

Hon. J. CORNELL: It was pointed out three or four sessions ago that these commissioners were appointed for the purpose of relieving justices of the peace of some of their duties. Now it is ruled by the Crown Law authorities that the Attorney General is the only person possessing power to appoint these commissioners. Recommendations for the appointment of justices of the peace are made by the Premier's Department. Could not that be done in the case of the smaller fry—to use a vulgarism? Why must we have an Attorney General to do this? The Minister has explained that there are innumerable Acts on the Statute Book which specifically provide that they shall be administered by the Attorney General. We should follow the precedent set by the mother of Parliaments and see that every high office is held by a person possessing the necessary qualifications. It is essential that that should be so. One of the highest offices in the mother of Parliaments, I understand, is that of the Lord High Chancellor who advises the King on legal questions. The King's representative in the Dominions, when he needs advice regarding the law of the land, should be able to refer to someone who is practically on the same plane as the Lord High Chancellor. It may be said that the Minister controlling the Health Department is not a professional man, but if that Minister started administering physic to individuals or set out to use a knife on them, I venture to say that my friend Dr. Saw would have some comment to offer.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It would depend on whom the knife was used.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Let such a Minister interfere with the medical profession or infringe any of their prerogatives, and he would soon be brought to heel. The same thing may occur if we have someone filling the position of Attorney General who is not professionally qualified to do so. He might delve into things he had not the right to deal with. Conning the personnel of Ministries of the past, I find that with one or two exceptions, and in circumstances which do not now present themselves, there always has been an Attorney General. The first Labour Government had no Attorney General, for the reason that there was not a lawyer in the ranks of the party. Therefore, a Minister for Justice was appointed. When the second Labour Government came into office, Mr. Walker was temporarily appointed Minister for Justice, but shortly afterwards was called to the bar, and thereupon became Attorney General. Had he failed to qualify in his legal studies, I am confident he would not have been given the position, but that, instead, the then member for Perth would have got it. The late Hon. Frank Wilson, on becoming Premier appointed as Attorney General Mr. R. T. Robinson, then a new and untried member of the Assembly. But for his legal qualifications, Mr. Robinson would not have been included in the Ministry. When Sir Henry Lefroy be-

came Premier, he appointed an Attorney General, as did also Mr. Colebatch on attaining to the Premiership. And, when Mr. Robinson lost his election, Mr. Justice Draper was appointed Attorney General, a position which he held until losing his seat at the last general elections. There is no reason why an Attorney General should not be appointed now, for there is in another place a qualified legal practitioner who was returned as a direct supporter of the present Government, and there is in this Chamber a lawyer who has consistently supported the Government. Nevertheless, we are asked to set aside a constitutional practice and agree to the appointment of a Minister for Justice in place of an Attorney General, notwithstanding that the administration of quite a number of our statutes calls for an Attorney General. If we are to have a Minister for Justice instead of an Attorney General, we should efface from our statutes all reference to the Attorney General. Members of Parliament should not have to consider the personal whims and foibles of members of the Cabinet.

The Minister for Education: This does not affect the Constitution.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No, but it affects about 14 statutes, and from time immemorial it has been the practice of British Parliaments to include an Attorney General among the King's advisers. The Minister administering the legal department should be a legal practitioner. I will oppose the second reading.

On motion by Hon. F. E. S. Willmott, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6.9 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 26th October, 1922.*

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

# QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

## Motor Car Identification Discs.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that private plates have been issued to cars for hire at the garages, and that no attempt is being made to recall them notwithstanding the law and the resolution of this House? 2, Will he take steps to enforce the law and respect for the decision of this Assembly?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 and 2, All plates issued to garages since the decision of the House have been in conformity with same, and instructions have been given to recall those already issued, and replace with the correct style of plates.

# QUESTION—ROAD MAKING, FEDERAL GRANT.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (for Mr. Willcock) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he now in a position to answer my questions of 12th September, 1922, in regard to the Federal grant for road making, the subject matter of which was then stated to be under consideration:—

“i. Of the amount allotted to Western Australia from the Federal Government for relief of unemployment by road making, etc., how much has authority been given to expend? ii. In what districts has any of this money been spent or authorised to be spent? iii. In view of the fact that both the Geraldton Municipal Council and the Geraldton Road Board have been waited upon by deputations of unemployed returned soldiers, will he authorise the expenditure of some money from this source in that district?”

2, If so, will he now furnish replies to the above questions?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The papers will be laid upon the Table in a few days, when fuller information can therefrom be obtained.

# QUESTION—ALIENS REGISTRATION.

Capt. CARTER asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the Commonwealth Government have suspended in Western Australia the registration of aliens and the compulsory notification of their changes of abode? 2, If so, why? 3, If the Aliens Registration Act is not in force, is it the intention to request the Federal Government to enforce the same? 4, What is the alien population in Western Australia? 5, Are any steps being taken to restrict the influx of aliens? 6, How many unemployed aliens are there in this State?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, I am not aware of the Federal Government's reason. 3, No. 4, It is estimated that in June, 1919, there were approximately 12,000 aliens

of all nationalities in the State. 5, This is a matter for the Federal Government. 6, I am not aware.

# QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, BOORARA PIPE LINE.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that the Water Supply Department is going to pull up the pipe line to Boorara? 2, If so, where is the department going to use it? 3, Is the proposed district any more prosperous than Boorara?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 and 2, The intention was to remove these pipes for the purpose of improving the water supply at Meekatharra, but funds are not available. 3, It is considered so.

# QUESTION—EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, Have the Government decided on the policy to abolish all scholarships from competition by the children residing in the metropolitan area? 2, If so, why this preferential treatment by the Education Department in regard to State scholarships?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. The only alteration proposed is the abolition of the special allowance now given to the first ten on the list. The ten scholarships in question are not in any way confined to children in the metropolitan area. All the other scholarships will remain as at present. 2, Answered by No. 1.

# QUESTION—MARGARET RIVER-FLINDERS BAY RAILWAY.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has a survey been made of the Margaret River-Flinders Bay railway to decide as to the suitability of the existing route for Government railway purposes? 2, If not, when is it intended to make such survey?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No, as surveyors are not available. 2, As early as possible.

# LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Nullany, leave of absence for three weeks granted to Mr. Angelo (Gascoyne) and Mr. Teesdale (Roebourne) on the ground of urgent public business.

# BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Noxious Weeds,

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

2, Street Betting,

Introduced by Mr. Mann.

**BILL—DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT.**

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—CLOSER SETTLEMENT.**

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 7—Acquisition of land:

[The Premier had moved an amendment "That paragraph (a) of Subclause 3 be struck out."]

The PREMIER: I propose to strike out the whole of Subclause 3 and substitute the amendment shown on the Notice Paper. This subclause deals with the amount to be paid for land. It has been very fully discussed and was agreed to last session. It is perfectly clear that the value set upon land by the owner for taxation purposes is a fair price at which to take it. Nothing can be said against that. The owner is to get the full value of improvements. That is perfectly fair. But there is one difficulty which we cannot get over and that is in regard to taking portion of a holding. I pointed out last night that the value may not and need not be even all over an area. Particularly is this the case in the South-West. It might be that a man will have some very rich swamp land, or a very good river frontage, say, at Pinjarra. If we take the poorer part of a holding at the taxation valuation calculated for the whole, we shall be paying too much. If we take the richer part of the land at the taxation valuation for the whole of the holding, we shall be paying too little. It will be readily understood that we do not wish to take that part of a holding which is being worked and is the home of the owner. It would be unwise to take such land even if we had the right to do so, because it would only mean taking one man off that area and putting another man on it. In the case of the Midland Railway Company's lands there is, of course, a considerable difficulty, because the company hold an enormous area, one-third of which only is first-class. We do not want to take a large block of Midland country because we do not wish to resume land that is not wholly suitable for settlement, seeing that we must take all land on one basis. The value set upon the land for taxation purposes is to be *prima facie* evidence of the value of the land. The court would be influenced by such evidence, though I do not say the court would decide on it solely. I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

The PREMIER: I move a further amendment—

That Subclause 3 be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"Compensation shall be based (a) on the unimproved value of the land; and (b) on the fair value of the improvements assessed at the added value given to the land for the time being

by reason of such improvements, to be agreed between the owner and any mortgagee or other person having any interest in the land and the board, or determined by arbitration under the Arbitration Act, 1895: Provided that the amount at which the unimproved value is assessed for the time being under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, with ten per cent. added thereto, shall be *prima facie* evidence of the unimproved value of the land: Provided also that any owner may, within 30 days after the commencement of this Act, amend his return under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, for the current year of assessment, by increasing the value placed by him upon his land, and thereupon a re-assessment shall be made by the Commissioner of Taxation, subject to an appeal by the owner to the court of review from any reduction by the Commissioner of the owner's valuation: Provided also that the sections of Part III. of the Public Works Act, 1902, relating to the right to and the application of compensation or purchase money for land acquired under that Act shall apply when land is taken under the provisions of this section."

Hon. P. COLLIER: The amendment represents a considerable variation upon the subclause as originally drafted, and also upon the Bill as it passed through this House last year.

The Premier: This is the provision adopted last year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Bill is the same as last year's, but this amendment seeks to make a considerable variation. The first proviso is to the effect that the value as assessed under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act shall not be taken as the unimproved value of the land—which was provided last year—but shall be only *prima facie* evidence. Why should the owner be given the right to vary? It seems to me that the value as assessed under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act is as near to being fair as we can possibly get, except in cases where a holding is assessed as one piece and only portion of it is required by the Government under this measure. In such cases a re-assessment would be required in order to arrive at the proper unimproved value. But by this proviso the door may be opened to the court, or whoever determines the value, to depart very considerably from the unimproved value as assessed under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, even in the case of holdings which are not being acquired merely in part. More particularly is it a fair thing to accept the value as returned by the owner of the land, since we provide that he shall have the right within 30 days to re-assess the unimproved value.

