

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): More than that.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Is that all it is proposed to spend in this direction?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): No. Having watched this land settlement business from the beginning of the War Council of Western Australia, I may say that I am proud of the work which has been done. In spite of the criticism of people who, as a rule, know nothing about the matter, I say that very fair progress has been made, and that we have handled the land settlement portion of our repatriation operations as well as they have been handled in any other State in the Commonwealth. We will continue to handle them in that way if we are here. When the reports come in from the surveyors who are at present on the Eastern and South-Western lines we shall know exactly how much land we have at our disposal. We shall have all the knowledge required to purchase, if necessary, those lands adjacent to the railways.

Hon. P. Collier: We will make things move then.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): Yes, and in such a way that it will be a long time before any other member in this Chamber has the temerity to move what is practically a motion of want of confidence in the Government, who have done so much and are prepared to go on doing as much as they have done in the past. Very excellent work has been done under trying circumstances. If hon. members knew as much as I know about the work they would be the first to agree with me, and applaud the Government for what they have done. In my opinion the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) has made out no case at all. I have not the slightest doubt of the result of the debate.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The whip has been cracked.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): It has not been cracked. The hon. member must not think that all parties are run as his is run.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I know that.

Mr. Munsie: Why was a meeting held this afternoon?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): This soldier settlement scheme is being administered in the most sympathetic manner by Mr. McLarty, who has a very large knowledge of the work, and possesses a wide knowledge of our lands. He is assisted by a capable staff. The services of Mr. Camm are still being utilised. He is an officer for whom I have the greatest regard, and I respect his opinion. There is no friction between those officers, as has been stated. They are working together amicably, to the one end, namely, the settlement of the soldiers on our land in a sympathetic manner, and with a thorough knowledge of their requirements.

The Minister for Mines: And with profit to the men themselves.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): Not only that, but with profit to the State. It is far better to settle 100 men on the land properly than to put 300 men on the land to turn out failures, as some hon. members would have us do.

On motion by Hon. T. Walker, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10:31 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 4th September, 1918.

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

OBITUARY—LORD FORREST.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.31]: It is my sad duty to inform the House that the Government this morning received from the Acting Prime Minister of the Commonwealth an intimation of the death of Lord Forrest, which occurred yesterday. During the course of Lord Forrest's painful illness the heartfelt sympathies of the people of Western Australia have gone out to him, to Lady Forrest, and to his relatives; and the news of his death will be received in thousands of homes throughout this State with a feeling of personal loss. As an explorer, as an administrator under the Imperial Government, as Premier of this State, and as our foremost representative in the Commonwealth Parliament, Lord Forrest for over half a century played the leading part in the building up of Western Australia. The high honour recently bestowed upon him by His Majesty the King, an honour unique in the records of Australian statesmen, was accepted throughout the Commonwealth as a fitting tribute to his great services to the Empire. There is no way in which we can adequately recognise his services to the country which he so dearly loved, and for which his broad vision, his wise and far-sighted statesmanship, have done so much. But from one end to the other of this State we find enduring records of his high aims and great achievements, and years will not efface his memory from the hearts of a grateful people. There is an element of peculiar sadness about his death—so far away from his home and his friends, though he was attended to the last by the lifelong partner of his joys and sorrows. Yet we cannot but believe that his closing hours were brightened by the knowledge of a long life well spent in the service of his country. He was a fearless pioneer, a single-minded administrator, a statesman with few rivals in the whole wide realm of Britain's colonising enterprises; and, above all, he was a great, good, kind-hearted, high-souled, and honourable gentleman. Men like Lord Forrest are not produced frequently in a country, or in a century; and there are few of us who will live to look upon his like again.

Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common sense;
And as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.

O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew.

