taking place. After all, it is the working people of the district who are affected, for the storekeepers have to pass on their losses by increasing their charges. I do not know whether this question affects the other ports of the North-West.

Mr. Coverley: There has been no case of ullaging in Wyndham for the past three years.

Mr. ANGELO: Surely the detectives ought to be able to assist in some way. Then there is this regulation of the Harbour and Light Department, relieving them of all responsibility. That should be cancelled. The department would then have to take more care in tallying out the cargo.

Mr. Millington: Have you any idea where that ullaged cargo is concealed?

Mr. ANGELO: No, we cannot discover that. The Chamber of Commerce asked me to bring this matter before the Government, and this is the first opportunity I have had. Several speakers have stressed the fact that the North-West has not had a fair share of the Federal road grant. Under the conditions governing that grant, area as well as population has to be taken into consideration. If we analyse the grants that have been made it is clearly seen that the North-West has not had anything like its share. Another point: there is a shameful waste of

money in the construction of some of the roads. One of the Federal conditions is that the road must be cleared for 20 yards.

Mr. Latham: Twenty feet.

Mr. ANGELO: Well, I have seen a road cleared wider than this Chamber, and that in a cutting over a hill.

Mr. Sleeman: Was that the clearing or the forming?

Mr. ANGELO: The men were making a cutting over a hill. It must have cost hundreds of pounds more than was necessary. Then there is a stone crossing being constructed over the Gascoyne River near the Junction. The distance across the river is 40 chains. The work had proceeded only a few chains when the Federal grant ran out. I congratulate the Government on their decision to replace the "Bambra." That steamer has done wonderful work, especially during wartime, in policing the freights charged by other steamers. But for the "Bambra" the residents of the North would now be paying double the freights and fares they are called upon to pay to-day.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. ANGELO: Before tea I was expressing my gratification at the decision of the Government to build a new steamer to replace the "Bambra" on the North-West coast. When going out of the Chamber some of my friends took me to task for urging further State enterprises. I cannot look upon the provision of a shipping service for the North-West as a State enterprise. It is nothing of the kind. It is a public utility, just as a railway is. I doubt whether railway freights will ever compare with water carriage, but until the Government can provide the North-West with railways, I shall always be in favour of the people there having a State Shipping Service. Not only will it be a convenience to them, but it will also be a means of developing that great area. I travelled recently in the "Bambra" and can safely say I have never travelled in a better conducted vessel. The officers and the crew seemed to be working in perfect harmony, and the ship is as clean and comfortable as it is possible for an old vessel to be. The North-West service is an exacting one. Any ship will not do for it. She must have a certain draught, and possess a certain speed to enable her to pass from port to port within specified times. She

must be of a certain size, and fitted to carry stock. I feel sure that, with the information in the possession of the Government officials, in the new "Bambra" we shall have a vessel that will be up to date and fill the bill. I am delighted to know there is going to be provision for a considerable amount of freezing space upon her. That is very necessary. I hope when the vessel is on the coast the Carnarvon Meat Works will be able to function. With a steamer provided with ample freezing space a great deal can be done to reduce the price of meat to the metropolitan area. A steamer such as this will be able to bring not only frozen meat but should be able to bring down chilled meat. If chilled meat can be transported from the Argentine to England, surely it can be brought from Wyndham and Carnarvon to the metropolitan area. If that is done in a satisfactory manner, it will mean that the people will not be satisfied with one new ship but will want at least a dozen that will bring meat down at regular intervals.

Mr. Mann: It should be chilled meat from Carnarvon.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. It is only fair that those members who know something of the difficulties confronting the State Shipping Service should say something in its defence. It is said that the "Bambra" frequently runs on sandbanks, and touches more land than other vessels do. She is asked to do a great deal that other ships are not required to do. She has to go into impossible harbours and do a lot of pioneering work that others cannot do. I have been on her when she has been asked on a pitch dark night to go upon a lee shore and pick up a lighter, because some other port was short of provisions. All the guide the skipper had was the time which must elapse since he lost sight of a lighthouse 40 miles away. No other skipper would be asked to do anything like that. Because the "Bambra" is asked to carry out impossible tasks such a slight incident as running upon a sandbank has occurred. I am glad that a new steamer has been decided upon and hope that nothing will be left undone to make her perfectly suitable for our coast. I would suggest that when the ships is well on the way to completion one of our captains who knows the requirements of the coast from the stock point of view, should be sent Home to supervise and direct the stock fittings that it will be necessary to instal. I should like to say a word

or two with regard to workers' homes in the North-West. The workers there are living under considerable disadvantages and discomfort and are badly in need of workers' homes, such as are given to their confreres in southern parts of the State. At present many families in the North-West are living in humpies, because they have not sufficient money to provide themselves with any other form of house. I suggest that an officer of the Workers' Homes Department should visit the North and address meetings at each of the centres. He could then fully explain the provisions of the scheme.

Mr. Panton: I am quite willing to go up.

Mr. ANGELO: The hon. member would be a good man to send. The officer might also inquire into what land is available. I feel sure a great many applications would be lodged for workers' homes.

