

**Legislative Assembly,***Wednesday, 15th August, 1923.*

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

**QUESTION—MINERS' PHTHISIS BILL.**

Mr. LUTEY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has the Bill relating to miners' phthisis been assented to? 2, If so, what action has the Government taken or propose to take regarding the Act?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, No definite action can be taken until the results of the medical examination to be carried out by the Federal Government are known. The latest information is that provision for the establishment of a laboratory at Kalgoorlie is made on this year's Federal Estimates, and I have the assurance of the Federal Minister in control that once the estimate is approved by Parliament, immediate steps will be taken to commence the erection of the building and the installation of the necessary plant.

**QUESTION—COUNCIL OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, REPORT.**

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Industries: Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House the reports to date of work done by the Board of Industry and Science?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: Presumably the hon. member refers to the Council of Industrial Development; if so, no annual report is prepared by this Council.

**QUESTION (2)—WATER METERS.***Departmental Supplies.*

Mr. HUGHES asked the Minister for Works: 1, Are water meters for the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department being imported from America? 2, If so, why cannot they be manufactured by the State Implement Works?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Some orders have been placed for meters which will come from America. 2, Meters can be manufactured in Western Australia by the State Implement Works and by private firms; but the alloys from which the internal mechanism is manufactured has not so far

proved satisfactory. Experiments are in hand, but in the meantime it has been necessary to procure supplies outside Australia.

*Cost of Repairs.*

Mr. LUTEY asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the cost per annum of repairing and replacing water meters in the Kalgoorlie area? 2, What amount of rent is received for water meters in the Kalgoorlie area per annum? 3, What is the cost per annum of repairing and replacing water meters in the metropolitan area? 4, What amount of rent is received for water meters in the metropolitan area per annum?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, £2,891; year 1922-23. 2, £2,566; year 1922-23. 3, £9,757 (1922-23, being 7½ per cent. on capital cost). 4, £774 (1922-23); from non-rateable properties only. Meter rent not charged for rateable properties and private residences.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Eighth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. GHESSON (Cue) [4.35]: If we take the Governor's Speech as an indication of the business to be transacted, the present session should be a very short one. The only legislation proposed that is of a controversial nature is the Redistribution of Seats Bill. There are many questions affecting the public at present and one of the most vital is that of unemployment. At this particular period of the year there is always an unemployment problem in most parts of the world. That problem has to be viewed in conjunction with the migration policy. While in favour of migration, I am opposed to dumping migrants here at the present juncture, and thus displacing our own workmen. Only a small portion of the people in Great Britain follow agricultural or stock raising pursuits. Most of those who have been brought out to Western Australia have lived in factory towns, and seeing that they are placed in totally new surroundings in the timber country and agricultural areas, we cannot expect all of them to succeed. Many of them may be experts and quite successful as tradesmen in the Old Country, but when they are placed in the big timber country, we cannot expect them to make good without a considerable amount of training. I have great sympathy with the migrants who come here. I realise that the Government have to nurse migrants through their probationary stages. If sympathetic treatment is extended to them many will make good. During the winter months the process of dumping migrants should not be continued. At that time of the year, we should go slow, for our duty is to provide employment for our own people. The whole machinery of the State is employed in an endeavour to find work for migrants when they arrive here, but in many instances success

in that direction is at the expense of our own citizens. Complaints have been made from time to time regarding the migrants who have been brought out. They are employed, in most cases, in clearing gangs with contractors, and under that system they have not made good. I have correspondence which shows, however, that one of the migrants who was employed in this way had made good. A representative of the New Settlers' League came along and asked the contractor to employ some migrants who were about to arrive. The man I referred to was given £1 a week at first, but received an increase of 5s. Although he had made good, he was dismissed to make room for another new arrival. The contention in his case was that as he had made good at clearing work, he could get on without any further assistance. When a migrant arrives here and makes good at clearing work, no influence should be brought to bear to displace him from his job. The whole of this work should be in the hands of the Government, who should control the operations, and not hand over portion of the task to outsiders. The Government are responsible for bringing migrants here and should accept the responsibility for placing them in work.

Mr. Underwood: Why should the taxpayer be burdened with the cost?

Mr. CHESSON: We realise that Australia requires population.

Mr. Underwood: If we did not get that population, what would happen?

Mr. CHESSON: Our first duty is to get population of the right sort. In bringing migrants from the manufacturing centres of the Old Country, we are not getting the right type. We have not established many secondary industries and, therefore, cannot satisfactorily place such individuals who have been brought up in manufacturing towns. The Government provide the migrant with a certain amount of training, including 12 months on a farm, to acquire local knowledge. After that interval he is able to take over a farming proposition. That is a good scheme, but in order to make a success of it, we should see that the men are physically fit and suitable for that work. At the present time only 8.2 per cent. of the population of Great Britain is engaged in agricultural or stock raising pursuits. In those circumstances we have not much chance of getting the right class of migrant from Great Britain. If anyone studies this problem he will recognise that we must take migrants from any part of the world so long as the new comers are suitable and can pass a medical test as to fitness. New comers should be those who have been accustomed to rural occupations in some part of the world.

Mr. Underwood: Were there any medical tests when our parents came here?

Mr. CHESSON: No, but at that time the immigrants were men of experience that could turn their hands to anything. England has become the big manufacturing centre of

the world, and the migrants now coming here are mainly from the manufacturing centres. A good proportion of the immigrants years ago were sea-faring people or rural workers—just the types to make good.

Mr. Underwood: That is not correct.

Mr. CHESSON: Well, if they were not sea-faring people they came of sea-faring stock. The high railway freights are having an adverse effect on the gold mining industry. The extra cost of commodities is responsible for driving people from the back country into the towns. When we consider the wages paid in the back country and the comparatively low purchasing power of money there, we can realise how difficult it is for people to subsist in the back areas. The cost of mining machinery and requisites has been responsible for many companies ceasing operations, and consequently the goldfields population has been declining. One of the big factors responsible for the high cost of mining requisites is the excessive freight rates. When the cost of commodities increases, the miner must make additional demands upon the industry, and if the industry cannot carry the increased load, it must close down. This is what has happened in a good many mining centres. If the freights were reduced to a reasonable level the money saved would permit of the mines being equipped with modern appliances so that low grade propositions could be profitably worked. No company in the back country can think of modernising its plant. Some of the plants have been in existence for 20 years and if it were possible to modernise them so that an extra 2-dwt. or 3-dwt. per ton could be extracted, many of the mines would be able to continue operations. Thus in some centres populations of 200 or 300 people could be maintained. In this way our people could be kept in the outer country. The people outback pay more by way of taxation than any other people in the State. Apart from mining, pastoralism is the chief industry outback. Shearing is a seasonal occupation only though it provides a good deal of employment during portion of the year. The Government should endeavour to foster the mining industry. When men from the back country drift into the city and are unable to get employment, they move to the other States. There has been quite an exodus from Western Australia to the Eastern States. Some of these men tried to take up land, but they were unable to get suitable holdings adjacent to railways that offered reasonable promise of success. We cannot afford to lose population in this way. The pioneers from the back country are amongst our best settlers. Most of them have married and reared families and, in losing them, we are losing some of our best citizens. While we are making every provision for the new arrivals—and rightly so, too—we do not exert the same energy to assist pioneers from outback when they wish to settle on the land. Every effort should be made to keep these people in the State. The miner has been responsible for the pioneering of every industry in Australia.

lia. He is the best asset the country has. It was the discovery of gold in Bathurst and later in Ballarat that first attracted population to Australia. But for the gold discoveries Australia to-day would have consisted mainly of pastoral holdings. The gold attracted men of the best type, men with plenty of energy and initiative, men who were prepared to strike out for themselves in this new land. Our people are the descendants of those pioneers. They have pioneered the gold industry in Western Australia, and through them the pioneering of our other industries has been made possible. Are we doing everything possible for these people? I do not think we are. When the Fingall mine shut down a big proportion of the men engaged to go to Newcastle, Broken Hill, Port Pirie and such like places. Had our secondary industries been established these men could have been retained in the State. But our secondary industries are backward; therefore the men went East in search of employment, and their departure was a big loss to the State. In company with other members, I visited one of the group settlements—Peel Estate—and was agreeably surprised at the magnitude of the work. In launching that work the Government have moved in the right direction. I went to the Peel Estate, not as a carping critic, but in order to gain first hand knowledge. After having viewed the work I realised that the Government were engaged in an undertaking that could be handled only by a Government or big company. It means the expenditure of a large sum of money. The drainage work in itself is a big undertaking. The development of the Peel Estate means bringing into production swamp land that hitherto has been useless. It is good land and there is no doubt about its productivity. Some of the land that had been drained only six months before was producing 10 tons of potatoes to the acre. For productivity this land is equal to the best I have seen in Australia. It will probably be found that all the group settlements have been over-capitalised, and it will therefore be necessary to write down the costs. When new chums are engaged on land clearing, the cost of clearing the first block must necessarily be high. The reasonable procedure is to take the expenditure over the whole area of a group and allocate the cost between the various holdings. The members of a group gain experience as the work proceeds, and probably the cost of clearing the last block would be not more than one-third of the cost of clearing the first. If a manufacturer wanted to turn out a thousand machines, he would not charge the cost of the pattern to the first machine. The cost would be distributed proportionately over the whole of the machines. I think any Government would adopt this system of allocating the cost of clearing. It is the only fair system. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) complained that he had been unable to obtain any information as to the allocation of costs for group settlements. There should be no difficulty about adopting the system I have suggested. These

groups are bringing into profitable occupation a vast area of valuable land that otherwise would not have been utilised. I commend the Government on their scheme. There is no doubt about the quality of the land. I have travelled over the greater part of Australia and I can say that some of the land at the Peel estate is equal to anything I have seen. The good land should be cut up into small blocks and the other could be utilised for stock raising. We are aware that the State is obliged to import an enormous quantity of dairy produce, all of which could be successfully produced in that particular district. Every effort should be made to induce people to go in for dairy produce. It is useless for them to attempt at the present time to engage in fruit growing because the market is so doubtful. On the other hand, there is always a market available for dairy produce. On the question of clearing it would be much better if experienced axemen were employed. It takes a new chum a considerable time to become proficient at his work, and if we are to keep the settlers on the land it is important that we should keep the costs down to the minimum, and avoid having to write them down at a later stage. It is important, therefore, that at the outset efficient labour should be employed. After all, efficient labour is the least expensive. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) made reference to the number of people being carried by the farmer. He declared that the people in the cities were dependent on the prosperity of the primary industries, and quoting particularly agriculture, stated that if it prospered, the towns would likewise flourish. But the hon. member must not forget that the farmer too is likewise dependent to a great extent on the ironworker, the coal-miner and even the manual labourer. The first essential, of course, is the soil, but then the farmer cannot go much further without implements. The iron miner hews the iron which is manufactured into implements with which to till the soil and to garner the crop and transport the produce to the markets of the world. The coal miner mines the coal that smelts the iron, that makes the implements which till the soil and garner the crop, and transports the produce to the markets. The labourer hews the superphosphate rock which is prepared by another set of city workers as a fertiliser. We talk disparagingly of centralisation, but we find it necessary in most cases to establish factories in the big centres of population. Our railways are the arteries which extend in every direction to the farming, mining, and pastoral districts. If we have a surplus of production over that which we require, it is exported from our big shipping centres, which accommodate large vessels. The only way in which manufacturing can be carried on on a big scale is for the railways to provide that the whole of the producing public shall be reached at a reasonable cost. When we consider what the railways do for the farming community, and that that community cannot do much without the assistance