The Premier: I do not think he will do so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The owner will be given 30 days in which to become honest. Although he may have been undervaluing his

land for years past, yet, when he has reason to believe that the State is about to acquire the land for closer settlement purposes, he is to have 30 days to inflate the value of his land so that the increased amount may be that at which it will be acquired by the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: If the Taxation Department have accepted the owner's valuation all the time, that is not the fault of the owner, and does not show any dishonesty on the part of the owner.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It seems to me that in this respect the subclause should remain as it appears in the Bill. I move an amendment on the amendment—

That in the first proviso the words "prima facie evidence of the unimproved value of the land" be struck out with the view of inserting in lieu:—"deemed to be the amount at which the unimproved value is assessed for time being under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907."

I agree that the carrying of my amendment on the amendment would get us back to where we were, and would not cover such a case as that indicated by the Premier, in which only portion of an estate may be acquired. I admit that difficulty. But the amendment moved by the Premier leaves us with a difficulty on the other hand, that is to say, where the whole of the estate is acquired, the court shall not be bound by the value for taxation purposes, but shall regard it only as prima facie evidence of the value.

The PREMIER: I hope the words will not be struck out. If the amendment is carried we shall get back to where we were before, and it will be impossible then to deal with the blocks not wholly taken. With the two provisos it would be impossible for the court to do more than grant to an owner, whose estate is taken, more than the taxation value. He has the right to increase the valuation within 30 days. The position is fairly safeguarded and I doubt whether any court would do more than give the taxation value.

Mr. Willcock: All the land resumed has been resumed at a higher rate than the taxation value.

Mr. Munsie: Sometimes to the extent of 900 per cent.

The PREMIER: On unimproved land?

Mr. Munsie: Yes.

The PREMIER: This clause has not appeared in an Act before. I should think the court would be guided by the value put upon the land for taxation purposes, particularly having regard to the two final clauses. I know, of course, that the court may be influenced by evidence other than the taxation value, but I doubt whether that will be so under the clause. An owner may put up his valuation and it can be reduced by the Commissioner of Taxation. It is a most difficult thing to draft a clause to meet the situation except in this way.

## Point of Order.

Mr. Pickering: On a point of order, may I ask your ruling as to whether the amendment suggested by the Leader of the Opposition will be in order. It is his intention to reinsert words which the Committee has already struck out.

The Chairman: It appears to me that if the words suggested by the Leader of Opposition are inserted, we shall be putting back words which have already been rejected. Of course, that is against the Standing Orders, is it not?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: May I draw your attention to a recent precedent? When the Licensing Bill was under discussion in Committee, words were struck out of various clauses in order to make those clauses read more clearly.

The Minister for Mines: To make the clauses read sensibly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The member for Perth then moved paragraph after paragraph and those paragraphs were framed on words which had previously been struck out. That was permitted for the purpose of making the clauses more clearly understood.

The Chairman: If my judgment is correct, I think that if the words now proposed to be struck out are struck out, and we insert the words suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, we shall be putting back those words which have been rejected by the Committee. That is against the Standing Orders. The point mentioned by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) is not on all fours with the contention of the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering.)

Hon. P. Collier: I have a distinct recollection that some amendments moved by the member for Perth consisted of whole sentences taken from paragraphs or clauses previously struck out. Some of those paragraphs consisted of 20 lines, and with the exception of a word or two, were almost exactly similar to the clauses struck out. I draw your attention to the fact that the Premier was responsible for the striking out from the Bill of two paragraphs which were fairly long and that it is my desire to re-insert only three lines from those long paragraphs struck out. If we are to carry this matter so far as to say that we may not insert words that have been struck out, we shall be debarred in the future from moving amendments which correspond with sentences already deleted. If my suggested amendment is out of order, portion of that moved by the Premier is also out of order, because the last proviso in his amendment is word for word with the last proviso in the clause struck out.

Mr. Pickering: It is not so much the words that have been struck out, but the principle—

Hon. P. Collier: On another point of order. Even if the point raised by the member for Sussex is a good one, is he not somewhat premature? The amendment before the Committee is to strike out certain words. His point of order may be raised when I move

to insert the other words. I may not move to insert them; I may change my mind.

The Chairman: The Leader of the Opposition is quite correct; I uphold his point of order.

Committee resumed.

The PREMIER: I understand the Leader of the Opposition does not object to the words contained in the clause, as they apply to land taken only in part, but he does object to land taken as a whole. If we strike out these words the clause will not apply to an estate taken in part.