Mr. Panton: There are plenty down here, but the department cannot supply the demand.

Mr. ANGELO: About four years ago I sent in a petition to the Workers' Homes Board for 23 homes in Carnarvon. Not one of these has been built and no notice seems to have been taken of the request. Another urgent work is required at Carnarvon, and I do not hesitate to refer to it, because not only will it affect the people there, but will mean considerable improvement to the conditions regarding meat supplies in the metropolitan area. I refer to the stock route from Carnarvon via Hamelin Pool and Mullewa. The present stock route is entirely denuded of feed. Even if we had a record season I do not think there would be sufficient feed on the route for sheep to travel to market in anything like a satisfactory condition. This is due to the fact that hundreds of thousands of sheep have travelled over the route during the last 20 years. Through the enterprise of Messrs. J. and C. Butcher, a stock route 120 miles long has been cut from their station to Hamelin Pool, at their own expense. The week before last, in company with one of the engineers of the North-West Department, I traversed that route both ways. We are of opinion that it will make an excellent stock route. It passes through virgin country. There is an abundance of feed along the track, and all that is required are three or four watering places along the dry patch of 82 miles. The stock route not only reduces the distance from Carnarvon to Mullewa by over 100 miles, but runs through an abundance of good feed.

Mr. Lamond: It would take a lot of money to find water there.

Mr. ANGELO: Artesian water can be obtained at no great expense.

Mr. Lamond: I think the bores would cost at least £300 each.

Mr. ANGELO: Four bores would not cost more than £1,200. The opening up of this route would be of immense benefit to the metropolitan area. Instead of our getting mutton from store sheep, which is unfortunately the case at present, because the sheep have had to travel over 200 miles of country practically without feed, stock can be brought to the railhead without losing condition and arrive here very much better in quality. I hope the Government will give serious attention to the matter. Not only will it assist the pastoralist of the Gascoyne if they open up this track, but they will also be conferring material advantage upon the consumers of the metropolitan area.

MR. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [7.41]: Some of the speeches that have been delivered during this debate have been elevating, but some of them have been very depressing, particularly those that were delivered in support of the amendment. I do not know why, in a country like this, there should be a place in our public life for men who hold mean and cramped views, and who possess considerable doubt regarding the great possibilities of Western Australia. We know the farming possibilities, the pastoral possibilities, and the mining possibilities. We also know how much has already been done by people in the production of the great wealth that has been derived from Western Australia. There should be no place in the public life of this country for men with mean and petty minds who think in terms of threepenny-bits, instead of viewing the State in the light in which it deserves to be viewed. I have spoken upon many Addresses-in-reply, and probably on those occasions have over-estimated the belief that members have in the future of Western Australia. Some of them sneeringly refer to the fact that I have always made the same speech. So long as I occupy a seat in this House, I shall continue to endeavour to infuse a little more belief in the possibilities of this State into the minds of our commercial people. In Western Australia we are almost a community of agents living upon one another. I had a most striking example of that brought under my notice a little while ago. We have heard of

the Business Men's Association in Fremantle. I know of no place in the State where less patriotism is displayed towards local industry, that should be supported by the business community, than Fremantle. They are great believers in trading upon one another, and in acting as one another's agents; great believers in impressing upon the Government of the day the need for lavish expenditure of public funds. It matters not whether it is the building of a new bridge or a new dock, or the extension of harbour facilities—

Mr. Sleeman: All necessary.

Mr. LAMBERT: Those things would not be necessary at all if the same spirit of progress as is displayed by the larger proportion of the commercial and business men of Fremantle were displayed all over Western Australia. In that case a black-fellows' camp would suffice for all the trading to be done. Only the other day some unsophisticated people not fully acquainted with the spirit actuating the business men of Fremantle wrote to the Fremantle Business Men's Association asking for suggestions as to how Western Australian boys and girls might be absorbed. Let me say that the only way to absorb our boys and girls into useful occupations here is to stimulate, build up, encourage, and support industry in Western Australia, and not to grab agencies from the Eastern States, or from one another. Now I come to the wider area for the observant eye in Western Australia. The remark I am about to make applies to-day to most of our big business people. I mention no names, because the application is common. Anyone starting an industry in Western Australia to-day can hardly induce a single one of our big business men to put a threepenny-bit into it. If a commission is to be made by selling something for you or to you, the business men pester the life out of you. That is the puerile kind of patriotism under which this country suffers, and under which it will suffer until we can inculcate upon these people some sense of their responsibility and some desire to co-operate in the general scheme for building up industries essential to this State. Until that time comes, Western Australia must stand back as the poor relation of the great Commonwealth of States. The members for Fremantle could teach a useful

object lesson in this respect to the business people of their town. The member for Perth, I am glad to say, has always been most anxious to assist local industries, and has done much in that direction; but he probably sometimes feels that the big commercial men, by virtue of their organisation and ramifications throughout Western Australia, have virtually monopolised the distribution of goods here. That hon. member should tell them that solid progress will not be accomplished until they take an active part in local industry and exhibit a spirit of co-operation.