of other industries, we realise how we all depend one upon the other. In connection with the mining fields, the Government should assist the companies that are operating by way of reducing freight on machinery. Freight for the carriage of superphosphate on the railways is fairly low. We admit that it is right that that should be so. At the same time, it is important, if we desire to see the mining industry progress more rapidly, that railway freights should be reduced. No mining company can do very much without the aid of machinery. A plant on a mine is just as necessary for the development of that mine as is superphosphate for a farm. We who represent mining constituencies are aware that there are many companies that are barely existing. They require modern labour-saving appliances, but they are greatly handicapped by the excessive railway freights, and when those freights are added to the cost of machinery, we can realise how it is that companies are not able to equip their properties. If the department would go to the assistance of the companies in the direction I have suggested, the result would be that considerably more labour would be employed and the life of many mines would be prolonged. Another matter in connection with which the Government can render assistance is in regard to prospecting. I am familiar with several mining districts where prospectors are carting stone over a distance as great as 60 miles in order to have that stone crushed. Take the district of Wardawarra, from which junce stone was lately carted to the Cue battery. After the prospectors had paid £3 per ton for carting, as well as other expenses, there was very little left for them. There are still openings for the Government to establish public batteries. The batteries need not be as costly as those which are already in existence. Go on any mining field and one can pick up stamp boxes and stamps, and in some cases practically the whole of the battery equipment—without the gas engine—at a very low price. A cheap plant could with advantage be erected at a place like Wardawarra where there seems to be a fair quantity of ounce stone available for crushing. At the Emu North a battery has been put up with Government aid. Very little stone has been crushed there. The lode contained a little water, and the water drying out meant the shutting down of the battery. The crushing from the Emu North was taken from the open cut over a big width, and it went 5 dwts. over the plates and 16 dwts. in the tailings, or 21 dwts. in all. The lode is a big one and easily treated. In that case the Government might give further assistance. Again, there is Reidy's. I know that country fairly well, having worked there for a considerable time. One does not get too much water in the lode there, but water is obtainable by cross-cutting over the country, there being bars which keep the water back. There are big formations at Reidy's carrying gold over a

great width, and if the Government would come to the assistance of the industry there it would mean considerable employment and another township. The Government have assisted the farmer with superphosphate and they could similarly assist the outback miner. Again, there is a big iron proposition at Tuckabianna. Several crushings have been put through the Cue battery from that mine. There was a battery on the mine at one time. About one-third of the gold is got over the plates, and two-thirds are in the tailings. By cyaniding one gets only a very small portion of the gold. The ore, though not refractory, requires re-grinding into a slime, and this process yields practically the whole of the results, only from 1s. 6d. to 2s. being left in the residue. In the case of a crushing or two put through the Cue battery, the people were paid on 60 per cent. of the assay in the tailings. The Government could not extract any more, not having a re-grinder. In a case like that it seems wilful waste to leave 40 per cent. in the tailings for the want of a re-grinder. I know that as regards assistance to the prospecting parties, any legitimate prospector putting up a claim duly certified can get assistance. I am not making any complaint about what the Government have done, but am simply suggesting that they can go further. We realise that at present our mining fields are on the decline. I ask, are the Government at the present juncture doing all they can to assist people to go out prospecting and pioneering? We know what has happened lately with regard to sandalwood. The correspondence which has been made available shows what the position is. We know that a considerable proportion of sandalwood cutters put into prospecting what they make out of sandalwood. Some of them while pulling sandalwood are also prospecting. We know that instructions have gone out that sandalwood cutters who were not registered before the 30th June would not be allowed to get sandalwood. In my opinion that is absolutely wrong. We want to keep our people in the back parts of the State if we possibly can. We should encourage population there by every means. The regulation in question will, therefore, do more harm than good. In connection with water supplies in the back country, let me take the case of Jasper Hill. The men there have stuck to the place on their own, and have erected a ten-head mill. So far they have not made 2s., but they have kept their hearts up. And now instructions have come that they must pay £5 rent per year or the mill will be shifted. The well where the mill is was in the first instance sunk by prospectors. The windmill there is a second-hand one, having been removed from Lennonville, where it was erected 20 years ago. The men have been asked to pay £5 a year for the upkeep of the mill. But it is the men themselves who have kept the mill in repair, and they have also kept the shaft in repair. I repeat that so far

they have not made anything. Now they are being harassed by the Government to guarantee payment of rent on a mill which has already paid for itself over and over again. That kind of thing should not happen. In connection with the Cue district I have to raise the question of the Nallan water supply. Only about a month ago the engineer in charge of goldfields water supplies came up together with a representative of the Mines Department. It appears that the Nallan water supply is to be taken over by the Mines Department. Instructions have been issued that at Day Dawn the supply of water is to be cut off from the town, and that only a stand-pipe will be permitted, supplies from the stand-pipe to be delivered by a contractor. This will mean that the Day Dawn public will be charged about 2s. 6d. per 100 gallons for their water. The Fingal people have abandoned the south end of their property, and Bastian Bros. have taken up the abandoned area. They have put up a boiler and poppet legs, and have sunk a shaft 200 feet, besides doing a lot of development. They require water for their boiler, and the local water in and around Day Dawn is salt. It appears, therefore, that these people are to be charged 2s. 6d. per 100 gallons for water for their boiler.

The Minister for Works: If you had made inquiries from the departments you could have got full particulars.

Mr. CHESSON: The engineer was in Day Dawn and Cue a little time ago. I made inquiries there from the local office of the Water Supply Department and I was given that information. The cartage would probably mean 1s. 6d. per 100 gallons, and this, plus the charge of 1s. per 100 gallons for the water, makes a total of 2s. 6d. Such a charge means crucifying Daw Dawn.

The Minister for Works: We are trying to help the Day Dawn people.

Mr. CHESSON: I am glad to have that assurance. At one time Day Dawn had a population of between 3,000 and 4,000, and the Fingal mine has paid over two millions sterling in dividends. With Government assistance, Day Dawn will go ahead again. No greater imposts than can possibly be helped should be placed on the people outback. The Government are prepared to assist men who follow other avocations, and therefore the Government should be prepared to assist the miner who is willing to strike out for himself. We have big mining propositions all over the State: the Lancefield, the Lady Shenton, and the Fingal. No one can persuade me that in the Fingal mine there is only one shoot of gold. There has been no boring done in connection with the Fingal lode. The company are abandoning practically all their holdings, and there is a big outcrop which can be traced for a mile or more. We know that in the Fingal mine the best values were struck at the 400 feet level. Money spent in connection with boring on a known payable lode is money well spent. In the localities

I refer to the Government have at present all necessary facilities. There is a township in Day Dawn and a township in Cue. On the spot are post offices, banks, and other facilities. If the Government will spend money in those localities now, they will help to keep the people there, and thus the money will be well spent. Therefore the Government would act wisely in placing a greater amount for this purpose on the current year's Estimates. I know that three years ago only £8,000 was spent in mining. I do not yet know what the Government propose to spend this year. A big effort should be made to get money for this purpose placed on the Estimates. The Government can find money for farming and other industries. Seeing that the mines have pioneered every other industry in this State, the Government ought to find the money to develop outback mining centres. Money spent in diamond drilling would be money well spent, and I commend that suggestion to the Government. At present we are suffering certain disabilities, probably because of the war, the cost of all mining requisites has been very heavy, with the result that many mines have closed down. I ask the Government to give greater consideration to people outback. The Government have practically sounded the death knell of the goldfields. Under the proposed redistribution of seats, Murchison is to be the biggest electorate in Australia, and to have the biggest quota of the outer mining fields. It is simply advertising that the Murchison is down and out. People who go out and submit to all the hardships inseparable from life in remote areas are deserving of greater consideration, of at least as much consideration as is given to those in farming districts. I hope the Minister for Mines will favourably consider the question of diamond drilling and will provide greater facilities by way of State batteries. Again, when an option is given over a show, the inspector of mines should be the one to take samples, and the results of the Government assay should be made public. The ramps afoot are doing great harm to mining. In my district there are promising propositions, but when people are approached they conclude it is another ramp, and proceed to button up their pockets. Some guarantee should be given to the investing public. Samples can easily be transferred from, say, the Eastern Goldfields to the Murchison. In our view the samples should be taken by the inspector of mines, and the Government assayer should publish the results of his work. Then, and then only, will confidence be restored to the investing public.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.35]: I am pleased to know that a butter factory is to be established at Manjimup, and also that the Premier is inquiring into the advisability of building a line from Yornup to the Great Southern railway. There is noticeable a pessimistic feeling in respect of the fruit industry. Even the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) was crying stinking fish about that

industry the other night. I see no reason why the people of the South-West should be down-hearted about the fruit industry. The Minister for Agriculture has done more for that industry than any other Minister I have ever known. The industry is not in so bad a way as we are led to believe. The member for Mount Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) the other night cited a particularly hard case, which I know was true. We have had bad times, but let us not forget that men who started in the Bridgetown district on four acres some years ago have made good and are now earning a comfortable living on 10 acres, without any assistance whatever. Those men are not afraid of the future. Neither last season nor the season before was a good one, yet to-day we have men making livelihoods out of their orchards. We hear about low prices for exported fruit, and we require the Government to render assistance in finding new markets. I believe the Far East will provide a particularly good market. I know of men who are getting 12s. and 15s. per case for late fruit, and even last year, one of the worst on record, an orchardist received up to 40s. per case for late Yates. So it will be seen that the fruit industry is not in so bad a way, after all.

Mr. Harrison: The quality of the fruit is good.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, it is excellent, and I am pleased to say the Commissioner of Railways has made arrangements for a flat rate, under which we can transport our fruit anywhere within the State for 1s. 6d. a case. That is a boon for which we should be grateful. I was fighting the Commissioner for it last year, but he could not grant the concession until the regulations were amended. All that we want is a better system of distribution. Markets in the heart of the city will not give us any advantage in that respect.

Mr. Mann: It shows your lack of knowledge.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Possibly, but it shows also that the hon. member, with all his interest in the city markets, cannot aid the industry in that way.

The Minister for Agriculture: You know a lot about fruit!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, I know a good deal. I compliment the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) on his remarks the other evening. He was somewhat contradictory in places; he caused a good deal of hilarity, but I think everybody recognised that there was a lot of common sense in his views on migration. We are all ardent advocates of migration, but we require migration of the right sort. If the hon. member's information is correct, it is time the authorities endeavoured to bring about a better selection of migrants. I regret exceedingly that the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) did not take a broader view. He referred to the South-West in terms of disparagement. When first I came into the House the hon. member tried to discredit me by asking

a question dealing with the fruit industry. Subsequently he came down to the South-West and expressed himself as very pleased with all he saw. I am quite ready to support the development of the North-West, but it is narrow-minded in the hon. member to try to boost the North-West by discrediting the South-West.

Mr. Angelo: I ask for a withdrawal. I did not speak discreditably of the South-West.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member asks for a withdrawal.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Am I to withdraw what is true?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member denies it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: All right, I will withdraw. However, I will show the House how the hon. member endeavoured to discredit the South-West. Dealing with dairying he asked, could the South-West spare its expert to go to the North-West. Can the hon. member deny that?

Mr. Angelo: The expert went.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Well, what is the hon. member complaining of? The hon. member said we ought to go in for wool, and not bother about the butter of the South-West. Yet in his next breath he asked could the dairy expert from the South-West be spared. Cannot the hon. member endeavour to legislate for the whole of the State?

Mr. Angelo: I am trying to, but nobody else does.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Is his vision blinded by peanuts or by bananas? When the South-West is condemned, I say we of the South-West should hit back. When we stand here and speak of State enterprises or public utilities, we should call a spade a spade. I do not know whether the Carnarvon Meat Works and the Wyndham Meat Works are State enterprises or public utilities, but I know that when the question came before the House I was prepared to take my stand and vote as I thought I ought to vote. But that has nothing to do with the Address-in-reply. I regret there are people in Western Australia who are envious of the work and the development scheme of the Government in the South-West. I would pay a tribute to the Mitchell Government, who are the first to contemplate doing anything for the development of that part of the State. I have no regrets as to the past. I have applauded the Government for their development of the wheat areas, and I have never pointed the finger of scorn and asked for a Royal Commission to be appointed to inquire into the workings of the Industries Assistance Board.

