

cattle. It is the only good thing they are doing.

Hon. V. HAMFERSLEY: I recognise that.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th August, 1924.

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

RETURN—WATER CARRIAGE SUBSIDY.

Mr. LATHAM (York) 4.34: I move—

That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing the amounts paid to the Railway Department, as a subsidy by the Treasury, for water carted over the railways for the use of settlers in the agricultural area for the years 1922-23, 1923-24.

This is only a formal motion, and I do not think—

Mr. SPEAKER: It being formal, the hon. member cannot speak to it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I think the motion might well be extended.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss it.

The Minister for Lands: But if the hon. member wishes to raise an objection—

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I rose to discuss the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss it. He can raise an objection to it. Does he object to it?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, I object to the motion in its present form.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then it cannot be further entertained at this stage.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motions by Mr. Richardson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Sir James Mitchell (Northam) on the ground of ill-health; and to Mr. Teesdale (Roebourne) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. CHESSON (Que) [4.37]: I find it more difficult to speak from the Ministerial side than from the Opposition side. Whereas when in Opposition we were free to offer destructive criticism, when one is standing behind the Government he is expected to bring forward something constructive. Since last session our party has been before the people and they have returned us to power with a mandate. The policy speech put forward by the then Leader of the Opposition, now the Premier, has been endorsed by the people. This leaves but little for members on this side to speak upon. Reading the Governor's Speech we realise that it is our own policy. Consequently, the ground is cut from under the feet of members on this side. Some Bills foreshadowed in the Speech have been before us on previous occasions and, although passed in this Chamber, have been slaughtered in the other House, or at all events mutilated beyond recognition. I hope when they are again dealt with this session they will meet with a better fate. With two exceptions my remarks will be confined largely to questions affecting my own electorate. In the Speech it is proposed to bring down a Land Taxation Bill and a Closer Settlement Bill. I was pleased with the utterance of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) the other night, and I feel sure that when the Closer Settlement Bill comes down that hon. member will support it. Certainly his deductions in respect of it were perfectly sound. When the member for York (Mr. Latham) made his maiden speech in the House he also was in favour of that measure.

Mr. Latham: He is in favour of it now.

Mr. CHESSON: No, I rather fancy he has slipped from grace. On the earlier occasion he put up a very able speech and showed that he was in favour of land values taxation.

Mr. Latham: No, no.

Mr. CHESSON: But since then, as I say, he appears to have changed his views.

Mr. Latham: You will find me supporting the closer settlement policy, but not that of land values taxation.

Mr. CHESSON: I am going to make a claim on behalf of my electorate. I contend that if land values taxation is introduced, connected with that should be a reduction of railway freights. Freights play a big part in the development of the outer goldfields. A large portion of the revenue to be derived from land values taxation should be earmarked for the reduction of railway freights. Under our present system of railway freights, the further out a man is the more he is penalised. The people of the metropolitan area do not pay much in railway freights.

Mr. Clydesdale: They pay their share..

Mr. CHESSON: It may be that they pay their share of passenger fares, but when it comes to freights on produce they pay little or nothing. Imported produce landed at Fremantle mostly comes up the river; alternatively, it comes up by motor. But when that produce goes to the country, the country consumer has to pay heavy railway freight on it. It is said that land values taxation will bear heavily upon the metropolitan area. It will at all events cause them to pay something towards the upkeep of the railways. Our railways are built in order to open up the country. It must be opened up, and the people of the metropolitan area must be fed by the producers who are settled in the country. Those who are prepared to go on to the land should not be penalised more than is necessary. Our whole aim and object is to develop Western Australia. We must develop not only our ports but our hinterland. Such a tax will certainly relieve the people in the remotest parts of the State, and will not bear too harshly upon those in the metropolitan area. It should be the means of opening up the land adjacent to our railways for closer settlement purposes. An enormous area of this land is now held as a matter of speculation. If we can compel the holders to put their land to proper use we shall benefit the State. No doubt excessive railway freights retard development. That is specially so in the mining industry. When a man is working a mining proposition, and requires up to date machinery, the question of freight must enter into consideration. If the freights could be reduced many low grade propositions could be worked, and this would mean the employment of a lot of men and additional wealth for the State. Taxation also plays a big part in our mining industry, which seems to be singled out for extra taxation. When people have a mining proposition to sell and give an option over it they get very little by way of cash, and if the option is exercised they receive shares of a certain face value. When we amended the income tax legislation last year we thought we had defined the face value of shares and their market value. I now understand this was left entirely to the Taxation Commissioner, but it should be defined by Parliament. A man may hold a lot of shares in a mining proposition, and these may have a face value of £1, but they may be absolutely valueless from the selling point of view. The holder of that scrip should be taxed only on what he can sell it for. If a man owns a mine he should be taxed on its value and on its earning capacity. Enormous sums of money have to be spent in developing a mine. Up to date plant must be installed, and this wears out in a few years. The people owning the mine should be allowed to recoup themselves for that expenditure before they are taxed. Every big mine has a battery and a cyanide plant upon it, for it is no good working a mine if

one does not get the gold out of the ground. Relief should be given to mining companies in this respect. A man may have worked for 20 years or 30 years and come upon a big patch at the end of that time. Allowance should be made for the lean years that he has passed through before he is taxed. As things are at present, by the time a man has paid all his liabilities he has little or nothing left as a reward for his years of labour. If the taxation was spread over a longer period it would give him a chance.

Mr. Clydeale: Do you think that should apply to all business people?

Mr. CHESSON: Yes. The member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) raised the question of sandalwood. The regulations undoubtedly hamper the outback districts. Most of the sandalwood is obtained a long way from railway centres. The regulations injuriously affect those who are getting the sandalwood. Men in my district and in the Mt. Magnet area frequently locate good patches of wood when they go out prospecting. They have no chance of disposing of that wood themselves, and have to work in with someone who is employed by one of the licensed sellers. They have to give away their knowledge to those people, and get very little as a result of their discovery. Prospectors and returned soldiers are allowed to pull only 750 tons of sandalwood a year. The member for Menzies worked that out at 1½ tons per individual, but I do not think it would work out at more than one ton. If a man brings in a parcel of sandalwood he has to get rid of it to a licensed buyer and makes very little out of it. It is time that regulation was cancelled. A good deal of sandalwood has been pulled on Crown land. If the puller cannot get rid of it it is generally entered up as having come from private property. By that means the Government are losing revenue. The sandalwood has to go to someone who has a private property, and no one can prove that it did not come from that property.

Mr. Panton: And the Government do not collect the royalty.

Mr. CHESSON: That is so.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That does not apply to sandalwood alone.

Mr. CHESSON: The Government do not get the royalty because the sandalwood is entered up as having come from private land. I know of several instances of this in the Mt. Magnet district.

Mr. Panton: And the puller does not get his £16.

Mr. CHESSON: That is so.

The Minister for Railways: Some of those people have been caught.

Mr. CHESSON: But many have escaped. The sandalwood is brought down to Fremantle. Very often the buyer contends that it is below fair average quality. The question is submitted to the inspector, and then goes before the Conservator. That portion of the regulations is

ridiculous, for it gives the puller no opportunity of redress. Those who framed the regulations did not know the geography of the country. Most of our sandalwood is obtained from the remote parts of the State. By the time the puller gets his returns, the sandalwood has probably gone to China. Many of the pullers work 80 or 90 miles away from the railway, and cannot get results for a long time. His wood is disposed of chiefly through the local storekeeper or an agent. When he gets his returns he finds that instead of receiving £16 a ton he has obtained only £13 a ton, and he is left to mourn the loss. Those who framed the regulations had no idea of the disabilities under which the sandalwood getter and the prospector have to work. The latter is especially entitled to consideration for the good he does for the State. By means of the earnings from sandalwood he is enabled to prospect and develop the mineral resources of this country. Were it not for that class of man, I do not know what would happen to Western Australia. The Fremantle company getting the wood desired a reduction in price, and applied to the Forests Department for it. Then the Conservator sends an inspector. That inspector decides, and the Conservator agrees. And that is the end of the puller for all time. The matter is one we might well go into. Members now sitting on this side of the House opposed that regulation tooth and nail, but were beaten by the decision of the Chamber, and the question could not be brought up again. Since the regulation has been put into operation, we have realised that it is a failure from the puller's point of view. We must conserve the puller. Were it not for him, there would be no sandalwood, and then I do not know what would happen to John Chinaman. As regards the reduction of £2, I agree that John Chinaman will pay the full price while the puller mourns the loss of the £2. If the House went into this question in the light of present knowledge, the regulation, I feel sure, would be disallowed. I wish to deal with the question of postal votes. We all know that in the back country there are postal vote officers, whose duty is to take postal votes. Any man who believes he will be seven miles from the nearest polling booth on polling day can give a postal vote. I suggest that after every election or by-election the postal vote books should go into the Central Electoral Office to be checked, instead of being left year after year with the postal vote officers, a practice which leaves the way open to dishonesty. The request is a most reasonable one. I have known the same postal vote book to be passed on from one postal vote officer to his successor without any check being made. Such a course simply invites

abuse. Moreover I suggest that postal vote officers should not be disfranchised. The man does the work for nothing, and is disfranchised for doing it. That is my own case; I cannot take my own vote. An elector should be empowered to take the vote of the postal vote officer.

Mr. Angelo: Why not get two postal vote officers appointed at each centre?

Mr. CHESSON: That might be a remedy. I would like to see something done by the Government in the way of generating electricity at the pit's mouth. I was pleased with the answer given by the Minister for Railways to the deputation that waited on him at Collie. I gather that there is now a chance of an electric power generating station being established at the pit's mouth in Collie to generate power from slack, which is the waste product of the coal mines. The pit's mouth in Collie is the proper place for a generating plant. Anyone who has worked in coal mines knows the enormous amount of waste in the form of by-products. The whole of the slack can be used for generating electricity. I hope in the near future to see a generating plant working at Collie, generating electricity for Bunbury, and in fact for all the manufactories, engines, and so forth working in that district. There is no reason why Bunbury, which has a decent harbour, should not have manufactories; and there should also be factories in Collie. In New South Wales ore is being taken to Newcastle, where the coal is. Nowadays it is much cheaper to take the iron or other mineral that is to be smelted to where the coal is found, instead of taking the coal to the mineral. The course I suggest would create a good deal of employment both in Collie and in Bunbury. I have always held that the port of Bunbury is entitled to the trade in whatever is produced for export in the surrounding districts. I am not parochial. I will always put up a fight for the Geraldton harbour, but I will also speak for the Bunbury harbour. A matter affecting my own district is hospital administration. Right through the Murchison and its back goldfields there are what are termed committee-run hospitals. All the workers in the district pay £3 18s. per annum, equal to 1s. 6d. per week, towards the medical funds and the upkeep of hospitals.