Mr. Sleeman: How about a word of advice to the country members now?

Mr. LAMBERT: I shall speak to them later. No one was more gratified or personally pleased than I was with the Premier's visit to London. Besides enlarging his experience, he had the opportunity of giving the people in the Old Country an idea of the calibre of the public man who for the time being guides the destinies of Western Australia. I have no doubt that from the Premier's visit much material good will result. His mind has been enriched not alone by his personal experiences, but also by observing the wider sphere of social affairs and those old associations which have contributed to the building up of Great Britain and its offspring, the British Empire. While we as a young nation may be ambitious in our social reforms, still we must pay every respect to those older traditions upon which we are establishing the foundation of our aspirations. The financial position is so favourable that the Opposition were led into a pitfall the other night, even though they were unable to find any fault whatever with the 15 months of administration by the present Government. Of course the Opposition must make some political show of finding fault with His Majesty's Government, but in their hearts they are gratified with the splendid results achieved during the comparatively short life of the Collier Ministry. Those results, of course, are not wholly due to the present Government. Undoubtedly many of them are due to the solid groundwork done, and to the productive nature of the State. If greater courage were shown in building up industries here, this State would exhibit still greater productivity. If we are blessed with a good season this year, I believe we shall have a

total wheat production surpassing all expectations. The time has gone by for men to cavil at the possible wealth of Western Australia, or cast doubts on it. Go north, south, east, or west, and witness the material progress made by our people to-day, people working possibly under poor guidance but with big hearts. Many old goldfielders, men who pioneered the waterless areas, are to-day displaying a spirit worthy of the race from which they have sprung. They are among our most successful wheat farmers. If the Government of this country would only give the people a lead and put a stop to the frequent displays of timidity, hesitation, and doubt, this State would soon be unsurpassed in the Commonwealth. With another good harvest we shall establish our agricultural industry upon a basis unchallengeable for all time. When Lord Forrest launched his scheme for the development of Western Australia, he had men maligning and decriing it. His great engineer, who launched the Coolgardie Water Scheme and the Fremantle Harbour Works, was also decried. Similarly Lord Kitchener was maligned when he went to Egypt to irrigate that country by the damming of the Nile. The regrettable characteristic of decriing a man who is doing anything is frequently to be met with in Australia. Such people certainly should find no place in the public life of this great continent. A regrettable feature confronting us at present is the incidence of taxation in Western Australia. Dozens of Eastern States firms operating here pay virtually no taxation whatever, though they pay big dividends in the Eastern States. We derive practically no benefit from their activities here, because they patronise no local firms, but import or indent all they sell. They pay tax where taxation is lightest. We should impress upon the Government the necessity for completely changing the incidence of taxation in Western Australia. Commercial men who have made money here find it discreet to leave for some other place, where taxation is much less, and invest their money there. I have heard of a good suggestion made by Mr. Lovekin some time ago, that for our present extortionate income tax we should substitute a sales tax, so as to get at the absentees who pay no taxation here. I hope the Premier will give serious thought to that matter. Possibly

by the summoning of all the ability in this Chamber some concrete recommendation could be arrived at. I believe that even the Opposition are desirous of placing taxation upon the shoulders that should properly bear it. It is not right that in a young country such as this, which has to contribute interest and sinking fund and to carry out all the functions of government, the people should be saddled with excessive taxation. Let us see whether, by getting together, we cannot assist the Treasurer to devise a scheme whereby Eastern States firms trading here will be made to contribute their due proportion of taxation to Western Australia. I believe such a course would be applauded by all sections of our people. It is scandalous that big shipping firms, big commercial firms, and big agency firms trading here should pay practically not a shilling by way of taxation to Western Australia, while our own big men, who are doing something to develop industries for Western Australia's lasting good, are paying thousands of pounds a year by way of taxation. Moreover, the number of companies operating here, but registered outside this State, is increasing every month. It would be a good idea to have a committee of both Houses to see whether we cannot exploit taxation methods in such a way as to saddle some of these companies with their proper share of tax.

Mr. Richardson: There is no need for a coalition. We all agree with you.

Mr. LAMBERT: But while we are agreeing, we float along without doing anything. Let us within this coming month call together the best elements of both Houses and see whether we cannot assist the Treasurer to arrive at some clear formula of taxation which would be fairer than the existing one, and therefore more acceptable to the people of Western Australia. It is only natural that I should have a word or two to say about the mining industry. I applaud the fact that the Minister brought an expert to Western Australia to advise him and the country as well along broad lines as to how the mining industry could best be further assisted. All sections of Parliament are satisfied regarding the great value of the mining industry to Western Australia. Members realise the great part it has played in the past and what it may possibly do in the future. Our agriculturists should be in-

