

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Bill as it stands takes that into account.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Having regard to the whole position and our desire to safeguard the industrious man, we should retain the words proposed to be struck out.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the hon. member reads the amendment he will see that the amount chargeable is fixed in the early part of the amendment.

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir William Lathlain can now move his amendment on the amendment.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That all the words after "therefrom," in line 10 be struck out.

Amendment on the amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I should like to ask either Mr. Lovekin or Mr. Nicholson, whichever is in charge of this amendment, to consider the desirability of getting back to where we were and giving the board power to write off as much as, in their discretion, they think fit.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is in there now.

Amendment, as amended, put and passed; the clause, as further amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with further amendments.

BILL—RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE.

Assembly's Further Message.

Message received from the Assembly, notifying that it had agreed to the recommendations of the conference on the amendments insisted upon by the Council.

House adjourned at 9.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21st November, 1928.

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

QUESTION—DRIED FRUITS IMPORTATION.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has his attention been drawn to an article in the "West Australian" of the 20th November, relative to the importation of dried fruits from the Mediterranean? 2, Will he bring the matter under the notice of the Commonwealth Government in the interests alike of producers and consumers in this State?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, The suggestion will receive consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, ELECTRIFICATION.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, With the intense competition of motor road traffic, have the Government given further consideration to the electrification of suburban and outer suburban railways? 2, If so, will he state the intentions of the Government, and the proposed change-overs, if any? 3, If possible, will he indicate the capital expenditure that would be involved?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Considerably over £1,000,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You would not get much done for a million.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I said considerably over a million.

QUESTION—WHEAT EXPORT, TONNAGE RAILED.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: What was the weekly tonnage of wheat received at Fremantle by rail during the 1927-1928 season?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: From December to June, inclusive, the weekly average was 171,000 bags.

QUESTION—MINING, GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: Can he give the House any information as to when there will be a sufficient staff of geologists to commence the Peak Hill geological survey that has been promised for some years?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: I cannot give the information. I do not know when we shall have sufficient staff to make possible the starting of that survey.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Cannot you find out?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When the money is available.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Licensing Act Amendment.

2, Stamp Act Continuance.

Introduced by the Premier.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,000,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.38]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.40]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending 30th June, 1929, a sum not exceeding £1,000,000.

The total consists of £650,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £300,000 from the General Loan Fund and £50,000 from the Government Sales Property Fund. That Supply will cover one month, by which time it is expected that consideration of the Estimates will have been completed. The expenditure is on the lines already set out in the Estimates, all of which, with the exception of the Lands Estimates, have been passed. During next week the Estimates will be completed and this Supply will then carry us on till the end of the month.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.41]: I do not think there is any need to discuss this proposal. We have considered the Estimates and they are practically through. I suppose the Premier will be bringing down supplementary Estimates in connection with the London payments held in suspense. I think he said he would do so.

The Premier: I said I hoped it would be possible to bring down the supplementary Estimates before the end of the year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think the Premier can do it safely in view of the unfortunate vote throughout Australia on the referendum.

The Premier: It has to be ratified by Parliament.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose we can risk that.

The Premier: In the next Parliament there will be many new members.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope there will be enough to do something for us.

Mr. Corboy: Why "unfortunate" vote?

Hon. G. Taylor: It is unfortunate for Western Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we are to lose our freedom and the right to control our finances, we shall not be meeting here to pass the expenditure of millions of money in a short space of time. I am pleased there were nearly 50,000 patriots in this State who voted "No." I do not know how to describe the people who voted "Yes." Certainly I cannot call them patriots.

The Premier: Surely there are not that many unpatriotic people in the State.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, 81,000 of them. If the Premier has to wait until the Federal Parliament ratifies the agreement, we shall not get finality this session. Anyhow, the Loan Estimates will be brought down very soon.

The Premier: Next Tuesday.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That being so, there is no need to discuss this measure.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Committee of Ways and Means.

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier---Boulder) [4.44]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending 30th June, 1929, there be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the sum of £650,000, from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund £300,000, and from moneys to the credit of the Government Property Sales Fund £50,000.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill introduced, etc.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages without debate and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—EDUCATION.

Reports of Committee adopted.

BILL—ROAD CLOSURE (QUEEN STREET.)

Second Reading.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [4.54] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has been introduced at the request of the Fremantle Municipal Council, who, in order to straighten Queen-street, have found it necessary to resume a strip along one side of the street and to purchase a strip on the other side. A strip 4ft. 6in. wide was purchased from Dr. East, and the council propose to sell the strip on the other side of the street. It is found that this cannot be done without the authority of Parliament. The proposal now is to close that portion of Queen-street and sell the portion closed, the amount of the purchase money going towards the acquisition of the small strip bought from Dr. East. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.56]: The member for Fremantle (**Mr. Sleeman**) tells us that the object of the Bill is to straighten Queen-street. Apparently that street is not straight now, and therefore we ought to welcome the Bill. The hon. member says the measure has been introduced at the request of someone else. He does not say, "I introduce the Bill because it is right and ought to be passed." He comes here apologising for the measure.

Mr. Panton: Modesty is typical of Fremantle members.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of other members too. If the House can agree, it ought to agree, to the proposal, because to have a street aligned as Queen-street is at present is ridiculous. Unless the Bill is passed, the land in question may be built on, thus entailing expensive resumption later. I entirely approve of the proposal, and have no objection at all to the passing of the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. Millington—Leederville) [4.58]: I have no objection to the passage of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—WHEAT BAGS.*Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of nine amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 1.—Add at the end the following words:—"and shall come into operation on the first day of August, 1929."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Council desire to provide that the Bill, when passed, shall not come into operation until the 1st August, 1929. Obviously it could not be operative during this harvest. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 2, Subclause (1).—Delete the word "stock" in the line twelve.

No. 3. Clause 2, Subclause (1).—Delete the words "in the Department of Agriculture," in line thirteen, and insert "under the Brands Act, 1904."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The effect of the Council's amendments will be that one brand will be sufficient, and that the brand shall be registered under the Brands Act, 1904. I move—

That the amendments be agreed to.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Everyone will have to register his stock brand, so this is an improvement.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 2, Subclause (1).—Delete the words "Penalty: Twenty pounds."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When the Bill left this Chamber it was a simple one, but the Council have expanded it. I do not see any objection to the amendment. The penalty clause is to be deleted from Clause 2, but succeeding clauses suggested by the Council deal more stringently with offences and the penalty provision is embodied in another clause. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 5. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 3, as follows:—

3. Any person who—

- (a) not being the grower or, without the authority of the grower of wheat contained in any bags, stamps on the bags containing such wheat the name and address or brand of such grower; or
- (b) defaces, alters, or renders illegible the name or address or brand of such grower on bags containing wheat; or
- (c) causes, directs, or assists in or permits or suffers any such act, matter, or thing aforesaid,

shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

No. 6. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 4, as follows:—

4. No person, other than the grower whose name and address or brand may be stamped on bags, shall refill with wheat, for the purpose of selling or disposing of same, any bags previously used by such grower without first effectively and completely removing or obliterating the name and address or brand thereon of such grower, and any person failing to comply with the provisions of this section shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

On motions by the Minister for Agriculture, the foregoing amendments made by the Council were agreed to.

No. 7. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 5, as follows:—

5. A person guilty of an offence against this Act shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty pounds, or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding six months.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Council provide for a fine not exceeding £20 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. LATHAM: The maximum period of imprisonment is out of all proportion to

the maximum fine of £20. I move an amendment—

That the Council's amendment be modified by striking out "six" in line 5, and inserting "one" in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope no more time will be spent in discussing the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But I think six months' imprisonment is too much to provide for.

The Minister for Railways: That is merely the maximum term: an offender might be sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment.

Mr. Latham: But surely the Minister will agree that the term of imprisonment is out of all proportion to the fine.

The Premier: But the court will have discretion to fix whatever term of imprisonment is deemed necessary.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If an offence were committed against the Act, a fine would probably meet the case. In the event of a repetition of the offence, the court would have power to award imprisonment for any term up to, but not exceeding, six months.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No serious offence can be committed under this measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then why the necessity for it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is necessity for it. It would be a serious offence if someone substituted a brand belonging to an owner whose products stood high in the estimation of buyers, for his own or an inferior product.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That would be fraud, and the offender would be prosecuted under the Criminal Code.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope the penalty will be retained.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope it will not be retained. The Bill will not protect a careless buyer, and that is quite right. If a man is so foolish as to buy without making the tests that are so easy, then he deserves to lose. If a man should put sand and stone into his wheat, that would represent fraud, and he would be prosecuted under the Criminal Code.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is the good of the Bill?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No good whatever, except to cause a lot of irritation and annoyance. It is so much nonsense. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party, Mr. Latham, has moved to reduce the maximum term of imprisonment, but I think it would be better to cut it out altogether.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 8. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 6, as follows:—

6. Nothing in this Act contained shall confer or be deemed to confer on the purchaser of any wheat in bags stamped or branded as aforesaid any greater rights or remedies against the seller than a purchaser heretofore had or may have been entitled to, nor shall anything in this Act alter the onus of proof in any proceedings which may be taken by any one of such parties against the other.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I see nothing to object to in the amendment, and I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 9. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 7, as follows:—

7. This Act shall not apply to wheat sold by one grower to another for seed or feed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the Bill has any virtue, it is in the protection it will afford. Surely people purchasing seed wheat should be protected!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This is to free the department!

Mr. LATHAM: This is a trivial matter. Seed wheat is sent from one farm to another, or from one district to another, and it is merely a matter of one farmer dispatching wheat to another farmer.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1928-29.*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from 8th November; Mr. Luty in the Chair.

Department of Lands, Immigration and Industries (Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister).

Vote—Lands and Surveys, £72,539 :

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.17]: In the absence of the Minister, I do not propose to discuss this Vote at any great length. We discussed lands pretty thoroughly when we were dealing with the Vote for agriculture. Still there are a few things I wish to say. I have made a note of a boast by Mr. Willcock. I am not quite clear what it means. I think it must mean the area of first-class land sold. Naturally, that has fallen off pretty considerably during the last three years. But we are spending loan money in the administration of this and other departments; in this department to a very much greater extent than in any other department. No less a sum than £72,539 of revenue expenditure will be transferred to loan this year. In the past we did all our surveys from loan. But then, of course, we had the Land Improvement Loan Fund, and £15,000 per annum was paid into that fund from revenue. That credit from revenue went into a fund from which it had to be used for loan surveys and for some other public works. But it is not right to burden revenue with £72,000 for this year. When the money is returned, as it will be when the successful applicants for land pay their survey fees, it will go to the credit of revenue. So we are double-banking the thing, and the £72,000 will mean £144,000 transferred to revenue. There should be a debit to loan from stores. We have abolished the Act that provided for the repayment of loan moneys spent in this way, and now there is just an amount saved to revenue. This amount of £72,000 is a very big sum. In 1922-23 the sum of £4,500 was debited to revenue, and we surveyed a very much larger number of blocks than we are now doing. This year, to cover the same activities we are transferring £72,539 to revenue. I must protest against the use of loan money in this way. If we are going to use loan money to save revenue, then in a very few years we shall be in a desperate

situation. There is no doubt about that. The whole thing is wrong in principle, and it will have to be adjusted sooner or later. At present it serves to make our deficit very much less than it ought to be, and we are taking money that ought to go into public works of a permanent character and using it for surveys that will have to be paid for by the successful applicants for the land. I hope the Premier will tell us that this money, when it does come back, will be restored to the credit of the fund in order that it may be used, as loan money should be used, for some permanent work. There is an increase in the expenditure of the department this year as against last year, but not a very material one. Unfortunately, we are throwing open so few blocks of land just now. The fact that we said there were 3,000 farms to be sold brought a great many people from the Eastern States, and they are getting work here while waiting for those farms. They are experienced young farmers and they get work when they go out into the country, to the detriment of our own people. It ought to be made clear to the Eastern States that we shall not be throwing open any further wheat area blocks until next year. I understand the Land Board has been disbanded. I know that some people applying for land the other day were told that no considerable number of wheat blocks would be thrown open until after December. We ought to tell the people of the Eastern States that they had better wait until after the end of December. They seem to imagine that they can come here and go on to the blocks of land straight away. A young farmer the other day, when he found that he could not get wheat land, tried to get land in the South-West. Even there he found difficulty, and so he went into the country to get work while he waited. I am told the Land Board has been disbanded. Under the old system a number of officials and a few other people experienced in that sort of thing did the work and drew fees. However, the Minister saw fit to get rid of that system and substitute a permanent board. But apparently the permanent board had not enough to do, and so they were abolished.

The Premier: All the odds and ends of land in various localities have been disposed of, and there will not be any more until the new area is available.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. The people have been told there will not be any more wheat blocks available until after the end of the year. That ought to be made clear to the people of the Eastern States, who seem to think they can walk in here and get wheat blocks without delay. They are experienced farmers, and they can go into the country and get work that those of our own people who are out of work ought to be allowed to do. Every day in the other States it is advertised that we have 3,000 wheat farms to be made available, and the people over there think they are already available. Of course they will not be available until next year. But there is a great deal of second-class land we could use in the meantime. We should be frank with those people and tell them it is of no use their coming over here until we are ready to supply them with land. I am afraid we would not be permitted to discuss anything in the nature of agriculture under this Vote. We have discussed operations on the group settlements pretty fully already. I hope the surveying of the wheat land that is available will be pushed on as speedily as possible. I suppose water will be a difficulty. But there are a great many of our own young people wanting land, and I think it would be a good idea to make a list of people of this State, not necessarily born here, who wish to take up wheat blocks. Then I think, we ought to give them some preference.