Member: It is too much, anyhow.

Mr. CHESSON: That is not all they pay. Every fortnight or so there is a local concert or social and dance in aid of the hospital, or a hospital Sunday, or a straight-out collection. It is true that the Government subsidise these hospitals, but owing to the sparseness of the population the subsidies are not sufficient. The cost of upkeep of hospitals represents a heavy item to that section of the community. I

urge the Government to run sweeps or lotteries in aid of the hospitals, as is done in Queensland.

Mr. Mann: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clydesdale: What about gambling?

Mr. CHESSON: I am not concerned about gambling. I have gambled all my life.

Mr. Clydesdale: You should be ashamed to admit it.

Mr. CHESSON: Life itself is a chance, and I have always been taking chances, though not on the racecourses of the hon. member interjecting. We all realise the amount of money that is going from Western Australia to Tasmania or else to Queensland, in which States sweeps are run. I do not care a "continental" for the criticism to which I shall be subjected for this suggestion, so long as Western Australia benefits. If our Government will run sweeps, we shall get some money to run our hospitals, certainly much more money than we are getting at present. Surely if the profits from sweeps are earmarked for the benefit of hospitals, the biggest wowsler in creation cannot grumble much. At any rate, I am prepared to take the bull by the horns and introduce the necessary measure. Criticism in that respect will not trouble me. After all, the sweeps will be for the benefit of indigent people whom we are compelled to treat in our hospitals. I believe that all members will agree with me on this subject, though some of them may be afraid to face criticism.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Queensland makes £100,000 annually for her hospitals out of her sweeps.

Mr. Mann: And we subscribe a portion of that £100,000.

Mr. CHESSON: By instituting Government sweeps we shall be doing something for people who cannot help themselves. Men and women will gamble, let the legislatures do what they like to prevent them.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Sweeps are not gambling.

Mr. CHESSON: If one takes a 5s. chance to win £1,000 or £10,000, of course it is gambling. We should put on our thinking caps and give this matter serious consideration. Personally I do not believe that a proposal for Government sweeps will meet with serious opposition from any side of the House. I now wish to deal with mining and the State battery system, which system I acknowledge has done a great deal for Western Australia. In my opinion a considerable proportion of the prospecting vote should be spent in localities where State batteries operate within a certain distance, so that the one form of expenditure will be worked in conjunction with the other form. The State batteries involve considerable expenditure and the cost of sending out prospecting parties has also been great. It should be our object to keep the batteries

crushing ore continuously throughout the year. If we induce prospectors to go out beyond an effective radius, they will not work as profitably as if they were working in conjunction with a State battery. If a valuable field is discovered the State is involved in further expense in opening up communication with the new field, so that it may be operated for the benefit of the State and of those concerned in the venture. I maintain that there are plenty of opportunities available still on the old fields where batteries are already established, and if these were availed of, more assistance could be given to the prospectors by the Government and the State batteries would be kept working. If hon. members realise the amount of money brought into circulation because of the State battery system, they will recognise the importance of the question. A return I have dealing with the operations of the State batteries from their inception to June 30, 1924, gives the following details:—

Tons of ore milled, 1,389,996; production by amalgamation, £4,748,961; production by sand treatment, £717,370; production by slimes treatment, £261,588; production by residue treatment, £9,353; giving a total value of gold produced of £5,737,274.

Tons of tin ore treated, 80,067; production by black tin, £92,419; production by residue treatment, £572.

These details give a grand total value of the production of £5,830,266. The whole of that money has been brought into circulation because of the State batteries. This is a big factor in the development of Western Australia. Some of the most important towns in the back country have been established because of this system. Wherever justified it should be extended, but if a prospector is faced with the necessity of carting his ore 15 or 20 miles to a State battery, he will have no chance of making a paying proposition of his mine. In such circumstances it would be necessary to procure a mill or a treatment plant, and if the prospector has not the money to face that expenditure and the Government cannot render assistance, he will have to give an option over the proposition and possibly make a considerable sacrifice. If several payable propositions were discovered in one district, the State should render assistance by providing a battery, for that is the best way of fostering mining operations in the back country. Unless it is a good dollying proposition, the prospector has no chance of success otherwise. With the circulation of extra money as a result of the mining operations and the work of the State battery system, new towns may be created, and with the extra population attracted to those centres the farmers will have improved local markets for their produce. Every consideration should be given to the men who are willing to go into the back areas. I am a member of the State Prospecting Board

which has done splendid work, and as the outcome of its labours there is a possibility of one or two good propositions being opened up. The following is a brief *resume* of the work done by the board, showing the money expended and giving particulars about the prospecting parties assisted or sent out by the board:—

The Prospecting Board was created on the 1st September, 1919. Subsequently an advisory board was established at Kalgoorlie. Advisory boards have since been formed at Meekatharra and Mt. Magnet. From the inception of the board to the 31st December, 1923, assistance was granted to 566 parties, comprising 972 men assisted, at a total cost of £23,338 8s. 8d. From 1st January, 1924, to 30th June, 1924, 75 parties, comprised of 109 men, were assisted and 35 extensions were granted, on the recommendation of the State Prospecting Board, at a cost of £2,166 16s. 1d. It was apportioned as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Rations	1,553	1	1
Hire horses	303	8	10
Repairs	47	16	5
Purchase of equipment	31	2	10
Freight	66	18	0
Fares	10	6	6
Explosives	3	19	3
Miscellaneous	150	3	2
	<hr/>		
	£2,166	16	1

This makes a total of 641 assisted parties, comprising 1,081 men, at a cost of £25,505 4s. 9d., since the inception of the board, and in addition, £3,680 14s. 6d. has been spent on five State prospecting parties controlled by the board. During the six months ending 30/6/24, nine applications were refused and eight were withdrawn. In many cases where assistance was refused, it was because the applicants' mining had gone beyond the scope of prospecting and they were advised to apply for assistance under the provisions of the Mining Development Act.

Dealing with State prospecting parties the report states—

Towards the end of 1921 the board submitted to the Hon. Minister a scheme for systematic prospecting by State-equipped parties, acting under the direction of the board, of several large metalliferous divisions throughout the State. The total cost was estimated at £20,000. The success which attended the first State prospecting party led the board to equip several similar parties. No 2 party examined the Coobina greenstone belt in the vicinity of the Ophthalmia Range. No. 3 party prospected an area near Lake Barlee. No. 4 party was equipped from Roebourne and operated in the Ashburton goldfield. No. 5 party are now in the East Kimberley district, but having only just commenced, the result of their operations is

not yet known. The result of the systematic prospecting of these areas is that we now have definite information about country which had perhaps only been "run over" previously, and of which no official information was available. Apart from the State prospecting parties, many of the prospectors assisted (only by means of transport, tools, and rations) have taken out crushings during the half year, but not many were payable. The under-mentioned are the best: A. Sclater, 3½ tons for 57 ozs.; Acheson & Taylor, 15 tons for 64½ ozs.; while rich prospects have recently been obtained by Jones & Harris at Mt. Grey. Refunds have been made during the half year by Acheson & Taylor, £26; A. Sclater, £18; and Jones & Harris, £80. The operations of the board have extended from Wyndham to Ravensthorpe. The Murchison and Eastern goldfields have, of course, received most attention. The result of the operations under the ordinary system of equipping small parties and allowing them practically a free hand, cannot be said to have been successful, for although some payable crushings have been obtained, nothing likely to permanently benefit the State was discovered. One exception, however, appears to be in the case of Ivan Jones and Harris, who were equipped by the board and whose discovery at Mt. Grey resulted in the pegging out of, and application for, a large number of leases and prospecting areas, in all 60. The discovery is of too recent a date to permit of its value being assessed, but indications are said to warrant the assumption that at least two or three mines will be the result. These prospectors have repaid the greater part of the cost of equipping them.

If only one town is opened up as the result of the money expended by the board, something will have been achieved for Western Australia. Moreover, the establishment of such a centre in the back country will mean the provision of facilities for the pastoralists who, after all, were the original pioneers of Western Australia. In those parts of the State such facilities become available only in the event of gold being discovered. Telegraphic communication becomes established; it is followed by a railway and thus facilities are provided for the pastoralists. I have spent most of my life in the back parts of Australia and have been both a miner and a prospector. Most shows have been discovered through the outcrops, but we have an enormous territory which has merely been scratched. Most of the gold found in the Cue district is connected with iron ore or schist. Those of us who had gained experience on the Eastern States fields, on coming to Western Australia, looked for quartz and did not bother about lode formations. I think most of the gold has been shed from lodes. Traces of gold no thicker than a penknife have come through the cement. Within the last few weeks there

has been a find at Cue that has produced about 1,000 ozs. One parcel of ore of 103 tons yielded 68 ozs. 13½ dwts. over the plates and there is probably 8 to 10 dwts. in the tailings. This was discovered by boring. It was found at the spot where Tom (the first found gold, and this was the richest alluvial patch ever known on the Murchison. I spent a good deal of time and money in trying to locate whence the gold had been shed. Other people in Cue also tried, but all failed. An old prospector has now located one of the richest finds the district has known for many a day. Right through the Murchison the outlook for mining is very much brighter. We have no time for a croaker. A prospector must be an optimist. Systematic prospecting is necessary to locate the rich deposits and money should be made available for this work. The State battery system should be operated in conjunction with the Prospecting Board. We need a big gold rush something like that of the Golden Mile, or better still a good alluvial find. An amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act is necessary to permit the Government to advance money to people taking up pastoral holdings. I know a lot of young men in the Murchison who are prepared to take up pastoral holdings, but they have not sufficient cash, and they do not wish to get into the hands of Dalgety's and the big firms. It does not take anything like the money that is required for a farm to develop a pastoral holding. The first needs are fencing, wells and windmills, and then stock. No clearing is required. We talk a lot about bursting up large holdings; here is an opportunity for the Government to act. These men would take up small holdings. A good portion of the Murchison was previously cattle country, but it is now given over to sheep. Every year sheep stations are being extended further inland and the dingo is being driven back. In time the whole of the Murchison, right through to the North-West, will be used for sheep. Sheep are able to stand drought much better than cattle and the profit, of course, is greater. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) referred to the statements of the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) regarding pastoral holdings. The pastoral leases were extended in 1917, or 11 years before the date of expiry, and the extension granted was till 1944. Everyone realises that pastoral land may be resumed at any time for agricultural purposes, but what we want is closer settlement for pastoral purposes. Along the river frontages the pastoralists run a limited number of stock and do not comply with the improvement conditions. Had they done so they would have sunk wells and installed windmills, and been carrying stock on the whole of such leases. That is what we complain of. Had the pastoralists carried out the improvements, we would not mind so much. Those members who were in the House in 1917 understood clearly the