terested in the question because there is little doubt that the best market for their produce is the home market. The idea of stimulating mining, and thus extending the home market available, should appeal to the farmers. The Royal Commissioner, Mr. Kingsley Thomas, made many important recommendations, and although I am not altogether with him in his scathing references to the past management of our mines, we may acknowledge that, generally speaking, he has given us an informative outline of how we can place the industry on a better basis. When giving evidence I told Mr. Thomas that in making his recommendations, he should not overlook the fact that from 1914 onwards, Great Britain had been engaged in a war and that during that period it had been almost impossible except at most exorbitant prices, to bring the milling plants up to date. In addition to that, the cost of all classes of goods and machinery required for the industry had gone up as much as 400 per cent. without any corresponding benefit. If there is one industry in Australia that cannot pass on increased charges, it is the gold mining industry. It is regrettable that Mr. Thomas, in his enthusiasm to advise the Minister along right lines, used language that has not met with general support, but that hardly lessens the value of his report. I am pleased that he made favourable recommendations regarding the Coolgardie goldfields and pointed out that during the comparatively short time Coolgardie flourished, about 1,500,000 tons of ore was raised giving a return of nearly 1,000,000 ozs. of gold. When it is realised that all that gold was won within a radius of a mile of the Coolgardie post office, and that no mine went down below 900ft—only one shaft was sunk to that depth—hon. members will agree with the conclusion that Mr. Kingsley Thomas arrived at, namely, that Coolgardie is far from being worked out. In my evidence before the Royal Commission I maintained that the method under which money was made available to the mining industry did not provide the most satisfactory conditions. What was necessary, I informed the Commissioner, was a thorough reorganisation of the Mines Department and the provision of monetary assistance on a totally different basis. The fact that the Government may advance money to prospect a mine is not sufficient

unless the money made available is adequate to prove or disprove the occurrence of gold in payable quantities. If it is not possible to provide money on that basis, it is useless to start. The work should not be done by halves. If a shaft is sunk for a few hundred feet and a drive is then put in for 20ft. without any signs of gold-bearing ore, it is useless getting fainthearted or, in the case of the Government, withdrawing their financial support. If these questions were handled properly by a technical adviser who should lay down some definite policy that would secure continuity in its application to the industry, some value would be derived from the expenditure of the State funds. It would be wrong if I did not pay a tribute to the present Minister for Mines. He has had a lifelong acquaintance with the mining industry and is most desirous of assisting those engaged in it. After all, he is only human and can only do his best with the work he has to cope with. That is one difficulty in our present system. The Minister for Works is Minister for Labour, Minister for State Trading Concerns and a dozen and one other things as well. The Premier is Treasurer, Minister for Forests, and Minister in charge of many other branches, while the Colonial Secretary is also Minister in charge of six or eight other departments. It is high time common sense was brought to bear and that the position was reviewed in order that we might determine how much to expect from Ministers and whether or not additional Ministers should be appointed.

Mr. Richardson: I think you are sweating them.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is so. Ministers have not a moment to spare from their work, and when we consider the exacting nature of public life to-day, it is almost impossible for Ministers to do the work expected of them. Take our State trading concerns. In our railways we have some £20,000,000 invested. Fancy the Minister for Justice being the Minister for Railways and Minister in charge of three or four other departments as well. The Railway Department is big enough to warrant the attention of one Minister, and if that were agreed to, the Minister in charge would be able to concentrate on what is one man's job and perhaps save the State thousands of pounds. So it is with the Minister for Works who is the

ministerial head of the State trading concerns. I do not know exactly how much money is invested in those utilities.

Mr. Hughes: About two and a half million pounds.

Mr. LAMBERT: We have our timber mills, our State ships, our agricultural implement works, and many others.

Mr. Richardson: And the Wyndham Meat Works as well.

Mr. LAMBERT: Let me forget that for the moment. All members are agreed that, notwithstanding any opinions they may hold as to whether or not State trading is justified, we have got them, just the same as the chap on whose doorstep the baby was left—and we have got to nurse them.

Mr. Richardson: But in this case they belong to us, you know.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not wish to make any reference to recent investigations, but it must be clear to hon. members that we want more strict and more exacting control over the State activities. If we consider the implement works, for instance, the machinery there is totally unsuitable and out of date. The whole of it should be dumped into the river, and no business man would dream of carrying on with such machinery to operate. If we are to continue the works for the benefit of the farmers they should be put on a proper basis.

Mr. Sampson: Do you suggest that the plant is obsolete?

Mr. LAMBERT: Most decidedly.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It was obsolete when it was put in.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. It should never have been installed.

Mr. Sampson: It should not have been put there in any case.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is realised that we must continue to operate these propositions as State concerns, and that being so, it is obviously the function of the Government to see that the plant is brought up to date, so that production costs may be kept down.

Mr. Sampson: Why not dispose of the works and save money?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You go down to the Primary Producers' Conference and suggest that.

Mr. LAMBERT: The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) and other of his colleagues stumped the country and promised that if they were returned to power this iniquitous system of State enterprise would cease, and that at the first opportunity the trading

concerns would be sold. The moment their political skins were likely to be punctured, nothing more was said.

Mr. Sampson: Yes, there was. Let the hon. member turn up his "Hansard."