The Minister for Agriculture: That definite policy of the department will be continued.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I mean our own people.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The young men of our own country should get whatever land is available now. Quite naturally the board makes the wisest choice from amongst the applicants. We are getting from the Eastern States, good, experienced men with money, and it would be very difficult for one of our own young men without money to hold his own against them. But we could make a list of our own young men, just as we did in respect of the returned soldiers.

Mr. Mann: About 40 per cent. of recent allotments to successful applicants went to Western Australians.

The Premier: More than that.

Mr. Mann: They were Western Australian born.

The Premier: Many of the applicants from the other States, especially South Australians, are experienced farmers and have money.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not referring to native-born Western Australians, when I say people in the State. Many suitable people have been here for years. They cannot all be born here, nor can they all be Premier of the State. I mean people of our own State, people who are here and who want land. They come into competition with some splendid young Eastern States farmer with money, and naturally the board makes the wisest choice. I do not see what else the board could do, unless we lay it down by regulation that preference must be given to our own people. It is our custom to give a chance to the man without money in our own State. When we wanted people to come here with money and experience they would not come, so we took our own people without money and put them on the land. They ought still to be given that opportunity. The opportunity will not exist much longer with our wheat lands. Very soon we shall have sold the last good safe wheat block we have.

The Premier: The last opportunity will soon pass unless people begin buying land from others.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I should like to see the last block sold to-morrow. That would mean that we should get to work more quickly in producing increased wealth. Sooner or later people will have to go to the South-West. Last Monday morning I saw for the first time a considerable consignment of butter put upon a truck from Busselton. This represented 234 cases of 56 lbs. each. It was cheering to see how delighted the local people were to be handling such a large consignment of that commodity. The porters were handling it with as much joy as if they themselves had made the butter.

The Premier: Was that from the Busselton factory?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. I understand it represented only half a week's churning.

The Minister for Agriculture: The company is contemplating an extension of their business.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. I hope the Government will help in the erec-

tion of factories where they ought to be, that is to say not more than 30 miles apart. If a chain of butter factories, all in co-operation, were established in the South-West, the cost of manufacture would be reduced, and the selling arrangements would be more effective. It would then be possible to appoint a first-class man to oversee them all. Better prices could also be given to the producers. If all the grass in the South-West to-day could be utilised we should be producing more butter than we require.

The Premier: When the wheat lands are all gone, land seekers will go to the South-West.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is nothing wrong with the South-West. The pastures have always responded. The future of that part of the State is assured. In the past we tried to grow grass without seed. Now we are supplying both seed and fertiliser to the ground, and the South-West is coming into its own. This is the most valuable unoccupied territory in the British Dominion. The growing period there is longer than it is anywhere, except possibly in California.

The Minister for Agriculture: The people have now discovered how to treat the South-West.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is only a matter of seed and fertiliser. No private person has made any mistake in sowing, and the right principles are gradually being followed everywhere. In Albany six years ago land, the trees on which had been merely chopped down, was sown with grasses with great successes. We should never have cleared the groups in the way we did over and above 25 acres. The balance of the holdings could have been cleared at a minimum of expense and fodders sown upon them. I have seen excellent fodders growing on land where the trees had merely been rung. I would like to know from the Minister what has been done with regard to the Group Settlement Board, whether all its members have gone and whether the monthly expenditure has ceased.

The Minister for Agriculture: The board will be temporarily constituted as occasion arises.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That was the old system.

The Premier: We shall be going back to the old system.

The Minister for Agriculture: The board were very efficient.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under the old system two or three boards, if desired, could be appointed.

The Minister for Agriculture: There were thousands of applicants, and they took a lot of handling.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Years ago we had as many as 90 applicants for a block, and they all had to go before the board. When the blocks were thrown open, ten or twenty at a time, the board were able to work more easily. It was a terrific job when 200 blocks were thrown open at once, and all the applicants had to be dealt with. The claims of the first applicant must have been forgotten by the time the last man had been dealt with.

The Minister for Agriculture: So many applicants journeyed to Perth, and when disappointed went back again.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The fact that they were disappointed showed that they were genuine applicants. I object to loan money being used when revenue ought to be expended. I hope the work will proceed until we get as many farms as are available on the outer fringe of the wheat belt surveyed and sold. I also hope it will be made clear to the people in the Eastern States that it is no use their coming here now, and that they had better wait until the blocks are ready for them. Officers of the department are doing good work. We cannot criticise that, but we can object to the policy which keeps on referring to 3,000 farms. We have not yet got those 3,000 farms. When we have them surveyed ready for occupation we can let people know that the farms are ready. Sir Joseph Carruthers used to talk of 1,000,000 farms for a million farmers, but no one actually got a farm. If I had spoken of 2,000,000 farms for two million people it would not have amounted to any more in the long run. It is all a question of getting the farming areas surveyed and allotted as they are made ready. I have no criticism to offer of the work of the officials of the department. They have done good work. We should never offer that which we have not ready for selection. We should do all we possibly can to prevent any person from being disappointed in his search for land.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.45]: I agree with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition when he suggests that people have been deceived through the circulation

of exaggerated reports concerning the area of land that is available for selection. I am particularly sorry that this has been so with regard to people in the Eastern States. The statements that have been made have caused a number of people to come here, as they possessed the idea that farms were awaiting their occupation. The other evening I referred to the 3,000 farms scheme, but was informed that I should defer my remarks until this particular vote had been reached. I wish to refer to the Avon electorate, that portion of it where the rainfall becomes so scanty and irregular. In my opinion, that lighter country is going to be a great standby for the farmers, particularly towards the end of my electorate, where it approaches Yilgarn. There are many reserves in that lighter country and many of them are devoid of timber. I have brought under the notice of different Ministers the advisability of cutting up those reserves and have drawn attention to the fact that permitting them to remain as reserves, they become breeding grounds for vermin. I have asked that the position be reviewed and I have been told that the various departments are against any alienation of these reserves. In some cases this is the correct attitude, and particularly in respect of the commonage around the township of Westonia. There are several at the Yerbillion Pumping Station, on which there is not a scrap of timber to be seen. Those could well be utilised as a productive agency as far as wheat growing is concerned. On some of the country that I have asked should be thrown open, the timber has been entirely cut out and a wild scheme of reforestation has been drawn up by someone in the department in the hope of being able to supply the pumping station with firewood in the days to come. I do not know much about reforestation and therefore cannot say how long it will take for the trees to grow to a sufficient size to permit of their being cut for firewood. I think, however, that the land could be very much more usefully employed if it were made available to those people who require land for cultivation. The area in question would be very quickly selected because of its close proximity to the main railway line. When speaking the other evening on the subject of the 3,000 farms scheme, I mentioned the fact, as the "Daily News" says to-night, that there were a lot of Dismal Jimmies about. The "Daily News"

is adopting an attitude quite the opposite of that followed by the "West Australian." That journal told us a few weeks back that we were too rash with regard to the 3,000 farms scheme, and it advocated the very thing the Leader of the Opposition was demurring about to-night, that men with capital should take up land because there were chances of failure if anyone settled there without capital. I combated the Dismal Jimmy attitude of the "West Australian." When we get to Southern Cross we naturally expect, going out so far east, that the rainfall will decrease. But it has to be remembered that a greater part of the 3,000 farms scheme will be carried out towards the Southern Ocean and consequently will be brought within the southern coastal influences. The rainfall improves in that direction and it is better there in fact than in parts of the established wheat country. I wish to make that clear because we are told from time to time that Southern Cross is settled and that Bullfinch is no good. The truth is that there is a fair sprinkling of good crops in the Southern Cross district and when one makes inquiries the invariable reply is that with good fallow and the correct kinds of wheat, the district will come into its own. I was surprised to hear that the Land Board had ceased operations. I presume that they have got to the end of their work though I have been informed that the board have not been doing particularly good work. The fact remains that the board have put up a good record with the number of applications that have come before them. I hope the Acting Minister for Lands will bear in mind that I shall not be satisfied until I can persuade him or the members of the bank or the Industries Assistance Board to review their attitude towards the country that lies north and north-east of Westonia. There is an area in that locality that is light in character, and it has been cut up into blocks up to 5,000 acres in size. Those who take up the areas cannot get any assistance from the bank, the trustees of which declare that farming there is not an economic proposition. The areas range from 2,000 up to 5,000 acres, and I consider it would be wise if the bank reviewed their attitude, or if the department cut up the blocks into smaller holdings. I urge this because I am certain that the lighter country is going to be the salvation of that part of the wheat belt. I have not much more to

say because I spoke at length on the agricultural vote the other evening, and my desire to-night was to draw attention to the reserves which are a resort for vermin and to the large areas to the north-east of Westonia which I consider should be reviewed by the department.

MR. KENNEDY (Greenough) [5.52]: I represent a very important agricultural electorate and its prosperity at the present time is due to the opening up and development of its wheat-growing lands. Just recently a tour was made through the Greenough electorate by many members of Parliament, bankers and commercial men. I understand it was their first visit to that part of the State, and all were amazed at the rapid development and the quality of the crops they saw, as well as the class of land that is being cultivated. A visit such as that, is of great value from the point of view of the settlement of land. At the present time a party of surveyors are engaged north of the No. 3 rabbit-proof fence, classifying and surveying a large area of country. The value of this land, as members may be aware, has until comparatively recently been an unknown quantity. Nobody had ever been there, with the exception perhaps of a few sandalwood getters. Indeed, from the early days until recent years Balla and Dartmoor, which would be approximately 30 miles from the Ajana and Yuna railways, were never considered in the light of wheat-growing areas, but since cultivation has taken place there the land has averaged six to seven bags to the acre. The settlers worked under a disadvantage by reason of their having no water supplies. As it was impossible in the Dartmoor area to put down tanks and so assist the settlers, the Agricultural Water Supply Department tested the country by means of bores. Success followed, and prosperity must result for the settlers in those parts. But one disadvantage still remains and it is the fact that they are 30 miles from a railway and transport facilities must be provided. Now even further out than Balla and Dartmoor surveyors are engaged in classifying a large area of what is considered to be good wheat-growing country. The surveyors have been at work for the past eight or nine months and it is not expected that they will complete their labours for another four or five months. I hope that when the report of that survey party is made

available, no time will be lost in subdividing and opening up that country and a railway provided, so that the economical working of a large tract of valuable land will be possible. This might be brought about when the reports come in by requesting the Railway Advisory Board to inspect the country with a view to the building of a line at the earliest possible date. Parliament will be in recess for five or six months, and by the time it meets again the report of the advisory board should be available. For many years there has been no railway extension beyond Yuna and it is known that there is a big tract of good wheat-bearing land further out. It is impossible, however, to work it successfully unless railway communication is provided. Many years ago several reports were presented about the nature of the country between Yuna and Mullewa, but since then a good deal more information has been obtained as the result of the establishment of experimental farms, and it has been found that it is now possible to farm successfully what was thought, 14 or 15 years ago, to be sandplain or light land. The rainfall in that area is adequate, and is considered to be better than in any other part of the State from a wheat-growing point of view. There are many settlers 15 or 20 miles beyond Yuna, and all are experiencing great hardships by reason of the absence of transport facilities. I am not suggesting that the Government should waste public money, but in this case we know that that large area of land is suitable for wheat growing and should be surveyed, classified, and cut up into suitable blocks for settlement purposes. There is no doubt about the quality of the land north of Mullewa, down through Tenindewa and across to Yuna. A railway would involve the Government in no loss, but would be a sound proposition in that it would enable the Government to provide suitable farm land for the many inquirers seeking land in that part of the State. Numerous inquiries, amounting probably to hundreds, have been received in Geraldton for wheat-growing land and doubtless applicants are becoming a little bitter over the delay of the Government in classifying the land and opening it up for settlement. A large amount of money is being spent in the construction of a new harbour at Geraldton, but a harbour is of no use unless we provide facilities to convey the produce

to the port. Within an area extending over 60 or 70 miles are thousands of acres of land suitable for wheat-growing lying idle, and it is time the Government were up and doing. No long ago Parliament authorised the extension of the Ejanding-northwards railway. That line should be further extended to link up with the system either at Mullewa or at Pindar on the Mullewa-Cue line. It would traverse millions of acres of the same class of country and the success of the railway would be assured. It may be desirable to establish experimental farms in some parts of the State. One such farm has recently been established at Dampawah, east of Perenjori, to test out that country, but I claim it is not necessary. The country is suitable; the rainfall is satisfactory; it is the same class of country and the rainfall is similar to that of the country traversed by the Ejanding-northwards railway extension. Thousands of people are crying out for land, and it is necessary that such areas should be opened up at a very early stage. I have watched the development along the Wongan Hills line during the last five or six years and the rapidity of the progress has been wonderful. Recently the Government purchased three estates near Mullewa that had been lying idle for many years—Mendels, Wongoondy and Kockatea. Ten or eleven years ago many people decried the quality of the country comprised in those estates. They contended that Mullewa was too far distant for successful wheat growing and that the quality of the soil was unsatisfactory, except for grazing purposes. Mendels was the first estate purchased two or three years ago. The settlers quickly set to work to cultivate that land, and this season they are reaping not less than eight to ten bags of wheat per acre. The Kockatea and Wongoondy estates adjoin Mendels, the class of country is almost the same and the rainfall is similar. Nothing but prosperity can result to the selectors who are fortunate enough to obtain blocks on those estates. There is another matter on which I should like to touch while discussing this vote. Attached to the Lands Department are a large number of Agricultural Bank inspectors who are stationed at various points in the agricultural districts. They carry on a very important work. They have big areas to traverse and they are charged with the responsibility of making recommendations to the Government on the amount of work