Hon. P. Collier: The amendment of the Premier does not meet the case, and neither does mine.

The PREMIER: No, it does not. In your opinion the clause should provide that the assessment value shall be the unimproved value in instances where the land is taken as a whole.

Hon. P. Collier: That is right.

The PREMIER: If we strike out these words, that object will not be attained. The proviso makes it certain that the arbitrator in cases where the land is taken as a whole, shall regard the assessment as the fair value. The clause as originally printed is perfectly fair. I only move the amendment to get over the difficulty I have alluded to. If the owner thinks he has under-valued his land, he will have an opportunity to increase his valuation. I doubt if much of our agricultural land is under-valued. The improvements on most properties are of very considerable value.

Mr. Munsie: That is a different thing.

The PREMIER: The clause dealing with improvements is absolutely fair. What the hon. member wishes is that where land is taken as a whole it shall be taken at the taxation value.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not understand the amendment.

The Premier: It is quite clear.

Mr. MUNSIE: Perhaps it is clear to the hon. member, but I cannot understand it.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you speaking to the point of order? We have to decide that first.

Mr. MUNSIE: I thought it was already decided.

The CHAIRMAN: No. I am inclined to favour the point of order raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. PICKERING: But the Leader of the Opposition moved another point of order, taking the point that my point of order was not in order at that stage; and you, Sir, ruled that he was right. You said I could raise my point of order at a later stage.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well, the question now before the Chair is the amendment.

Mr. MUNSIE: In the Premier's amendment, paragraph (b) and the proviso are totally contradictory. The Bill provides only for taking land which is unimproved.

The Minister for Mines: No, land which is unutilised and unproductive. Such land may be improved.

Mr. MUNSIE: Nevertheless paragraph (b) and the proviso are contradictory. I am disposed to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition; but even with that amendment, the clause will still be contradictory. The difficulty could be got over by making this provision proposed by the Premier apply to cases where only portion of the land is taken. Unless we do that, the clause will not be fair. If we take the best part of a man's holding, it is unfair to the owner that it should be taken at the unimproved value of the whole of his estate. On the other hand, if we allow him to re-assess, and then pay him on the value of the best portion of his land, it will not be fair to the State. The amendment does not solve the difficulty. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that, when we give a man the right to amend his assessment, if the whole of his holding be resumed it should be resumed on his taxation assessment, plus 10 per cent.

Mr. PIESSE: I am opposed to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I cannot see the need for either of the two provisos. The Premier's amendment will meet the case. Moreover, we have the final proviso to adjust all differences.

The Premier: No, that is dealing only with the money.

Mr. PIESSE: Still there is the right to go to arbitration. The idea of the two provisos is to shorten the evidence on compensation. All that the land owner can ask is a just compensation. Paragraphs (a) and (b) cover that, and so I see no reason for the two provisos. Taking the valuation on the taxation assessment cuts both ways, for it may be either too low or too high. Of course, that will be adjusted by the arbitrator. Is that not sufficient? If we give the owner 30 days, in which to amend his land tax return, he may put up the value. However, many would not trouble to alter their returns. While certain land may be under-valued, a good deal of land is over-valued.

Hon. P. Collier: Only the other day I read in the paper that some land was assessed at £10 per acre, unimproved. I should say that land was over-valued.

The Premier: No, that would be a choice patch of swamp land.

Mr. PICKERING: I cannot support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Had he moved to strike out the two provisos, I would have been in accord with him. I agree with the remarks of the member for Toodyay, and I agree also with the Premier. In partial resumptions it is quite impossible that an equitable rate should be fixed by the assessment set forth in the original provision. In the majority of instances the resumptions will be partial, and so it is necessary that any amendment should be on an equitable basis. The Premier's amendment is the more equitable of the two before us. Consequently I should like to see the Leader of the Opposition withdraw the amendment moved by him.

Paragraphs (a) and (b) will meet the situation.

Mr. MONEY: We are mixing up two matters, the question of false returns or assessments at a lower or higher value, and the matter of land resumption. I do not think a block of land will be taken under this Bill without arbitration being necessary to arrive at its value. Further, there is no land within 12 miles of a railway that is unimproved. It is not unimproved if stock has been running on it for some years, even if it is neither fenced nor ringbarked. There may be improvements as the result of running stock, which have not cost the owner 6d. an acre but may be worth £1 an acre. On the other hand a man may have spent £3 an acre on improvements which are not worth 5s. an acre. It is impossible to sever the improved from the unimproved land. The value varies from year to year. The question will be so mixed up in arriving at the value that it will be impossible to disentangle it. The clause might be recommended and the provisos deleted.

Mr. LATHAM: I know land varies in value from time to time. I must protest against the suggestion that farmers are dishonest. That is not so; neither are we who are suggesting these alterations for their protection. The definition of an unimproved value is the value that can be obtained for land if there is a willing seller and a willing buyer. If the subclause is altered at all, it should be struck out altogether.