Mr. LAMBERT: If the hon. member will cast his mind back to the opinions he expressed when he was a member of the party before the last one he joined, he will remember that he promised to sell the State trading concerns at the first opportunity.

Mr. Sampson: And that promise stands.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, only as a promise.

Mr. Corboy: And is likely to keep standing.

Mr. LAMBERT: Perhaps some little satisfaction is gained by the hon. member's constituents from the incessant promises he makes. Much has been said about stimulating the agricultural industry, and inseparable from that process must be a recognition of the light land problem in Western Australia. Experienced farmers like the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) and others sitting on the Cross Benches assure us that much of the light lands of the State are capable of great production. That raises the question of producing wheat at competitive rates. The cultivation of the soil and production itself boils down to a question of £ s. d. We must procure cheap fertilisers and make land available cheaply too. We must proceed with cultivation along lines that we have not attempted formerly. Much good could be done for the farmers if we had an agricultural chemist to advise them. We have many, I will not say useless departmental branches, but branches that we could well do without. The Observatory is an outstanding example. While people seem to recognise that we must keep a man to gaze at the stars, they do not recognise the crying need to give farmers sound technical guidance in order that they might get the greatest possible return out of the soil.

Mr. Richardson: Does not the Government Astronomer record earthquakes also?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, and I saw in this morning's paper that he has actually discovered a new star with his telescope. It is to be hoped that when the proper time arrives his memory will be immortalised for that discovery. I have a deep reverence for astronomy, but not when it is carried on at the State's expense. If the Commonwealth could be induced to take over our Observa-

tory I would suggest to the Premier that they be given the whole of the plant to take off to Canberra, while we made more profitable use of the observatory buildings.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But the regular observance and even photographing of the heavens is essential, is it not?

Mr. LAMBERT: A few years ago all the observatories were asked to photograph the heavens, and Western Australia was allotted a due share. However, it was not long before it was discovered that our chap had been photographing somebody else's stars, to the annoyance of that somebody else. I say that the Treasurer is not justified in lavishing money on an observatory when there are many useful purposes to which the money could be applied. Coming to the all-absorbing question of wire netting, I hold that the House should hammer at the Federal Government and try to make them realise their responsibility in this regard. There could be conveniently spent in this State a couple of million pounds on wire netting. In these days of rabbits and other pests no farmer is secure unless he can enclose his holding with wire netting. We should do all we can to minimise the risk and loss our farmers are put to by the invasion of rabbits and other pests. But the question must be tackled in a comprehensive fashion. It is no use doing it by halves. Out on the Nungarin line there are farmers spending full time digging out rabbit warrens instead of attending to the cultivation of their fields. Also the Government should try to get their engineers to devise some comprehensive scheme of water conservation for agricultural districts. It would not be a very difficult matter for the engineers of the Water Supply Department to design the moulds for a 20,000-gallon cement tank. Given such moulds, and providing that the excavation had been previously made, the tank could be built in a day. Of course, it would be necessary to standardise the tanks and have a complete travelling plant, else the price would be prohibitive. But with the necessary plant on a motor lorry the staff could go around the country districts from farm to farm, putting in one tank per day. If the work were tackled in that way the cost would be comparatively small. The making of the moulds for a 20,000-gallon cement tank would be only a detail. This country should be studded with such tanks. We shall never get any real relief from possible water

shortage until we encourage farmers to make proper provision for the conservation of water.

Mr. Richardson: How would you get the material for such a tank?

Mr. LAMBERT: The excavation having been previously made, the motor lorry could fetch along the plant, and the cement could be mixed on the job.

Mr. Richardson: A big job, I think.

Mr. LAMBERT: One who regards everything as a big job is not likely to get anywhere. I say the thing is easy. If I were in charge of the department I would not hesitate a moment to order the necessary plant and set about the work. The sooner this problem of water conservation is tackled the better.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If they only provided the moulds it would be an advantage. We could do the mixing ourselves.

Mr. LAMBERT: Everybody is pleased with the showing made by the railways during the past financial year. Of course, the late Government take credit for the improved financial position of the railways. However, apart from the reasonably good management of the Railway Department we have had contributory to the financial result a bountiful harvest and other favourable factors. Notwithstanding the criticism levelled at the Railway Department we can well be pleased with the present position. It is only a matter of time when, instead of having our railways in the position in which they were five years ago, when undoubtedly they were a burden on the State, they will resume their undeniable usefulness. I hold that wherever State railways pay interest and sinking fund and something over, a corresponding reduction should be made in the freight rate. It is not sound policy to run State railways and water supplies on commercial lines. Rather should they be regarded as agencies in the development of the State. Railways should not be expected to pay anything over and above interest and sinking fund: after that there should be a corresponding reduction in freights and fares.

Mr. Richardson: They should not aim at a profit.