carried out by clients of the bank. They also make valuations of holdings, and in many ways they have to safeguard large amounts of capital belonging to the State. After having studied their work closely, I claim that Agricultural Bank inspectors are inadequately paid for the important work they do, and if their services are to be retained, they should receive more adequate remuneration. Recently there has been elected to this Chamber one of those officials who, I am sure, is well acquainted with all the ramifications of a bank inspector's duties, and I trust his voice will be raised on behalf of those inspectors and the poor salaries they receive. I hope the report of the survey party on the land north of the rabbit-proof fence will soon be made available to the Government. In that district are hundreds of thousands of acres of first-class land. Recently I accompanied a member of the Migration and Development Commission, Mr. Gunn, and other parties through the area lying between No. 3 rabbit-proof fence and the Murchison River at the Yulalong homestead, and down to the once important lead-mining district of Galena. I should say that that area roughly 100 miles by 80 miles contains hundreds of thousands of acres of first-class land suitable for wheat growing, and that it should be opened up at a very early date. Railway communication is necessary. When the report of the survey party is available, I hope the Railway Advisory Board will be asked to report on the construction of a line, because there is no doubt that the land is suitable and the only way it can be brought under successful settlement is by serving it with a railway.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [6.8]: It is very encouraging indeed for a new member to be greeted with a hearty handshake such as I have just received. I was not aware that it was part of the usage of the House, and I certainly feel cheered by it. My contribution to the debate will be very brief. I am told that brevity becomes a member situated as I find myself. I am told, too, that I may deal with any aspect of land settlement upon which I care to touch. There is one matter, and one only, to which I wish to refer. According to information passed to me to-day, it seems that recent happenings at Lake Varley and Lake Biddy, which I understand constitute one

section of the 3,000 farms scheme, are extremely unsatisfactory in that a large number of selectors have been walking off their holdings, and quite a number more contemplate walking off as soon as they are sufficiently financial to do so. It has been put to me that when the Agricultural Bank inspector for the district visited those farms recently, his idea of first-class land did not tally or anything like tally with that of the surveyors. He found, too, that there was a good deal of extremely salty land, and it was surprising to him that the surveyors had passed it. In addition, the amount of first-class land is such that the Agricultural Bank will certainly not advance against it. The inspector in question is personally known to me, and I am sure that he knows what he is talking about and that the selectors who have walked off their holdings were well advised to do so. There is no doubt that isolation, the uncertainty of water supplies and the uncertainty of railway facilities constitute the drawbacks customarily met with in newly-settled areas, but no man can successfully fight against the handicap of bad land and very few can battle through on land against which the Agricultural Bank is unlikely to make advances. The position suggests the question whether some surveyors possess the knowledge effectively to carry out land reclassification work. From the standpoint of the Government there is a resultant heavy loss of time, money and public confidence. The obvious remedy to be adopted in future is certainly concerted action in the early stages of land settlement between the Agricultural Bank and the Lands Department. For some strange reason—I do not quite know why—there has always been a stupid independence of action and outlook by the two departments named. It has been a surprise to me that such independence should be tolerated by responsible Ministers for so long. Anyhow, the time has arrived when the Minister for Lands should give special attention to the matter. I am wondering whether the peculiar circumstances of the case I have quoted do not call for some specially lenient treatment of the settlers concerned. What action will be taken by the Government, I do not know. Possibly the settlers who have had to leave their holdings will be more tolerantly treated when the next batch of blocks is thrown open for selection. I feel grateful to the member for Greenough (Mr. Ken-

nedy) for his very cordial reference to the Agricultural Bank inspectors. His sentiments on the matter have my unstinted blessing. I do not think I need attempt to add in any way to what he has said. He made out a good case and, if I attempted to amplify it, it may appear as if I were asking for something for my own family. I am pleased at the cordial reception accorded me, and the attentive hearing I have received.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [6.14]: I desire briefly to speak about the orchard country in the hills. There is a difficulty regarding that land because much of the land available is in blocks far too large for the purpose—unnecessarily large for a man to cultivate and to make a living from. There is some very fine land out from Pickering Brook and Carilla, and adjacent to Barton's Mill. I should like the Government to consider the question of cutting up portion of that land into areas that would be more convenient and therefore more practicable from the standpoint of working.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again at a later stage of the sitting.

BILL—RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE.

Council's Further Message.

Message received from the Council notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference, and had appointed Hon. J. J. Holmes, Hon. E. H. Harris, and Hon. W. H. Kitson as managers, the President's room as the place, and 7.30 p.m. as the time.

Sitting suspended from 7.34 to 8.10 p.m.

Conference Managers' Report.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have to report that the managers met the managers for the Legislative Council, and that an agreement has been arrived at. As regards Clause 2, the conference recommends that after the word "construction" in line 11, the words "or maintenance" be inserted, and that the words "provided that the material in the railway mentioned in the second paragraph of the Schedule may if necessary be otherwise disposed of" be added. That gives us the right to dispose

of the material in the White Hope line, if found necessary.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You can do as you like by a roundabout way.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. The Council still insists that the material in the Kanowna line must be used for construction or maintenance of railways.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Under the Loan Estimates the Government can buy a couple of hundred miles of rails and do as they like with them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is right. A further recommendation is the insertion of a subclause as follows:—

The cost of the railway in the second paragraph of the Schedule as charged to the Government railways capital account may be omitted from the accounts prepared under Part 4 of the Government Railways Act, 1904.

That means that the Council does not insist upon the cost of the White Hope line remaining part of the railways capital account. I have already informed the House that this line was purchased from the Goldfields Firewood Company for the purpose of keeping open the White Hope mine. The purchase should never have been debited to the railways capital account, in my opinion, because it was purely a purchase for the purpose of keeping a mine open. Unfortunately the mine did not turn out successful. Had the Bill remained as it came from the Legislative Council, the Railway Department would for all time have been saddled with an interest payment of about £1,000 annually in respect of the line. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Water Boards Act Amendment.
With amendments.
- 2, Land Tax and Income Tax.
Without amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1928-29.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Mr. SAMPSON: Prior to the tea adjournment I was dealing with the land available in districts suitable for fruit and vegetable

production, and I referred particularly to Pickering Brook and Carilla. Adjacent to those areas is Piesse's Brook soldier settlement. In that area may be seen the finest exposition of soldier settlement to be found in any part of the State. Citrus fruits grown there are remarkably fine. In the same locality south from Pickering Brook and in the Illawarra and Karragullen districts, there are some of the finest apple orchards in the State. Difficulty has been experienced in connection with citrus production owing to the presence of blue mould that makes its appearance in fruit shipped abroad. There are remedies for this, and these include Brodex and bi-carbonate of soda. In my opinion it would be better if land were made available in smaller blocks so that the production of apples and oranges, our most popular fruits for export purposes, might be encouraged. We are in a particularly favourable position in this State because, contrary to the experience in many parts of Canada and throughout California, irrigation is unnecessary here. Great assistance would be rendered to the growers if financial assistance were available to them through the Agricultural Bank. Unfortunately, dairymen, orchardists and others are not able to secure assistance in that direction. I hope the Minister in charge of the Estimates will give serious consideration to the requirements of the growers in that respect. Undoubtedly the assistance that the Agricultural Bank could render would be much appreciated and would materially help to secure greater production.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.19]: We all regret that the Minister for Lands, who is in charge of the Estimates, is unable to be present with us to deal with the vote now before us. We exceedingly regret that the strain he has been under in connection with the administration of group settlement matters has undermined his health. We shall be pleased to see the Minister back in his place, again occupying the position that he has filled with credit to himself since he took over the Lands portfolio. I have read the report of the Surveyor General, and I found it exceedingly interesting. It is gratifying to Country Party members to know that some time ago we forecasted the policy, effect to which is now being given by the Government. May I briefly allude to some of the points that we put before the people

at the last election? We urged the adoption of a comprehensive scheme of railway construction, approved of by the Railway Advisory Board in consultation with the representatives of the Lands Department and the Agricultural Department; that a surveyor experienced in water supplies should be attached to that body and that provision for dams and water supplies should represent part of the surveys to be undertaken in new areas; that it was essential, particularly in areas where water conservation was necessary, that experts should determine the sites available for dams and other types of water supplies and that particulars regarding those matters should be included on the departmental lithos. I am pleased to be able to say that the policy we put before the people at the last election is now in force. In the Surveyor General's report we find the following paragraph:—

In August last the Government appointed a committee, consisting of the Engineer for Water Supply, the Deputy Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, the Director of Agriculture, and myself as chairman, to report upon areas for settlement, and to advise as to water supplies, roads and railways in connection therewith, with costs involved under each heading. The committee, after going carefully into the matter, recommended the development of the area between Southern Cross and the Salmon Gums railway and the country east of Mollerin Lake, and as a result the Development and Migration Commission have taken the matter up. Under your instructions I have accompanied members of the Commission on visits of inspection to this country, and have supplied them with all the information in the hands of the department.

It is certainly gratifying to us to find that our advocacy in that respect has been put into practice. Dealing with the railway policy in its application to land settlement, I would like to point out that settlement is spreading east of Pingrup and out towards Lake Magenta. The settlers there consider that surveys should be made as a preliminary to the construction of a railway to their area. Those settlers are anxious to hear the result of the committee's report regarding the possibility of railway construction there in the near future. The settlers had hoped that the Migration and Development Commission would have been asked to report on the question of linking up their area with the port of Albany. The member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) and I, together with members of the Legislative Council from our province, had interviews with peo-

ple interested and we despatched a letter to the Government asking them to consider a request that the Migration and Development Commission should be asked to report on this area southwards and upon the possibility of utilising a harbour, that a large number of settlers regard as the nearest to them. Unfortunately we received a reply from the Premier's Office stating that the matter would be given consideration when the area was to be examined. To my mind that answer was not altogether satisfactory and it seemed to me to be slightly evasive. It has been contended by the Engineer-in-Chief, I think, that it might be advantageous to consider the construction of a few additional miles of railway to a natural port that could be developed with a minimum of expenditure, instead of spending a huge sum of money in opening up some other port. In mentioning that point I do not intend to speak in a derogatory fashion to the injury of any other port. Throughout the Great Southern we feel we have not received the consideration in connection with the huge land settlement scheme, of which we hear so much, that many of us think our district warrants. We know the Migration and Development Commission have performed useful services throughout the Commonwealth in investigating schemes that have been advanced in various States with the object of taking advantage of the cheap money available under the migration scheme, money that can be obtained for a period of 10 years at an average cost of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I am sorry that the Commission were not in existence when Western Australia inaugurated the group settlement scheme. Had the Commission been in existence then, a considerable sum of money might have been saved to the State and to the settlers. When the Group Settlement Bill was discussed in the Legislative Council, the Chief Secretary stated that, as a result of blocks having to be abandoned, there was an estimated loss of £292,000. I hope the Minister for Lands will be able to give an assurance that the abandoned blocks will be thrown open and an opportunity given to others to take them up. Those of us who know anything about the land realise that it must either go ahead or go back. If land is abandoned, the suckers come up in abundance. Land was cleared by the Leader of the Opposition, when he was Minister for Lands, with

a view to finding employment for men who were out of work. Between the time the land was cleared and the period when it was taken up by settlers, so I am informed, the clearing costs amounted to about £40 an acre, because the karri seedlings had grown up. Therefore, since we have £892,000 of the State's money in properties abandoned by the group settlement authorities, it is desirable that we should throw open those lands and give somebody else an opportunity to take them up, so that we may minimise the loss that is bound to accrue from the unfortunate position in which we are placed. On the Estimates, under the heading Group Settlement Board, I find that £14,670 is being charged up to loan capital, while only £5 is being charged up to revenue. I hope the Minister has the information available, for I think we should know whether this amount of money being booked up to overhead charges is being charged to the settlers, and whether the settlers are expected to pay that money in addition to the cost of their holdings. If that is so, the sooner the board are able to complete their work and have the settlers established on their blocks, and the sooner the valuation takes place, the better it will be for the State and for the settlers themselves. I hope the Minister will be able to supply us with some information regarding that. I hope also that the Minister will give us an assurance that if it be at all possible—and I see no reason why it should not be possible—the Migration and Development Commission, in conjunction with the existing committee consisting of the Engineer for Water Supply, the Deputy Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, the Director of Agriculture and the Surveyor General, should be given an opportunity to go over the Great Southern lands. We heard from the member for Greenough (Mr. Kennedy) to-day that he had the pleasure of accompanying Mr. Gunn, the chairman of the Migration and Development Commission, through part of his district. I think we are entitled to have the same opportunity in the southern part of the State. We have down there a port that, during the recent waterside trouble, the shipowners were very pleased to use. It answered the purpose very well, and the steamers were able to discharge their cargoes there. If we cast back our minds to the days when Fremantle harbour was first suggested, we

shall recall that we were told it would not in any way interfere with the development of the port of Albany, and that therefore that end of the State had nothing to fear. In respect of the big land settlement scheme, quite a number of us feel that unless we raise our voices and draw the attention of the Government to the position, we may again suffer the fate that we suffered in the past at that end of the State. Some members may ask what the port of Albany has to do with the member for Katanning. But I draw attention to the fact that Albany is the port for my district. It is essential that that port should be developed. By the whole of the land settlement being carried out in a direction which is drawing away from that port part of its natural trade, an injury is being done to us in the district of Katanning; because we shall not get opportunity to secure reasonable railway or shipping freights.