Hon. P. Collier: That is sleepy old York.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I regret that this applies to many other places in Western Australia. People wonder why all this money is being spent in the South-West. I have been through the groups, and desire to pay a tribute to those men who are working on them. Their sole purpose is to make good. Despite the critics, these men are working for a pit-

tance. They have their wives and families to keep and are receiving 10s. a day. They are working hard. There may be a few black sheep in different groups. The scheme is so grand and so enormous that it takes a great deal to understand it. I will offer a few suggestions to the Premier, which he may accept or reject. We can improve our system of group settlement. The idea is good, and the policy is good, and I know that 75 per cent. of the men in my electorate will make good but it is heart-breaking for some of the men on these groups, who have possibly never taken an axe in hand before, to work for two or three years under foremen, wielding the axe, and working the saw, grubbing and burning and cross cutting without getting on to their own land. A better system than this could be introduced. The South-West is wet country. There is rain during every month of the year.

**The Minister for Works:** There is no prohibition there.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH:** I suggest to the Premier that good practical bushmen should be put on, even if they have to be paid 15s. or £1 a day, to go through the groups during the burning off season and burn up the rubbish, so that the men can get on to their holdings more quickly. I wish to mention No. 1 group, south of Manjimup. The men on that group, as in other groups, are working eight hours a day. The clearing under experienced foremen is costing less than £15 an acre. They are bound down to bring their cost within that sum, and I am pleased to say they are doing it. As one goes further south the cost of clearing will not reach that sum, because the country is more open, although the land is just as good. The largest trees are not being taken out. It would be much more costly to clear if they were taken out.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** No. 1 group is supposed to be the worst of them all.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH:** The groups are making good. The men are imbued with the idea of becoming producers very soon and sending their dairy products to the Eastern States. I believe the South-West will be the saving of this country. That is where we are going to get our dairy products and stop the drift of money to the Eastern States. I believe in the South-West in spite of the member for Gascoyne.

**Mr. Angelo:** I have said nothing to the contrary.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH:** The hon. member did. When I was on No. 1 group last Sunday week one of the settlers showed me what he had done. He had been breeding pigs. Last year, working eight hours a day on the group, he cultivated an acre and a half of land around the house, and sold over £60 worth of bacon and ham. He also sold £33 worth of cabbages and fed his pigs and cows on cabbages until they would eat no more. He also stated that he grew Brussel sprouts eight feet high, and had to get a mattock in order to grub them out. People may laugh at that, but he produced his books to verify the statement. It would be an eye-opener to mem-

bers if they could see what this settler has done. There is always a fly in the ointment, however. Those people who are expecting to make good next year on their own pastures, may be faced with serious difficulty. I want to know from the Minister for Agriculture what provision is being made for supplying the settlers with dairy cattle so that the groups may be stocked at the time when they are ready for stock. The sustenance to the settlers will cease, and if the Government have not made preparations along these lines it will be a bad lookout for the men and for the State as well. Ninety per cent. of the people on the groups are contented and happy. Their wives and children are also contented. There is this one problem with regard to stock, however, on which I require the assurance of the Minister.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin:** Do you think the Government would clear the land as they are doing and make no provision for stocking it?

**Mr. J. H. SMITH:** I saw no such provision made and I want to know what is being done. I do not want these groups to be made ready for cultivation without any stock being at hand to put upon them. Where are the cattle coming from? In my electorate there are 13 or 14 groups. Each man will be given from six to 10 cows and there are 20 men in each group. This will mean a lot of stock.

**Mr. C. C. Maley:** They will get a lot from the Midland lands.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH:** I hope the Government are alive to the position. I thought when I asked a question the other day about agricultural colleges that something might be done in Bridgetown or Balingup or Manjimup to establish an agricultural college, and import pedigreed stock to be used there. If we had good pedigreed stock we could, with the herds in the district, breed something better than now exists there, and form the nucleus of a herd from which distribution could be made to the group settlers. I regret that the scheme has not yet reached maturity. The Minister's reply was very evasive. No reference has been made in the Speech to the Hospitals Bill. This matter affects my district very materially. If the medical profession cannot be nationalised, something will have to be done to give people hospital accommodation and medical attention, because they are not in a position to pay for medical attention. A good deal of fuss was also made about the Closer Settlement Bill last session. I intend to twit the Government with regard to this. Were they sincere when they introduced that Bill? Do they want land that is alongside existing railways thrown open for selection or was it only a red herring drawn across the trail? I advised numbers of people in my district to get rid of some of their land, because they had too much, and several properties have been offered to the Government at reasonable rates; I should say at least £2 an acre under their value. The people there recognise that they hold too much land and are afraid of taxation. The Government spent a good deal

of money on local boards, and on the inspection of the properties. The reports of these boards were invariably favourable to the purchase of the land. The Government then sent along their experts to see what the country was like, and these, too, reported favourably upon it. Some of the properties are 30 years old, and can be cleared for £6 or £7 an acre. It is better land than that at the Nornalup Inlet, for instance.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You condemned the member for Gascoyne for speaking in a derogatory manner of another part of the State, and you are now doing it yourself.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I said it was equal to the land at Nornalup Inlet.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You said it was better.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I say it is equal to it. Will that satisfy the hon. member?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That will do.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is good land in both places. Members will notice the departmental expense that is going on all the time in reference to these properties. The district surveyor reported favourably on the land, and said it would be easy to cut up and would make ideal blocks for closer settlement. I understand the Premier also approved of the purchase, but referred the whole thing to the manager of the Agricultural Bank. Mr. McLarty, however, turned down the proposition or deferred decision to a future date. This is what makes me ask if the Government were sincere about the Closer Settlement Bill. This sort of thing happens throughout Western Australia with regard to lands abutting on our railways.

Mr. Lutey: Will you support an unimproved land values tax?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course I will. Referring to the position of local authorities, I wish to thank the Minister for Works for the courtesy extended to me since Parliament was last in session, and also for the assistance given to my district during the last two years.

Hon. P. Collier: A case of spoils to the victors!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: More power should be granted to local authorities. If £100 or £200 is to be spent in a road board district, the funds should be made available to the local authorities, who should spend the money. In Bridgetown we have an up to date road board and we are spending £1,400 this year. We have to spend it before the 30th September next. There are no unemployed in my district.

Mr. Wilson: Where did you get all that money?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: From rates. We tax ourselves to the extent of 2s. in the £.

Mr. Hughes: And you will not allow us to impose a tax in Perth!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The reason why we have no unemployed in our district is that the local board put on 45 men, who will be engaged continuously till the end of September, and I can see employment after that date. As to water supplies, a rate of 3s. has been im-

posed in the Bridgetown area. The water supply there was put in at the outset for the benefit of the Railway Department and now the townspeople are asked to contribute more than their share towards the interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of that supply. Coming to the question of railways, I wish to refer to one which has been on the cards ever since Lord Forrest's time. In his days the construction of the line was promised. The present Leader of the Opposition, when a Minister of the Crown, also made a sort of promise. In addition, the present Premier, as well as Sir Henry Lefroy and Sir Newton Moore, promised that the line should be built. The railway I refer to is mentioned in the Speech and will start from a point south of Bridgetown and connect up with the Great Southern line. The length of the railway will be about 90 miles. The Premier, in reply to a question the other day regarding this railway, said that investigations were being made concerning the advantages to arise from the construction of the line. I heard that one of those who are on the board of inquiry went to Cranbrook in a motor car and came back again. I do not know whether this is the sort of investigation which is to be carried out. The Premier has been supplied with statistics regarding the district, and I will guarantee that those statistics will not be shaken. They are conservative to a degree, and I challenge anyone to discount them. The railway will run from Yornup to Cranbrook, a distance of 90 miles. The statistics with which the Premier has been furnished refer to that part of the country to be traversed by the railway, starting from six miles on the east side of Yornup and six miles on the west side of Cranbrook, extending for ten miles along each side of the railway route. The railway will serve a large area of land, 479,328 acres of which have been selected at prices ranging from 5s. to £1 per acre. All the land is sheep-proof fenced, ring-barked and subdivided. Dams have been sunk where necessary and other improvements have been carried out. If the value of the land is assessed on the conservative basis of £1 per acre, we get the total value of £479,328. Of that area, 16,046 acres, which are within ten miles of the railway, have been wholly cleared. Reckoning the cost of that work at £10 per acre, we have a total value of work done in clearing of £160,460. That country is cultivated and under clover and other fodder grasses. Splendid pasture is obtained there. The area part-cleared represents 23,000 acres; all the blackboys have been grubbed up and the small timber removed, the remaining larger timber having been rung. Placing an estimate upon the value of that area of £2 10s., we have a total of £57,500. In view of these figures which I intend to present to the House, if the Premier will not agree to the construction of the railway, public opinion will, I believe, force him to do so. There are 411 acres of orchards in full bearing and tons of



fruit are rotting under the trees because the railway promised so many years ago has not been constructed.

Hon. P. Collier: People who have railway facilities cannot market their fruit.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: With better organisation I believe that they could do so. It is because of the abnormal conditions obtaining at present that we cannot get a market for that fruit. For my part, I am not pessimistic concerning the future of the industry.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a bad look-out if we cannot get the market.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Placing a value of £50 per acre on the orchards, we get an additional sum of £20,550. When Mr. Robert Farquhar came to Western Australia with many thousands of pounds in his possession, he bought a property 40 miles out along the route of this railway. He spent a considerable sum in improving the country and placing it under fruit trees. To-day the orchard is non est, and Mr. Farquhar is many thousands of pounds out of pocket. Mr. Farquhar has left Western Australia a broken-hearted and disappointed man. He had looked forward to his boys taking over the property in full bearing and making a success of it. I welcome the fullest inquiry, with a view to the verification of my figures. I welcome that inquiry by departmental officers or by anyone else concerned. Regarding the stock held in this part of the State, there are 90,686 sheep, nearly all of which are Merino ewes. Placing upon them a value of £1 per head, which is a low estimate, we have another £90,686. The settlers have gone in for breeding horses, and there are 1,616 horses there, comprising half-draughts, heavy draughts and good delivery horses. Valuing them at £12 per head, we have a total of £19,339. As to cattle, there are 1,333 cows. They are not producing those commodities which, were the railway facilities available, would help to stop the drift towards the Eastern States of our orders for butter and other dairy produce.

The Minister for Agriculture: We will put them on the groups.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: How can the Government put them on the groups? What a beautiful thing to say! There are 70 returned soldiers there, and are people to come here under conditions which mean that those men's interests are to be sacrificed in favour of the newcomers? Is that how the Government intend to starve one section of the community in order to feed another section?

The Minister for Agriculture: You misunderstood my interjection.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If that is so, I am sorry. There are 1,333 cows not producing dairy products because the settlers are too far away from a market. Instead they are rearing calves. Under those conditions, cows will never pay unless transport facilities are offered shortly. Putting the value of the cows at £8 per head, they represent £10,664. In addition, there are 446 pigs in the district which, valued at £2 or £2 10s., will give a

value of £1,115. These statistics have not been compiled without much expense and much labour, and I can vouch for their accuracy. Reckoning all these together we get a total value of £840,402. A few miles out along the route of the railway, we have the finest belt of jarrah in the State to-day and Mr. Kerr, the manager of the Wilgarup Timber Company and of the Co-operative Trading Company, of Greenbushes, is prepared to build part of that railway for a concession. He is prepared to build 30 miles of the line and hand it back to the Government after ten years, only charging the cost of the rails. I have been right through the whole of that country, and I know of no better proposition. Last year I spoke on this subject when the Premier introduced the Bill dealing with the Nornalup railway. On that occasion I said that there was only one railway that was more important than the Nornalup railway and the one I referred to was the Yornup-Cranbrook line. I can prove that by the figures I am quoting to-night.