Mr. LAMBERT: Certainly not. When they begin to show a profit, they are defeating their proper function. Now that the tide has turned and we are again on the up-grade, with the possibility of increased territorial revenues, I hope we shall have a review of railway rates

and fares in the interests of our country districts. The gold mining industry also has been hit by high railway fares. There is now but a comparatively small population on the goldfields, while there is a long line of railway to serve that population. It is only natural that the Railway Commissioner should desire to get as much as he can, but I hope that a review will be made of railway rates and fares. That brings me to the question of railways generally. It has always seemed an absurd anomaly that the Public Works Department should carry out railway construction work. The Railway Department is saddled with the responsibility of running the railways, but the other department has to build them. I do not know when this dual control crept in. If people have to run a railway they should construct it. If they have not the necessary engineering ability to construct railways, they have not sufficient ability to run them. It is only reasonable to suppose that if the railways did construct their own lines, they would do so with an eye to their efficient running and proper management afterwards.

Mr. Sampson: Would you have each department carry out its own work?

Mr. LAMBERT: I would have a railway construction department attached to the Railway Department.

Mr. Sampson: That would be an additional department.

Mr. LAMBERT: I daresay there are sufficient officers in the department already to carry out the grading and other work necessary for the running of our railways. Why should they hand over to the Public Works Department the construction of some bush line in the agricultural districts?

Mr. Sampson: It is better to have a highly specialised department than to have several sub-departments.

Mr. LAMBERT: Is it necessary to have an Engineer-in-Chief to decide whether a grade should be one in 60 or one in 80 in order to run a 3ft. 6in. railway into some agricultural district? The constructional part of nine-tenths of our railway system would not call for the services of a first standard engineer.

Mr. Sampson: I think you are wrong.

Mr. Withers: The railways that have been handed over from the Public Works Department have not been altogether satisfactory.

Mr. LAMBERT: A large proportion of the work is platelaying. This position came

up in the early days of the State, when the Engineer-in-Chief, for the sake of self-glorification, had everything, including railways, brought under his control. In this way the Public Works Department came to carry out the work. The practice should be stopped immediately. The work should be dissociated altogether from that department and all constructional railway work should be carried out by the Railway Department, which is charged with the subsequent running of the service.

Mr. Taylor: Would you accept their reports on the wisdom of putting down certain lines?

Mr. LAMBERT: That would be a matter for the Railway Advisory Board.

Mr. Taylor: You are referring to construction work only.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. The Commissioner and his officers should be charged not only with the running of the railways but their construction.

Mr. Richardson: I think you are entirely right in that.

Mr. LAMBERT: This was brought home to me when I had a survey made of the loads that could be carried from Meekatharra to Geraldton.

Mr. Sampson: I hope this is not an attack upon the Minister for Works.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Minister can defend himself. He does not need the hon. member to do so. The member for Swan would be the last person, in his puerile way, who would be called upon to defend him.

Mr. Sampson: I would like to know what is behind this.

Mr. LAMBERT: A nice sort of sabbath-school defence you would put up.

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

Mr. Sampson: Suppose you drop the ambiguity.

Mr. LAMBERT: Although the Commissioner is not allowed to construct his own railways he has to accept them from the Public Works Department when constructed and run them as best he can, no matter what the grade may be. He is also dabbling in the control of the electricity supply, a subject upon which he knows little or nothing. It is absurd that he should be controlling the power-house. What knowledge would any railway engineer claim to possess concerning the generation and distribution of electric power? The same thing may be

said concerning our tramway system. This should be run in legitimate competition with the railways. They should be under two separate managements. Wherever the manager of the tramways can get passengers in competition with the railways or anyone else, he should get them.

Mr. North: It would be much healthier.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes.

Mr. Sampson: You would advocate freedom for the motor buses?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, so long as they advocate freedom for the railways. If I were Minister for Railways I would put on 20 or 30 buses to-morrow morning, and run them in competition with the railways.

Mr. Richardson: We will have to make you the Minister.

Mr. LAMBERT: It would then be a question of the survival of the fittest. The buses should be given every right to compete legitimately with any concern that the Government provides. When at Bruce Rock I said that if the Government were not prepared to provide suitable State hotel accommodation they should allow someone else to provide it.

Mr. Sampson: And it is urgently needed.

Mr. LAMBERT: Both the tramways and the electricity supply should be dissociated from the railways. What has the matter of electric power, which means so much to the future of Western Australia, to do with the railways? If the manager of the power station can buy coal 1s. cheaper as a result of employing other means of transport than the railways he should be entitled to do it.

Mr. Richardson: That is so.

Mr. LAMBERT: The only basis upon which these things should be controlled is on business lines. We should not have this humbugging idea of saying "You must take this, or take that." It is the same with the control of buses and many other things. There is no need to hand over such concerns as the Metropolitan Water Supply, the metropolitan trams, and other things to boards that are interested only from the parochial point of view. The Government should consider handing over all these subordinate functions to local bodies that are directly interested in running and controlling them.

Mr. Richardson: That is a good idea.