I desire to move—

That this House has heard with the deepest sorrow of the death of the Right Honourable Lord Forrest, and desires to place on record its high appreciation of the public services rendered by him to this State, the Commonwealth of Australia, and the Empire, extending over a period of more than half a century. That this House desires to share in the great sorrow of Lady Forrest in her bereavement, and to express its deepest sympathy to her and to the relatives of the late Peer in the irreparable loss they have sustained. And that the President be requested to forward these resolutions to Lady Forrest.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [4.35]: I rise to second the motion which has been so ably and eloquently proposed by the leader of the House. I feel that I may claim almost to have the right to second the motion, because I find that I joined the Parliament of Western Australia before any member sitting either in this House or in the other. I first met the late Lord Forrest in 1883, when he was Surveyor General of the colony of Western Australia. I am sure that I express the feelings of all around me when I say that we are consumed with deep grief at the news that has reached us to-day. Personally I feel that I have lost a friend and the country a statesman. My very first acquaintance with Lord Forrest was just after he left school. He left when I joined what was known as Bishop's Collegiate School. He then went surveying; and I, as a young man on the Murchison pioneering, often met him when he was surveying the various runs which I was trying to stock with sheep. Later on, as I have said, I met him in Parliament in 1883. I have been in such a position as enabled me to watch his successive successful rises from one point to another. From one achievement to another, I watched him climb the ladder of fame, until at last I saw him arrive at the topmost rung—from plain John Forrest to Lord Forrest of Bunbury. His career is one which speaks for itself, and one which would be a credit to any man. I also had experience of Sir John Forrest as a member of his Ministry. In my opinion, perhaps nothing can try the friendship of two men more than working together in a Cabinet or in a Government. Yet I do not think the late Lord Forrest and I ever had an angry word, though I am prepared to say that we had many differences, for he was a man of very determined and even stubborn disposition, while I was of a rather independent nature myself. However, as I have said, the late Lord Forrest and I never at any time had a single serious difference; and he was one of the most good tempered, kind, and well-disposed men that one could possibly wish to be thrown against. The great feature, as I think, of his character was his patriotism to the land of his birth. He gave up his whole life to thinking how he could best develop Western Australia, what were the best means he could use for making it successful, and what were the best laws he could institute for making the people well-to-do. To prove how single-minded he was in this, it is only necessary to recall that

never on any occasion did he use his high position for the purpose of amassing wealth or gaining money for himself. I have no hesitation in saying that had it not been for Lord Forrest's enterprising brothers, who insisted upon his taking shares in commercial undertakings, he would have died a comparatively poor man. That, I think, is greatly to his credit, because he was always a worker, and exceedingly industrious, and as I have said, single-minded in his desire for the advancement of the State of which he was a native. There is nothing further that I can add to the eloquent testimony so admirably submitted by the leader of the House. Therefore, I conclude by once more expressing my deep sorrow and lasting regret that Lord Forrest should have gone, and the hope that his last moments were soothed by surcease of pain. I know that his memory will long remain amongst this people for the good he did for Western Australia.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.40]: In supporting the motion I have but a few words to say. Perhaps among all those to whom Western Australia is their adopted though not their native land, I can claim to have enjoyed as long a friendship as any with the late Peer, if not a longer friendship. I shall never forget the first time that I saw Lord Forrest. It was when I was a boy about eight years old, and he had just completed one of his famous journeys across Australia. I looked upon him with the open-eyed wonder of a child, as upon one who had crossed some raging ocean in the fraillest of craft. And quite recently, some 800 miles from here, I travelled in comfort nearly half-way along one of the late Lord Forrest's travelling routes. Then, all unaware that the fate which has overtaken him was about to fall, I could not help reflecting that it was due to his enterprise, his courage, his dauntless determination, and his patriotism—of which the two previous speakers have made mention—that one was enabled to travel, as I travelled, in comfort over such far-away parts of this State. I feel that Australia has produced no other son like the late Peer. I doubt if ever again Australia will produce just such another son as the late Lord Forrest. It is a matter of regret to me, as it must be to all of us, that his last hours were spent away from the State he loved so well. But I doubt not that he faced death with the same grim courage and the same determination that took him across the arid wastes of this continent in the days when exhalation was very different in its difficulties from what it is now. I have to support the sentiments also which have been expressed regarding the fearful loss sustained by Lady Forrest. Those of us who know that lady, who know with what single-hearted devotion she loved her lord, who know with what a high degree of success she worked for him and know to what extent some of his success, at all events, was due to her efforts, will know what a loss she has sustained. The late Lord Forrest always struck me as singularly proficient in that most necessary of the arts of government—administration. He was a man with a fearless outlook on affairs; he was a man of quick decisions, and of stern determination;