Member: The State sawmills will be looking for that jarrah belt soon.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Before tea I was dealing with the timber industry and the need for constructing a railway that would be in the interests of the settlers concerned as well as of the State. There is a belt of timber covering a stretch of 20 miles. It comprises 250,000 acres of jarrah, and experts estimate that it carries six to twelve loads per acre. A timber company were prepared to build the line and pay royalty for the timber on the concession, but they also wanted to get the timber from the adjoining properties. If the line were built the Government would receive royalty from the timber on the unalienated land and also the freight from the timber on the alienated holdings. Estimating the value of the timber at 7s. 6d. per load and the quantity at eight loads per acre, the 250,000 acres would represent £750,000. These figures are astounding, and members will probably wonder why such a line was not built 20 years ago in accordance with the promise given by every Government that have been in power. I am afraid we in the South-West have been too modest, or is it that the claims of this part have not been sufficiently strongly advocated? If the 90 miles of railway were built—the route presents no great engineering difficulties—at a cost of £4,000 per mile, the outlay would be £360,000. Against that, horses, stock and land cleared in the district represent a value of £840,000. In the timber alone the Government would have an asset of £390,000 over and above the cost of constructing the line. I trust that public opinion will compel the Government to sanction the building of this railway before the session ends. I am not here to boom the South-West, but I wish to tell the truth about it and to urge that its requirements receive consideration.

Hon. P. Collier: You are very modest in the matter of railways.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A railway is required out from Boyup Brook through a district which includes some of the finest agricultural land in the State. The Premier has been given conclusive proof that wheat can be grown there 40 bushels to the acre and oats 4 tons to the acre. Mr. McCallum, the wool expert, said the wool produced there was amongst the best he had examined in Western Australia and that it was fit to exhibit in the Melbourne or Sydney show. There are too many pessimists in this country. It makes by blood boil when I hear these individuals—

Hon. P. Collier: From York?

Mr. J. H. Smith: Yes, and other places—who have no faith except in their own little centres. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) last night made statements that are not borne out by fact. He endeavoured to ridicule the Primary Producers' Association and the president, Mr. Monger. I almost felt ashamed to own him as a co-Parliamentarian. When I sat on the Opposition side of the House and asked the member for Pilbara to show his independence, he spoke on behalf of the National-Labour Party. That is a truth which cannot be denied. This is the bold gentleman who spoke last night about us being wedded to this party and referred to Mr. Monger as "king of kings." The member for Pilbara is not the man to criticise Mr. Monger.

Mr. Wilson: He did not support you at that time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: He did not support me when I required support. I was sitting on the Opposition side as an independent, sad and lonely, and I decided to take my seat behind the Government who are doing their best for the South-West. The Mitchell Government is the only Government that has endeavoured to do something for the South-West. I am advocating the Boyup Brook railway also. Boyup Brook is a little place at which a Royal Commission sat and was told that I was not a fit and proper person to represent it. However, if the electors want me they will return me. If they do not, they will return a better man.

Mr. Angelo: You are pessimist.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not; neither am I a pea-nut king nor a banana king. I regret that the Premier is not in his seat. I should have liked him to be present to hear my references to these railway requirements.

The Colonial Secretary: Did you give notice?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Did the Minister give notice that he was going to be appointed to the Cabinet or what was the strength of his appointment? It is no joke for people in my electorate, battling in that heavily timbered country, to come to Perth time after time to interview the Premier regarding railway facilities. It is no joke for them to have to pay their out of pocket expenses to organise these deputations.

There were two deputations to the Premier, and they have received nothing but promises of inquiries. We want a railway from Jarnadup to the south of Lake Muir. The Premier said he was astonished to learn there was so much good land in this district and promised to make inquiries, but no inquiry has been made yet. I do not think the Advisory Board were even sent there. The other day, in answer to a question, the Premier said the Advisory Board would make an investigation. Investigations were made 20 years ago; we want the Government to do something. The Premier is assured of my support for his South-West policy. I shall support him through thick and thin. Those people who cavil about the policy for the South-West should visit that part of the State and satisfy themselves. We are not afraid of the scheme, the land, the rainfall or anything else. Let critics satisfy themselves and then, if they can honestly and truthfully say the expenditure is not warranted, well and good. There seems to be a desire to condemn the scheme before it has had a chance to prove itself.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who is trying to condemn it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The deputy Leader of the Opposition has been one of our best friends, but some of the members on the Government side of the House, married to their own little centres, and some outside critics, have sought to condemn the scheme.

Hon. P. Collier: The main force of the opposition came from your own conference.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not say that members criticise the Premier's scheme because they want to unduly boost their own centres. I think their opposition is due to shortsightedness and parochialism. I do hope that Parliament will give the Government the full assistance to which they are entitled in regard to their developmental policy. I can quote case after case where men have made good. I could say a good deal more but the Minister for Agriculture is anxious to speak and I have no wish to take up any further time. If the railway Bill to which I have referred is not introduced by the Government, then I shall submit it myself, and if members make full investigation into the question, I shall be able to claim their support.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. K. Maley—Greenough) [8.3]: May I first of all tender an apology to the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) for an interjection I made last evening while he was speaking, and which was made in the heat of the moment. I know the hon. member is not thin-skinned and perhaps does not require an apology. All the same, I submit it. May I also express my regret that the vacation has not restored to good health, especially after his recent trip, the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen). There is no member in this House who is more esteemed, and we all deplore the fact

that the condition of his health is such as it is. I do not know that I need accept the invitation of the Leader of the Opposition to give a dissertation upon the negotiations that proceeded between the Premier and myself during the recess, and to which the hon. gentleman referred. The Leader of the Opposition has a capacity for humorously dealing with certain subjects, and when he points the gun on such occasions personally, I think, the best thing to do is to say, "Don't shoot, I will come down." I do wish to say, however, that we all live in political glass houses, even the member for Pilbara.

Mr. Underwood: Very light glass, too.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: One is skating on very thin ice to-day on the questions of executive control and the subordination of parliamentary government to that control, as has been said by many members. So far as I am personally concerned, while I keep within the four corners of the political platform to which I have subscribed, I shall not accept dictation from any body outside this House in regard to my conduct as a member of Parliament. I am responsible to the constituents who sent me here.

Mr. Marshall: Why do you not make that declaration outside?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep order.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am going to claim the same right as any member on the other side of the House, and I want it to go forth that I claim the right to confer with my political associates in the organisation to which I belong, and that I have never been subjected to the control of any outside body while I hold the appointment I do, and that I shall never lead the Country Party from behind. I am only claiming for myself what other members would claim for themselves. I know that the Leader of the Opposition appeals to us all when he gets into a happy vein on the treatment of political subjects. I do not know, however, whether the hon. member was justified—although up to a point he was decidedly humorous—in the allusions he made to the episode which he described as the meeting of the lion and the mouse. I venture to say that the hon. member is aware that what he described was taking place in connection with his own party, and if it comes to a question of lions and mice, the same remarks may be applied to rats in his own quarter.

Mr. Chesson: We have them now.

Mr. Wilson: Where are they?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They are apparent to-day. Take the conduct of affairs of the political party with which the Leader of the Opposition is associated, though not in this State, but in New South Wales.

Mr. Marshall: You might just as well go to America or to England. We have never gone outside of this State to make convictions.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: You have had one recently. Still, I am not going to throw stones in that direction. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Pilbara know that when one is appointed to a Cabinet position, that in addition to the oath of loyalty, he also takes an oath that he will do what is right in Cabinet. If it will comfort the hon. gentleman opposite to know it, I will tell him that I asked the secretary of my own political organisation that if he could not refrain from cracking the party whip over my head in my office, he had better keep away. I do not know what would have happened on an occasion like that if such a request had been made by my friends opposite when the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) was holding the position of secretary of the Trades Hall.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He had more sense than to do such a thing.

Hon. P. Collier: In the course of about five years he was in my office not more than four times.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have never gone about this country as a Minister of the Crown making use of my position to gain an advantage for my own political party. I am a little bit above tactics of that description. It is not right to do such a thing in any circumstances.

Mr. Underwood: No member in this House has ever suggested it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There has been a lot of suggestion and I am endeavouring to put myself right in regard to the allegations under which I have been resting since last evening. The remarks came from the member for Pilbara. Regarding the policy of the Government and the policy of land settlement generally, it is right that it should not be understood by the Opposition. That is a function of government and the Opposition are there to criticise at all times and to profess not to understand the attitude of the Government. But it is not right, and in those circumstances cannot be justified, that a want of knowledge should be responsible for the attitude of several members who have spoken on the Address-in-reply this session. It is really a question of save us from our friends. Why does not the member for Pilbara cross to the other side of the House? I regard him in the same way as I regard some members of my own party, notably the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson), who do not profess to understand the Government policy.

Hon. P. Collier: Then what are they supporting?

Mr. Underwood: I know you can issue an ultimatum which we can resent.

The Minister for Mines: You came to the House as an independent.

Mr. Underwood: And you are not going to adopt me.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no intention of doing so. I want to say that the policy with which my colleagues in Cabinet and I have been associated, and are definitely committed to, we shall stand to,

and it would be a strange thing, as has been suggested, if we did not know what it was and in regard to which we had no wish to accept the responsibility.

Mr. Marshall: Only provided it was not a failure.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** The Premier will not be associated with a failure any more than I will be and I intend to take my full share of the responsibility. Regarding Mr. Monger, I suppose that he, as the head of the Primary Producers' Association, is entitled to express his opinion, and in his recent utterance he absolutely declared that he was expressing his own views. In that respect I am not my brother's keeper, though I am not going to say that he is not as much entitled to his own opinion as is the member for Pilbara to his, or indeed any other member of the community.

Capt. Carter: Would you call his presidential address an expression of private opinion?

Mr. Underwood: He said it was.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I do not care what Mr. Monger says in his presidential address, but I am going to refute absolutely the suggestion that the party whom I have the honour to lead in this House have been or are in any way subject to outside influence.

Mr. Underwood: What about that resolution?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I deny that absolutely, and I do not care what the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is belly-aching or muttering about.

Mr. Underwood: I am not belly-aching.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Pilbara must keep order.

Mr. Underwood: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** This is a subject which is easily capable of raising the ire of the member for Pilbara.

Mr. Underwood: I have no ire.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** As to the policy of land settlement, after all said and done I can only repeat myself. A century ago, after the close of the Napoleonic wars, the unrest in Europe promoted the initial development of Australia. Here to-day, after another great war, practically 100 years afterwards, Western Australia with the other States is entering upon the most tremendous phase of immigration that the Australian unit of the British Empire has yet experienced. I will not say that everything is perfect as regards organisation. The agreement entered into by the Premier of this State with the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments does not call upon us to receive migrants and establish them in group settlements until next month. The agreement provides that in four years from the date of signature Western Australia shall settle 6,000 individual settlers upon the land at a capital cost not exceeding £1,000 each. It was not until 12 months after the signature of the agreement that the Government of this State were to commence the establishment of the migrants on the group holdings.

In the intervening 12 months the migrants were to gain local experience. However, conditions in Western Australia hastened the initiation of the scheme. Owing to the presence in this State of people who in the absence of inducement to remain, might have left Western Australia, the group settlement scheme was started practically 12 months ahead of its time. What would have been the position of this State to-day in regard to the ebb and flow of population if we had had no group settlement policy? What would have been our position as regards our gold mining industry and the exodus of people from that industry to the Eastern States? We have not been able to prevent all from going who wanted to go, but we have prevented a number of them. What would have been the position had we had no definite land policy? It is a pretty good performance to have over 1,200 men definitely established in the group settlements 12 months before the agreement bound us to commence. Hon. members have contended that in view of the high cost of development we should have had expert gangs clearing the land, so that the settler might get on to his holding at the lowest possible capital cost. There has never been a time in the history of the world when any country has undertaken to settle the London cockney or the London cabman, without any capital, on the land and give him an opportunity to make good. If we had the land ready cleared for such migrants, they would never have the opportunity of being tried out on the soil, and we should not have a chance of knowing whether they were worthy of the opportunity which was being given to them. Moreover, to place them on developed holdings straight away and expect them to make good would be ridiculous. Until the fourth or fifth year they will go through a probationary period. Their operations are being directed by departmental officers, field officers, and local foremen. If they do not work up to the standard their 19 mates think they should, they are liable to be put off. That is perhaps a necessary safeguard. The whole policy of land settlement is so simple that it cannot be understood, or will not be understood, by certain people.