references of the member for Guildford. I have not made any great demands on the resources of the Treasury. I realise that owing to the commitments left as a legacy by the late Government, it is useless for representatives from the back country to request special consideration. I hope that the Main Roads Bill will be dealt with, and that when the Commonwealth grant for road making is being allocated, the Government will remember the Murchison, including Cue. In the past the people that "hollered" the most got the most. We of the Murchison have grievances as well as other places, but we realise that the Government at the present time are confronted with difficulties and commitments that they are in duty bound to honour. Some of these commitments relate to group settlements and other matters, and consequently we have to curtail our demands. Still, when it comes to a matter of main roads in places that are a long distance from the metropolis, and there is Federal money available for distribution, with the added subsidy of the State Government, we are entitled to prefer a claim for consideration. I hope that the Bills to be presented during the session will receive the consideration they deserve not only by this Chamber, but at the hands of another place. It is interesting to note that the people of the goldfields at the present time are taking a different view of things from what was the case some time ago by reason of the improved outlook for the mining industry. On the Murchison the position of affairs is much brighter, and going to the electorate of the Minister for Mines we find there, too, that the position is much more hopeful. At the Daphne mine, judging by the amount of stone raised and the surface prospects generally, the outlook is satisfactory and it appears as if there were good chances of making that a decent property. There have been satisfactory improvements around Cue, whilst at Reidy's, where the Mararoa company have been working an option for about 12 months, the leases have been opened up and developed. The information I have regarding the option is that in all probability it will be exercised. This will mean providing employment for 100 men, and the consequent establishment of a small township. The leases are only 12 miles from the railway. Generally speaking, the outlook is hopeful by reason of the fact that there is so much activity.

Mr. BROWN (Pingelly) [5.50]: I rise with some diffidence to make a few remarks on the Address-in-reply. I have listened to a number of the best debaters we have in Western Australia, and as a new member I feel that I shall have to make my remarks in as concise a manner as possible, and if I should fall into any errors I will ask the House to bear with me and to make allowances on account of my inexperience. Some time ago I heard the Premier say that we

had in this Parliament a considerable number of new members, and that every one of them was imbued with brilliant ideas for the salvation of Western Australia. Whether those brilliant ideas will be listened to or not, the course of time will tell. I am not a strong party man but I am pleased and proud of the little band to which I belong. In my opinion it is undoubtedly the party that will bring Western Australia out of the slough of despond. I realise that it will not be very long before Parliament will consist of two parties, the Country Party, to which I belong, and the Labour Party.

Mr. Withers: We shall all be one then.

Mr. BROWN: I have read a great deal about party politics, and the more I learn about it the more am I convinced that the sooner it is done away with the better it will be for the State. When we come to look around we find that men like Lloyd George and others who in their day appeared to have a permanent hold of their positions, are turned out. It is the same in all countries of the world where men who to-day appear to be leaders of strong parties, are in fact in occupation of those positions for only a brief time. We in Australia are as badly off, because when a man is leader of his party and becomes Premier, thus reaching his summit, his downfall comes very rapidly, no matter to which party he may belong. There is always someone trying to bring him down. Many a man has raised his party to a high level only to be wrecked himself by that party. Let us look around and see what happened in Rome. Rome had her laws, but what do we find happened? Mussolini came into power, and he adopted brute force in order to bring about reforms, the brute force consisting of administering castor-oil to the people. Such a course appears to me to be extraordinary in this enlightened age, and that is one reason why I do not feel disposed to become a strong party man. I hope yet to be able to see the forces united with an elected ministry in power. I desire to bring under notice a few of the requirements of the Pingelly district. Just as other members have done I could prefer requests involving an expenditure of a million pounds. But I do not propose to be so extravagant; I intend to ask for only a little. Speaking of the town of Pingelly itself, if it had its due, Narrogin should be one of its suburbs!

Member: Where is Narrogin?

Mr. BROWN: It is at present the hub of the universe. Some of the land around Pingelly is undoubtedly the best we have in the State. It has been settled now for something like 60 years. One of the first complaints I have to make is with regard to the railway station. The Premier knows this station pretty well. I do not know whether it was he or Mr. Scaddan who declared many years ago that it should be burnt down. It was erected merely as a makeshift, but it stands to-day doing the service of a place that should be very

much better equipped. Looking around the Great Southern line we find at a place like Mt. Barker, that recently a sum of about £7,000 has been spent on the railway station. It is only right that a town like Pingelly that has contributed for 35 years to the revenue of the State should have a railway station commensurate with its needs rather than a miserable little hovel. Going farther west from Pingelly I wish to say a word or two in connection with the Narrogin-Dwarda railway, part of which, when constructed, will run through my electorate. Some time ago the Minister for Works promised at a meeting down there that it would be the first railway to be constructed in Western Australia. He anticipated that there would be a lot of unemployment during the winter months, and the line could then be constructed by day labour. I do not think there can be any unemployment. Thank heaven for that.

The Minister for Works: Isn't there!

Mr. BROWN: Then I do not know where it is. The railway has not yet been started. Going further north from there we find that Parliament has authorised the construction of a railway from Brookton towards Armadale, a distance of 27 or 28 miles. Nothing has yet been done in the way of making a start with this work and I may tell the Premier that in the course of a few days he will receive a deputation on the subject. Moving on east from Pingelly we get into one of the most fertile places in Western Australia, the Kondinin district. It is 100 miles east of Pingelly and I may inform the House that within a radius of seven miles that district last year produced 156,000 bags of wheat. It is possible that the settlers from that part will approach the Government for assistance. Water in that locality can be conserved in dams. There is also a gorge there known as Gorge Roek where water can be stored provided a weir is built across the mouth. The catchment is 25 acres in extent and many millions of gallons can be conserved.

The Premier: Then let us have the weir.

Mr. BROWN: I trust that when the request for the construction of the weir is submitted the Premier or the Minister for Works will prove sympathetic. Extending beyond Kondinin we come to Kalgarin. What has been done in that district in a comparatively short period is remarkable. Last year was the first in which crops were sown and this was the result: There were 95 settlers holding 145,000 acres. They are from 18 to 36 miles from Kondinin. The nearest settler is 18 miles from the line. This year there are 10,000 acres under crop and next year it is expected that approximately 17,500 acres will be under cultivation. The Agricultural Bank has advanced to the settlers no less than £100,000. The nearest railway, which is from 25 to 30 miles away, is that at Kondinin.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: I have to travel that distance now.

Mr. BROWN: Perhaps the hon. member's district is not as rich as this. If a line is extended for the convenience of these settlers it should go east from Kondinin into Forrestania towards Ravens-thorpe. If this railway be built it will bring those people within a reasonable distance of Perth. Immediately the line is constructed to Kondinin, it should be carried on to Corrigin. The Corrigin line is already built to Brookton, and from Brookton to the line just passed is all on the road to Armadale, and so will bring those people 70 miles nearer to Perth than they are at present. The Minister will agree that we must always take into account the geographical position of a place. Well, that is the geographical position of those settlers. Beyond that radius again are dozens of settlers who have not very much improvement on their holdings because the Agricultural Bank will not grant them loans, declaring that they are too far from a railway. The Lands Department and the manager of the Agricultural Bank have told me it is the only place where there is virgin land for selection. It is clear that we must either build a railway there or advance the settlers money through the Agricultural Bank. Now, I want to refer to our primary resources, the chief of which, of course, is farming. Let me show you from statistics how the industries stand. Agriculture in 1913 furnished exports to the value of £19,776,735. In 1920-1921 £43,336,754 and in 1921-1922 £48,452,643. The pastoral industry in 1913 exported to the value of £42,057,346; in 1920-1 £45,805,314, and in 1921-2 £58,222,175. Dairying and the farmyard in 1913 exported to the value of £3,854,743, and in 1921-2 £10,992,021. Mines and quarries in 1913 exported to the value of £14,712,242, and in 1921-2 £9,345,342. Fisheries in 1913 exported to the value of £424,849, and in 1921-2 £434,552. Forestry in 1913 exported to the value of £1,106,549, and in 1921-2 £1,270,691. From these statistics it will be seen that we have to fall back upon our primary industries, namely agriculture, dairying, pastoral and mining. If history repeats itself, as it must, our mines will eventually reach oblivion. Ballarat at one time had the richest mines in Australia.

Mr. Lambert: They were only tinpot shows as compared with ours.

Mr. BROWN: I am not running down our mines. I think they ought to be assisted. I am merely pointing out that in the end we have to fall back on agriculture and the pastoral industry. Ballarat lost her mines completely, notwithstanding which Ballarat to-day is one of the most flourishing of Australia's inland cities. What has made it? When the mines petered out, the people gave atten-

tion to the agricultural land in the vicinity.

Mr. Lambert: A lot of the farmers in this State turn their attention to the Government.

Mr. BROWN: Of course the mining towns in this State are not so happily situated as is Ballarat. Take Coolgardie, once a flourishing town. It is now nothing but a mass of ruins and dilapidated buildings. And as time passes other mining centres will meet the same fate.

Mr. Lambert: Very much like that of the 'Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. BROWN: That association is not likely to go down, nor is the farmers' party.

The Minister for Lands: Just now you expressed the wish that there were no parties.

Mr. BROWN: Kalgoorlie, too, is in a dry area without an assured rainfall, and when the mines peter out there will be nothing left but the pastoral industry.

Mr. Lambert: It shows that you know nothing whatever about it.

Mr. BROWN: What is the produce, other than mineral, of Kalgoorlie to-day?

Mr. Lambert: Why, anything can be grown there.

Mr. BROWN: They are depending entirely on the mines. What happened when the Ivanhoe closed down? Hundreds were thrown out of work, and the Premier himself went up and found work for them. I am not finding fault with that, because we may yet have to ask him for work for the unfortunate settlers they are going to put off the land.

Mr. Lambert: At £1 a week, and keep themselves?

Mr. BROWN: Did you ever work on a farm?

Mr. Thomson: No, he has too much sense.

Mr. BROWN: We have hundreds of miles of auriferous country and so, probably, we shall some day discover new goldfields. Therefore it is the duty of the Government to see that the prospectors get a fair deal.

Mr. Lambert: You do not mind their getting crumbs from the cocky's table?

Mr. BROWN: If it were not for the cockies, hundreds of others would be starving to-day. I listened carefully to the remarks of members representing the North-West. We have there a huge territory, and we all know that when sufficient rain falls in those tropical districts, vegetation grows rapidly. No doubt eventually we shall have to rely upon the North-West for a large proportion of our meat supply. We have been told that there are in the North great possibilities in respect of cotton growing. At Millstream, in the extreme North, millions of gallons of water are going to waste, water

that could well be used for irrigation. That would bring enormous wealth to Western Australia. Such places ought to be fully exploited. We are told that white men cannot live up North. I stand for a White Australia. I am with the Labour Party in that.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They are with us in that.