Amendment on the amendment put and negatived.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I move an amendment—

That the second proviso be struck out.

I am not casting any reflection upon the farming community. It is only a reflection in so far as a man will take advantage of this provision who has not been honestly valuing his land in the past.

Mr. Latham: The value may alter.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If a man has been putting in a fair valuation for his land he will not take advantage of this provision. On the other hand, if he doubles the valuation, is that not *prima facie* evidence that he has not been honest in the past, or that he is dishonestly trying to put up the price of his property in excess of its real value in the expectation of its being resumed? The proviso indicates that we believe there are men in this State who have been under-valuing their land for taxation purposes.

Mr. Piesse: It only makes provision for an error.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In order to allow these men to submit a proper valuation of their land, we are to give them 30 days in which to do it. The clause countenances dishonesty and fraud. In the desire to become honest, owners would be actuated by the hope that they would be able to get more money out of the Crown when their properties are purchased.

Mr. Broun: They could have my land tomorrow at the valuation the department has put upon it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Imagine any taxation officer refusing to accept an increased valuation which might mean an extra £30 a year revenue to the country! His services would be dispensed with in no time if he did such a thing. No Commissioner of Taxation is concerned in reducing the valuation submitted by a landowner. If the owner is satisfied with the valuation he puts in, can it be imagined that the taxation people would write to the owner pointing out that he had placed too high a valuation upon his land? No Commissioner of Taxation would dream of doing any such thing. The men affected by the Bill have a very clear idea what it means to them, and if they are conscious of the fact that they are holding land out of use, the first thing they will do will be to re-assess their land and the Commissioner of Taxation will accept their re-valuation without question. The Commissioner would not know what was in the mind of the man and write to him saying that he would not accept the increased return furnished because he realised that while it might mean an increase of £10 or £20 to his department by way of taxation, the effect of the re-valuation would be to rob the Government in some other branch of the State's administration when his estate might be acquired.

Mr. Money: There are only three bodies to assess taxation. They are the road board, the State Taxation Commissioner, and the Federal Taxation Commissioner.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What has that to do with it?

Mr. Money: A man puts in a return; that is not an assessment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But if a man asks to have his assessment increased, what Commissioner of Taxation would object to that?

Mr. Money: I know of no man who has tried to increase his assessment. I say it is an impossible principle that is sought to be laid down.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is why I want the clause struck out. It is a reflection upon Parliament to insert such a proviso.

Mr. LATHAM: The Leader of the Opposition had tried to justify the remarks he made, to which I took exception. I do not regard his arguments as convincing. If the land was of the one value, he would be right in his argument, but climatic conditions, the development that takes place, and the various conditions that are operating in a new State like Western Australia will all tend to increase the value of the land. That is unfortunate for the Leader of the Opposition in his argument, although fortunate for the farmers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The value will increase in 12 months?

Mr. LATHAM: In less than 12 months. It has been stated that £20,000 is to be spent upon experiments in connection with our light lands. If those experiments prove to be successful, without additional work in connec-

tion with improvements the land will increase very considerably in value. If the value of land increases in 12 months, surely it is fair to give these people an opportunity to re-value their properties.

Mr. Munsie: They alter it next year.

Mr. LATHAM: They do not alter it at all. I do not think the member for Hannaus knows how often the returns are sent in. Once a landowner makes his return he is not required to send in any further return unless he changes the properties held by him, either by selling some or purchasing others.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are supposed to put them in every year.

Mr. LATHAM: One is not supposed to do anything of the sort, unless one has increased his holding either by purchase or sale!

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If your land has increased in value, you are supposed to put one in every year.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not so. I deal in land and I never send in an additional return unless I buy or sell property.

The Premier: You must send one in, if the property changes in value.

Mr. LATHAM: Well, the Taxation Department has never notified me of that fact.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Suppose a railway was constructed past your land?

Mr. LATHAM: That has nothing to do with the unimproved value of the land.

Hon. P. Collier: The Taxation Department must treat you more favourably than they treat me. They fine me every year for being late with my returns.

Mr. LATHAM: From an assessment point of view, the question of the railway would not affect the land.

Hon. P. Collier: You will have inquiries made into your case all right!

Mr. LATHAM: The department can do that if they like. The opening up of the dairying industry in Western Australia will certainly increase the value of our land within 12 months. If butter factories are established within five or ten miles of holdings, the value of the surrounding land will be increased. The closer settlement of our areas in itself will increase the value of land. There is no dishonesty in the proposal that a man should be able to submit a re-valuation of his land for taxation purposes. I know that my argument is logical.

Mr. Munsie: They can only submit their re-valuation within 30 days of the passing of the Act.

Mr. LATHAM: Well, give the farming community that opportunity!