Mr. LAMBERT: I also wish to refer to the rotten way in which our railways have been put down. Take the railway from

Meekatharra to Geraldton, or that which runs into the hills. We find that at one point a locomotive can haul 200 tons, but that 20 miles away it can haul 500 tons. If members would look at the scale of the Meekatharra to Geraldton railway, and that from Perth to Merredin, they would be appalled at the rotten way in which they have been laid.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: And thousands of pounds have been wasted.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, in unnecessary haulage. It is a fundamental principle of economics that a thing that is overcharged for is unworkable.

Mr. Sampson: Does that not prove that an engineer is required to see that correct grades are used?

Mr. LAMBERT: Of course an engineer is required. If the hon. member were going to buy a printing machine he would not ask for the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief. The grading of our railways is obviously wrong. Any second-rate navvy could put them right if he were given the levels. We want the necessary deviations and regradings to be carried out so that our railways can carry their maximum loads. In America trains are shifting 7,000-ton loads at a time. In this country we are trying to compete with the United States in the production of wheat. Recently the British Government completed a contract with the Soviet Government for the purchase of five million pounds worth of wheat, to be paid for in cash or kind. This must be very comforting to our wheat producers. Next year Great Britain will get five million pounds worth of Russian wheat. When Russia is organised and the great southern provinces are again producing, we shall never be able to stand upon competitive lines with them unless our railways are properly graded and we have proper facilities for the carriage of our produce to the shipping ports. It is in that spirit I urge that some of the problems which are the foundation and life's blood of this young producing country should be considered. Once they are considered, the obligation and responsibility are cast upon the Government to find the money, and have these necessary works carried out as they should be. I am pleased the Government have sanctioned the building of the Esperance railway, which is long overdue. It is regrettable that a conflict of opinion has

kept that railway back for 20 years. I was pleased when the ex-Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Maley, came back from Esperance, and said he would stake his agricultural knowledge on the fact that the building of the railway would add another great province to Western Australia. At that time there were many opinions hostile to its construction. The men who have grown old in the mining industry should be given an opportunity to select land on which to settle their boys and girls and to find a home for themselves in their declining years. I hail with the greatest satisfaction the Government's decision to build this railway. When the line is connected with the eastern goldfields railway, our own people on the fields, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, should also be given an opportunity to acquire land and settle on it with their families. The problem of the extension of the Transcontinental railway on the 4ft. 8½in. gauge from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle should be tackled with all seriousness. That extension, coupled with proper harbour facilities at Fremantle, should make Fremantle the principal terminal port of Australia. If the Transcontinental line were extended to Fremantle, before long we would be able to pull up the rails of our eastern goldfields line and use them elsewhere. A fascinating scheme has been put forward by that big man of Western Australia, W. N. Hedges, with regard to the building of railways alongside our natural watercourses. That suggestion should have our closest possible consideration. Mr. Hedges has spent a lifetime on problems of transport. Over his own railways he has for years transported close on 300,000 tons of firewood annually. No one appreciates more than he the need for re-grading, and for taking advantage of natural watercourses, so as to ensure the maximum load for the minimum of power. A board should be appointed to go into the matter of re-grading and deviating our railways. The knowledge and experience of men like Mr. Hedges should be availed of; and I believe that he and others would readily give their services in the interests of the State. When we feel the competition of Southern Russia with our wheat, we shall be compelled to attack the larger problems of the development of our State. I again express my hope that members, instead of addressing themselves to little pettifogging,

parochial matters, will give their views on the larger questions confronting Western Australia. Whether a railway station or a siding should be put in at Timbuctoo matters little; the question can be decided by putting up a case before the Minister of the day. I say again, there should be no place in the public life of this country for men of petty minds. Western Australia has almost limitless resources, agricultural, pastoral, mining, and others. This country offers great opportunities for men who are prepared to go out and work for themselves. Such men should be encouraged by a proper system of governmental assistance, not coddling; and then this State will continue to progress as it has progressed in the past.

MR. BARNARD (Sussex) [8.52]: It is pleasing to learn from the Governor's Speech that Western Australia is progressing so satisfactorily and that the financial position has improved materially, while conditions of trade and industry and of development are generally satisfactory. Land selection, too, is advancing, the wheat harvest is a record, and the pastoral industry continues to develop. The export trade in timber has been maintained during the past year, and steady progress has been made with the development of the Fremantle harbour, the Geraldton harbour, and also the Bunbury harbour. No doubt it is necessary that these ports should have due consideration, and that their jetties and harbours should be maintained so that shipping may be catered for. However, I notice that no mention is made of a little place where I live, a place called Busselton. The port of Busselton has been sadly neglected for many years, so that it loses a considerable amount of the shipping that should visit it. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) has told us how necessary it is to improve the Bunbury harbour in order to cope with its increased trade. The hon. member did not mention that during last year 30,000 tons of traffic went to Bunbury that should have been shipped at Busselton. Indeed, timber was railed from as far as 40 miles west of Busselton and taken through Busselton to Bunbury for shipment. I do not think the present Government favour such a state of affairs, and I trust that in the near future something will be done for the port of Busselton.