Mr. BROWN: Japan to-day is very much offended because America has refused to accept any more Japanese as settlers. I have been told by a man who knows from experience that a whole colony of Japanese settlers living together will make a white settler's life a misery, until he is glad to get out and let them buy his block. We do not want that in Australia. We know that thousands of Britishers would like to come out to Western Australia if they could get the chance, and it is clear that we have plenty of land in the North-West on which to settle them. There are in the North many magnificent rivers that could be dammed for the irrigating of millions of acres. In the Eastern States are to be found many striking examples of the value of irrigation. I know of one place where five and six sheep per acre have been fattened annually and sent down to the Melbourne market. Think what that means to the State! Our primary industries should be most carefully fostered. I have had considerable experience of the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. I pioneered as a boy in Victoria, and I have pioneered also in Western Australia. I spent eight years as an inspector for the Agricultural Bank. In the course of my duty I valued large areas of land. Unquestionably we must blame ourselves for so many failures amongst the clients of the Agricultural Bank. One of the first conditions laid down by the bank is that its client must be within a certain distance of a railway. Beyond that distance one cannot get a loan. The result was that the original settlers were able to pick out the eyes of the country, and when the new settlers came along they had to take what remained. A lot of our settlers, having no money, had to apply for assistance from their first going or to the land. Then they were asked to get production in unfavourable conditions. They were urged to grow wheat along the Great Southern. To-day it is known that wheat-growing on the Great Southern, except in streaks and patches, is not payable. Still, those settlers had to try to farm wheat on indifferent country, where at best they could get only a few bushels per acre. They had not the means to keep sheep, and the Agricultural Bank would not advance money for the necessary wire.

Mr. BROWN: Before tea I was speaking of the methods of the Agricultural Bank. Probably a good many mistakes have been made by over-valuing certain lands for agricultural purposes. The land in this State, and more particularly along the Great Southern, is very patchy. One may see land on one side of a fence that is worth little, while on the other side it may be extra good for cereal growing. The mistake made was that men were put on the poor land and it was impossible for them to grow a payable crop. In 1917 an interesting instance came under my notice. There were two paddocks three miles apart. One man had 300 acres cropped, 200 of which was fallow and 100 scarified. He obtained 1,700 bags of wheat. The other man had 300 acres all of which had been fallowed, and he received only 360 bags of wheat. Members may ask why.

Mr. Maley: What was the difference in the value of the land.

Mr. BROWN: That is the point. One block was suited for cereal growing and the other was not. Yet the man on the unsuitable block had no alternative to farming the land that the Agricultural Bank had given him. He was inexperienced at the time, but eventually he discovered to his sorrow that the land was not adapted for the cultivation he was carrying on. After all these years, settlers in the Great Southern are finding out the methods that should have been adopted from the first. The land is admirable for grazing purposes, and farmers, instead of trying to grow wheat, are sowing large areas of oats. Artificial grasses are becoming adapted to that part, and the farmers are now sending large numbers of stock to market. In the Pingelly district a man I know had 3,700 acres of ground. He erected silos and made ensilage of his crop and the whole of his time is now occupied in cultivating 1,700 acres. The other 2,000 acres are for sale. This is what the Pingelly district is most suited for, and the same may be said of the country extending right down to Katanning. Further out east there is a man who has never put a plough into his land, and this is the seventh year in which he has had an average return of 22 bushels to the acre. If that system of farming were adopted in certain other districts, the return would be nil. I was surprised to learn from the I.A.B. that certain districts are classed as "six-bushel average." If that is so, how can a man deeply indebted to the board be expected to make his farming pay? I am pleased to say there are few such areas in my district, but they are scattered here and there. Failure is not always due to the fault of the man; the fault often is that men have been placed on poor land. The Minister for Lands is the member of the Cabinet to whom we must look to advance the welfare of the State. I was grieved to learn recently that about 400 clients of the I.A.B. had been given notice to either reduce their liabilities or go off their land.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

I learn that this matter has received the consideration of the Government and that it has been decided to treat every case on its merits. These people will thus be given another trial. This will always live in my memory as one of the most graceful acts of the Labour Government.

Mr. Panton: It is only typical of them.

Mr. BROWN: If the Government continue in that way, the settlers under the I.A.B. will have no cause to complain of not having been given a fair trial. The previous Government appointed three practical farmers in each district to investigate the cases of I.A.B. farmers who were in difficulties. If these farmers, after careful examination, are of opinion that it is impossible for a client of the board to make good, the man should go off the land as soon as possible.

The Minister for Railways: They would not turn down a member of the organisation, would they?

Mr. Thomson: Some of them have.

Mr. BROWN: The field inspector has to be a judge of stock; he must understand farming thoroughly and must have a knowledge of finance. If we could always get such accomplished men as field inspectors, it would be all right. They, however, have the theoretical knowledge, but not the practical knowledge. An inspector goes to a man who is in difficulties and the man probably puts a proposition as to what he is going to do and what he requires; but the inspector says, "No, we cannot agree to that." The settler naturally becomes downhearted, because he cannot farm his land according to his ideas of what is best. Three practical men from the district in conjunction with the field inspector should be able to say whether the settler is in a position to make good. In my electorate are men who started farming 10 or 15 years after other settlers had taken up land close to the Great Southern railway. They went out to the eastern areas, and to-day they are able to ride in their motor cars. The unfortunate settlers who were planked down on poor land close to the Great Southern are still in difficulties. We are told that the finances of the State are in a deplorable condition. We have a deficit of six millions, and yet on top of that we are to be asked to vote millions more. I want to know where the money is coming from. The Government no doubt have ideas about raising money, and unless they do raise more money it will be impossible to carry on development work in the country. How can we build railways if more money is not raised? How can we go on with development work if fresh loans are not floated? I understand the Government are likely to subscribe to the Federal Loan Council. If the Eastern States are going to dictate to us as to when and how much we shall borrow, the progress of this State will be greatly retarded; and I can only regard such a proposal as another link in the chain of unification. This will never do for Western Australia.

Our entry into the Federation was the worst thing that ever was done. We are beginning to find it out now, and if we permit the Eastern States to dictate as to our borrowings, well, all I can say is, "God help us." A good many people are inclined to blame Sir James Mitchell for having initiated the group settlements. I do not blame him. I was much surprised to hear the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) say the ex-Premier had never done one act to benefit the farmer or develop the State. Will anyone tell me that a man imbued with the idea of bringing thousands of people to Australia and settling them in groups, was not trying to do something for the State? The ex-Premier probably made a mistake, because thousands, and, in fact, millions of money have been spent and he lost sight of the virgin country where men could have been settled and could have obtained an immediate return. The Kalgardin district in the first year of settlement produced 5,000 bags of wheat. What have the group settlements produced? Nothing, and they will require to be spoon-fed for a good many years yet. Some of the group settlers will never make good. They have been placed in groups and, owing to the land being of a patchy nature, it is reasonable to expect that a good many of them will not have good land. In a decade or two I believe the group settlements will prove a blessing. There is always a market for dairy produce and similar lines. We know what we have to pay for those commodities at present and those things can be produced in the South-West. One man who took up land in the South-West without assistance informed me that he was able to produce three crops a year from the one piece of land and that he received a return as high as £80 per acre by growing rotation crops. In his opinion linseed can be grown well there. This is a splendid factor in dairying. When fed to cows it returns nitrogen to the soil and greatly enriches the land. In the opinion of this settler the South-West will ultimately be the garden of Australia. That is also my belief. Unfortunately, however, we have not yet the population we need for the necessary development. When the people get going properly the question of marketing the produce will have to be gone into. The local market, which is the only one we have at present, would soon be flooded. If, however, we produced chiefly butter and bacon there would always be a ready sale for them. No man can go wrong if he grows wheat and wool and the other stable commodities, because there is a fixed world market for these things. It would be to the interests of the State that we should first develop those industries that we know will pay. The first thing I wish to refer to concerning the policy of the Government is State trading concerns. We cannot gather from a perusal of the returns whether they are paying or not, but my own opinion is they are losing badly. Take the Implement Works, for in-

stance. I understand they were established with the object of directly benefiting the man on the land. I cannot see that they have fulfilled their object.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, they have.

Mr. BROWN: No. I will tell the House how the farmers have been deceived. I have seen the bills.

Mr. Chesson: What would they be paying for their implements to-day but for those works?

Mr. BROWN: I know a man in the York district who bought an old harvester at a sale. He had the wheels, the axle and part of the frame. It was similar to a State machine, and he, therefore, asked the State Implement Works to send him up some parts, including a winnower. The parts came up, and with them a bill for no less a sum than £250. That is how the works help the farmer.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Did they sell him a house as well?

Mr. BROWN: No.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They must have done so.

Mr. Chesson: What was the bill for?

Mr. BROWN: For the parts. This farmer found out afterwards that the parts were useless. He asked the works to take them back, and they replied that they could not do so. They finally agreed to take them back, and the farmer lost £75 over the deal. He was glad to get out of it at that figure.

The Minister for Railways: He could have got a new machine for less than that.

Mr. BROWN: The implements turned out by the State are not of the same quality as those that come from the Eastern States.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: They are.

Mr. BROWN: No. No farmer will take a State harvester if he can get another. They are not turning out one piece of machinery that the farmer would take if he could get anything else.

Mr. Corboy: I know many farmers who take State implements in preference to others.

Mr. BROWN: But under what conditions are they taking them?

Mr. Corboy: They can buy in any other market they like.

Mr. BROWN: I am glad to hear that. There is no doubt that the works are not turning out machines as good as they ought to do.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They make the best plough on the market.

Mr. BROWN: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BROWN: Probably if the works employ good mechanics they may be able to turn out good machinery. Of what use are the works to the farmer or the State, seeing that they are being run at a loss?

Mr. Pantou: What would happen to the farmers but for the fact that the works are policing the implement industry?

Lieut.-Col. Denton: We are law-abiding citizens; we do not need policing.

Mr. BROWN: I will now refer to State hotels.

Mr. Pantou: That is the stuff.

Mr. BROWN: I can see no use for State hotels. Has any State hotel assisted in the development of the district in which it has been established?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, at times.

Mr. BROWN: If left alone, private enterprise would soon have supplied the want, if it existed. The Government pick out the eyes of every town, and establish a hotel wherever money is to be made. They are trading on booze. Is that desirable?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Would any private individual have erected a hotel at Corrigin or Kwollyin?