Mr. Munsie: Will you establish a butter factory within 30 days?

Mr. LATHAM: Very few people will make alterations.

Mr. Munsie: Then why do you desire this provision?

Mr. LATHAM: I wish to be fair. The people who have pioneered the State are worthy of consideration.

Mr. Munsie: Certainly they are.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And they are getting it.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the Committee will agree to retain the proviso, which is fair and honest.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not.

Mr. Munsie: In any case, you can alter the valuation every 12 months.

Mr. LATHAM: One is not expected to do so. One does not put in a return unless he has bought or sold property.

Mr. Munsie: I send in a return every year.

Mr. LATHAM: Agricultural and pastoral land is dealt with on a basis different from city property.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Let us examine the argument put forward by the member for York. Taxation returns have to be sent in by, say, September. In addition to that, farmers will have 30 days after the passing of the Bill within which to submit their re-valuations. Assuming that the Act is assented to by the end of the year they will have all that period between September to the end of the year, to do what he suggests. The member for York has pictured a case where a man may send in a return in three months during which period the land may increase in value. He has referred to the possibilities of the establishment of butter factories or closer settlement generally increasing the value of the land. The proviso refers only to those persons whose land is increased in value within three months. He would have the Committee believe that there are many men in Western Australia who wish to take advantage of this proviso. On one hand, while the member for York says a large number of estates will increase in value in three months, he says, on the other hand, that the unimproved value of farming land has not increased at all for years. He says the unimproved value goes on year after year and he himself has not sent in any further valuation for years.

Mr. Latham: The Taxation Department do that, not the farmer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: While the member for York says that the unimproved value of agricultural land does not increase for years, because he has not sent in any returns to show any alterations, still he contends that the value may improve within three months. That is a most illogical attitude. On the one hand he wants this provision for the numerous estates, the unimproved value of which has increased during the three months; on the other hand he says the unimproved value has not been increased for years because the Taxation Department accept the value year after year without question.

Mr. Latham: The Taxation Department assess the value.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member's argument is absurd.

Mr. Broun: A new railway built through a district will increase the unimproved value.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member's leader says it makes no difference whatever.

Mr. Latham: I said so far as the farmer's return was concerned.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, no difference to the value of the land.

Mr. LATHAM: The value is stated by the farmer in the original return. After that any alteration is made by the Taxation Department and not by the farmer. Therefore, if a railway runs through the district, it is the duty of the department and not of the farmer to increase the valuation.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I agree with the amendment to strike out the proviso, because it contradicts something already passed in the Bill. I took exception to the inadequate amount which the treble tax will represent. A man could avoid the treble tax by merely doubling the value of his land. It might be possible for the board to resume land at a value of, say, £3,500, whereas if it were valued at £7,000 they would not resume it. It is mandatory that the return under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act be accepted. Therefore the owner would be able to avoid the payment of the treble tax. I think this will be done.

The Premier: No, it will not.

Mr. PICKERING: I hope the Committee will not strike out this proviso.

Mr. Munsie: What has changed you again?

Mr. PICKERING: I was in favour of both provisos going out, but the other one which I desired to see deleted has been retained. We have heard a lot about the dishonesty of farmers.

Mr. Munsie: We have heard nothing about it.

Mr. PICKERING: Well, the dishonesty of land owners, and farmers more or less are land owners.

Mr. Munsie: You indicate dishonesty by advocating this proviso.

Mr. PICKERING: The value of land in the South-West has altered materially during the last 12 months. Considerable areas which, prior to the advent of group settlement, were regarded as valueless are now admitted to be of considerable value, and it has not been possible to make any variations in the returns. There is no certainty that this Bill will be passed by another place. Therefore there is no reason why a man should place on his land a value which might not be correct. I differ from the member for York. In the South-West development work in the shape of railway communication has been foreshadowed for some years and has not materialised. The Minister for Works stated this afternoon that there were no surveyors available to decide as to the Margaret River-Flinders Bay railway route.

The Premier: Just at the moment we have none available.

Mr. PICKERING: Yet this is one of the most urgent works. When that railway is built, the land served by it will be greatly enhanced in value. In view of the delay in building these railways and of many circumstances over which the Government have no control, it is unreasonable to expect land owners to put up their values in anticipation of facilities being provided. A good deal

of road construction has been undertaken in the South-West in connection with group settlement. These roads will materially increase the value of the land so served. Thus there are many reasons which should embolden the Government to stick to the proviso.

Mr. PIESSE: I hope the proviso will be retained. I have not the slightest doubt that the Commissioner of Taxation would carefully examine any fresh valuations submitted by land owners. Last year I valued a small block of second class land at 9s. an acre and the value put upon it by the Taxation Commissioner was 7s. 6d. I directed attention to this and was informed that I was bound to take the departmental valuation.