Mr. Corboy: Where is that trade you mention being taken to? Do you suggest it is being taken away from Albany?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has been referring to the port of Albany pretty frequently. I should like him to be brief on that question.

Mr. THOMSON: I am only giving reasons why I want the Surveyor-General and the members of the Migration and Development Commission to have opportunity to go over the land in the southern portion of the State, instead of having the whole of their attention drawn to other areas. For instance, we find from this report that the most important survey work outside the ordinary selection surveys were the subdivisinal surveys in connection with the 3,000 farms scheme, approved by the Government early in the year, and that a beginning was made in the Lake King and East Kalgardin districts. I congratulate the department on having performed the work they have done in very trying conditions out in those areas. Also I want to emphasise the fact that I am not opposing the opening up and developing of that area. At the last election I said from every platform from which I spoke that it was our policy to open up and develop that area, and even go further than is suggested at present and push out railways ahead of settlement. So I am now only drawing attention to a disability from which the southern portion of the State is suffering.

Mr. Corboy: You do not suggest that Albany is the natural port for that country.

Mr. THOMSON: For quite a considerable part of it, and for a lot in the hon. member's district as well.

Mr. Corboy: No, none in my district. Esperance is the port for that country.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member should remember that there is a small place called Magenta. There are 25 or 30 settlers there.

Mr. Corboy: Not all in my district.

Mr. THOMSON: I know a little more about that than does the hon. member.

Mr. Corboy: You are including Pingrup.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not. There are more than 25 or 30 settlers there. The point is this: The Engineer-in-Chief in his report did say that it might be well worth considering—in his opinion it was well worth considering—whether it might not be more profitable to lay an extra mile or two of railway to be able to utilise and develop a natural port. In speaking as I am doing, I am not desirous of detracting from any other port. However, I hope the country at that end of the State will have that examination which the people down there consider it is entitled to. That is all we are asking for. So far the Migration and Development Commission have been able to travel right through the group settlements, go out to Mollerin and out through the Greenough electorate. We have no objection to that, but we say that we should have the same opportunity to show to the members of the Migration and Development Commission, and the Federal Government, and the people generally that our part of the State is equally well worth developing. Now I want briefly to touch upon the Agricultural Bank. We have heard a good deal about the wonderful pasture growth that is taking place in the South-West. I do not for a moment wish to place any discredit on those who have said that they are getting a wonderful growth of pasture down there. But about 12 months ago the trustees of the Agricultural Bank visited my district and decided that for the development of certain areas out west they would alter their policy and make an advance to enable pastures to be laid down and top-dressed. The settlers in those areas have clearly demonstrated that the land which a few years ago was not regarded as worth more than 1s. an acre, on account of the poison, is capable of growing splendid pastures. In the latest

issue of a weekly paper I saw that in a certain area 15 miles south-west of Kojonup 1,600 acres of land was available at 6s. and something per acre, reducible to 1s. per acre when the poison should be eradicated. There is the value the Government even to-day place on the land in that area. Yet it has been demonstrated, as it has been also in the South-West, that by the planting of subterranean clover and the application of superphosphate the people there can produce excellent pastures. Unfortunately the Agricultural Bank, while admitting that it was desirable to assist those people to lay down pastures, agreed only to give an advance for the first year. I told the trustees that in my opinion they were being penny wise and pound foolish. I say it will pay the Government, if they have in those areas settlers who are not in a position to purchase their superphosphate, to give them an advance so that they may top-dress their pastures. Because it is only by that means they will be able to increase the carrying capacity of their land and be in a position to pay their interest and, in due course, repay the capital borrowed from the Agricultural Bank. The Agricultural Bank advance should be for at least two years. It is in the interests of the settlers in those districts, because a large number of them are not blessed with too much of this world's goods. If the Government would make that money available for top-dressing, I am sure it would very greatly increase the value of their securities. I have nothing further to say except to repeat I am sorry indeed the Minister for Lands is not with us, and that I trust it will not be long before he is back in his place in the House.

MR. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [8.43]: I want to say one or two things about the development being carried out in the south-eastern portion of the State. I am sure we all regret very much the fact that the Minister for Lands is not here to deal with his Estimates. In mentioning the development that has been carried out, and what is being done for the 3,000 farms scheme, I realise that all sorts of things will crop up which subsequently we shall be able to say ought to have been avoided. It is easy to be wise after the event. Nevertheless, there are some things that experience should have taught us to avoid, but which may possibly creep in again on this oc-

casion. One of the first things the Government should do is to make an announcement as to their railway policy for the opening up of this country. I know they are endeavouring to push on test surveys.

Mr. Thomson: It is a permanent survey from Salmon Gums.

Mr. CORBOY: We are left in doubt as to the ultimate result and as to where the lines will run. A pronouncement is desirable not only for new settlers but for the old settlers who have been left without railway facilities. The Leader of the Country Party has referred to the Pingrup settlers. Farmers are in an even worse plight at Kalgarin, where they are suffering more from lack of transport facilities than any other settlers in the State. Some two years ago in all good faith the Treasurer authorised me to tell the people at Kalgarin that a Bill would be put through in a fortnight, and the line would be constructed in about three months. Although about two years have elapsed, the line has not yet been authorised.

Mr. Thomson: That was before an election.

Mr. CORBOY: That is not a fair interjection, though it is typical of the hon. member.

Mr. Thomson: It was not a statement made after an election.

Mr. CORBOY: It was not made for electioneering purposes. The Bill was due to be brought down, but Mr. Stileman's report prevented its presentation. The insinuation of the hon. member is typical of him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORBOY: These people have carried on under grave disabilities for several years.

Mr. Latham: In some cases for eight years.

Mr. CORBOY: I think this year will give them their fifth harvest. For the first two years they carried out only developmental work. During the last two or three years they have grown big crops, but have had to cart the wheat 52 miles.

Mr. Thomson: That is impossible.

Mr. CORBOY: They have only continued to seed large areas in the belief that they would soon have a railway. It is time the Government came to a decision on the matter. Railway facilities for Kalgarin are wrapped up in the whole question of developmental railways for the south-eastern

portion of the State. We should know what that scheme is. It is desirable also for the Pingrup settlers that they should know what is going to be done.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Pingrup and Salt River are in the same position.

Mr. CORBOY: Experts should say where the railways should run. What I want to see is that the experts are given an opportunity to report, and if they have reported that we should know their views as quickly as possible. I congratulate the Government on their road policy in the area to be occupied by the 3,000 farms scheme. We hear a great deal about railways preceding settlement. I am sure that any member would, as Treasurer, take the view that railways prior to settlement were an impossibility.

Mr. Thomson: I would not take that view.

Mr. CORBOY: The Government are deserving of commendation for doing the next best thing, namely, providing fine roads for every settler to enable him to reach his block in this new country. I have traversed a considerable portion of the district in the last month and have seen many well-grubbed and well-cleared roads wherever I went.

Mr. Thomson: You are lucky in your district.

Mr. CORBOY: Most of that big scheme will be carried out in my district. The Government have cleared roads 16 feet wide and the settlers are thus able to reach their blocks. Much, of course, remains to be done. I regret I cannot commend the Water Supply Department for the water facilities they are providing. I feel strongly about that.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must deal with the question of land settlement. The water supply question should have been dealt with on that particular vote.

Mr. CORBOY: All these questions are involved in the migration agreement. For some 12 months bores have been put down by the Water Supply Department in places where it was quite obvious they would not get water.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: They have got it.

Mr. CORBOY: It has gone salt within three days of striking it, as always will be the case in salmon gum country. Now the winter has passed, the department realise that dams must be constructed. The opportunity to provide water this summer has gone, and the settlers will experience a difficult time.

I hope in the Forrestania area the same difficulty will not arise, and that the department will benefit by past experience in handling the Lake King and other centres round about. There is a lack of co-ordination in the work done by the Lands Department and the Agricultural Bank. In the case of one area that was made available for selection under the 3,000 farms scheme, and under which blocks were taken up in the belief that they were good blocks on the classification of the Lands Department, directly the settlers were visited by a bank inspector, in response to their application for a loan, the blocks were turned down. In that particular district the settlers have walked off en masse.

Mr. Stubbs: Why?

Mr. CORBOY: The classification of the bank officials was worse than that of the Lands Department. The latter showed the blocks to be good, but they were condemned by the bank as being poor, second-class blocks.

Mr. Teesdale: Were they sold subject to a bank loan?

Mr. CORBOY: No. When a settler takes up a block he applies for a loan and the bank classifies it.

Mr. Stubbs: The land is marked on the plan before selection, showing that loans will be advanced.

Mr. CORBOY: The Lands Department classify for selling purposes and the bank classify for advance purposes.

Hon. G. Taylor: Which is the better judge?

Mr. CORBOY: I am not prepared to say, but I find that the bank officials are pretty reliable.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are doing business from another standpoint.

Mr. CORBOY: These settlers have been turned down and have left the district. The member for Wagin knows the area I am speaking of. Great hardships have been inflicted on those people. One settler was a married man with five children. He had spent his savings in equipping himself, but after three weeks the inspector came along and refused to advance 1s. on the block.

Mr. Latham: The Government would compensate such people.

Mr. CORBOY: The hon. member knows how much chance they have of getting compensation. The position is an acute one in the district. Some effort should be made to get a classification of the land that will

satisfy both the Lands Department and the bank prior to its being taken up. There is grave lack of co-ordination and a sharp difference of opinion between the two departments as to what constitutes good and bad land. That position should be rectified. The same standard should be set up, so that the land is classified by each department on precisely the same basis.

Mr. Stubbs: Evidently some of the surveyors do not know good land when they see it.

Mr. CORBOY: Either that or the work was slurred. It is impossible to say what occurred. Generally speaking the work is well done. In most of the districts I have been to lately, the surveys of the Lands Department coincide exactly with the classifications of the Agricultural Bank. In most districts the surveyors have done fine work in their original classifications.

Mr. Latham: The trouble may be due to the importation of New Zealand surveyors who do not understand our land.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not know who made these particular surveys.

Mr. Stubbs: His name should be known.

Mr. CORBOY: Other things are causing dissatisfaction. One is that the bank is apparently short of officers competent to take the field as bank inspectors. Because of the development in new country, some difficulty has arisen in other districts which have been settled for some time. The bank inspector from Newdegate has been taken away to supervise the opening up of Forrestania. Not a single credit authority has been issued in the Newdegate territory for six months, because no bank inspector has visited the district in that time. The storekeepers are beginning to get restless. They are carrying on the settlers but are getting no money.

Mr. Stubbs: That is a serious state of affairs.

Mr. CORBOY: Both the storekeepers and the settlers are in difficulties. The officer at Newdegate was an excellent man and was sent away to take charge of the work of Forrestania, and no one has yet replaced him at Newdegate. I hope efforts will be made by the Government to provide the bank with necessary funds to enable them to help those settlers over their difficulties instead of compelling them to wait for six months before they can get any assistance. There were several other matters that I in-

tended to touch upon, but I will briefly mention one only. I sincerely hope that the trouble that occurred at Newdegate will not recur in connection with the new settlement. I understand it is intended to have a certain amount of clearing done on blocks before the settlers are put on them. The difficulty arises that when men are employed to do the chopping and not having to do the burning afterwards, the job is never satisfactorily carried out. We had a bitter experience at Newdegate where on some land that was chopped seven years ago the stumps are still remaining. The settlers on those areas had to go on to new country and get that into production, and in some cases they are only now clearing the areas of stumps that were permitted to remain. Those settlers have had to pay interest on the cost of the chopping right from the very start, some six or seven years ago. In some cases there was a writing off, but in those instances the land was of no use to the men who took it up. I hope a similar experiment will not be tried by the present administration in connection with the development of that country south-east and south of Southern Cross. The settler has to carry the baby and pay for whatever work is done on the block and consequently he should be the one to personally supervise the work that is being carried out for him.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [9.4]: I have spoken so often on the subject of land settlement that I am afraid my remarks will be regarded as somewhat stale. Still, the few words that I propose to say will stand repeating. We should congratulate ourselves on having such an enormous territory capable of producing wheat. I believe that wheat is now being grown on the Murchison, some 60 miles north of Northampton, and I have been told that the yields have been even as much as six bags to the acre. If that is the case, we can boast about having an enormous area of wheat-growing land extending over a distance of 700 miles from the Murchison in the north to Esperance in the south. We can form an idea of the great area we are likely to have under cultivation in the years to come. The greater part of the 3,000 farms scheme will extend from Katanning to Esperance, and looking at the position of Forrestania on the map, we find that settlement there will extend from Southern Cross in the direction

of the Esperance railway line and also to Ravensthorpe. At the last-named place wheat has been grown for some 15 or 20 years without the aid of superphosphate. I have been told that in that district as much as two and three tons of hay has been cut to the acre without the ground having been fertilised. If that is the case, all we require is railway facilities to open up that territory, and I have not the slightest doubt that the wheat output from that part of the State alone will be enormous. With reference to the settlement at Kalgarin, I have during my five years in this House advocated strenuously the construction of a railway to that district, but I regret to say that nothing has yet been done. The settlers there are still between 45 and 50 miles from a railway, but they are living in hopes that a line will be built. We are well aware that great changes have taken place in recent years, and that our surveyors have discovered an enormous territory of land capable of growing wheat in the Forrestania locality extending to the coast, and that consequently it might have been a wise move to hold back from construction some of the promised railways. The Government are in a position to know where the greater settlement is taking place, but at the same time the locality such as the one to which I have referred must not be forgotten. I have every faith in the Government, and I believe that before long they will introduce a Bill to give the people in the Kalgarin area the facilities they so urgently require. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) can hear out what I say in respect of the hardships that are being experienced by the people there, solely through the absence of railway facilities.