Mr. BROWN: One can get no better accommodation at the State hotel than in any other hotel.

Mr. Corboy: And you do not pay more.

Mr. BROWN: There is a tendency at State hotels to put as many beds as possible into one room.

Mr. Corboy: Of course that sort of thing does not occur in a private hotel.

Mr. BROWN: I will tell the House what happened to me at a State hotel. I asked for a bed, and was told there was only one left. Behind me there was a man with his wife and child who also wanted accommodation, but they were told there was no bed for them, and no effort was made to put them up. They were told they could get beds wherever they liked. However, I went to my room. I discovered in one bed a man almost on the verge of D.T.s, and in another bed a man who seemed, from his condition, to be on the point of dying. Members may imagine what I had to put up with that night.

The Minister for Railways: Did you look under the bed?

Mr. BROWN: That kind of thing has never occurred to me in a private hotel. One sees men hanging around State hotels, spending every shilling they have, making no attempt at thrift, and in their old age they will have to go to the Old Men's Home and be kept by the State. Other men who are thrifty and deny themselves are the very people who will have to assist in the support of these spendthrifts. On behalf of all conscientious objectors I claim that the State should not enter into this realm of commerce. I am not a prohibitionist by any means, but in all honesty I claim that the State should never have ventured into this business. We thought when the State Sawmills were established that we would get cheaper timber. That has not proved to be the case.

Mr. Corboy: The late Government joined the monopoly. That is why you cannot get cheap timber.

Mr. BROWN: If that is so, I hope the present Government will very quickly wreck the monopoly.

Mr. Corboy: We have done so.

Mr. BROWN: I have been buying from the State Sawmills, and have to pay 5s. a hundred feet more for my timber since the Labour Government have come into office. That is how they have wrecked the monopoly. In my trade as a wagon builder I find it impossible to build wagons. I will show the House how some of our Government institutions patronise local industry. I know of one department that called for tenders for certain articles that are made by the State. It wished the local producers to cut each other's throats so that it might ascertain how cheaply it could procure those articles. No doubt the State Implement Works put in a tender, but it will be found that they do not make any of these vehicles. Under the present system of working it is impossible for them to do so. Of what use are the State Implement Works to the man on the land? Probably they go in for other ventures, of which I know nothing. Any man can compete against the State in the building of wagons. If that were all the competition we had to face we would have nothing to fear. The State cannot turn out a wagon as cheaply or as well as can a private firm. If the State Implement Works and the Sawmills are working at a loss, of what use are they to the State?

The Minister for Railways: Have you looked at the balance sheets?

Mr. BROWN: Thousands of pounds of beautiful timber are allowed to go up in smoke every year.

Mr. Wilson: That is a reflection on the Conservator of Forests.

Mr. BROWN: If that timber were sold at reasonable rates it could be used for shed construction or other useful purposes, if it were known to be available. As things are, however, it is all wasted.

Mr. Wilson: That is not so.

Mr. BROWN: The member for Pilbara (Mr. Lamond) advocated the establishment of State stores. Where are we going to draw the line?

The Minister for Railways: We should always do what we can to prevent the people being robbed.

Mr. Stubbs: I will sell my store at a reasonable price.

Mr. BROWN: He gave us instances of what prices were charged at Marble Bar, and compared them with the prices in Perth. He said nothing about the freight to Marble Bar, or the book debts the storekeepers piled up there. The State will soon find out what will happen if they start out in this business.

Mr. Chesson: What about the prices that are charged the prospector out back for explosives?

Mr. BROWN: The member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) compared the charges made upon explosives with those made upon super. How many train loads would it take to carry all the explosives that are used in one year, and how many to bring back the product thereof? A motor car

could carry the lot. Superphosphate is the mainstay of the man on the land.

Mr. Panton: The more you carry on the railways the more you lose.

Mr. BROWN: See what we get back, in an indirect way through carrying super over the railways! It is a means of bringing many thousands of pounds worth of extra freight to the railway system. There is no better policy a Government could adopt for the encouragement of the agricultural industry than the carriage of super at a low rate.

Mr. Corboy: Why do you object to fracture being carried at a low rate?

Mr. Panton: The more train loads of super you run the greater is the loss.

Mr. BROWN: The railways arrange to carry goods at a cheaper rate during certain portions of the year for the sake of the back loading.

Mr. Panton: We are only asking for the same concession for the mining industry.

Mr. BROWN: The farming industry will be still in existence when there is no longer any mining. Our railways, it is said, are not paying. Probably they do pay during certain months of the year. However, the only way we can make our railways pay is by encouraging production.

Mr. North: Last year the railways showed a profit.

Mr. BROWN: If it were not for the products grown by the farmer, the railways would be "bung."

Mr. Chesson: The wool and stock from the Murchison make the railways pay.

Mr. BROWN: Those things are all agricultural products. For my part I venture to say that more is being sent away now from Pingelly, in money value, than ever before.

The Minister for Railways: Timber is the mainstay of the railways.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, and very often the freight on the timber costs more than the timber itself costs to produce. Railway rates should be reduced. At all events, I hope the rates on farm products will not be raised. I turn now to the policy of the Government. One of the first things Ministers did was to introduce the 44-hour week. I can only conclude that that was a party move. Ministers know the thing is not as it ought to be. I do not blame them for the fact that, in order to get votes, they promised on the hustings a universal 44-hour week. I am open to be corrected, but I believe the 44-hour week on the railways has to be done in five and a-half days. That is a thing I know the workers do not want. They want to work the 44 hours in five days, and go away and earn 10s. from a farmer on the other day.

Ministerial Members: Oh!

Mr. BROWN: The railway employees are very hard-working men, but only during four months of the year have those men the opportunity to work to their full capacity. They are now receiving 48 hours' pay for 44 hours' work. Later in the year,

however, they will be working 48 hours and more, and they will be working the extra hours at overtime rates. That is where the shoe will pinch, and the country will suffer. We all ought to realise that a fair day's pay is worth a fair day's work.

Mr. Panton: A novel observation.

Mr. BROWN: Recently I saw two men painting a lamp post. Having no other lamp post to go to, they made that one lamp post last half a day.

Mr. Corboy: That was due not to shortage of men but to shortage of lamp posts. Where is that lamp post?

Mr. BROWN: Not very far from where I live. I know, because on that day I was working slow myself. The cost of living is a very serious problem. At present I have to buy everything I use in my household; but for 20 years, living on a farm, I had my own meat and gristed my own flour and had my own butter and eggs, and so forth. But now that I live in town I have to buy everything I use; and I say straight out that a man living in town cannot keep a family on less than £5 a week.

Mr. Panton: You are supporting the basic wage.

Mr. BROWN: How can we decrease the cost of living? Only by encouraging production as much as possible. Let the people in the South-West grow all the potatoes and onions they possibly can. The old law of supply and demand will come in. Prices will rule according to whether the demand is not equal to the supply, or the supply not equal to the demand. The farmer should be encouraged to grow all the wheat and stock possible.

Mr. Corboy: If 6s. a bushel will not encourage the farmer, what will?

Mr. Latham: Where does the farmer get 6s.?

Mr. Corboy: That is the price to-day.

Mr. BROWN: The price of wheat certainly has gone up, and the first cry in the town was, "We want State flour mills and State bakeries." Surely townspeople do not grudge the farmer his little increase. The average return of wheat for the State, according to the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay), is only 11.14 bushels. Some of the farmers got only 6 or 8 bushels last season.

The Minister for Lands: Your argument does not apply to the potato grower, because when too many potatoes are grown the price falls and the grower goes short.

Mr. BROWN: We have lands which will grow potatoes splendidly. At Kendenup, for which I hope the Government will do something even though the property is in the hands of the debenture holders, there are still 60 people growing products of the kind required to reduce the cost of living. Those Kendenup settlers can grow splendid products, and the Kendenup dehydrator, the only plant of its kind in Western Australia or perhaps in Australia, will enable those products to be carried even to the North-West—such things as potatoes, carrots, and

turnips. The dehydrator can cope with all the output of Kendenup, and that of adjoining group settlers as well. In the interests of the country the Kendenup settlers should be kept there and the land bought from the debenture holders at a reasonable price.

The Minister for Lands: That is the point.

Mr. BROWN: The Kendenup settlers are quite willing to accept 300 or 400 acres and put them under dairying and intense culture. They are positive they can make a fair living at Kendenup in that way. Men who put money into Kendenup are now wheeling muck in barrows. Surely they are good men whom we ought to keep in Western Australia! Therefore the Government should either purchase Kendenup or arrange for the continued working of the property.

Mr. Clydesdale: The late Government could not buy Kendenup.

Mr. Chesson: Kendenup was a gamble.

Mr. BROWN: You said you were a gambler, because mining is a gamble.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must request a cessation of interruptions, and the hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. BROWN: Going on the land is not a gamble but a life of privation until such time as the settler makes a living. We must look to the man on the land to pull this State out of the mire. For that reason I earnestly plead to the Government that they give the man on the land all possible consideration. I promise to give the present Government all the support in my power. I realise that Ministers are actuated by the best intentions. Their actions up to date have proved conclusively that the Administration is not antagonistic to the man on the land.

Ministerial Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWN: I have considered myself justified in voicing my opinions on certain subjects. I hope that as time goes on Ministers will realise the force of my advice to them: "Do all you possibly can to advance our primary industries."

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [8.13]: The most pressing matter for the consideration of the Government and of this House is the State's financial position, because that position must inevitably affect every activity of government, and even to some extent cause modifications of the Government's programme and their desires. Our financial position is such as must occasion grave concern to all who have the interests of the State at heart. I was somewhat disappointed to learn during this debate that our loan possibilities are to be limited by the Commonwealth. While I agree as to its being undesirable that the Federal authorities should take control of our activities as they do, and are endeavouring to do in many directions, and while I agree that it is undesirable the Commonwealth should interfere with Western Australia's sovereign rights, I regret that

the fact of interference by the Commonwealth should have given rise to complaints that Western Australia's difficulties are owing to Federation. It is a complete error to blame Federation for all our difficulties. In my opinion even those things which are a handicap because of Federation are at any rate no worse than other handicaps from which we would have suffered had we not joined the Federation.

Mr. Thomson: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course. What I have stated represents my opinion.

Mr. Thomson: You will have great difficulty in convincing the people.

Mr. CORBOY: Our financial difficulties are due at least as much to faults of our own as to faults of the Federation. We must look to ourselves to remedy the position. To our own efforts must we look to get us out of our present difficulties. Now I desire to make a brief reference to unemployment. I said that possibly our financial position might cause the Government to refrain from doing things they would like to do. I am not in the confidence of Cabinet any more than are members opposite, but when the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) stated, as he did last night, that the Mitchell Government handed over the State to the Labour Government free from unemployment, he was, to say the least of it, under a wrong impression.