Mr. Marshall: Will you not be so kind as to say that it is impossible to understand?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** No. I say it will not be understood.

Mr. Underwood: It is not understandable.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** After all, the scheme in itself is so extraordinarily simple that its very simplicity constitutes its genius. Criticism has been levelled at the fact that the organisation of the New Settlers' League is the instrument by which migrants are found employment here until such time as they gain local experience and become qualified to go on groups. It is a fact, and a very extraordinary fact, that during the war the whole of the provision for Red Cross funds was made, not by the direct appropriation of Parliaments, but by the voluntary efforts of the

people throughout the British Dominions. An incidental result was to keep all the people interested in their men at the front. As regards the New Settlers' League, it is claimed that the work of this league should be an ordinary function of the Government. But are not the Government entitled to use the goodwill of the citizens for the placing of the immigrants as they arrive here?

Mr. Underwood: At the cost of Western Australians.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
Oh!

Mr. Underwood: Yes, that is so.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
With the development of the wheat belt and the group settlements by the clearing of another two million acres, we may not be able, in the absence of other avenues of employment, to keep the migrants in work continuously. In future, and especially during the winter months, when employment is at its lowest ebb, it may not be possible to deal with the question of employment by present methods. But at a period in the history of Australia when the State Governments are entering upon schemes of immigration, it should be the function and the care of the Commonwealth Government so to arrange matters that some big national undertaking shall be proceeded with at a time when it will represent help in the absorption of the ebb and flow of workers. What is happening here must happen in all the other States in regard to this matter. Surely one may reasonably expect the Commonwealth Government to have enough constructive ability to arrange that at a time like this some great national work like the unification of the railway gauges between the capital cities of the States shall be put in hand to help the various State Governments in the absorption of labour at a time when the stress is most severe. All these migrants can easily be absorbed during harvest time and during the summer months. In this State we have always had a recurring difficulty in finding employment, especially during June and July, for such of our people as are following seasonal occupations. The wharves are quiet, and shearing, although started, is by no means in full swing.

Mr. Underwood: It is in full swing.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
In the North perhaps, but not in the southern districts; not until next month.

Mr. Underwood: Shearing in Western Australia is now in full swing.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
We have heard a good deal about the fruit-growing industry. During the years 1919-20, 1920-21 and 1921-22 the Commonwealth Government operated a fruit pool for the benefit of Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and South Australia. The loss on those pools for the three years has been in the vicinity of £600,000. The fruitgrowers of Western Australia, although Commonwealth taxpayers, have not received any benefit whatever from the operation of those pools, notwithstanding

which, as residents of Western Australia, paying the highest per capita taxation from the earning point of view of all in the Commonwealth, they have to bear their share of the losses on those pools. Yet our poor little local jam factory, assisted by the State Government and of very great use to local fruit-growers, is the victim of dumping by jam manufacturers of the Eastern States. All these things have been brought under the notice of the Prime Minister, but all we can get is an admission that our claims are warranted, and the assurance that some day we shall have relief. It is like a voice crying in the wilderness to ask for any practical adjustment.

Mr. Underwood: Blame the other fellow; he is not here.

Mr. Lutey: If he were, we might be able to deal with him.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
I can assure the hon. member that my statement is absolutely correct.

Mr. Underwood: But do not excuse yourself by blaming the Commonwealth Government.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
I am not excusing anybody. Immediately before the last election the Federal Government constituted a Federal fruit council, a Federal meat council and a Federal dairy council. Yet the Commonwealth Government refused assistance to those organisations.

Mr. Underwood: You have a Country Party Government in the Federal arena. What are you growling about?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
The State Government have recognised the value of the services of the State fruit advisory board. To permit them to enter into the Commonwealth organisation, the State Government last year advanced £200, more particularly with a view to getting the fruit-growers' organisation to establish a board from which the Government could receive advice.

Mr. Underwood: The Country Party are well represented on that, are they not?

Mr. Pickering: It is a very good board.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**  
In spite of several instances of account sales furnished by individual growers at fruit-growers' conferences to show the alleged condition of the industry, one cannot but notice that no reference is ever made to those things on which a profit has been secured. The fruitgrowers should first remedy the existing condition in point of local distribution, which is easily capable of 100 per cent. improvement if proper methods were devised. It is much better that they should sit down and put their house in order before going to the Eastern States to join Commonwealth councils or, alternatively, looking abroad. The State Government have done everything they can to establish markets overseas. We have paid £200 as our share of the expenses of a delegation, consisting of Messrs. Meares, McDougall and Chaffey, that went Home last year to make representations to the Imperial

Government for the preferential treatment of Australian fruit. In addition, we are contributing £300 per annum to the cost of the Commonwealth Commissioner for Trade in the Near East.

Mr. Pickering: Is that for fruit only?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, he is a general trade Commissioner. We are contributing also to the expenses of the Trade Commissioner in China, Mr. Little.

Mr. Pickering: He has been sacked.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In the language of the hon. member, he has been sacked, but only recently. The Government put the "Kangaroo" on the run to Java and Singapore primarily to open up trade with the Near East. Also we sent a trade delegation up there.

Mr. Underwood: You sent some tourists up there.

Mr. Harrison: Western Australia is the better known for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not going to say there is a tremendous trade to be opened up with the teeming millions of Java, but certainly there was a reasonable prospect of promoting trade, particularly with Singapore, if the merchants responsible had known how to open up and keep that trade. The State Shipping Service has given them reasonable shipping facilities for that trade. I am pleased to be able to say the fresh fruit trade is developing, although our meat trade and our ordinary trade with manufactured goods are remaining stationary.

Mr. Willcock: Not the meat trade.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, it has declined.

Mr. Underwood: What about the Fremantle meatworks?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There are two branches of the meat trade. There is the frozen meat trade between Wyndham and the Islands. The biggest parcel we have sent up in the "Kangaroo" to Sourabaya or Singapore has not exceeded 50 tons.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I think you will find it was 60 tons.

Mr. Willcock: What about livestock?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is another trade altogether. The Government have nothing to do with that. I am speaking of the trade which our manufacturers, with the advantages which the Government have placed at their disposal, ought to be able to secure.

Mr. Willcock: What about the cattle trade from Derby?

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not very great. The teeming millions of Java, of whom we hear so much, can only afford to feed themselves on a few handfuls of rice. Of course, among the wealthy Chinese and the European population there will be a demand for meat, but the principal opening will come with the establishment of the new naval base and the opportunities which, natur-

ally, a big trans-shipment port like Singapore should afford. On the one hand it is said we should have nothing to do with State trading; on the other hand, we are told it is our business to find new markets. Years ago, when we produced but a few hundred bushels of wheat over and above the local consumption, our merchants looked abroad for new markets. To-day it ought to be the function of the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Manufacturers, and of the merchants to open up trade with the Near East. Personally, I think one or two commercial travellers representing our local firms would be of more value in securing orders in the Near East than all the trade commissions we could send up there. I wish to disavow a statement that has been made concerning myself, as a sort of Christopher Columbus or the discoverer of some new region, because of my recent visit to the Esperance district. Owing to railway construction being under way in that district and to a scheme for the development of the mallee, it was necessary that a Minister should visit it during the recess. The potentialities of that part of the State from the point of view of wheat production were known some 20 years ago. That portion of the Esperance district that would be opened up by the Esperance-Northwards railway is the mallee country. Although it is in the safest rainfall zone, it is by no means the most important part of the district. It is easy to understand why in years gone by the port of Esperance was not opened up. There would not have been nearly the amount of development between Northam and Southern Cross had it not been for the opening up of the goldfields. There has been an immense amount of settlement, which has now extended as far as Southern Cross, due in the beginning to the great markets provided by Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. I lift my hat to those 15 or 20 settlers in the Esperance district who have battled through the most appalling conditions that ever settlers had to face. I could not, however, base my judgment of the Esperance land upon the result of the 20 years' work of those men. If one were to judge the productiveness of the eastern wheat belt by the records of the settlers under the Industries Assistance Board, one would not have a high opinion of it. The average production of the assisted settlers in the wheat belt is about five bushels to the acre. Apart from these, of course, there are many practical farmers who have done well and made fortunes. If we took the average of the assisted settlers, could we say that wheat growing had been profitable? How, therefore, can we judge the Esperance district if we adopt the same system?

Mr. Munsie: Do you think that is all the wheat they have grown in the wheat belt?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but that is the average of the assisted settlers.

Mr. Munsie: I would not say that is all the wheat they have grown there.

Mr. Pickering: What do you mean?

Mr. Munsie: You know what I mean.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We all deplore the fact that we have not a large continuous run of uniformly good country in this State such as we see in parts of South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. The area from Norseman eastward for 150 miles, and 100 miles in another direction contains some 15,000 square miles, or roughly nine million acres of country that is 60 to 70 per cent. uniformly good. This is a larger expanse of good country than we have in any other part of the State. One of the features about the wheat belt is that the land is patchy. There are good belts of uniformly good country and then patches of poor sandplain. In the Esperance district, about 40 miles west of Grass Patch and 130 miles or so east, by 100 miles deep, there is probably five to six million acres of first class country from good mallee to good forest. It is country that men following good methods of farming could succeed in turning to profitable account by wheat growing. The old bogeys with regard to the Esperance district have been knocked on the head. It was said there was not enough land there to justify the construction of the railway. This bogey was destroyed by the Agricultural Commission. The salt bogey was then trotted out. It was stated that no water could be obtained by sinking, and that if dams were put down they would not hold. Last year every dam in the Esperance district was full to overflowing. For the last 25 years the dam at Norseman has never been empty.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: All the dams were full before the railway was reported on.

Mr. Munsie: I wish you would question your leader on the subject now.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Why should it not be possible to open up the country by means of lines of railway, such as the goldfields wood lines? The wood-line companies are plate-laying practically every day in the week and extending their lines. Railways such as these carry greater loads of timber than we would require to carry, and are put down at a minimum cost. It should be possible to satisfy many claims for railways by means of these light lines, which later on could be ballasted as the conditions and the development of the country warrant.

Capt. Carter: What gauge have you in mind?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We should have to continue the present gauge. There is no occasion to expend up to £4,000 a mile on building a line to conform to the standards of safety which are usually prescribed for the travelling public. The travelling public would have to take the risk that would be involved if they travelled on an ordinary wood line for the sake of being able to get their produce to market.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That would be all right until a railway was built.

Mr. Pickering: Experiments with cheap railways have been tried before.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Repeated remarks are made about the unimproved land along existing railways. For four or five years scarcely a single acre of land was cleared in this State. Development stopped dead. The Government are setting out now to double the area of cleared land in the wheat belt, and to increase the area by two million acres. If that is accomplished people who travel about the country will perhaps be able to see double the amount of development, and this will justify my statement that our landholders to-day are working harder than any other section of the community, and that the community as a whole is working harder than any other community on earth.

Mr. Lutey: One man cannot develop thousands of acres.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There may be a few isolated instances where the land has not been developed.

Capt. Carter: Cannot we get at these few isolated instances?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They must exist, of course. For a community of 343,000 men, women and children to do all that is being done here is a wonderful record. Our farmers have under crop about two and three-quarter million acres, from which will come produce and freight for our railways next season. They are also putting under fallow to crop during the ensuing year another 1¼ million acres.

Capt. Carter: What is the average distance from a railway?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: For a small population like ours to be turning over about 10 acres for every man, woman, and child in the country is a record of which we might well be proud.

Mr. Munsie: I quite agree with you.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In fact, when New South Wales or Victoria, or even South Australia, had a population of 343,000 souls, I do not suppose any one of those States was putting under cultivation 500,000 acres per year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There has been a great advance in machinery since then.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Our results are very fine illustrations of what the producers of this State, whether agricultural or mining or timber, can do. Now I wish to refer to cotton cultivation in Western Australia. Firstly I wish to pay a tribute to the energy and zeal displayed in this connection by the member for Roebourne, Mr. Teesdale.

Mrs. Cowan: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I must acknowledge his efforts to stimulate the Government and citizens generally towards the production of what he termed the great white wealth of cotton.