Mr. Corboy: The Treasurer would get a very warm welcome if he went there.

MR. BROWN: I wish we could get him to have a look at the district. If he went there, he would not hesitate five minutes about the need for the railway. However, I am living in hopes that the line will be constructed before long. I am not going to say now where the railway should start; I will leave that to the Government to determine with the aid of their officers. The farmers in that district are growing wheat, and last year they got a return of six and seven bags to the acre, but it costs them 10d. a bushel to get their wheat moved to the nearest railway siding. I should like to ask anyone experienced in farming what

chance a man has of making agriculture pay when it costs him 10d. a bushel to get his wheat to a siding. By the time he pays the expenses connected with machinery and bags, etc., he has nothing left for himself. I have sufficient faith in the Government to believe that they will not hold up the construction of this line any longer, but that they will introduce the Bill as soon as possible. Speaking of rainfall, from observation in the Northampton district, the Murchison district, and also in my own electorate, I am satisfied that with a meagre rainfall we can grow splendid crops. By a meagre rainfall I mean seven, eight or nine inches. In some localities during the present season I do not think we have had as much as that, and yet the yield in a number of instances will be 20 bushels to the acre.

Mr. Withers: The light rainfall is all right provided that it comes along at the proper time.

Mr. BROWN: I do not know that during this season it fell at the right time where the yields have been good. The fact remains that there have been some excellent crops in the dry areas. I should like to say a word or two about the light lands. Wherever we go in the State we find the land patchy. There may be an enormous area of forest country, covered with salmon gum, gimlet or morrell, and then we may strike a considerable area of light land. In many instances we find that that land is just carrying scrub, and yet this is the class of land from which judging by all accounts, we will get some of our best crops this year. I regret that the trustees of the Agricultural Bank will not acknowledge that the light lands are suitable for cultivation or that in their opinion it is not desirable that they should advance money on these lands.

Mr. Stubbs: They are doing it now.

Mr. BROWN: They were not advancing money in the past. The outback farmers always give the new chum this advice: "Never put your eggs in the one basket" and by that they mean that the whole of the heavy land should not be cultivated at the same time, but that there should be a percentage of light land under crop. The wisdom of following that advice has been evident this year. I should like to say a word or two also about the enormous area of land between Brookton and Armadale. Some rich fertile valleys are to be seen there; valleys suitable for intense cultivation, the

growing of fodders and fruit. If a railway were built from Brookton to Armadale—I notice some of my friends opposite laughing—an enormous area of that country would be brought under cultivation and it would all be within close proximity to the biggest market, that of the metropolitan area. It seems almost a shame to permit that country to remain idle, especially when a comparatively short distance of line will enable it to be brought under cultivation promptly. I am sorry the Minister for Lands is not here because a little while back he made a trip through this particular area. If he were here he would hear out what I am saying, that there are thousands of acres awaiting cultivation. This line also has been promised for about seven or eight years.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the hon. member that this is not a discussion on railways.

Mr. BROWN: Very well; I shall leave the railways alone, but at the same time it almost impossible to refer to land settlement without speaking about railway facilities.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not continue to refer to railway construction under these Estimates. I have allowed him considerable latitude and he must confine his remarks to the Estimates under discussion.

Mr. BROWN: We should give every encouragement for the settlement of our land. At the present time we find that people are coming from the Eastern States and are paying great attention to our agricultural areas. Every train that arrives brings people who are making inquiries, and in settled districts, we find that farms are changing hands. This is very satisfactory when we remember that only a few years ago it was almost impossible to find a purchaser for improved property. Go into any settled district and one finds that farms are being acquired by people from the Eastern States. All this speaks well for Western Australia and especially is it satisfactory when we find that the purchasers are people possessed of means.

Mr. Teesdale: And what becomes of those who sell out? Do they retire?

Mr. Withers: They go East.

Mr. BROWN: After they have sold out they acquire other areas and start afresh.

Mr. Teesdale: God help them; one start I should think would be enough.

Mr. BROWN: I am surprised to hear the hon. member talking like that.

Mr. Thomson: They start out with a few thousand pounds.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, they do not start out again without capital; they are starting with capital and they are going to make good. The people who are selling their farms are not leaving the State. They have made their homes in Western Australia and they have sufficient faith in the State to know there are other districts which when developed will give them equally good results. All that is wanted is development and we are getting it. I do not know how it is intended to allot the 3,500 farms, but I understand that a certain number of them will be reserved for migrants. If that is so, they will require some spoon-feeding, but under the migration agreement provision is made for that. We are getting 10 millions of money at a cheap rate of interest for the development of the 3,500 farms. I hope a certain number of those farms will be made available for Australian boys, and particularly for Western Australian boys. When a dozen blocks are thrown open for selection there are hundreds of applicants, and I regret to say that some of our young fellows have been ballotted out every time.

Mr. Teesdale: Of the last 300 blocks 70 per cent. went to Australians.

Mr. BROWN: I am pleased to hear that, but the fact remains that hundreds of our own boys are unable to get land. Only two or three years ago, from a locality with which I am acquainted—I suppose it is typical of other localities—several boys had to leave the State because it was impossible to get land here. Of course there was plenty of land, but under the system of survey before selection, they had to wait until so many blocks were surveyed. When the department threw open only ten or a dozen blocks at a time, there were 200 applicants for them. Young unmarried men who had to depend upon their parents for help were balloted out and the blocks were given to other people. We have such an enormous extent of territory stretching from the Murchison practically all the way to Esperance that there should be land for everyone. I believe it is the policy of the department now to throw open, not three or four blocks, but 200 or 300 blocks at a time.

Mr. Teesdale: If you are short at all we can always give you a bit in the North-West.

Mr. BROWN: I do not want to go to the North-West. If the robust hon. member who interjected is a fair specimen of the North-West type, I prefer to remain down here. Western Australia possesses as fine a climate as may be found in any part of the world, and that applies more particularly to the Esperance district. Though it may be hot and dry in the day time, the Albany "doctor" springs up every night and cools the atmosphere. In that district good crops can be grown on very little rainfall, provided it comes during the growing period. I shall always support any vote that will make for the betterment or development of the lands of Western Australia.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.19]: I am sorry to say my experience of new settlement is not so pleasing as that expressed by the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy). I wish particularly to point out to the Minister that it would be well worth while getting hold of some of the plans east of that section of a line running between Kondinin and Merredin. Ten or 12 blocks of land have been surveyed at a distance of 50 miles from a railway and without any connecting road survey. It is quite impossible for people to go on to those holdings within the limited time allowed by the law—six months—unless facilities are provided for them to get there. Also I would direct attention to the inconvenient surveys made of those blocks. No system at all has been adopted; they are all higgledy-piggledy, and I never saw such difficult lines to follow as have been adopted in the surveys.

Hon. G. Taylor: I suppose they were surveyed at night.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know.

Mr. Teesdale: Putting in overtime?

Mr. LATHAM: It becomes a serious matter when people get such blocks, spend the few pounds they have saved, only to find after they have purchased motor truck and got various necessities together to go on the land that they have been set down in such inaccessible country. I hope some connecting surveys between the new areas and the older areas will be made, so that there will be some provision for roads. I cannot understand why the light land out there has not been surveyed. I should think that this year would have satisfied most of the officials of the Lands Department and the Agricultural Bank, who of course work

hand in hand, that the less rainfall precipitated, the better the yields from the light country. Consequently, on the light soil, in the far eastern area better crops are obtained than from the heavier country. Of that I am fully convinced. Coming westward towards the coast one finds that the longer the country is cropped the heavier becomes the rainfall and the lighter become the wheat crops on the light country. One has only to travel through the districts where the yields are only average to find that the best crops this season are growing on the light country. I am convinced that the further east one goes, provided he does not go on to the gravel country, the better are the returns from light country. I am afraid we have a number of surveyors in this State from other parts of the world—some of them came from New Zealand—who have been sent out to survey land and who, while they can do the survey work all right, do not understand the classification of our soil. This has led to a good deal of trouble between the Agricultural Bank and the Lands Department on the question of classification.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you know how many New Zealanders we have?

Mr. LATHAM: Sufficient for a noise to be made about them when they were brought over here.

Mr. Teesdale: I was wondering whether the Government had brought over a number or only two or three.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not suppose there are more than 20 surveyors out and perhaps seven or eight would be New Zealanders. Anyhow, there are quite enough to do damage to the reputation of this State. If people come to Western Australia, take up land out there, accept the classification of the Lands Department, and the Agricultural Bank officials do not endorse the classification, it is not good for the State.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do the surveyors unacquainted with Western Australia classify the land?

Mr. LATHAM: Surveyors do the classification.

Hon. G. Taylor: But those particular surveyors?

Mr. LATHAM: I am not going to be led into making a statement of that kind.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not think any Government would be simple enough to do that.

Mr. LATHAM: When the surveyors are sent out into the country, I take it they have to do the classifying work. In the Surveyor General's report I read the following passage:—

The four young surveyors engaged in New Zealand last year naturally found conditions in this State somewhat different from those in the Dominion, and it took some little time for them to become familiar with the methods of survey and organisation in force here. They have given very satisfactory service.

No doubt they could do the actual work of surveying, but I know that our soils and climatic conditions differ so greatly from those of New Zealand that probably the young surveyors are not at fault with our methods of making the classification.

Mr. Teesdale: Would New Zealanders over-estimate it rather than under-estimate it?

Mr. LATHAM: It is difficult to say. New Zealand has a great variety of soils. There it is possible to grow very good pasture in thin soil on a subsoil of pumice. If a New Zealand surveyor came here and saw good surface soil, he might think the land was suitable for wheat growing. After all, New Zealand does not produce much wheat; it produces little more than is required for local consumption.

Mr. Panton: That is because it has not the extent of land to produce it.

Mr. LATHAM: New Zealand farmers go in for pasture more than for cereal growing; they give attention to the growing of fat lambs and mutton.

Mr. Panton: I saw a reference to 95 bushels to the acre being taken off this year.

Mr. LATHAM: I am afraid that a good many people, particularly outside this Chamber, run away with the idea that the Government have millions of money to spend and can spend it anywhere.

Mr. Panton: Some inside this Chamber seem to think the same thing.

Mr. LATHAM: We are getting money under the migration agreement at a cheap rate of interest for a comparatively short period, and we have to assume the responsibility for the payment of the full interest charges after 10 years and also for the repayment of the principal. That is a serious matter, and it is not to be expected that any Treasurer—no matter what his political faith—will throw it about injudiciously without any care for future results.

The Premier: We should not undertake any work with cheap migration money that we would not undertake with ordinary loan funds.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so; just as much care should be exercised in the expenditure of the one as the other. I am afraid we exclaim too frequently, "This is cheap money." That, however, should not induce us to expend it without ensuring that we get full value for it. In the 3,500 farms scheme careful selection of the land is necessary to ensure the success of the scheme. It is of no use throwing open for selection land 50 or 60 miles from a railway without there being some idea in the minds of the political heads of what is to be done to give the people railway facilities. Year after year we find the price of wheat going down, and wheat is going to be the staple product of those farms.

The Premier: Not going down year by year. It has been maintained for years.

Mr. LATHAM: It was 6s. 8d. a bushel in 1921, and this year it is down to 4s. 3d. It has fallen lower and lower. I am not sure that 2s. 4d. a bushel in pre-war days was not on a par with 4s. 3d. to-day, taking into consideration the cost of fertilisers, machinery, etc.

Hon. G. Taylor: Oh, oh!

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member does not know too much about the price of wheat or the growing of wheat.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not know too much about anything. You know all.

Mr. LATHAM: I do know about the price and the growing of wheat. It would do the hon. member good if he went out and acquired a little more knowledge of it. Anyhow, I am not going to allow the hon. member to correct my knowledge of wheat growing.

Mr. Withers: Love one another.

Mr. LATHAM: I thank the hon. member, but he sometimes speaks out of his turn.

Mr. Mann: Only sometimes?

Mr. LATHAM: Now and again.

The Minister for Mines: There is nothing on the Estimates about that, either.

Mr. LATHAM: Nor about the Minister's interjection. I wish to say a few words about Malta and the Maltese. I do not want to deal with the land, but I want to make a comparison. When I was there I noticed that every foot of land that could be used for agricultural purposes was so used. The

Maltese are a very fine type of settler and it struck me that if we could get 1,000 of them here, with financial backing available up to £5,000 per head, and settle them anywhere between Perth and the Great Southern country, they would produce sufficient butter to counteract the shortage of production in this State.

Mr. Teesdale: You will be fired at in the street if you say that.

Mr. LATHAM: The Maltese are British subjects, and white people at that.