Mr. Latham: No one could do that.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course not. The unemployment this winter is just as great as during any other winter. It is a seasonal difficulty that we experience each year.

Mr. Thomson: It is the same in other States too.

Mr. CORBOY: When the member for Swan asserted that the late Government had handed over the State free from unemployment, he mis-stated the position. Every day I receive requests from married men for information as to where they may have a chance of getting a job. Many thoroughly deserving cases have been brought under my notice. Many single men apply to me as well, but I always advise them to get out of the city and endeavour to find work in the country. Every member knows that that has been the position for several months past.

Mr. Richardson: There are hundreds out of work now.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course there are. Members must be aware of the fact. I can see in the attitude of the member for Swan and from the tenor of paragraphs published in one or two violently anti-Labour papers, the beginnings of an attack to be made on the Labour Government later on.

Mr. Latham: I did not know any such papers existed here.

Mr. CORBOY: There are one or two. I thought from the speech of the hon. member that he must have read the publications I refer to.

Mr. Holman: He reads the "Primary Producer" only.

Mr. Latham: Not now.

The Minister for Lands: Then you are making a mistake. It is the most informative paper that is published.

Mr. CORBOY: For the first time since I have been in this Chamber, I must disagree with the hon. member. He quite forgets our own organ, the "Worker."

The Minister for Lands: It does not give the information that I want.

Mr. CORBOY: I know the "Worker" does not deal with those problems that confront the Minister at present. However, I can judge what is happening. They are working up to the point when, later on, these newspapers and perhaps members like the ex-Colonial Secretary will say that the Labour Government, with their Utopian proposals and their policy of helping the bottom dog, have brought about chaos and unemployment.

Mr. Thomson: You must expect criticism.

Mr. CORBOY: We do not resent fair criticism but we do object to deliberate misstatements of facts. We do object to members like the member for Swan saying there was no unemployment when the Mitchell Government went out of office. In two or three years' time he will probably make that statement and say that Labour, owing to its policy, reduced the State to a hopeless position and the workers to a condition of starvation. Such tactics are grossly unfair. While we can expect narrow-minded people, who write articles in the Press without a full knowledge of the facts, to adopt that attitude, we do not expect members of this Chamber, who are in a position to know better, to do so.

Mr. Latham: Of course we get more unemployment during winter time. Generally speaking, however, there is not much unemployment.

Mr. CORBOY: I have admitted that the unemployment at present is largely seasonal. Of course we did have an exceptional year, when that did not apply. I believe we built a tramline to Como and so relieved the difficulty that year.

Mr. Clydesdale: Quite right, too. We want six more tramways.

Mr. CORBOY: So long as I get the one I want, I shall be satisfied. It is obvious that the best way to relieve the State from its financial troubles, and ease the staggering load that is borne by the people, is to increase the population, and in that way increase production. The more shoulders brought here to assist in carrying the burden, the more promptly will our production for export overseas be fostered. Such a course is necessary for effectively dealing with our financial problems. The Government realise it is essential to secure an increase in the population, with a view to dealing with this difficulty. At present we are hampered in many directions because of the heavy taxation necessary to meet our commitments. As with the individual so it is with our industries, which cannot be expanded as we desire. Instead of money

being expended on the establishment of industries or in the extension of existing ones, it has to go into the Treasury to meet the interest bill. The taxation of Western Australia compares unfavourably with taxation in most of the other States. But it must necessarily be high because there are so few individuals here to produce wealth to lighten our burdens. Again, it is obvious that one of the most useful ways in which production can be increased is by land settlement and an increase in primary production.

Mr. Thomson: Provided that marketing facilities are available.

Mr. CORBOY: That is so. The best facilities exist for the marketing of wheat, wool and products of that description. The difficulty will be in the future, when we have to market the products from the group settlements. The question arises as to how we are to achieve the necessary increase in primary production. This question has given me a good deal of concern. We invite people to come here and go on the land. The best proposition is undoubtedly that to be found in the wheat and wool country because the settler secures returns so promptly, thus adding to the wealth of the State as a whole. We find, however, that the Land Boards have been sitting every year and have been besieged by applicants anxious to get on the land. In my own electorate where the advances available from the Agricultural Bank are tiny compared with those available elsewhere, there have been from 80 to 100 applicants for a single block. Yesterday an instance came under my notice of a father who had taken his three sons to a block at Newdegate. He could get the one block only for his family. One of the lads has since married and he desired to get a block in the Newdegate area as well. Since he was married three blocks there have been made available. He applied for each one but failed each time because no fewer than 50 applicants sought the blocks, and one of the applicants in each instance had a better claim to it than he had. That man would make an ideal settler. He is of fine physique and a smart intellectual young fellow. He finds it impossible, however, to obtain a block where he wants it. I know of other men who have been similarly unfortunate. Some have gone on month after month applying for block after block and then, becoming discouraged by repeated failures, have given up their attempts. That discloses a serious position. If it means anything it means that we are land hungry.

The Minister for Lands: That is, near railways.

Mr. CORBOY: I am talking only of land within a reasonable distance of railways. It means that the difficulty of providing land is one that will have to be tackled with determination. It is for this reason that I welcome the proposed introduction of a Closer Settlement Bill to enable the Government to secure land adjacent to railways but not adequately utilised. I also

welcome the proposed tax on unimproved land values. That is the only scientific method evolved so far to force land into productivity. It is high time such measures were introduced. In the splendid address by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) last night we had a reference to the extension of the pastoral leases to 1948. That extension was a matter for great regret, for had those leases been allowed to fall due in 1928, as originally intended, it would have been possible to have subdivided the North and North-West in such a way as to put ten times the white population into that territory, by giving the people who would go up there smaller holdings than those of to-day, with proper water facilities on each. Unfortunately for the State this chance to increase the population in the North and at the same time materially increase its production, has been postponed for 20 years. Without imputing motives to anybody, I say it was the greatest possible shame that those leases should have been extended to the present lessees. But for that, after 1928 we should have had up there a population that would have made the North a good deal safer than it is to-day in point of defence, and more nearly in consonance with our ideal of a white Australia. I believe the group settlement plan offers, at all events one of very few practical methods of developing our South-West. I do not propose to deal at any length with the groups, for I am not very well acquainted with the work actually done upon them; but I should like to refer to the cost and method of clearing. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) had something to say the other night about the clearing. He talked of ringbarking and burning the undergrowth over a succession of years, and eventually burning out the big dead timber after five or seven years. As against his statement that the South-West was sour and would not grow anything unless it were cleared in the manner described, let me say that I have seen down there magnificent crops of subterranean clover growing right up to the burls of big trees; and, strangely enough, the clover was thicker and stronger close to those trees than out in the open clearing. In regard to possibly the first 50 groups, a mistake was made by clearing on a face. Possibly later on, because of that mistake, we shall have to give consideration to the financial position of those settlers. The Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement took evidence from men qualified to express an opinion on the South-West. Practically all of them agreed that the South-West could be profitably and quickly brought into production by taking out all the trees up to 18 inches diameter, ring-barking all over that size, and sowing subterranean clover in the fields cleared in that way, leaving the big timber to be taken out as it died and opportunity occurred. It has been demonstrated that fields cleared in that manner will successfully

carry large numbers of stock. I understand that after the initiation of the first 50 groups that method was adopted on group settlements. I believe it holds out much greater chances of success for those groups and that, if markets are available, it will enable the settlers to carry through to a successful issue the adventure upon which they are embarked. We are importing enormous quantities of dairy produce annually, and it will require all the energies of the group settlers for some time to come to supply our home market. After that is done, they can think of exporting overseas, when it will be necessary to go into the question of markets and marketing facilities. I have come to the conclusion that the late Administration, while apparently capable of devising a way to put this scheme into operation, were not competent to direct the departmental officers in the minor details of administration that means so much to individual settlers. Now that some of the groups have been in existence for two years and the settlers thereon should be going out on their own responsibility, we hear of all sorts of difficulties to be overcome. Sufficient cows, we are told, are not available, some thousands being required for the group settlers.

The Minister for Lands: We can get them all right.

Mr. CORBOY: Efforts are being made to obtain them, but I think I am right in saying that no provision had been made to meet that position when it arose. In a big scheme things like that are likely to lead to disaster. I hope the new Minister has found it possible to rectify many of those minor details which, as I say, frequently mean to the settler all the difference between success and failure. As for general farming, we have to look around to find where we can place settlers. Here I am going to be a little parochial, as indeed every speaker save the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy), has been.

The Minister for Lands: He had nothing to be parochial about.

Mr. CORBOY: No, he is the only member whose constituents have not a grievance. Let us hope that in three years' time they still will have no grievance, at all events not against him. I could hand over to him a whole cartload of grievances from Yilgarn, and it would surpass even his undoubted ability to do everything that some people require in an electorate such as mine. Indeed, in an electorate that for some years has been going down, it is difficult to maintain optimism amongst the electors. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to induce a Government to look with favour upon projects in such an electorate. When a mining district is depreciating it should be our endeavour to do what we were told to-night was done in Ballarat, namely find some other means of providing for the population, so that

they remain in the district instead of flooding the already congested capital city. In the Yilgarn electorate for some 18 months we have had a modified form of land settlement policy. After years of agitation we have at last secured the partial endorsement of the Agricultural Bank trustees of the district as a farming proposition. There is no doubt whatever about the eventual success of farming operations in that district. One man there, Mr. Forrester, whose homestead can be reached on foot in 10 minutes from the Southern Cross railway station, has cropped an average of 1,000 acres, has 5,000 acres cleared, has not merely built up a competence, but has equipped himself with some of the luxuries of life, and will this year reap his 20th consecutive harvest. Yet he started with nothing, and has accomplished all this without the assistance of the Agricultural Bank. If it be possible for Mr. Forrester in those circumstances to grow wheat successfully on so large a scale, surely it is possible for other settlers to do the same with the assistance of the Agricultural Bank. There we have a huge area of magnificent country lying alongside constructed railways and with an available water supply. Farming operations have been successfully carried on for 20 years, and the district is awaiting merely a little more generous Government assistance to send it ahead by leaps and bounds. Eighteen months or two years ago the whole of the district was surveyed into farms. Almost all the blocks have been taken up, but unfortunately many of them are not being developed, the settlers not residing on their blocks.

The Minister for Lands: How long have they been away?

Mr. CORBOY: Some of them have never lived on their blocks.

The Minister for Lands: Then they should be forfeited.

Mr. CORBOY: I believe the provision in the Act for forfeiture is a very good one; but before forfeiting, the Government should give the intending settlers a reasonable opportunity for proving the value of their blocks.