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

Amendment put and a division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	19

Majority against .. 9

#### AYES.

Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Walker
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Munsie

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Broun	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Carter	Mr. Money
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Denton	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Durack	Mr. Sampson
Mr. George	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gibson	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Latbam	Mr. Mullany
Mr. H. K. Maley	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Proposed new subclause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1922-23.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Department of Lands and Repatriation (Hon. Sir James Mitchell, Minister).

Vote—Lands and Surveys, £100,368:

Mr. Pickering: Is the Premier going to say anything about this vote?

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [7.38]: I have told the Committee already all I have to tell them about this vote. I did so when introducing the Budget.



Mr. Pickering: You are standing on what you said previously?

The PREMIER: I said all there was to be said then.

Hon. P. Collier: Has not time caused you to vary it in any way?

The PREMIER: Notwithstanding the rapid increase in the number of butter factories, and the general development of the State, nothing has happened since I introduced the Budget to cause me to change my views.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [7.40]: I regret the Premier is satisfied to rest on his laurels. I am sorry to find that the reports of the Lands Department, the Agricultural Bank, and the Industries Assistance Board have not been laid on the Table.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Have we had them in any other year?

Mr. PICKERING: We have seldom had the report upon the Industries Assistance Board, but I do not know about the others. Seeing that we are engaged in a huge developmental policy, it would be only courtesy to members that they should have the fullest information placed before them to guide them. Various appointments are mentioned in the Estimates which need explanation. There are also certain policies in connection with this department embraced in the Estimates but for which there are no items. This is the only opportunity we have for dealing with group settlement and soldier settlement.

The Premier: That will be afforded on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. PICKERING: I propose to deal with those particular items to which I cannot find a reference in these Estimates.

The Premier: You cannot do that.

Mr. PICKERING: On the general debate upon this vote I am entitled to deal with those phases of departmental activity shown therein. Under the heading of land settlement for soldiers is included group settlement. Group settlement is a question that has agitated the minds of members and of the general community. The fervent wish of all people is that the policy embarked upon by the Premier in the direction of group settlements will be a complete success. We have been told that he proposes to introduce a Bill dealing with this phase of settlement. I understand that this Bill is essential in order to arrange about those funds which he has been spending without the authority of Parliament.

The Premier: Not without authority.

Mr. PICKERING: It is money which the Agricultural Bank should be spending, but which has been spent under other votes. During the past few months I have had a considerable amount of correspondence in connection with group settlement. The problems facing these settlers call for a reasonable amount of comment. I have been compelled to ask for information in this Chamber as to the conveyance of the families of group settlers and their effects to their holdings.

Yesterday afternoon I put the following questions to the Premier:—

1, Is he aware that delay has occurred and expense imposed upon group settlers by failure in transport to convey wives, families, furniture, and personal effects from Busselton to groups? 2, That in consequence thereof settlers have been compelled to go into debt to defray such expenses? 3, Does he propose to recoup settlers for such expenses?

It is understood that the amount of sustenance allowance permitted in the case of these people is 10s. a day. In the case of big families this amount is too small, but they are endeavouring to make ends meet on it, notwithstanding the grave difficulties they are under in consequence of the lack of cheap transport from Busselton to the groups. The whole of the transport has been done by motor vehicles. The rates charged for motor transport are, of course, very much higher than the rates for transport in ordinary circumstances. In the course of the replies which the Premier gave me to-day he said that there had been some delay and possibly a little expense, but that the department were not aware of any considerable amount. I readily understand that to a departmental officer the sum of £12 for one settler may possibly not appear a large amount. It has to be borne in mind, however, that these settlers depend upon a sustenance allowance of 10s. per day. The Premier also said that assistance had been provided in order to secure improvement in the transport organisation. It is true group settlers receive much more assistance than is given to ordinary settlers, but group settlement is a special movement organised for a special purpose and under special conditions. Therefore the comparison with ordinary settlers does not hold good. If it is proved that the group settlers have been put to unnecessary expense, that expense should be recouped to them. They ought not to start their career on the land with a load of debt in addition to that which is consequent upon the improvement of their blocks. I hope the Premier will reconsider the matter with a view to reimbursing the group settlers. I do not advocate an increase of the sustenance allowance if it can be proved that the present rate is adequate, for I realise that the sustenance allowance will form part of the capital debt which the settlers will have to repay.

The Premier: Every case will receive proper consideration.