Mr. Wilson: The Maltese?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes. I believe they would be admirable settlers. If we threw open to them the land west of the Great Southern line, I believe they could show us what it is possible to do with that land. I do not want those people to come here and compete in the labour market, but I would like them to come here and show what they can do with our land that is to-day lying idle and useless and will continue so for a considerable time, at any rate until our population is much greater than it is to-day. They could show us work on the land such as is to be seen in their own little island. Malta is 11 miles long by 9 miles in width, with a population of 264,000. Anyone who goes there will come away convinced that if it is feasible to help these people to get relief from their surplus population we should do so. They live very cheaply.

Mr. Panton: What about the people of Great Britain?

Mr. LATHAM: We have a great responsibility in that direction.

Mr. Panton: Let us deal with them for a start. Never mind about the Maltese.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not sure whether we can settle these people. We have not made a great success of doing so up to the present. I should like to see 100 Maltese put into the country west of the Great Southern. I believe they would make a success and become as good dairymen as anyone else. This would be a little relief towards the British Empire to which we owe some responsibility.

Vote put and passed.

Votes. Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board, Soldiers' Land Settlement, £5: Group Settlement, £5—agreed to.

Vote—Immigration, £6,065:

Member Suspended.

Mr. THOMSON: I wanted to have something to say on group settlement.

The CHAIRMAN: We have passed that vote. We are now dealing with immigration, and the items under that heading.

Mr. Teesdale: I have something to say about immigration.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Katanning wish to speak upon any item under the heading of immigration?

Mr. THOMSON: I want to ask for some information about group settlement.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order.

Mr. THOMSON: I am speaking to a point of order. I say I am not out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member resume his seat? We have passed the vote dealing with group settlement, and cannot go back. I have now called the vote "Immigration," and the member for Roebourne has risen to speak to an item under that heading.

Mr. THOMSON: With all due respect, Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order. I shall have to take action against him unless he acts within the Standing Orders. He must resume his seat. The member for Roebourne has the floor.

Mr. THOMSON: I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. THOMSON: I am entitled to rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will resume his seat. The member for Roebourne has the floor.

Mr. THOMSON: I am rising to a point of order. I am entitled to do so.

Mr. Teesdale: And I am standing here ready to speak on the vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask both hon. members to resume their seats.

Mr. THOMSON: I am entitled to rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: We have passed the vote under the heading of group settlement, and are now dealing with immigration. We cannot go back. The member for Katanning is out of order, and the member for Roebourne has the floor.

Mr. THOMSON: Am I not permitted to ask a question, and to state my case?

The CHAIRMAN: No. The hon. member will resume his seat.

Mr. THOMSON: I will not resume my seat.

The CHAIRMAN: Then the hon. member will have to leave the Chamber for the remainder of the sitting.

Mr. THOMSON: I will not leave the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Then I must call upon the Sergeant at Arms to do his duty and remove the hon. member.

Mr. THOMSON: This is ridiculous; it is absurd.

The CHAIRMAN: Sergeant at Arms, will you do your duty? If necessary, I shall have to take other steps.

Mr. THOMSON: What? This is becoming an absolute farce.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. THOMSON: There is no order at all. It is ridiculous.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must leave the Chamber at once.

Mr. THOMSON: The Chairman is not going to bully me. I am getting tired of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Sergeant at Arms, will you get the constable to assist you to remove the hon. member?

Mr. THOMSON: Get two or three constables!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. THOMSON: It is absurd that an hon. member of this Chamber should not be given an opportunity to state his case. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. It is scandalous.

[The Sergeant at Arms approached the member for Katanning and escorted him out of the Chamber.]

Debate resumed.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Roebourne has the floor.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am almost too shaky to speak now. I wish to speak generally on the vote.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for a general discussion on the vote has passed. The Committee are now dealing with items.

Mr. TEESDALE: Very well. I will deal with the items.

Item, Officer in Charge, £560:

Mr. TEESDALE: I have recently looked into immigration matters in London. As the result of this I maintain that we ought to be looking after these things for ourselves. Savoy House ought to be attending to all immigration question for Western Australia. Several difficulties have already been solved by the Agent-General, Mr. Angwin. Had everything been left to Australia House, we should have lost some desirable migrants. The Eastern States officers with their full staffs and improved facilities have an advantage over Western Australia in the selection of migrants. People with a little capital are always sent off to one of the other States. If we had our own organisation, we should get a fair share of these desirable people. On one boat there were 500 or 600 migrants who knew practically nothing about this State. Perth was not mentioned to them, only New South Wales or Victoria. They did not know land was to be had so cheaply in this State. When some of them arrived in New South Wales they were disappointed at the reception they got, and when they returned to Western Australia they regretted not having started here first. There are not sufficient experienced employees in Australia House to deal with the matter. It is desirable that men who are imparting information should know their subject. Not more than three officials in Australia House know Australian conditions. That is not fair to Western Australia. They even refused to allow our Agent General and a visiting member of Parliament to enter Australia House on one occasion when a number of girls were going out to Western Australia. I found that this objection was raised because there had been in the past too great a consumption of cake and tea at the expense of the Commonwealth. This arose through relatives desiring to see the migrants off prior to their leaving for Australia. Ample apologies were subsequently tendered for the disrespect shown to the Agent General. I have not a word to say against Colonel Manning, who is a broad minded and conscientious official. He will see that Western Australia gets a fair share of migrants who apply to him for information. We ought to confine our

migrants to men who will guarantee to keep out of the town, and to domestic servants. We had enough of the artisan type of men. It is not fair to add to that number by others who, on their arrival, find that the trades in which they are interested are fully catered for. We should confine our attention to agricultural labourers, farming lads and domestic servants. As regards nominated passengers, it does not matter. They are an acquisition, since their friends are responsible for them for 18 months or two years.

Mr. Mann: But the responsibility is not carried out.

The Minister for Mines: Nominated passengers are brought straight off the boat into my office, for me to get them a job.

Mr. TEESDALE: So long as they do not join the unemployed and demand three meals a day and a bed at night, it is all right. It is satisfactory to learn from the migration report that so considerable an amount is repaid by migrants to whom money has been advanced. Against £388,000 of advances there are repayments of £266,000. I hope members who cast reflections on people from the Old Country will bear those figures in mind. The same report shows that for the last six years Western Australia has received 3,500 migrants annually. The figure, if correct, is not excessive. Mention was made this evening of the cheap money. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the word "cheap." It is a question of what we are paying to bring migrants out.

The CHAIRMAN: That is matter for general discussion.

Mr. TEESDALE: We are borrowing in order to make advances to migrants. From a country paying £15 2s. per head in taxation the money comes to a country paying only £11 17s. 2d. The money is especially cheap having regard to its source. One must now and then break a lance in behalf of the land that protects Australia every time there is any trouble. Great interest was being taken at Home in the Dreadnaught scheme for training boys. I saw how the arrangement of 13 weeks' employment on a farm worked. In 13 weeks the boys are taught various branches of farming. We cannot put boys through in that period. They are taught ploughing, dairying and orchard work. When competent, each boy is presented with £1 to purchase

clothes and to restore the kit he brought with him. I do not regard that feature as satisfactory. The boy's clothes are knocked out in the 13 weeks, and then he is turned loose with no clothes left and only a pound to purchase another outfit. Our system of sending boys to agricultural colleges for 12 or 18 months is far preferable. In conclusion I emphasise the necessity for Western Australia attending to its own migration matters.

Mr. SAMPSON: When travelling across the Atlantic I was greatly surprised to learn that out of 800 emigrants on board, no fewer than 700 were Southern Europeans proceeding to Canada. It is regrettable that more of the people in the Old Country do not decide to come to Australia or Canada to settle on the land. Having had the opportunity of visiting Australia House, I am amazed to learn that Mr. Teesdale and Mr. Angwin were unable to secure admittance there. Through the courtesy of Colonel Manning I had the opportunity of visiting the Brandon school in Norfolk, where a number of youths between 16 and 19 years of age were being trained for migration to either Australia or Canada. Their term is 16 weeks, and they are taught the rudiments of farming. It is not suggested that in this period they learn farming completely, but the time is sufficient to enable the authorities to pick out youths who are not adapted for farm work. Unquestionably what is done there is of great advantage. Colonel Manning's work is of the highest value to Australia.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The time has arrived when we should seriously consider the whole question of migration. The officer in charge of migration should use his best endeavours to see that migrants are not brought here at certain periods of the year. He should be a man with enough knowledge of the position in Western Australia to ensure that unemployed in Great Britain are not simply sent out to become unemployed in Western Australia. I know of a number who came out and in a few weeks found themselves on the unemployed market. They were brought out with the intention of settling them on the land. The officer in charge of migration should have more cognisance of the people who are nominated to come to Western Australia. The nominations permitted are simply a farce, in many cases. Not long ago there was an unemployed man in Fremantle who had left a job as signaller on the Northumberland railway to come here.

He had been told by the migration agents that once he landed in Australia everything would be all right, that if he wanted a farm he could get a farm, and that if he did not want a farm he would not be here 24 hours before he would get almost any job. The same things were told him by a prominent Western Australian, a Government official, by whom he was eventually nominated. As soon as he set foot here, the Government official wanted to shove him right off and take no responsibility whatever. For many weeks he was knocking about without food for himself and his wife and children except what he got from the Fremantle Ugly Men. Such a case cannot be defended. I know of another case, a boilermaker from England who came out with two children, aged 12 and 13. He had two sons here already, and they nominated him. On arrival here he found his sons were among the unemployed. The Government therefore had to assist him and the two young children. The Ugly Men, who do good work among this class of people, also came to his assistance.

Hon. G. Taylor: But the sons were not out of employment when they nominated him?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not sure as to that. I am sure, however, that men whose nominations should not be accepted are allowed to nominate migrants. Bill Smith or Tom Jones has simply to send a nomination form, and the nominee comes out.

Hon. G. Taylor: There used to be some sort of supervision or scrutiny.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Apparently there is none now.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then blame your Government.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am prepared to blame anyone to whom the responsibility is sheeted home. It is useless allowing people to nominate migrants from the Old Country unless they are in a position to meet their obligations and look after the nominated migrants for 12 months. Under existing conditions we are simply transferring the unemployed of Great Britain to Western Australia to become unemployed here.

Mr. Sampson: They must be very exceptional cases to which you refer.

Mr. SLEEMAN: They are not. If the hon. member wants to get information regarding any more, he can get into touch with the secretary of the Ugly Men's Association at Fremantle, and he will be furnished with particulars. The people I refer

to are nominated, but they are down and out after a few weeks out here. Quite a number of men have been brought out who should never have been allowed to come to Australia. That is the fault of the system under which migrants are selected in the Old Country. Men who are not physically fit have been allowed to come to Western Australia.

Mr. Teesdale: But you have your own Australian doctors conducting examinations now!

Mr. SLEEMAN: Well, they are allowing men to come out who are not physically fit.

Mr. Teesdale: Once you blamed the English doctors for that, but you have your own countrymen conducting examinations now!

Mr. SLEEMAN: Well, the Australian doctors will have to take the blame. Those who are responsible for allowing some migrants to come out should be severely censured. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Rowe) has been dealing with the case of a migrant and his family, and the doctor who was concerned should be dealt with. The man was totally unfit, and he and his family are to be repatriated.

Mr. Sampson: You should give full particulars about such a case.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for North East Fremantle can do that, but the man was passed by a doctor in the Old Country.

The Minister for Mines: We have had a number of such cases.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Before Mr. Angwin left the State for London, I met a man on one of the group settlements. He had been shattered as the result of a big gun explosion, and he had to wear corsets to keep himself together. That man was told that he should go to Australia, and it would make a different man of him. He was told that all he would have to do would be to get a few chickens and then, after some weeks, he would be able to get a horse and cart and drive about. All that was necessary for him would be to keep a few chickens, and he would be able to get on!

Mr. Sampson: Who told him that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Someone who is responsible to the Migration Department told him that.

Mr. Sampson: Then the Government should take up the matter and remove that officer.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There is another factor that forces many of these people on to the unemployment market, and that is the in-

flux of Southern Europeans. It is time the Government took action in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The officer in charge has nothing to do with that matter.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The officer in charge might recommend to the Government that until the Commonwealth Government prevent the Southern Europeans from coming here, they should put a stop to migration. If the Commonwealth Government do not take action, then it is time the State Government stopped migration altogether until the British Government bring to their senses the people responsible for the influx.

Mr. Sampson: You are getting this in under subterfuge.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not know what the hon. member is referring to when he talks about a subterfuge! I do not know whether he is referring to the fact that when he was in Malta he urged that the Maltese should come out here in large numbers.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I would not have participated in the discussion had it not been for the remarks of the member for Fremantle. If there is any truth in the statement he has made regarding the system under which nominated migrants are coming to the State, it is time the Government looked into the matter. The member for Fremantle said that some of the unemployed had been accepted as nominators for people in the Old Country. If that is so, there is great laxity in the administration of migration matters.

The Premier: Not necessarily, because a man who is unemployed in the Old Country may make the best type of migrant.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is not the point I am making. I refer to the statement by the member for Fremantle that unemployed people here are accepted as sponsors for nominated migrants. The member for Fremantle has vouched for the accuracy of his statement, and said there were a number of such cases. If that is so, the Premier should take the matter up. It is useless allowing that sort of thing to go on. If that has been the position, I am not surprised that we have unemployed in such large numbers.