Mr. Angelo: Mr. Teesdale was also very active in the distribution of seed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I regret that the member for Roebourne is absent to-night, but he will be able to pick

me up on my departmental Estimates later on. I now go back to the time when the hon. member, during a visit to Queensland, became so impressed with the progress cotton growing had made in that State that he wired to Perth recommending the Government to engage a cotton growing authority from Queensland. The Government very willingly and readily fell in with that recommendation. Mr. Jones came to this State to advise the Government as to promoting the cultivation of cotton here. I do not wish to say anything about Mr. Jones going to Bruce Rock, where our most successful farmers are, and telling them that they ought to be growing cotton. The Agricultural Department set about establishing experimental plots at numerous centres in the South-Western Division, from Northampton to Albany. Cotton was grown on those experimental plots either from seed supplied by the department or from seed purchased from Mr. Teesdale, who brought quantities of seed with him from Queensland. The object was to ascertain definitely whether cotton could be grown successfully under the conditions obtaining in our South-Western Division. This was done before Mr. Jones came here, and I now wish to give the House the results of the experiments—

Early in 1922 public interest was stirred by the reports of wonderful yields of cotton in Queensland, and by propaganda from the British Australian Cotton Growing Association. Applications for seed came to hand daily, and small packets were distributed to intending growers free, with instructions for planting and a request that the result of the trial be sent to the Agricultural Department. A very small percentage of returns has been received from these small experimenters, suggesting failures in the large majority of cases. Several hundred free packets were distributed in this manner. In order to supplement these trials, and that some information might be gained as to the suitability or otherwise of various areas in the south-western agricultural districts of the State, a series of experiments was planned in representative districts. An endeavour was made to choose farmers known to the department for these experiments, as it was realised that the value of the results depended to a large extent on the thoroughness with which the instructions for planting were carried out.

Here follow in the report the conditions under which the experiments were made. I may say that the conditions under which cotton is grown in most countries, and particularly in the Rockhampton district of Queensland, include a particular summer rainfall, from mid-November to mid-April, of 28 inches.

Mr. Pickering: What temperature?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A very humid temperature. I will not detail all the individual experiments, which,

as I have said, extended throughout the South-Western Division. Here is the record of the experiment made on the Morredin State Farm—

This seed was obtained from the "Sunday Times" Proprietary, and grown by Carpenter Burhop. The soil was heavy chocolate manured with stable manure, and watered regularly. May 31st, plants carried from 20 to 30 bolls each. This is a poor yield when compared with plants which carried over 50 bolls. Quality, cotton rather stained with watering. Staple about one inch long. Plants attained a height of one to two feet, and flowered. Many plants were attacked by an insect pest, and some bolls blown off by the wind before maturity. Bolls started to open on May 8th. The bolls were attacked by some insect which pierced the boll and spoilt the staple inside.

Here is the record of the Busselton experiment—

Soil, sandy loam. Planted 4th September. Germination, nil; ground too wet and cold. A second sowing was made about December 20th, but too late in the season.

At Gosnells there was a fair crop—

Soil, grey clay, well manured with cow dung. Kept very clean from weeds. Planted, bulk at the end of October; empty spaces were filled in December. Plants in rows three feet apart and 18 inches between plants in the row. Plants between two feet and two feet six inches on April 12th. Area, 19 acres. Yield, 28lbs. actually picked, and the owner estimates another 11 to 12 lbs. still on the bushes. Yield per acre, taking 40 lbs. as the plot yield, works out at 210 lbs. per acre. Value at 5½d. per lb., £4 16s. 3d.

The most successful experiment was made at Maylands, the cotton being grown by Mr. G. Larwood—

Soil, light grey clayey loam, alluvial in origin, of good depth, and fine in texture. Ploughed early in the winter, 1922, and harrowed till of fine tilth. Planted end of September. Rows 3 feet 6 inches apart, and plants 18 inches in the rows. Area, 90 yards by 5 yards, 450 square yards. No fertiliser was supplied, but the land had previously been used for gardening and was therefore rich in stored plant food. Yield 104 lbs. per plot, 1,118 lbs. per acre. Value at 5½d. per lb., £25 12s. 0d. Seeds planted two weeks earlier failed to grow or yield as well as the above plot.

With that one exception our experimental plots throughout the South-Western Division proved almost total failures, whether from late frosts in some cases, or from poor germination in others, or from lack of experience in others still. We have other varieties of cotton, some of which may later prove suitable to south-western conditions. In reply to Press statements regarding the



quality of the seed supplied by the Agricultural Department to experimenters, and as to the quality of the seed supplied by Mr. Teesdale, who brought a couple of tons from Queensland, we have felt that we could not rest under the statements made, especially by the "Sunday Times." Therefore we have had tests made for the protection of the department. We secured average samples of Mr. Teesdale's seed, and took average samples of our own, and germination tests were made in the department at three different periods. In the case of the seed brought by Mr. Teesdale the average was 52 per cent., and in the case of the departmental seed it was 63 per cent. The seed which the department had was supplied by the British Australian Cotton Growing Association, and we were prepared to distribute it free to persons willing to conduct experiments. At the same time, we never stood in the way of Mr. Teesdale as regards the sale of the seed he brought here. In fact, we gave him every opportunity to dispose of it. As I have stated, we are not going to rest under the allegations made by the "Sunday Times" regarding the quality of the seed distributed here last year. The accepted percentage of germination in New South Wales is 70 per cent., and in Queensland, for "A" grade, 75 per cent.; and in America, for good seed, 90 per cent. Statements have been made regarding the qualifications of what have been termed "alleged experts." When first setting out to establish the group in the North-West, the Government acted purely on the advice and recommendations of Mr. Jones. I do not claim that I would have set out to demonstrate that wheat could be grown at Bruce Rock under conditions such as we set out to show that cotton could be grown in the North-West. The rainy season had practically commenced before the men were sent up to those groups, and it was only in an endeavour to catch the season and see if something could be demonstrated in growing cotton there, that the Government decided to go on with the scheme at that late stage, and thus get ready for the next season. Naturally the experiment at Derby resulted disastrously. I candidly admit that no one would have set out to grow any type of plant, let alone cotton, under similar conditions, but I deprecate the statements that have been made regarding the qualifications of experts, particularly Colonel Evans, who, when he visited the North-West, naturally condemned the original experiments on Pindan soil near Derby, owing to the conditions he found there.

Mr. Munzie: He also condemned some experiments at Wyndham, 100 miles from where he had gone.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so. It has been stated that Colonel Evans had no experience in cotton cultivation and that he was a wheat expert. It has also been stated that on the say-so of alleged experts, these disasters resulted.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Experts are always liable to make mistakes.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At the risk of wearying members, I will give them some information regarding the qualifications of Colonel Evans. These we have looked up and the information has been taken from the "Agricultural Journal" of India. The first reference we found to Colonel Evans, who is a Master of Arts of Cambridge, showed that he was Deputy Director of Agriculture in the Central Provinces of India. The date of his appointment to that position was not stated. In 1910 he was Deputy Director of Agriculture, Northern Circle, Central Provinces, India. In July, 1918, he was on special service in Mesopotamia in connection with the development of the agricultural resources there. For this work he was made a C.I.E. In July, 1919, he was attached to the Government of Burmah for special services and he returned to the Central Province in October of that year. He was appointed Director of Agriculture in Bengal in September, 1920, and he resigned from the Indian Civil Service in October, 1922. Immediately he went Home, he was placed on the reserve staff of the British Imperial Cotton Growing Association. He has been responsible, by virtue of his position in connection with agriculture in India, for a series of articles, one of which dealt with experiments on the storage of seed potatoes. They were undertaken in conjunction with Prof. Lefroy, who came out to conduct experiments in connection with the destruction of wheat by weevils in Australia. In 1913 he wrote an article dealing with the organisation of seed farms in the Central Provinces, and another article in 1917 dealt with the improvement of the seed supply in the Central Provinces. Reference to the "Agricultural Journal" of India shows that cotton is grown extensively there particularly in the Bombay, Madras, and Nagpur areas. To-day Colonel Evans is directing the cotton-growing industry of Queensland. I will quote the following extract from a letter recently received from the Agent General-elect (Mr. Colebatch) dealing with his visit to Queensland:—

The development of the cotton industry in Queensland to-day is being directed by two men, Mr. G. Evans and Mr. V. W. G. Wells. The former was loaned to the Queensland Government by the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, and so highly do the corporation think of the prospects of cotton growing in Australia, as set forth in the reports of Mr. Evans, that they have now arranged for him to remain here for an extended period. He is now visiting the Northern Territory to report on cotton possibilities for the Commonwealth Government, and for the future—whilst his time will be chiefly occupied with Queensland—other States of the Commonwealth will come within the ambit of his investigations. Mr. Evans, it will be remembered, visited Broome and Derby and submitted a very valuable report to the Western Aus-

italian Government. He is keenly interested in the development of the industry in the West, and is confident that under right conditions it has a great future. Mr. Wells is a highly qualified American expert, and he will direct the breeding of seed cotton for use in Queensland.

I only mention this to show that men of this description are accused of being "alleged experts," and of destroying by their advice cotton-growing ventures here. The Government, by accepting their advice, are accused of hindering cotton cultivation, and making it impossible for the industry to be established. I do not know where we will end up if we are to accept the gratuitous insults to men possessing qualifications such as these experts possess.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: When I saw the plants up North, they were 2ft. high.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member would not say that, from what he had seen, it was hopeless and useless.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The plants had no attention.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) would regard that as a profitable crop.

Mr. Underwood: That is not so. I saw the cotton plants growing there and Evans said that they would not grow.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not say that. If the hon. member had been here, and had discussed matters with Colonel Evans, he would have a better appreciation of his qualifications, and not refer to him as an "alleged expert."

Mr. Underwood: Of course, I am an "alleged statesman."

Mr. Angelo: Was the Derby experiment the only one in the North-West?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No.

Mr. Angelo: Were there other experiments conducted by the Agricultural Department?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: None in the North-West. I have already told the hon. member that the other departmental experiments were conducted in the South-Western Division.

Mr. Angelo: There were no others in the North-West?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No; those came under the North-West Department. At the conference of Ministers of Agriculture, which I attended in Melbourne in May last, Colonel Evans was present. Mr. Clarence Goode, who is associated with Mr. Crawford Vaughan in this work, was also at the conference. Hon. members will remember that Colonel Evans was proceeding to Queensland when the Government here secured his services to make an investigation of the North-West in connection with cotton growing. Colonel Evans stated at the conference that boll weevil had been reported in the Fiji Islands.