The Minister for Lands: But that would have to be done with Government money.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes, just as on the group settlements.

The Minister for Lands: They are under special arrangements.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister will agree that even those special arrangements leave the greater portion of the burden on our shoulders.

The Minister for Lands: We hope not.

Mr. CORBOY: In the Yilgarn district the Agricultural Bank is offering only 50 per cent. of the value of improvements consisting of clearing, fencing, and water

conservation. It is impossible for the settlers to make good on such a basis. It is obvious that a man possessed of sufficient capital to carry through on that basis would go to a district where he could get a farm already stocked and equipped.

Mr. Angelo: You said Mr. Forrester started with nothing.

Mr. CORBOY: Quite so, but when he "went broke" he had to take a job on wages and then go on with the game again. Forrester to-day owns a motor car, has his own electric light plant, electric washing machine, electric iron and all the conveniences to be found in a modern metropolitan home.

Mr. Angelo: He started with nothing, and the others you say are getting 50 per cent.

Mr. CORBOY: But Forrester had the advantage of the goldfields market; he was the farmer nearest to it. That advantage is not available to the present settlers. Even if it were, there would be many more to share it.

Mr. Mann: Did not Forrester have dry farming experience in South Australia before coming here?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. The question of dry farming methods is worthy of consideration. It is obvious that the line of our agricultural area is going to be pushed further and further east as our knowledge of handling the country in the so-called dry areas increases. We can all remember that Governments in the past were charged with insanity for having settled people so far east as Kellerberrin and such like places, which to-day are recognised as absolutely safe districts. I dare say one would be correct in stating that, with the knowledge available 20 years ago, settlement out there would have been unsafe, but with the knowledge since gained it is to-day an assured district. With the knowledge we have to-day, I believe it is possible for a man without any capital worth mentioning to make a success of farming in the Yilgarn area. That could be done by the adoption of the Wimmera methods.

The Minister for Lands: On areas of 2,000 acres and with sheep.

Mr. CORBOY: Eighteen months or two years ago when that country was being surveyed, I did my utmost to induce the Government to cut it up into 2,000-acre blocks, so that a man could go in for sheep as well as crops. The Government insisted upon blocks of 1,000 acres. I pleaded with them to increase the size to 1,500 acres, but unsuccessfully. These 1,000-acre blocks were taken up, and now it is a case of "squeeze out your neighbour." Even if wheat growing should prove a failure, it is magnificent sheep country, and I believe there is undoubted success ahead of those settlers, provided they are given proper assistance.

I asked the late Government to send Mr. Sutton to lecture to the settlers on the Wimmera methods and the then Minister for Agriculture promised that it would be done. Unfortunately, the promise was not kept. Mr. Sutton is going through the district shortly to talk to the settlers on the best methods to be adopted, and I hope considerable good will result. This year about 2,500 acres of wheat has been sown in that district on virgin land cleared during the last 18 months. I am hopeful that the results will be such that it will be impossible for the Government not to grant the assistance desired, and that the production will be so convincing that it will be unnecessary for us to advance any other argument. According to the statistics for the last 17 years the Bullfinch area has a rainfall of over 13 inches, while in the Southern Cross area the average during the same period has been over 11 inches. Practical farmers in this House will agree that with such a rainfall—sufficient of which falls in the growing season—and the adoption of proper farming methods, it should be possible for settlers combining stock raising with wheat growing to make a success of their holdings. It has become a habit on the Address-in-reply to prefer requests on behalf of one's own district. There is a proposition that I would commend to the earnest consideration of the Government. It was brought under the notice of the late Government, but unfortunately without favourable result. When we could not get more than 50 per cent. advance for the improvements I have mentioned, we requested a full 100 per cent. advance for clearing the first 250 or 300 acres, so that it would be possible for a settler to clear sufficient country to get in a decent crop and assist him to carry on with the 50 per cent. advance afterwards.

Mr. Latham: Would not a statutory board control that?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes, but it should be possible, in the peculiar circumstances existing, for Government policy to have some effect.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The Government have given the bank a guarantee in some instances.

The Minister for Lands interjected.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister for Lands is one of the most cautious men in the House. He was in this district with the ex-Premier and me, and he will remember that the locomotive was unable to pull a very small train, consisting of a coach and four trucks, up an easy incline because of the thickness of the grass overgrowing the railway line. This goes to show the possibilities of the district for sheep raising purposes. I hope something will be done to relieve the position of these settlers. If they are granted the full measure of assistance for the first 250 or 300 acres of clearing and thereafter the

50 per cent. advance, they will have a sporting chance of success. I commend to the earnest consideration of the Government, when the railway policy for the agricultural areas north of the goldfields line is being discussed, the advisableness of again having classified the country lying between Bencubbin and Bullfinch. I have been through a considerable part of that country towards Bencubbin from Bullfinch, and every inch of the way we were in the same belt of magnificent forest country that prevails around Bullfinch itself.

The Minister for Lands: I have made a list of all the applications.

Mr. CORBOY: I am not pressing for the immediate building of the Bencubbin-Bullfinch line. We have not yet got the Narrogin-Dwarda railway, so we cannot expect to get the Bencubbin-Bullfinch line.

The Minister for Lands: In that area there is land on which we could operate, but not so in the other district.

Mr. CORBOY: The State is land hungry. Give us a sporting chance to prove what the Bencubbin-Bullfinch country is worth! If its usefulness be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Government, the advisableness of linking up the two dead ends, and thus making available a new area for settlement, could be seriously considered.

Mr. Angelo: Thirteen hundred miles of railway has already been asked for.

Mr. CORBOY: I am fairly young, but I am afraid I shall never live to see the completion of the railway programme outlined during this debate.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Remember what was done between 1911 and 1915.

Mr. CORBOY: I remember the railway building programme, which was put into operation by the previous Labour Government. It justifies even the Narrogin-Dwarda people in being optimistic. They may get their railway during the next three years.

The Minister for Lands: Money was obtainable at 3½ per cent. in 1911, whereas now it costs 6 per cent.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course the money market must influence the position, but when one is pleading for a little consideration for these districts, there are many aspects that should be borne in mind. We have a mining population at Bullfinch and the bulk of the men would make ideal settlers. They are accustomed to the climate; they have lived there for years, and are anxious to adopt the avocation of farming, which is less dangerous to health than is mining. After all, I am asking for an amount that is very tiny indeed when one remembers the enormous expenditure involved in the group areas of the South-West. What are we doing at present? We are taking men, who have lived 20 years on the goldfields, away from a climate to which they are accustomed and one with a comparatively small rainfall and dumping them away down in the South-West, where half of them in the

winter will think they are going to be drowned.

Mr. Withers: They will be rejuvenated.

Mr. CORBOY: Perhaps so, but with men whose health has been affected by long period of employment underground, it would be much better to give them a healthy occupation in the climate to which they are accustomed rather than transfer them to a climate that must prove somewhat drastic. Land is available in large areas in the Bullfinch district, and the capital required would be small compared with the enormous cost of the group settlements in the South-West. It has become popular during this debate to press for the construction of railways. Regarding the Newdegate area the Government have to face one of two problems. They have either to build the railway to Newdegate, or find a sum of money that will equal the cost of the railway to finance the stacking of wheat and other produce raised in the district. I have some statistics from the Newdegate area and they make impressive reading. Newdegate is a comparatively new settlement and it is in some respects unique in the history of the State. It is unique in the sense that out of 160 settlers there are only two who are not on their blocks. The settlers have done an enormous amount of development work, and this year have gone in for cropping on a scale that is going to create a very serious problem for the Government if railway facilities be not provided. The statistics to which I refer were compiled at considerable cost by the Newdegate Progress Association, who employed a census-taker to visit each farm. The area under crop this year is 13,800 acres. If that area returns no more than the average for the State, it will mean the production of 56,000 bags of wheat. It is claimed by the Newdegate settlers, who may be optimistic, that they will produce at least one, two or three bushels per acre over the State average.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Over 50,000 bags.

Mr. Kennedy: Forty-five thousand.

Mr. CORBOY: Contracts are in existence for the clearing of land for use next season that will mean the provision of an area of no less than 33,650 acres for cropping.

The Minister for Lands: And new settlers are still going out there.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. To enable them to put in this crop the settlers have acquired 30 machines, and next year will have over 100 more.

Mr. Latham: Fifty per cent. of the farmers do not buy State implements.

Mr. CORBOY: That is a reflection on the farmers. No one squeals more loudly than they do about the handicaps of Federation and the Eastern States grab.

Mr. Latham: They get better machines elsewhere, and that is a very important thing in farming.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not know that they do. Even if that be so, it is due to

the fact that the late Government for years deliberately refrained from bringing the State Implement Works up to date. They have been handicapped with obsolete machinery and plant that is out of date. It has been practically impossible for the works to compete with the Eastern States on anything like a paying basis.

Mr. Latham: My experience dates back further than that.

Mr. CORBOY: The works are badly laid out.

Mr. Latham: A Labour Government started them.

Mr. CORBOY: The Labour Government were undoubtedly sold a pup by the man who first managed them.

The Minister for Lands: It is only a matter of prejudice. Give them another name, and no one will know the difference.

Mr. CORBOY: In the Newdegate district there is now a population, comprising settlers and their families, of 211, and 144 men are employed there. Next year no less than 764 tons of super will be carted into the district, and 260 additional horses will be required there. The only discouraging feature about the settlement is that the average distance the settlers have to go to reach the railhead is 36 miles. Over that distance they have to cart everything that is taken on to the farm, and every bushel of wheat that is taken off it. It is an impossible proposition. If a railway is not provided, stacks will have to be built in the district, and the farmers will have to dump their wheat on the sites of the stations that already have been surveyed, and the Government will have to finance the stacking.

The Minister for Lands: What are the roads like?

Mr. Latham: The worst in the State.

Mr. CORBOY: That is true. When I was last in the district I saw a sick child being taken to Lake Grace in a motor car. I was never so sorry for any child as I was for that one, and wondered if it would reach the town alive. The road is so bad, in its worst places, that it is impossible to attempt to cart produce over it to the rail head. The lowest price for carting the 30 odd miles to Lake Grace works out at no less than 2s. 2d. per bushel.

Mr. Griffiths: It is an impossible proposition.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course it is. That district contains nearly 14,000 acres of wheat this season, which will have to be handled. Unfortunately I see very little chance of railway facilities being provided in the immediate future. I appeal to the Government to do their utmost to build a railway into that area as quickly as possible. It is the most economical and soundest method of dealing with a serious problem. If they can do nothing else I hope they will extend the railhead far enough to make it possible for the settlers to get their produce to market. It has been stated that wheat is at present 6s. a bushel. That would mean a great deal to the set-

tlers who will have 40,000 bags to sell. If they have to stack it and leave it until next year, they may not get more than 3s. or 3s. 6d. a bushel.