and those of us who live in Western Australia can remember a quotation which he himself frequently made: "If a monument is required, look around you."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.44]: As one who has the proud privilege of calling this State "The State of my birth," may I be permitted to say how deeply we regret the death of Lord Forrest. It has been the pride and pleasure of Western Australians to refer to the late Lord Forrest as "One of us," and we sympathise with Lady Forrest to-day, and mourn for the loss of a great man. In order to estimate the true greatness of Lord Forrest, we must look back to 70 years ago, when Lord Forrest was born in the backblocks of this State. There were not then the educational facilities which exist here to-day; and yet Lord Forrest, practically unaided, carved his way from, I believe, axeman to surveyor, and thence to the Peerage which he held at the time of his death. The last speaker referred to the first occasion of his seeing Lord Forrest. May I be permitted to refer to the last time I saw Lord Forrest. He was standing on the platform in front of the Perth railway station, and the Governor General was formally opening the Great Western Railway. Lord Forrest stood there, a monument of ability and patriotism, and my mind ran right back to the beginning of things, to Genesis. We are there told that the Maker of the Universe viewed what he had done and was well pleased. The quotation is, I think, "God saw that it was good, and he was well pleased." I could not help thinking that Lord Forrest saw that it was good and he was well pleased. Lord Forrest has gone from us after having lived a life of which anyone might well be proud, and he has gone without leaving a single enemy on the face of God's earth. In conclusion may I be permitted to say that the Empire has lost one of its greatest men and that Western Australia has lost her best friend.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [4.47]: Words almost fail me to express what I feel in regard to our late friend. Personally I prefer to speak of him as Sir John, for he was Sir John to us, although he went away from here as Lord Forrest. I can claim to have enjoyed a close friendship with Sir John, such as was the privilege of but few men. We had been intimate all our lives. Sir John was not above being a friend to the poorest of women. On one occasion I remember he walked to South Bunbury to see some poor woman who had taken notice of him when he was a small child. It is a pity that we have not more young men rising up after the stamp of Sir John Forrest. He never was an orator, but he was a gentleman and no one can say that he ever did a mean action. He was one of Nature's gentlemen. When I saw him the last time, only a short while before he left, I felt that I was seeing the last of him. Not half an hour before I heard to-day of his death I remarked to a friend that I did not think he would ever reach the Old Country. Words fail me to express what I think is due to Sir John Forrest from this State. He was one who might have been referred to as a rough diamond, but nevertheless, he was one of Nature's gentlemen.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [5.48]: May I be permitted to add a word to what has been said in regard to Lord Forrest. The party with which I have been associated in the past, although differing politically from Lord Forrest, have always looked upon him as a builder of Empire, and I hope we shall always remember him as such. We always looked upon Lord Forrest as one who tried to do his best for the State, for the country in which he lived, and for the Empire. We have always associated him with big things, but in my mind he was always associated with small matters also. It has been to me marvellous that he should have had time to evince the interest he did in the smaller public affairs of the State. I remember him principally in connection with the King's Park Board. It was to me wonderful to think that Lord Forrest, whenever he came to this State, could make it his business to attend to such a small matter as that, having regard to the high position he occupied. I desire to add this tribute to his memory.

Question put and passed, members standing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.51]: I desire to move—

That as a further expression of the sorrow of members in the loss they have sustained by the death of Lord Forrest, the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 4th September, 1918.

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

OBITUARY—LORD FORREST.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.32]: It is with very great sorrow that I have to communicate to the House the information which I received from the Acting Prime Minister to-day that our old and esteemed friend, Lord Forrest, died yesterday at sea on his way to England. A great man has passed away. Although there may have been many who had differences of opinion with him, at the same time all recognised his honesty of purpose and his great work. He loved his country. This was reciprocated in the hearts of the people. His works will remain as a memorial during the present generation, and in many instances for all time. No member of this House had so close an association with Lord Forrest as it had been my privilege to enjoy. Four years his trusted colleague in the Government of Western Australia, it remains for me, the only surviving member of his last Cabinet, to ask this House to do honour to his memory. We all