Mr. Underwood: Boll weevil or boll worm?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We will come to the boll worm later on. Colonel Evans said—

This matter has arisen out of a reported case of the disease amongst the cotton at Broome in Western Australia. It was open to doubt as to just what the diseases was; it might be the pink boll worm of Egypt, which was doing about 25 per cent. of damage to the Egyptian crop every year and costing the Egyptian Government a good many pounds annually. We could not take any risk in Australia of that pest hanging over our head, and he would like the conference to state definitely what remedial measures should be taken in case of an outbreak of that sort. His own view was that we should eradicate all the cotton in Broome. There were only about 5 acres under cultivation so that it was not a very serious matter. If the outbreak had occurred in Queensland, he would think about packing up his trunks and going. There was only one worse pest and that was the boll weevil of America. With regard to the telegram that had been read to conference—

That was a telegram regarding the boll weevil supposed to have been discovered in Fiji—

—he would say that they would have to prohibit the importation not only of seed from Fiji, but also cotton, because the boll weevil could come over in raw cotton. In regard to cotton pests, there were a great many, but there were only two really serious ones of which they were frightened in Australia; one was the well-known cotton boll weevil which they had in America and which so far, apart from that telegram, had never been reported outside of Mexico and the United States of America. The other one was the pink boll worm (*Gelechia gossypiella*) which was found in Egypt and India. The larva in the resting stage burrowed into the seed and seed infested in that way could not be distinguished outwardly by the eye. It was introduced into Egypt in 1911 in a few bales of cotton which were sent from Bombay to Alexandria, and in three years those few seeds amongst the cotton had spread the disease right through the Delta, and the Government in Egypt had had to adopt very stringent measures to deal with it. Those measures consisted of the total eradication of the crop on the 30th November of each year; every crop had then to be cleaned and burnt off the land. . . . When he examined the cotton at Broome he thought the pest might be the Egyptian pink boll worm. When he reported the matter, Mr. Sutton, the Director of Agriculture, at once realised the seriousness of the position and sent up an entomologist, Mr. Newman, who reported that he found the disease in the wild hibiscus, an alternative host plant. He had been in Queensland for the last two months and had been on the look out for the pink boll worm among the cotton fields. He had been working in

company with the State Entomologist and so far they had seen no trace of the pink boll worm in the cotton. They had found something almost identical in appearance, the *Platyedra gossypiella*, in the wild hybiscus—

That was exactly what proved to be the case here. This question was brought before conference by me and I will repeat to members what I said there. The report of my remarks is as follows:—

Mr. Maley (W.A.) said that this matter had been placed on the agenda paper by Western Australia. On receiving the opinion of Colonel Evans as to the presence of the pink boll worm at Broome they had an investigation made by the departmental entomologist, whose report he had (Report read to conference). It seemed that the wild hybiscus plant was a host for this pink boll worm and as it extended throughout the north-west portion of the State and across to Queensland practically, it would be almost impossible to eradicate it. He saw in the Melbourne Press recently that the boll worm was stated to be in existence around Brisbane; apparently, therefore, it was an Australian product. It was a fifty-fifty chance that this was not the same class of insect as the Egyptian pink boll worm, the *gelechia gossypiella*. He appreciated the difficulty in enforcing the quarantine regulations against passengers carrying small packages of seeds, and if seven instances of this nature had come to light, he thought it might be assumed there were actually 700. If this pink boll worm could use the wild hybiscus as a host plant, it was nothing else but a darned-fool proposition to ask the State or Federal Government to attempt to eradicate it. In Western Australia they had only five acres of cotton, and could burn the lot in 10 minutes, and if that would end the pest that would naturally be the course they would pursue, but he thought there was some strength in the suggestion that had been made that this was possibly not identical with the Egyptian pink boll worm.

I promptly telegraphed over here that it would be wiser to destroy that season's plants in the North-West. That was not given immediate effect to, because after I consulted the Minister for the North-West it was decided to wait until the cotton was harvested, and then burn it. All the statements concerning the extravagant waste, and the lack of protection of material sent up there, are not wholly justified, although perhaps not altogether wrong.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They were nearer right than wrong.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I will tell the hon. member the facts.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I know them. I handled some of the material.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The original site at Derby was subsequently condemned by Col. Evans, and the settlers were to be shifted to the new site. Unfortunately, the rainy season had set in, and so

the whole of the material could not be shifted. Consequently the hon. member saw it there lying on the ground. Before the hon. member came down, Mr. Teesdale, the member for Roebourne, telegraphed asking that inquiries be made. The following information was sent by the Commissioner of the North-West:—

Group members were themselves responsible for shifting plant from first block to new site. Cottage material carted first site could not be removed immediately to new site, as to do so would have cost more than its value, on account of impassable roads. See Stoddart's report re shifting cottage material, 28th May. Mudge acted in best interests of Government. Do not consider any departmental officer negligent.

Hon. P. Collier: What rubbish!

Mr. Underwood: Of course it's rubbish.

Hon. P. Collier: The Commissioner is going on reports made to him by some local officer at Derby.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If there be any blame, it ought to be sheeted home to the departmental head.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course Ministers and others down here are in the hands of those up there. It is distinctly incorrect to say what has been said. We saw the material on the spot, and we stacked some of it. It was disgraceful the way it was left.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We put some of it in the shed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Stoddart, the engineer, says—

Considerable trouble has been experienced in trying to get material for houses, etc., carted to site. There is still one cottage partly erected, and a considerable amount of material at the old blocks. I had hoped to get hold of the Yeeda team, but found out to-day that the station requires it for the next three months at least. At present we are left with a teamster who is coming in on 17th June, and who has said that he might cart it, and then at a higher rate.

I have given that by way of explanation of North. However, men of any experience of the conditions that prevailed. The Government are alive to the necessity for successfully establishing cotton cultivation in the North. However, men of any experience of cotton growing in Australia are rare. Col. Evans told me he wanted at least eight experienced men in his own department in Queensland, but did not know where to secure them. After long negotiations we are bringing over an officer who is a practical man and will know whether the land is properly prepared for cotton cultivation. We have no reason to fear that cotton growing will not be successfully established all through the North-West. Taking the State from north to south, we have a range of from 60 inches winter rainfall to 60 inches summer rainfall, and so it is impossible to believe that we have not climatic conditions suitable to cotton cultivation.

Mr. Underwood: Why worry exclusively about cotton, why not grow fodder plants in the North?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Last night the hon. member had an opportunity to tell us all about what should be grown in the North. However, he confined his attention rather to political growths. The new officer will be under the control of the Director of Agriculture in respect of cotton cultivation in the North.

Mr. Underwood: Cotton and other cultivation.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He will be there chiefly for cotton cultivation, but naturally he will pay attention to other cultivation, and he will have the advice of a skilled agriculturist.

Mr. Underwood: Also he will have the advice and assistance of those in the North.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know that the advice of the hon. member and other North-West members has not been taken by the Government. Several meetings were held of North-West members and others interested in the formation of the North-West Department. Yet the hon. member now says that department is of no advantage, and he resents attempts on the part of anybody to do something for the North-West. The Government are anxious to do all they can for the North, and I hope a greater measure of success in the cultivation of cotton will be achieved in the near future.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [9.25]: An outstanding feature of the Governor's Speech is the brevity of its reference to mining. Gold mining, together with prospecting for oil, is given only 12 lines of the Speech, gold mining alone receiving five lines. Remembering what the gold mining industry has done for the State during the past 20 years, one would have expected to see more serious consideration given it in the Governor's Speech. Not less a sum than £147,992,477 worth of gold has been won in Western Australia. Of that amount, dividends totalling £28,306,956 have been paid, leaving a balance of £119,685,521 or, rather, the greater proportion of it, to be distributed throughout the State. In face of those figures we find in the Governor's Speech only the briefest reference to this industry. The Premier, in reply to the Leader of the Opposition a few nights ago, said that for the five years 1918-23 the expenditure was £12,390,867, and that of that amount £7,660,000, or 61 per cent. of the total, had been advanced to farmers. The Leader of the Opposition had referred to the amount borrowed last year. The total was £3,644,699, of which sum £2,368,428, or 65 per cent. of the total, had been loaned to farmers. Since the Premier pointed out the very large percentage of money allotted to farming, surely some reference might have been expected to the amount expended on mining and mining development. We have heard a lot about immigration. The best immigration policy we ever had was the reported gold discoveries during the nineties.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: This is well known to the present Government, from whom naturally, one would expect more sympathetic consideration of the mining industry which has meant so much to the State. Repeated requests have been made to the Government for a reduction in the price of water used for mining purposes.

Mr. Lutey: We were promised that I would be attended to immediately the House rose.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: When, a few evenings ago, the Minister for Works was speaking, I expected him to make reference to the promised reduction in the price of water used for mining. Up to the present we have received no assurance from him that anything is to be done. Requests have been made to the Minister for Railways for a reduction of freights, also with the object of assisting the industry. So far we have heard nothing. The Governor's Speech was delivered on the 26th July; the position is well known to Ministers and supporters of the Government; yet no announcement has been made as to the Government's intentions to assist the industry. In 1902 upwards of 16,000 men were working in the mines compared with 6,000 at present. This shows how necessary are efforts to foster the industry. We are losing our goldfield population.

Mr. J. H. Smith called attention to the state of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: You ought to talk—only five out of 18 of your members present.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The depletion of the goldfields population represents a serious loss to the State. A reduction in the price of water for mining purposes and a reduction in railway freights alone will not solve the problem of the high cost of production. There are other factors. The Government could very well intervene to bring about a reduction in the high cost of mining requisites. It is of very little use to have a Government who sit down and do nothing while the cost of gold production is so high. Yet the Government are doing nothing. The present Government have done less to assist the industry than any previous Government. We are now in the third week of the session and the Minister for Mines has made no statement as to granting assistance. Only recently a Primary Producers' Conference was held in Perth. Mining interests are supposed to be represented in that organisation but very brief, if any reference, was made to mining and no suggestions were offered with a view to assisting the industry. The Minister for Mines has paid a couple of visits to the goldfields during the last two months and I understand he intends to visit Kalgoorlie again shortly. Perhaps later on he will take us into his confidence and in

form us what relief the Government propose to afford. The Mine Workers' Relief Fund is receiving very serious consideration from the people interested in the welfare of the dependants of afflicted miners. This fund was brought into existence in 1915 during the regime of the Labour Government. It was intended to bring miners' complaint within the scope of the Workers' Compensation Act, but this proposal was defeated by one vote in another place. The Labour Government then did the next best thing by encouraging and assisting the establishment of the relief fund. To-day this fund is in a bad way financially; it is showing a loss of not less than £60 per week. A considerable sum of money must be made available during the present year to finance its operations. There is not the slightest doubt that other methods will have to be adopted to compensate men afflicted with miners' complaint and their dependants. The Queensland Government have brought miners' complaint within the provisions of their Workers' Compensation Act. What can be done in Queensland can also be done in Western Australia.

Mr. Lutey: It was the Labour Government who did that.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Then it is to be hoped we get a Labour Government in this State. This question must be faced. It is a standing disgrace to the State that such a serious condition of affairs should now exist in Kalgoorlie. This matter has been ventilated for years; the position is well known; yet the necessary redress is not forthcoming. Under the relief fund only partial relief is granted. It was never regarded as a measure of compensation. This state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. Provision should be made to grant full compensation. If a miner in receipt of the award wage becomes afflicted, his income immediately drops from the current rate of pay to an allowance of 25s. a week, with an additional 5s. for each child. This drop occurs just at the time when he is unfit for work and needs nourishment to enable him to fight the dread scourge of miners' complaint. The minimum wage is 15s. per day, or £4 7s. per week; yet he is reduced to the allowance I have mentioned which must not exceed £2 5s. for the family.

The Colonial Secretary: Irrespective of the size of the family.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: That is so. This matter should receive the consideration of Parliament. The Labour Party desire to better the conditions of those afflicted with occupational diseases and one would naturally expect the Government to take a keener interest in the welfare of the workers, especially those connected with mining. I admit that some of the cases dealt with by the Relief Fund board of control have received more money by way of weekly payments than is provided for under the Queensland legislation, but the scheme is now be-

coming depleted of funds and other provision must be made.

The Colonial Secretary: Is not the amount in Queensland limited to £100, and does not the Kalgoorlie fund pay up to £800 per case?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: That may be so; I understood the limit in Queensland was £500. Under the Queensland scheme the worker enjoys security; he knows the amount he is to receive. Under our scheme the beneficiaries, of whom there are upwards of 700 adults and children, do not know their position.

The Colonial Secretary: It is receiving the serious consideration of the Minister for Mines.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I am glad to hear it. That consideration is not being given to the position too soon. Quite a lot has been said about immigration during the last three weeks. The policy of the Government has been explained from different angles by the representatives of the different political parties supporting the Government. We seem to have entered into a compact to absorb annually 35,000 settlers. Provision is also made to settle some 6,000 people on the land. I would draw the attention of the Premier to a report of the Imperial Congress, appearing in the "West Australian" on 11th August. There were representatives of the central land owners' association at the conference, and amongst other things immigration was dealt with. In the report the following appeared—

The association says that it approves the objects of the Empire Settlement Act for the absorption of the surplus population, but migrants to the Overseas Dominions would require to be possessed of agricultural knowledge. If this demand should be met by a proper system of training men drawn from industrial and urban centres, the association would not object. Farmers and farm labourers, however, could not be spared. The migration of agriculturists from one part of the Empire to another would not increase the food production of the Empire.