Mr. Latham: It is not 6s. a bushel.

Mr. CORBOY: The bakers have put up the price of bread, and say that the cost of flour is the reason for our paying another halfpenny per loaf. I understand that the London parity to-day is 6s. 2d.

Mr. Richardson: They are offering 5s. 8½d. to-day.

Mr. CORBOY: If the price drops only 1s. a bushel next year that may mean all the difference between placing the Newdegate settlers on their feet and keeping them struggling for many more years. If they could sell their wheat while the price is high, they would be able to get on well from the beginning. I appeal to the Government to consider earnestly the question of providing railway facilities for that area, which has already demonstrated what it can do. The settlers have done a tremendous amount of work, and shown their confidence in their holdings. I was astounded to see the amount of clearing that had been accomplished in such a short time. A great deal of work has been done, and a township is now springing up there. I venture to say that before long this will be one of the biggest producing centres, in compact form, in Western Australia. Nearly 14,000 acres are under crop this year, and nearly 34,000 acres will be under crop next year. This must impress the Government with the urgency of the matter, and the necessity for something being done to enable the settlers to get their produce to market. There is another settlement at Kalgarin that is also entitled to assistance. Several members have already put forward the claims of that district for consideration when the railway programme is gone into. The settlers at Kalgarin have already produced a large quantity of wheat, which justifies them in expecting railway facilities. They have developed their holdings and ought to receive some consideration. When the Lake Grace-Newdegate Railway Bill was before the House last year, I said that any measure providing for the construction of the railway east of Kondinin to meet the requirements of the Kalgarin district would receive my support. I would welcome a measure that would provide for railway facilities being given to these people. The Ravenshorpe district has for years suffered from a drought. It has been in an unique position in that it is the only district in the State that has suffered in that way. Practically every other district has enjoyed good seasons during that period. There is a magnificent belt of timber country at Ravenshorpe within 30 miles of the coast, close to a range of hills which should break up the clouds and induce rain to fall. We all hope that the drought conditions will not continue, and that this year's harvest will improve. Ravenshorpe unfortunately suffers from a disability that does not exist to such

an extent in any other farming district. The greater the crop a man produces in that district, the more is he penalised because of his production. I refer to the fact that the freights upon his produce are abnormally high. He has a very small local market and must get his produce away. Unfortunately the bottom has fallen out of the copper market, and there is nothing to give the mining industry a stimulus. The local people used to absorb a good deal of the products of the land, but the population is not as big as it was. Almost all the produce from the Ravensthorpe district has to be sent away.

The Minister for Lands: How is the butter factory getting on?

Mr. CORBOY: That was an ill-advised venture, but the Government dairy expert thought otherwise and the Government agreed to finance the building of the factory. It was built at a time when there were not sufficient cows in the district to supply the milk required, let alone butter. Had the drought conditions been broken, there is no doubt there would have been a rapid increase in the number of cows in the district, and the factory would have been working to-day. The farmers were genuine, and subscribed one-third of the capital necessary for the factory. Butter is a product they would have been able to get away without being greatly affected by the freights. The drought conditions, however, have led to a decrease in the number of stock. Directly good seasons return and feed is available, stock will be brought into the district and we may see the butter factory operating. At present the people are importing fodder to feed their stock, for there is no feed in the district. The freights upon that constitute a great burden. The Minister in charge of State shipping has said he will go into the question of affording some relief in this respect until feed is available locally. I hope he will be able to do so. But relief is necessary in respect of freights on all other things. Despite the reduction of one-third granted during the last Parliament the people there are now paying exactly double the highest freights paid elsewhere in the State. The highest railway freight on wheat elsewhere is 5d. per bushel, and my constituents are paying no less than 10d. per bushel on the State steamer. That is largely due to the fact of production in the district having been small and the cost of running the steamer having been high. It is hoped that the new steamer to be placed on the coast in some months' time will enable a considerable lessening of running costs to be effected and consequently a reduction in freights, especially on primary products. When I hear my farming friends, such as the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown), complaining of the grave handicap under which their constituents suffer because of the half-penny railway freight they pay on fertiliser, it makes me wonder what they would say to 10d. per bushel freight on wheat.

Mr. Thomson: They would not have much hope.

Mr. CORBOY: Equally the Ravensthorpe people will not have much hope until their freights are brought down to a reasonable level.

Mr. Latham: You pay £5 per ton freight on your super.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. Some of the charges were simply ridiculous; but improvements have been effected during the last three years, and I hope we shall continue to get relief. An increase in our primary production is essential, and therefore I have somewhat dwelt on the primary industries operating in my electorate. I recognise that if the mining industry should be dying, it is essential to provide other avenues of employment for the men who must necessarily go out of the mining industry. I suggest to the Government that the best and most economical way of providing for those men would be to place as many as possible of them in the districts in which they have lived for years, to place them on the land there under conditions which will afford them a reasonable chance of success. Of course I know that in many mining districts that would not be practicable. I desire to make a brief reference to the mining industry, which unfortunately has latterly known a slack period, though I am glad to be able to say that in my own electorate, except as regards the Ravensthorpe district, there has been a notable revival in mining. One mine in Yilgarn, the Burbidge, which for years had paddled along with two or three men, was as lately as a week ago employing 30 men. Unfortunately the mine has had to close down temporarily because of lack of water; but a water supply is being provided by the Government from the goldfields main. Thus the difficulty will shortly be overcome, and then there will be an increase in the number of men employed on the mine as compared with the number working there last week.

Mr. Griffiths: There are very good reports of mining operations at Westonia.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. The trouble at Westonia is too much water; at Burbidge it is too little water. In other districts of the Yilgarn area there is production from mining which shows splendid results at the moment and promises even greater things to come. There is a magnificent field in the making at Langsford, out from Bullfinch. With the revival of the copper market, and the promised success of the Neville process of copper extraction, a revival of copper mining in the Phillips River district may be anticipated. In passing I may say that that bugbear of the last Parliament, so far as I was concerned, the Ravensthorpe smelter case, has not yet been settled—a fact which may surprise some old members. The member for York (Mr. Latham) need not look at the present occupants of the Treasury bench. Now those gentlemen are there, we have the prospect of a settlement of the case within the next few weeks. As regards

the mining industry generally, one of the essentials to its continuance and to a brightening of its present prospects is a due encouragement of bona-fide prospecting. While a good deal has been done in that direction by past Governments, two or three things yet remain to be done. The first of these things I do not intend to stress, because the Government are already aware of the necessity for an alteration. That first thing is relief from the most oppressive burden of taxation laws which operate against the prospector. He battles along for 15 or 20 years on what is, after all, a mere pittance, which would not be tolerated by most men; and then, if he is fortunate enough at the end of that period to find something which may repay him for all his toil and hardship, the Commissioner of Taxation steps in, and the prospector, instead of reaping the reward of his labour, finds the Taxation Commissioner demands practically the whole value of the discovery.

Mr. Latham: And sometimes more.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. In many instances prospectors have had from the Taxation Commissioner a bill greatly in excess of the amount of cash they received and the cash they could obtain from the sale of their shares. So, instead of deriving advantage from his discovery, the prospector finds that he has a millstone of tax debt hung around his neck. Something must be done to remove that disadvantage. I know men who for years have put every penny they could get into backing prospectors. I have one such man particularly in mind—a harrister. For the past 12 months that gentleman has found himself compelled to discontinue paying prospectors to go into the field, because he realises that if they do find anything, neither he nor they will reap any advantage from it: the whole of the return would go to the Taxation Commissioner. That is a severe handicap. It means that men who for years have been backing prospectors are unable to continue to do so. Another feature which needs rectification is the outrageous sandalwood monopoly created by the last Parliament. In that connection we provided for the making available of 750 tons of sandalwood for bona-fide prospectors. If every one of the prospectors who have so far applied for permits to pull sandalwood under the regulations were given an equal share, each of them would be allotted 1½ tons for the whole year.

Mr. Richardson: Have 550 prospectors applied?

Mr. CORBOY: Something like that number. I obtained the figures from the Mines Department, who have the issuing of these permits. When I have called on the officials of the Mines Department for an order for a prospector to pull sandalwood, they have said to me that they are very sorry but that they must cut the thing out, and that if every one who applied got a cut out of it—

Mr. Richardson: I did not think there were so many prospectors going around.

Mr. CORBOY: There are. Most people would be surprised, on going outback, to discover how many genuine prospectors there are still in the field. The genuine prospector, for whom the 750 tons of sandalwood are provided, is not seen near the railways nor in the towns. Just recently I had in hand the case of two men who had discovered a lease showing considerable promise. However, they had exhausted their credit at the store and were unable to get further supplies. Rather than ask the Government to assist them with money from the Mining Development Vote, they decided, being independent, to go and pull a bit of sandalwood and get a bit of money to square the storekeeper, after which they would resume their mining operations. They applied through me to the department for a permit under the 750 tons provision. The department knew both men well, and at once granted each of them a permit to pull wood. But then my trouble was to get an order for the wood. As the result of three weeks' strenuous endeavour I succeeded in getting an order for four tons from one man, and nothing for the other—really four tons between the two of them. That was the very best that could be got. Even if the sandalwood monopoly cannot be broken by the Government, even if the contract entered into is such as cannot be got rid of without payment of heavy compensation, some effort should be made to amend the contract so that a sufficient quantity of sandalwood getting will be reserved for prospectors to enable such of them as do not desire to make money from the Government to go out and pull a bit of wood in order that they may be enabled to carry on their prospecting and mining operations. I sincerely trust something will be done to effect that. There will be opportunities later for dealing with the very many other subjects one would like to talk about, and I do not propose at this stage to go any further. I know that the present Government intend to do all they can to place the mining industry on a sound basis, and I hope their efforts will prove successful. I hope that coincidently with the establishment of a better feeling in the mining world we shall have a continuance of development in the agricultural areas. I again appeal to the Government to bear in mind the necessity of providing for those people who wish to go on the land in Western Australia, and who for many months have been trying to get on the land, but who, as the records of the Land Board prove beyond doubt, have been unable to do so because the land is not at present available. If we are to increase our production from the soil, some effort will have to be made to find suitable land adjacent, or very close, to existing railways for these people. In that way land will be made available which should be put into use. Finally, I would again stress the urgent necessity for the close consideration of the question of providing

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

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1924.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Standard Survey Marks.

2, High School.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary.

ASSENT TO BILL.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 7th August.

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

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

Hon. J. Ewing: This House?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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