Mr. ROWE: The member for Fremantle has referred to a case that I have been interested in. When that man was examined by a doctor at home, he was snifering

slightly from tuberculosis. He asked the doctor how he thought he would get on in Australia. The doctor told him that if he came to Australia, he would be a different man altogether, and it would be the making of him. I asked the man if the doctor charged him anything, and he said "Yes, I gave him £3. I understand that the more money a man has to give the doctor, the easier it is for him to get to Australia." I asked him how he had been since he had arrived in Western Australia, and he replied, "I am much worse now, and I must get back to England the best way I can." As a result the Migration Department have decided to repatriate the man, his wife and two children.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolution reported.

BILL—RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE.

Council's Further Message.

Message received from the Council notifying that it had agreed to the recommendations of the conference on the amendments insisted upon by the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES— STATE TRADING CONCERNS.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair.

Division—State Brickworks, £44,824:

Mr. SAMPSON: I had hoped the Minister would advise the committee as to the position of the State Brickworks, as to whether the market has been extended as was suggested last year, and as to the outlook in respect of trade.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES: The plant at the State Brickworks has been increased during the last two or three years by the construction of two additional kilns. During the year ended the 30th June last we manufactured upwards of 15,000,000 bricks. Bricks are in great demand, and the business manager has advised me that our surplus output is booked up for 10 months ahead. It is not the policy of the Government to in-

crease the plant at the State Brickworks. There is a great demand for increased production. I think it advisable to make that statement so that it will afford those who are prepared to put capital into privately controlled brickworks an opportunity to do so. The position is acute. As I have said, the surplus production of the State Brickworks, that is to say, the production not used by Government departments, has been booked up for 10 months ahead. The real explanation for such a demand on the State bricks is that they are of a superior class, and are sold at a lower price than that charged by private manufacturers.

The Premier: In another place the other night it was said that we were in the ring and were profiteering. We have always sold our bricks below the price charged by private firms.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES: That is so. The management of the State Brickworks has never been associated with any of the private companies. Quite recently representatives of private concerns waited upon me to know the position. I told him it was not the intention of the Government to increase the plant. It may be of some interest to the Committee to know that during the last 12 months we have purchased an additional shale deposit. That was necessary because the shale deposit we are working at present may last only another seven or 10 years, and the purchase of this new shale deposit was decided upon to meet the needs of the departments and also of the State Brickworks in the utilising of its plant when the deposit we are now operating on runs out. Therefore we have ensured a deposit for future use.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am glad to hear the statement—

The Premier: You have already spoken on the general discussion.

Mr. DAVY: On a previous occasion when we were discussing the State Brickworks I said, and I made it clear that I was speaking on hearsay evidence, that anybody who wanted to buy State bricks had to buy them from a private firm that had the sole monopoly of the distribution of those bricks.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: You were quite wrong in that statement.

Mr. DAVY: I may have been, but when I made that statement, the accuracy of which I did not vouch for, the Minister did not deny it.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Yes I did. Look up "Hansard" and you will find that I did deny it.

Mr. DAVY: Well, I want to go one further. The statement I make now—it was given to me on reliable authority—is that if one wants to buy State bricks from that particular distributor, one has also to buy that gentleman's time. I should like the Minister to give that a direct denial if it is untrue, and to say whether that system has ever existed, and if so has it now ceased to exist?

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Who is the sole distributor?

Mr. DAVY: I do not remember, but I think I mentioned his name at the time it was given to me.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: No, you did not.

Mr. DAVY: Well, I can easily find out the name. Still I shall be glad if the Minister will tell us definitely what system of distributing State bricks, retail or wholesale, is adopted, and whether the distributor has a right to impose a condition of that sort. I have always been in the habit of taking the Minister's word, and I should like him to make a statement on that point.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The system adopted—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister is not in order in replying to every question as it is put. He can reply to them all afterwards.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I was surprised to hear the Minister declare that the State bricks are sold at a lower price than bricks made by private firms.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: I cannot understand your surprise, for during the last three years I have made that statement every time the Estimates have been under discussion.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: We have repeatedly heard the statement that the State trading concerns, including the brickworks and the sawmills, have an honourable understanding with other firms.

The Premier: That has been one of the lies continually circulated.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is not charged up against this Government alone. The statement has been repeated during the last six or seven years.

The Premier: In another place it was repeated a few days ago. There is not a shadow of truth in it, yet they will keep on repeating it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It has been freely stated during the last six or seven years. Even to-day if one goes outside people tell him of it. Whether they have any authority to say it, I do not know. I have no reason to doubt the Minister's statement and I am pleased to know that the Government are not in the ring either of brickmakers or timber merchants.

Mr. BROWN: The estimated profit is £1,676.

The Premier: Where did you get that?

Mr. BROWN: That is a very small amount and evidently the works are being run as near to the margin as possible. We cannot expect much more than that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES: The member for West Perth asked for information about the system of distributing the surplus production of bricks. People are advised to make application and place their orders with the business manager of the works, who makes the distribution to the best advantage in the interests of the works and also of the applicants. The whole trouble is that the demand for bricks is greater than the works can supply, and there has been a certain amount of dissatisfaction inasmuch as people have been unable to secure the superior class of brick they desire. We have very few agents. I do not know the person indicated by the member for West Perth, but it may be Mr. Jenkinson. He is a contractor in a large way, but he orders bricks for his own use and is not an agent of the State Brickworks. He is a straight-out buyer of bricks.

Mr. Davy: Has that always been the case?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES: Yes.

Item, Manager, £650:

Mr. SAMPSON: I think the shortage of bricks—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot discuss the shortage of bricks. The item deals with salaries.

Mr. SAMPSON: If you will allow me.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall not allow any member to discuss anything that is out of order.

Mr. SAMPSON: Cannot I mention it under the item of manager's salary?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot put that across me.

Division put and passed.

Division, State Ferries, £10,225—agreed to.

Division, State Hotels, £61,358:

Mr. BROWN: A surplus of £12,642 is anticipated. I take it the hotels are paying very well, and I should like to know why the tariff has been increased. Meals cost now 3s., and yet one can go 25 miles beyond a certain State hotel and get meals at a private hotel for 2s. 6d.

The Premier: Because our accommodation is worth the money.

Mr. BROWN: I have received equally good attention—I shall not say better—for considerably less money.

Mr. LAMBERT: The time has arrived when a searching inquiry should be made into the whole administration of the State hotels, especially in view of the capital involved and the return we are getting. I have long held the view that the running of hotels does not come within a State's activities, and it would be far better if they could be leased under reasonable conditions.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is wrong with selling them?

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that we need go so far as that, but I am averse to keeping a separate department to run State hotels when I think we are losing thousands of pounds by it. I do not know whether the Premier is satisfied with the revenue he is getting from the State hotels.

The Premier: I am not, not by a long way. I could get three times the amount by letting them.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then let them.

Mr. LAMBERT: I certainly think the Premier would get three times as much, and that they would be conducted as well as at present, though they are managed excellently now. Still, it is not a class of business that lends itself to State management.

The Premier: I am open to receive offers.

Mr. LAMBERT: Had State ownership been persevered in, we might have had a lot of decent buildings and the increment increasing year by year. Then by leasing them under decent conditions the department would have been receiving £50,000 or £100,000 a year. Further, if at any time, prohibition were carried, instead of the people being asked to pay compensation for the closed hotels, the hotels would have been closed automatically. I hope some move will be made to inquire into the administration of State hotels to ascertain whether we are getting the revenue that we should have from them.

Mr. Davy: You do not need an inquiry to ascertain that.

Mr. Clydesdale: Would you advocate calling for tenders?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, to-morrow. The best way would be to call tenders under strict conditions as to their conduct, the highest tender to be accepted. We would then get another £15,000 or £20,000 a year. I mentioned the matter three or four years ago but these things continue year after year. We discuss them as if we were dummies. Apparently no notice is taken of our remarks, and it seems futile to make suggestions good, bad or indifferent. After 12 or 14 years of Parliamentary life one becomes so tired of making suggestions that he feels it hardly worth the exertion to rise in his place to speak on the Estimates or any other matter.

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member voiced an opinion that is widespread. The State hotels are certainly well conducted, but the conduct of hotels by the State is neither dignified nor profitable. Perhaps the day is not far distant when the odium that attaches to the Government for carrying on trade in opposition to others may end.

The Premier: Do you think the Renmark system in South Australia is a good one? The local authority controls the hotel, and all the profits go towards hospital maintenance.

Mr. SAMPSON: Wonderful results have been achieved there. Great improvements have been shown in the conduct of hotels generally during the past six years. I hope the remarks of the member for Coolgardie will bear fruit.

Division put and passed.

Division—State Implement Works, £162-312:

Mr. SLEEMAN: This Vote shows a deficiency of £3,271. It is not a large sum, and it should readily be wiped off and the works made profitable. While we are spending money in assisting people on the land, we should also see that some effort is made to build up our secondary industries. It would be quite in order if the department assisting settlers demanded that those settlers should purchase the implements made at the Government works. Unfortunately, too many people are decrying our local industries and the products that are made by them. We can make implements just as good as any other part of the world can make them. Some members are forever running down the State implements.

Mr. Davy: Do you want a law to compel us to use the products of the State Implement Works?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, but if we assist the man on the land we should insist that he in turn shall buy his machinery requirements from the State undertaking.

Mr. Corboy: Our own State farms do not buy them.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I doubt whether that is true, but if it is so it is a poor policy on the part of the departments concerned.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you not think we have given them a fair trial?

Mr. SLEEMAN: All that the hon. member has done is to cry stinking fish. Some members opposite have always tried to close down these works. They are a big asset to the country. No one has ever complained about the ploughs made there. Even members opposite agree that it is a good article. If we could only insist on assisted settlers taking State ploughs, the works would soon be employing thousands of hands and returning a profit. In years to come the works would also be able to turn out other implements which would prove more popular than those now being manufactured. The plough will help to popularise the works.

Mr. Davy: We had better start a jam factory on the same basis.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Perhaps the hon. member would say we should not have any State railways.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must keep to the vote under discussion.

Mr. SLEEMAN: While members say the State should not run any trading concerns or public utilities, they are doing their best to nationalise the Midland railway.

Mr. Davy: I have made no effort in that direction.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have heard many members talk about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order: The hon. member must confine his remarks to the State Implement Works.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if you will stop all these interjections.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect upon the Chair.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope that something will be done to put the works on the footing they should have occupied years ago.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the Government will take stock of their implement works. It is time they were prevented from manufacturing machinery. I do not think seven harvesters have been sent out from the works this year. If the establishment were used mainly for engineering works, probably it would not show a deficit at the end of each year. The works cannot make satisfactory farming implements. I do not like the views expressed by the member for Fremantle when he suggests that assisted settlers should be compelled to buy machinery made there. There would be no need for any compulsion if the works turned out a good article.

Mr. Sleeman: There would be no need for compulsion if members did not cry stinking fish.

Mr. LATHAM: I believe the State plough is a good one. If the machinery was used solely for the purpose of manufacturing ploughs, I would not oppose the continuation of the works. I object to the manufacture of articles which do not give any satisfaction, and only lead to the creation of a deficit at the end of the year.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The member for Fremantle accused me of being anxious to dispose of all State trading concerns. I was a member of the Government which started the implement works. We thought we were doing a great thing for Western Australia and that we would be able to produce machinery that would enhance the prosperity of the agricultural industry. What do we find after 16 or 17 years' experience? That we are losing money year after year, and that we are not able to put on the market implements that fill the bill.

Mr. Sleeman: Who said that?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It has been stated repeatedly by farming representatives in this Chamber. There have been no complaints about the ploughs, but not too many of them are used. To-night we hear the plea, "Give the State Implement Works a chance." Any man who remains ignorant in spite of experience is hopeless. It is all very well for the member for Fremantle to boost up works which are closely associated with his electorate, but let us be fair to the State as a whole. We are not doing the proper thing by incurring liabilities year after year without getting any further forward. If I could see a glimmer of light as to the works justifying themselves, I would not say a word against them. However, it is up to the Government to consider whether the works should not be disposed of in the interests of the State. Private people very likely would make them pay. Private implement works competing with our State works are paying. Our works cannot go bankrupt for the simple reason that they are backed by the State. Otherwise they would have been broke long ago.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would not have risen but for the discussion which has taken place. Let me point out that there would have been no occasion for the discussion but for a strict inquiry made into the operation of agricultural implement works many years ago. The Government of the day, in deciding to create State implement works, acted as the result of exhaustive inquiry by a select committee. It is on record that a prominent citizen of this State, then an importer of foreign agricultural implements, said it was impossible for private enterprise to manufacture similar implements here because the dumping system would immediately be resorted to, and it would need no end of money to stand up against such tactics. We know that even recently endeavours to establish industries in this State have failed owing to dumping tactics, adopted chiefly by manufacturers in the Eastern States. Competing goods were dumped here at less than cost.

Mr. Davy: Let us have some instances.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is no use for the young and unsophisticated member for West Perth to talk as he does. Right in the heart of the West Perth electorate a manufacturing concern has closed down.

The CHAIRMAN: Was it a State undertaking?

Mr. MARSHALL: It was the manufacturing concern known as Rayner & Co.

Hon. G. Taylor: A jam factory.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is distinctly out of order. He must discuss the item before the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Mt. Margaret argues that the State loses annually by the manufacture of agricultural implements, but he has no figures to show that were it not for the State Implement Works the prices of imported implements would not be 50 per cent. higher than they are to-day.