Other features of the Governor's Speech have been so fully dealt with by previous speakers that I need not dwell upon them. One matter on which I presume I am expected to say something has been left alone by most of the previous speakers—I refer to the report of the Royal Commission on Group Settlement. Last session I stated that I thought such a Royal Commission absolutely unnecessary—a waste of time and money; and the report, I consider, justifies the diagnosis I made. It is a bulky report, and no doubt the members of the Commission worked hard. I will not say that they were biased, though the utterances of some of them before being appointed Royal Commissioners were such as might lead the public to believe that bias did exist. Still, I consider that they have framed their report upon the evidence they gathered. I find there is not much to be gained by the group settlement scheme from the testimony of the 142 witnesses who were examined. The number included 44 official witnesses, 75 group settlers, and 17 settlers from outside the groups. The 44 officials were absolutely new to that part of the country and to the scheme, and therefore knew little more of the subject than the Commissioners knew before they set out on their inquiry. The 75 group settlers had been in that part of Western Australia only a very short time, and were without knowledge of the capabilities of the land, or of what it was likely to do under group settlement, and therefore no notice can be taken of their evidence, especially as they were dissatisfied group settlers remaining on the groups merely while awaiting better opportunities. A great deal has been said about the class of men on the groups. It has been alleged that they are unsuitable and will never make settlers. We all have our little opinions of different people. Although some of the men on the groups have never before handled an axe or a spade, that does not say they will not make good settlers eventually. Times out of number it has been proved that men who are willing to work and to learn can do what other men have done. On the wheat areas men who had never farmed before have done well. What is possible in one place is possible in another. We should not disparage the group settlers, but encourage them as much as possible, as we are looking forward to the group settlements

proving a great benefit to Western Australia, particularly in the direction of dairying. As regards the 17 outside settlers examined by the Commission, one of them had been 15 months in the South-West, another four years, another 4½ years, one 9 years, one 11 years, one 12, and one 14. The last-mentioned was living on 103 acres on which he has reared his family and has done well. Yet he seems dissatisfied. The Commission should have called witnesses from among the older and successful settlers in the district, of whom there are plenty. Such witnesses could have given the Commission much more reliable evidence.

Mr. Lindsay: What about Prowse?

Mr. BARNARD: Mr. Prowse is not a farmer, but a dealer in stock.

Mr. Taylor: He is a cattle dealer.

Mr. BARNARD: I know nearly every man in that part of the South-West, and how long he has been there, and what he has been doing.

Mr. Lindsay: What about Smith?

Mr. BARNARD: Mr. Smith is a successful farmer. In his time he has had three farms in the South-West, and has done well on each of them. He likes changes, but he still remains in the South-West. Probably he will sell his present farm. No one can say that he is not a satisfactory man in the South-West.

Mr. Taylor: He seems like a land jobber.

Mr. BARNARD: The Commission seem to have done their utmost to make everybody on the groups dissatisfied, and to have spared no pains to bring up everything possible against the men and against the women. The women are really good helpers to their husbands, and are working very hard indeed to make homes on the group settlements. I am sure many of the group settlers will prove successful. The Commission say that not more than 50 per cent. will succeed. I hope we shall get 50 per cent. of successes. Most decidedly the scheme will be successful if 50 per cent. of the settlers are to make good. With the encouragement and assistance that the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) said every big scheme should receive, I am satisfied that in the South-West we shall have a dairying industry of which we shall be justly proud. There are ways of helping the settlers that will be beneficial. It was stated that the settlers will not make a success of dairying unless they go in for

side lines, and one proposal was that a bonus should be granted on every lb. of butter fat produced in order to encourage them to continue dairying operations. The Royal Commission claim that piecework is essential for the group settlement proposition, and advise that a training farm be established where newcomers may be taught agricultural work. Piecework is probably quicker and better than day work where men of experience are concerned, but piecework is useless unless the group settlers know all about land clearing. In my opinion the proposal for a training farm is futile. What better training could a man have than work on his own farm? They should continue to be trained as in the past and I am satisfied that after a few months' experience on clearing work, men will be in a position to go on piecework. Encouragement and assistance is what is required in order to make the group settlement scheme a success. The Royal Commission has not given the settlers any encouragement whatever and I hope the Government will not attach too much importance to the report. I trust they will continue the good work that has been inaugurated, and that money will be found under the new agreement so that the work may proceed satisfactorily. I am pleased to know that the Premier visited England and has returned with wider experience. I am sure that experience will be of benefit to the State and particularly to the South-West. The Minister for Lands (Hon. W. C. Angwin) has his heart and soul in the work and I am sure he will carry on successfully. I trust that the Government will continue the group settlement schemes and that they will bring thousands of settlers from the Old Country. We constantly hear it said that we desire a white Australia. That being so, the British people are those we should have on the land. I am convinced the scheme will be a success. We know that some of the land is very light and probably it will require greater attention from the standpoint of fertilisation than the good land. We must remember that there is also light land to be found in the wheat country, and as it was tried out there, so it must be tried out in the South-West. I am sure that we shall find our labours have not been in vain and that group settlement will prove satisfactory and successful in the long run.

On motion by Mr. Chesson debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.