Whilst efforts may be made by officials appointed by the Government to induce agricultural labourers and farmers to migrate to Western Australia, influences are also working in the direction of retaining those people in the country to which they belong. It has been represented to the Government that officials should be appointed in England with a view to sending out here people used to agricultural work, such as small farmers with capital. We are, however, up against the central land owners' association of Great Britain, as well as the farmers of that country, who desire to retain the labour they have trained. Mention has been made of the type of settler required for this State. During the last 12 months 40 blocks of land were thrown open for selection in New South Wales, and no less than 4,889 applications were received for them. In the Eastern States there are sons of farmers who have had the training necessary to fit them for

the occupation of wheat growers in this State. The best class of settler Western Australia has received is that which came here from the Eastern States when gold was first discovered. These people have made good in the agricultural areas after spending many years in gold mining.

The Colonial Secretary: They have made good in all classes of industry.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. Within Australia we possess the best class of settler procurable, and these people would come here if land were made available for them. During February of last year I approached the Lands Department on behalf of two New South Wales farmers who wished to settle here. They had farms of their own in New South Wales but desired to get hold of larger properties. They went through our agricultural areas, but were unable to find farms. We were told at the department that there was not a single acre of Crown land available for selection within 12 miles of a railway. The men, unfortunately, returned to New South Wales with the object of seeking land in Queensland. We know that the type of migrant we are getting has not been used to agricultural work, and that many of them are not suitable for farming operations. They will have to be trained, and someone must pay for that.

The Colonial Secretary: They are suitable in every other way, and a percentage is used to farming.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Possibly one per cent.

Mr. Pickering: Be generous.

Mr. Marshall: He is over-generous.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: We are not opposed to people coming here from overseas with a view to adding to our population, and thereby creating wealth for the population of the State as a whole, but we want the right class of people to come here. We can already get these within Australia.

Mr. Pickering: But that will not increase the population of Australia.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. If you get people from the Eastern States who are qualified to settle on the land, we shall be creating employment for those who come from overseas but are not yet so qualified.

Mr. Pickering: In what way?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: There will be extra labour required in the agricultural areas.

The Colonial Secretary: What additional avenue of employment do you suggest?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: If the Government would do more than they have done to assist the mining industry they would create employment for the absorption of many unemployed. Interwoven with the immigration scheme is the problem of unemployment. Despite what has been said during the session, and what has appeared in the "West Australian," that the unemployed problem is practically solved, hundreds of men are still seeking work.

Mr. Corboy: The Government know that, and are issuing ratings.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: We know it because of the applications we receive from men seeking our aid to employment. There are men in the city looking for work, and others tramping round the country.

The Colonial Secretary: Unemployment is less pronounced here, according to the reports, than in any other State.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: There are plenty of unemployed workers.

The Colonial Secretary: For a brief period only.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The Premier said that certain works were held over during the early portion of the year in order that they might be made available during the months of June and July for the absorption of the unemployed.

Mr. Pickering: Was that not a wise provision?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The best possible use was not made of the money to be expended on those works. Why did the Government wait until no less than 1,400 renewals and registrations had been made at the Labour bureau before the works were put into operation? It was not good policy to wait until an army of unemployed had been built up.

The Colonial Secretary: There never were 1,400 unemployed.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: During July, 1922, there were 1,420 renewals and registrations at the Labour Bureau, and for last July the number was even greater.

The Colonial Secretary: The same persons re-register for a full week.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Renewals are men who register until the 30th June, and become re-registered on the 1st July. It is not a question of a man getting a job in the country for three months and then again reporting at the Labour Bureau. There could be a thousand names on the register on the 30th June that would be classed as renewals on the 1st July, because registrations are made monthly, and each month stands by itself. The work mentioned by the Premier should be taken in hand at once.

The Colonial Secretary: The main trouble is that so many of the unemployed insist on coming to Perth.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Where are they to go if they cannot get work in the country? Many of the unemployed are not fit to become clearers of land, and it would not be profitable to employ them in that way.

The Colonial Secretary: The unemployed are almost without exception unskilled workers. It is impossible to find work for them in the city.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The greater percentage are unskilled. I cannot understand why these governmental works were not started soon enough to prevent the workers from becoming unemployed. It is not necessary to starve men for several weeks if money is available, or to delay works in order to prove to the world that we possess an army of unemployed. That should not be necessary. If we had a proper system of government as regards construction work, such public work would be put in hand in sufficient time to absorb men as they become unoccupied in their usual occupations. We know that in every year the months of May, June, July, August, and September are slack months. The Government surely might be expected to see that men become employed and get the wherewithal to keep their wives and children. Now I desire to refer to the Primary Producers' Conference and to the remarks of

members of the Country Party on the floor of this Chamber.

The Colonial Secretary: "Tell me the old, old story."

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: It may be an old, old story, but I shall endeavour to present it in a new dress.

Mr. Munsie: Even if it is old, it is worth repeating.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Never before has this State been afflicted with such a sorry group of political parties as we now see on the Ministerial side of the House. During the last few evenings we have heard supporter after supporter of the present Government attacking the Government, launching attacks on the Ministers whom he has helped to create. We have heard members of the Country Party, and particularly the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), express disapproval of the group settlement policy of the present Government.

Mr. Pickering: Oh no, that is not true.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I will prove it to be pretty well correct. The member for Sussex stated that he is still of opinion that the Country Party's group settlement policy is the better policy.

Mr. Pickering: That is so.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I have endeavoured to get a grip of what is meant by the Country Party's policy of group settlement. It seems to me to resolve itself into this: "Now you see it, and now you don't." There is not one member of the Country Party who has yet explained what is meant by the Country Party's group settlement policy.

Mr. Munsie: Their chief sentiment was to get in more people to increase the value of land.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The members of the Country Party are attacking their own Government's group settlement scheme.

The Colonial Secretary: No, you are wrong, they are supporting it.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: They have a most remarkable way of supporting the Government. They support Ministers by attacking them. They have become political contortionists; one never knows whether they are going to land on their feet or on their backs. However, they are always supporting the Government.

The Colonial Secretary: They have always landed on their feet up to the present.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I am afraid they will not land on their feet next March.

The Colonial Secretary: You have no justification for saying that.

Mr. Munsie: A great deal of justification.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The president of the Primary Producers' Association, when delivering his presidential address, made this statement, amongst others—

The party, in notifying the Premier as to its intentions, was acting according to its constitution and displayed an act of courtesy in early informing the Premier of its intentions. Its action was deliberately misrepresented by a section of the Press, in the hope no doubt of creating a breach amongst our members and making the future more secure for the Nationalists.

Now comes the point—

The determined and unexpected stand taken by the party caused the Press to suddenly change its ground, and to realise it was dangerously near creating a crisis which might have brought about results very different to those hoped for.

Am I back on the same old subject? Seeing that the Minister for Agriculture also had a go at this subject, I do not know that a brief reference to it from me is out of place. "The determined and unexpected stand!" Shall we ever forget the policy adopted by the Country Party when the present Minister for Mines turned up at the Primary Producers' Conference? All he had to do was to shout, "Back to your burrows," and every man went to his hole. They are there yet.

Mr. Pickering: In what paper was that reported?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: It was not necessary to report that in the Press; it was so apparent. Then we have the exchange of notes between the Deputy Leader of the Country Party and the Premier. It was reported in the Press that when the Minister for Mines came to the conference, all he had to say was "Get in out of the wet." Thereupon the delegates sought their burrows.

Mr. Pickering: Again I ask, in what paper was that reported?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Surely the member for Sussex does not wish me to do his research work. There are newspapers available for the hon. member's reading. I do not know that it is my duty to carry about a bundle of newspapers for the purpose of pointing out interesting paragraphs to him. During the past few days we have had some evidence of the Country Party being a separate entity. There are two separate entities connected with the Primary Producers' Association as represented in this Chamber.

Hon. P. Collier: Two? Half-a-dozen.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: There is the Primary Producers' Association, which is a political entity.

Hon. P. Collier: Nonentity.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Its direct representatives on the floor of this House are referred to, and allude to themselves, as the Country Party. They are members, delegates, and units of the Primary Producers' Association. They are not prepared to admit that they are representatives of the primary producers. They say they are Country Party representatives.

Mr. Pickering: The expressions are synonymous.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I understand there was some amalgamation of parties in this Chamber, but the Country Party will not consent to sink their old title. I quite understand that. There are people who call themselves primary producers' but who are domiciled within the metropolitan area, who carry on business in St. George's-terrace, and who are referred to as St. George's-terrace farmers. They say they are primary producers. Certain members of the Primary Producers' Association say to them, "You cannot claim to be Country Party representatives, because you live in Perth and all your interests are in Perth, although you may have a farm in the bush. Therefore we will

stick to the old title and call ourselves Country Party representatives." Here is the futility of the last conference, a conference called together for the purpose of reviewing the work of the parliamentary representatives. We need only look at the agenda paper of the conference to see that one of the objects is to amend, alter, or remodel the constitution. We find the president of the Primary Producers' Association advising delegates to drop the subject of politics.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I do not blame him.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: "Leave that to the Country Party representatives and the executive," he said. After bringing delegates from all portions of the State, that was the advice he gave them.

Mr. Munsie: Did not Monger tell the delegates they could not move an intelligent motion?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: One man told them that. There is the position, and the representatives of the Country Party are backing a Government in whom they have no confidence.

Hon. P. Collier: There was a three-hours speech the other night against the Government from the Government benches.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Only to-night we heard the Minister for Agriculture give one of his supporters a dressing down for remarks he made yesterday evening.

Hon. P. Collier: A well-deserved dressing down.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The present Government are made up of several political parties, and many members of those parties have no confidence in the Ministry, although 50 per cent. of the portfolios in the Ministry are held by members of their party. They do not disguise the fact that they have lost confidence in the Government. I can quite understand now why we have so few Bills foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech. There is no cohesion on the Government side of the House. The present Ministry cannot trust their followers to give the support necessary to put legislation through. Before concluding, I just wish to mention that last session we passed a Miners' Phthisis Bill. So far as I know, that Bill became an Act. It was to come into operation by proclamation. At the time the measure was enacted, it was pointed out that this was a very desirable piece of legislation, and one very urgently needed. It was also pointed out that many of the men working in the mining industry were suffering from tuberculosis, and that it was essential, in the interests of the health of other men working in the industry, to get the tubercular cases out of it. Accordingly the measure made provision for finding employment for those who, upon removal from the mines, were in a fit state physically to undertake work. Provision was also made to compensate men taken out of the industry until employment was found for them. Up to the present we know nothing of the operation of that measure. All we know is that a number of men have been forced out of the mining industry since the measure was enacted. We know that those men have gone into the Woorloo Sanatorium. I want to know is the present Minister for Mines, or are the present Government, going to continue this peculiar state of affairs after the enactment of such a piece of legislation? Is that position

of affairs to continue until the next general election? Is the difficulty one of finance? Is there no money available for the carrying out of the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act? Is finance the stumbling block? Surely it is not a matter of waiting on what action the Federal Government proposes to take. It is not necessary to await the establishment of a laboratory at Kalgoorlie, because we have the very evidence of men being forced out of the industry on account of their suffering from tuberculosis. We had that evidence before the measure was enacted. We know of those cases without further medical research. Surely it is time that the present Government brought into operation the legislation which was passed last session for the purpose of relieving the situation that I have outlined.

On motion by Mr. Hickmott, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

Thursday, 16th August, 1923.

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

### QUESTION—LIQUOR TRAFFIC, U.S.A.

*Hon. T. Walker's Report.*

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: When will the reports of the Hon. T. Walker on his investigations of the liquor traffic in the United States be laid upon the Table?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: As soon as possible.

### PAPERS—GOVERNMENT WELLS.

On motion by Hon. T. Moore (for Hon. J. W. Hickey) ordered:

*That all the papers dealing with the cost of sinking Government wells between Mullewa and Dalwallinu (Nos. 1 to 9, inclusive) be laid on the Table of the House.*

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The papers are now on the Table of the House.