Hon. G. Taylor: The prices are higher because the articles are better.

Mr. MARSHALL: The law of supply and demand shows that if the price of a good article rises beyond a certain point, and if there is a fair article at a lower price, purchasers consider the extent of their resources. Were it not for the State Implement Works, imported implements would probably be at much higher prices.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is all moonshine.

Mr. MARSHALL: When the State Implement Works were first established, they were built up on the relics of a manufacturing concern whose machinery was obsolete. With obsolete methods and obsolete machinery the works could not possibly manufacture articles to compete with imported implements. Immediately upon the establishment of the works, the Government of the day went out of office; and the succeeding Government never did anything to bring the works up to modern requirements. In every way they did their best to ensure that the works did show a loss. They succeeded to this extent, that the articles produced here by obsolete methods and with obsolete machinery were so inferior that even to-day it is asserted that the implements made by the State works are no good.

Mr. Latham: The Government were in power for not less than three years after establishing the works.

Mr. MARSHALL: The succeeding Government never gave the works a reasonable chance of producing implements that could compete with the imported implements.

Mr. Davy: How many years did they want? They had five.

Mr. MARSHALL: It would not take as many years to bring the plant up to a state of efficiency as it takes to manufacture a lawyer. I repeat, the State Implement Works have never had a fair trial.

Hon. G. Taylor: Nonsense!

Mr. Ferguson: They had five years of a sympathetic Government.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even since the present Government came into power, £20,000 has been expended in bringing the machinery up to a modern standard.

Mr. Teesdale: Talk about underhand stoping! You are a bit rocky on business matters.

Mr. MARSHALL: Much has been done by the Government to place the works in a state of modern efficiency.

Hon. G. Taylor: The engineer in charge is a good capable man.

Mr. MARSHALL: It can be admitted that the works have not had a reasonably fair trial. Country Party members represent a section of the producers who require a market for their produce. There is nothing to prevent them having a choice of the purchases they desire, whether those goods be imported or manufactured locally. On the other hand, those who work in the State Implement Works have no choice regarding the wheat and flour they have to use. They are compelled to use the local products.

Mr. Ferguson: And they are the best.

Mr. MARSHALL: The only way we can encourage local production is to protect the local market. I am surprised that members sitting on the Opposition cross-benches have not appreciated the fact. Apparently they would prefer to send their money to a foreign country, to America, or perhaps to Malta. At the same time they expect to build up the local market for the consumption of their own products.

Mr. LAMBERT: Probably it would be as well to remember that perhaps nine-tenths of the activities at the State Implement Works are directed to serving other State concerns, in which they play a very important part. The manufacture of agricultural implements is subordinate. The works are also engaged in turning out cast-iron pipes, water meters, and other articles.

The Premier: The works engage in ordinary engineering activities.

Mr. Teesdale: And they build dredges.

Mr. Marshall: And cranes for the harbour works.

Mr. LAMBERT: The works have been improved lately but are still capable of greater improvement. For members to discuss the Implement Works solely from the standpoint of their value in manufacturing agricultural implements is altogether wrong. It would be very unfortunate for other departments if, in view of the competition that exists, the works were to be closed. It would cost the State considerably more than we lose at the present time. It is regrettable that the opportunity was not seized by those who should have a knowledge of the subject, to add to the value of the implement works along profitable lines. Every year the Government railways have at their disposal thousands of tons of high-grade steel that cost from £18 to £22 per ton and that steel is sold to an outside firm. Some time ago I suggested that an electric furnace should be installed at the State Implement Works for the purpose of re-melting that steel. Side by side with the disposal by the Government of that high-grade steel to a private concern, the State power house supplies electric current to that private concern at a price less than the cost of providing the current amounts to. The loss incurred in that respect amounts to much more than the deficit in connection with the operations of the State Implement Works and yet not a single member has taken exception to that fact.

Mr. Sleeman: That is a horse of another colour.

Mr. LAMBERT: When we consider that the private concern I referred to purchases that high-grade steel from the railways at 10s. per ton for re-melting with the aid of electric current sold to them by the Government at .56d., it has to be borne in mind that the steel, when re-melted, is sold back to the Railway Department at upwards of £20 per ton. In view of that fact, it is nearly time hon. members commenced to ask questions.

Mr. Davy: It is pretty nearly time these Government enterprises took a tumble to themselves. You are presenting a shocking case against Government administration of such concerns.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is either the function of the State Implement Works or of the Railway Department, but the fact remains that if activities were confined alone to dealing with this high-grade steel at the present price of current, the Government, by re-melting the scrap steel themselves, could

make a clear profit of between £25,000 and £30,000 per year.

Mr. Mann: Is the present scheme not economically successful?

Mr. LAMBERT: Admittedly.

Mr. Mann: Then what is the use of your argument?

Mr. LAMBERT: But it is not economically successful from the Government's point of view to sell steel that costs them £20 a ton, to a private firm at 10s. per ton, at the same time supplying the private firm with current at less than it costs to produce, only to buy back from that private firm the steel when re-melted at from £22 to £24 per ton.

Mr. Davy: What does that prove?

The CHAIRMAN: It proves that the hon. member is not discussing the State Implement Works.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am speaking directly to the vote before the Chair. I am referring to a profitable activity that could be handled by those works. Thousands of tons of cast steel are required in this State every year. One concern in which I am interested has bought a considerable quantity recently. Everyone else, the Railway Department and all the other departments requiring cast steel, must buy from private individuals the very steel that has been sold at a few shillings per ton by all the other departments, including Tramways, and Electricity Supply, the Railways and every other department. While the bluff may be put over that this cannot be run by a Government, actually it is one of the simplest possible industries to run; because you have the raw material there to be scrapped, material for which there is no sale in Western Australia unless you have an electric furnace to re-melt it. And the development of electric furnaces throughout the world has been remarkable. If there were in any of our departments an engineer with any conception of the development of electric furnaces—

Mr. Davy: Are you criticising the Vote?

Mr. LAMBERT: It is competent for the hon. member to get up and speak for himself. He is not bluffing me, and I do not suppose he is acting sponsor for the Minister. If the hon. member does not understand what I am saying, it is his fault, not mine. I am only giving what I hope is some useful information to the Committee; something that may be of use to the Premier when people come along and put up fanciful schemes for bettering the position

of the State Implement Works. He can say to them "I understand you are selling thousands of tons of scrapped steel. Give me an estimate of what an electric furnace will cost, and let the Railways give me an idea of what they are paying per annum for their castings." Then the Premier can remind them that he is supplying for the melting of the scrap steel electric current at considerably less than the cost of the power to produce it, let alone the capital, the cost of management and depreciation.

Mr. Mann: Are you indicting the manager or the Minister?

Hon. G. Taylor: The Government—anybody.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am only trying to open up a wider sphere of usefulness for these works. I hope members will not believe that the manager of the State Implement Works alone is concerned about the production of agricultural machinery. Too many people who have a practical knowledge of the use of agricultural implements think that those from the State Implement Works are not up to the mark. That being so, it is as well for us to realise it, and to realise also that there are many other activities in which those works can be usefully employed.

Mr. DAVY: I do not quite understand what the speech of the member for Coolgardie was in aid of.

Mr. Teesdale: The Red Cross.

Mr. DAVY: It seemed to prove conclusively that the State Implement Works are very badly run.

Mr. Sleeman: Was he in favour of them or against them?

Mr. DAVY: I really do not know. But what the ordinary man, without any particular policy about such things, sees is that the State Implement Works year after year make a loss and so cost the State a lot of money.

The Premier: That is not quite right. You will see by the footnote that their contribution to revenue this year is expected to be nil. It is not quite the same as making a loss.

Mr. DAVY: Of course it does not say so, but if the works were making a loss of £10,000 this year that statement at the bottom would still be perfectly correct.

Mr. Latham: They estimate to lose about £3,000 in one year.

Mr. DAVY: We know they have been a drain on revenue for many years past, and that despite a serious writing down of capital. We know also that the purpose for which they were established, namely, the manufacture of farming implements, has not been fulfilled with any conspicuous success. Because everybody praises highly the State Implement Works' plough, we see that the praising of one small agricultural implement out of the large number of machines that the works purport to produce is rather damning those works with faint praise. So the works are failing, and expensively failing, to achieve the object for which they were established. Now we are told the works are carrying on other functions, the manufacture of engineering plants for other departments.

Mr. Sleeman: They are building a big dredge.

Mr. DAVY: Why do the works have to build dredges and other things and still show a loss?

Mr. Marshall: They built the best crane on the Fremantle wharf.

Mr. DAVY: Yes, at a loss. It is very nice for the member for Fremantle to have in his constituency a State trading concern employing 500 or more voters.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you suggest that the works lose on everything they do?

Mr. DAVY: In view of that loss of £3,000 per annum, I suggest that their activities are unprofitable to the State. They pay no taxes, no dividend duty. So I suggest that the 500 or 600 men working there are working unprofitably as a whole. They get their wages and so on, but their activities as a whole are unprofitable. There is too much of this business throughout Australia. We have thousands and thousands of men busily engaged in activities at a loss.

Mr. Sleeman: If a railway was showing a loss, you would sell it.

Mr. DAVY: I do not say any such thing. It may be necessary to continue running such a railway. But nobody has put forward any good reason why the State Implement Works should continue to be run at a loss.

Division put and passed.

Division—State Quarries, £38,330—agreed to.

Division—State Shipping Service, £200,406:

Mr. SLEEMAN: Here is another Vote to which members may not be so antagonistic. Not long ago some members, not very sympathetic towards other State trading concerns, declared that this was not a trading concern, but a public utility. If it is a public utility we can afford to improve it. We have two fine boats in the "Kybra" and the "Koolinda," not forgetting the "Kangaroo." If another good boat were purchased it would serve to lessen the loss on the State Shipping Service. It would be more economical to run the service with another boat than with the number we have at present. There are people in Australia who have threatened to suspend the Navigation Act.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall not discuss the Navigation Act.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That was just in passing.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall not allow that subject to be discussed.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It might make matters more difficult for the State Shipping Service. The time has arrived when another boat should be purchased. Exemption should no longer be granted to the boats carrying black crews and the trade should be confined to the boats that are catering for it, namely the State ships. An exempted vessel employs a black crew at very low wages, and very little of the money is spent in the State. The State boats pay a decent wage and give reasonably good conditions. The families of the men live in the State and the money is circulated in the State. The boats, too, are provisioned here. I hope that in the near future another "Koolinda" will be provided and we shall be able to do away with the black boats trading in and out of Fremantle.

Division put and passed.

Divisions—State Sawmills, £735,443; Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works, £318,800—agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.13 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 22nd November, 1928.

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

QUESTION—ROAD CONSTRUCTION, GHOOLI.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Have the Yilgarn Road Board been refused permission to construct a road through Ghooli Experimental Farm to the Ghooli railway siding? 2, If so, will any financial assistance be given by the Government to the Yilgarn Road Board towards the construction of the additional road necessary to give settlers access to this siding?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, If the Yilgarn Road Board makes application for assistance it will receive consideration.

QUESTION—ELECTORAL DISTRICTS, QUOTAS.

Hon. H. STEWART asked the Chief Secretary: Has the Chief Electoral Officer submitted any reports under Section 10 (2b) of the Electoral Districts Act, 1923, notifying that the rolls made up for any triennial election had shown that the enrolment in not less than five electoral districts had fallen short of, or exceeded, by 20 per centum, the quota for such districts under that Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: No. The Bill for a redistribution of seats in accordance with the division of the State into electoral districts by the Commissioners pursuant to Section 3 was not passed. Therefore the quota and the proposed division lapsed and paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of Section 10 relating to a re-division of the State into electoral districts was inoperative.

MOTION—PUBLIC SERVICES, LATE HON. J. E. DODD.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan)
[4.33]: I move—

1, That this House requests the Government to afford Parliament an opportunity to give effect to some form of recognition of the great services rendered to this State by the late Hon. J. E. Dodd. 2, That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, and its concurrence desired therein.

I shall best achieve my object by asking members to carry the motion unanimously, with the fewest possible words in introduction and in support of it. Members all remember Mr. Dodd and many knew him much better than I did. Therefore I shall not stress to any extent the good qualities our late friend possessed. Having been in the State for many years, Mr. Dodd was first known to me as a secretary of one of the industrial unions on the goldfields. He was an ideal secretary, a man of great vision, who always realised the economic loss that followed in the wake of strikes or lock-outs and, therefore, always strove to prevent any cessation of work. By so doing, he not only benefited the workers themselves primarily, but the employers too, and the State materially benefited through the wheels of industry being kept revolving. Following his position as a union secretary, he came to this House and, before I became a member, Mr. Dodd was a Minister of the Crown. In those days I viewed his actions not from the floor below, but from the gallery above. So far as I could judge, he carried out his duties not only fearlessly but, in accordance with his political faith, in the best interests of the State. Unfortunately as time went on, Mr. Dodd's health failed, and his ill-health continued to such an extent that he became more or less a physical wreck. Throughout he faced his ailment with fortitude and bravery that few of us, I am afraid, could emulate. I sat next to him for many years, and I know that on numerous occasions he endeavoured to carry out his duties while suffering great physical agony. I know, too, that he was fortunate in having allied himself with a lady who for many years so acted on his behalf that we can with truth characterise her as a ministering angel. She looked after Mr. Dodd, not only in his home but in this Chamber. It was a sorry spectacle, from time to time, when we saw Mrs. Dodd wheeling our late member all the