Mr. PICKERING: Another important question is that of the insurance of group settlers. The Government ought to formulate a scheme to cover the risks of sickness and accident. The present arrangement is a subscription of 1s. per week in that connection. The weakness lies in this, that each group is made a separate entity for insurance purposes. Considering that there are only 20 groups, and that the total of insurance premiums paid by a group may amount to only £1 per day, it is obvious that under such conditions a reasonable fund cannot be

established. I approached those in charge of the matter to see whether it would not be possible to devise a scheme which would really provide for the risks. Fortunately for the Government, but unfortunately for the group settlers, it has been ruled by the Crown Law Department that these settlers do not come under the Workers' Compensation Act. So here we have these settlers doing more or less hazardous work, involving not only danger from falling limbs and trees, but also danger from the use of explosives by more or less inexperienced men, and any settler who becomes permanently injured, say through the loss of an arm or a leg, will not be able to secure adequate compensation. I suggest that for the purpose of insurance the whole of the groups might be massed together and their contributions lumped. In my opinion the position is very serious. I know there have been serious accidents already on the group settlements. Some men have lost fingers. The Busselton Hospital has been overtaxed by cases of sickness and accident from the group settlements. Some scheme should be formulated to cover all the risks. I have written to the insurance companies on the subject, but they reply that they are quite unable to deal with the matter owing to the ruling given by the Crown Law Department. Another question of vital importance is the allocation of the cost of improving the various properties. The system depends largely upon the work of the whole group. It will be readily understood that the amount of clearing, for instance, will not be the same and will not cost the same on every block. That may apply to other forms of improvement. It would be interesting if the Premier could give us an assurance that the system of bookkeeping adopted is such as will allocate the proper indebtedness to each particular block. Otherwise there will be considerable trouble when the group, as it were, breaks up. If the cost cannot be allocated to the individual blocks on an equitable basis, surely the idea of the department will not be to divide the total cost of clearing 20 blocks by the figure 20 and charge the result to each individual block. Another very serious question is what is to occur when certain blocks, after a considerable amount of improvement has been done on them, are thrown out of the group? I know of one such case in which a large amount of money was spent in ringbarking and other work, and the blocks in question have been thrown out of the group. Who is going to bear the cost of that work? Is it going to be a charge against the group, or against some special fund?

Hon. M. F. Troy: Why was this land thrown out?

Mr. PICKERING: Because it was found to be unsuitable.

The Premier: So far as I know, that applies to only one block.

Mr. PICKERING: Will the Premier give a definite assurance in this connection as to how the cost—

The Premier: I give you my definite assurance that a fair thing will be done by these men on the land.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think it would be a fair thing to assess against a group of settlers the cost of work done on land subsequently thrown out of the group. The services of group settlers have in some cases been used in connection with road making. Is that to be a charge against road making generally in connection with the development of the country, or is it to be a charge against the group? A very important phase of group settlement is the provision of railway communication at the earliest possible date. With a view to relieving the position about Margaret River and Augusta, which is very acute, I thought the Minister for Works would make all preliminary arrangements as regards the railway which will afford communication to the group settlements. Imagine my astonishment on learning to-day from the Minister for Works that no survey has yet been made, and that he is unable to fix a date by which the survey will be made.

The Premier: I hope the existing line will be able to carry traffic for some time without being moved.

Mr. PICKERING: It must be known to the members of this Committee that a most interesting series of articles on group settlements has been published. I have not the honour of knowing, though I might guess, who is the author of them. It might be Mr. Morrison.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Morrison is not on the Estimates.

Mr. PICKERING: The articles have been written by a friend of the Government.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You have no proof of that.

Mr. PICKERING: Still, I can hardly conceive a friend writing such candid articles.

The Premier: So far as I am concerned, anyone can write anything he likes.

Mr. PICKERING: If the Premier read those articles, he must have been struck by several criticisms they contained.

The Premier: It is easy to criticise.

Mr. PICKERING: But this criticism is that of a friend. We are in this unfortunate position, that although we have the Estimates before us with a series of items, we have not that information which should be available in the reports of the Lands Department.

The Premier: You will have two other full opportunities.

Mr. PICKERING: I compliment the Minister for Railways on the fact that his department's report is available. We shall therefore be able to deal fully with the Railway Department when it comes up for consideration. In connection with the Lands Department the position has arisen that certain officers holding certain positions deal with communications from members of Parliament, without any apparent authority from the items on the Estimates. Perhaps the Minister for Lands in replying on the general

debate, may be able to show how it comes about that certain matters which obviously come under the jurisdiction of the Under Secretary for Lands are dealt with by officers whom we do not know by any particular denomination. When the items are under discussion I propose to ask for information in that connection.

The Premier: We are always anxious to expedite correspondence.

Mr. PICKERING: If we knew the exact degree of importance to place on the reply of an officer who has not any particular rank in the Lands Department, it would be of assistance to us. I do not know whether I am getting the decision of the Premier in such circumstances; certainly I am not getting the decision of the Under Secretary, and this applies to questions of considerable importance. As a rule, members do not communicate with the departments unless the matters are of importance. We recently had some criticism about, to use the vulgar term, the "pests" members of Parliament have been to certain departments. Since that reference appeared in the Press, I felt it incumbent upon me to send all my communications through the responsible Ministers. I have been somewhat astounded to find signatures attached to replies I have received, of officers whom I do not recognise as holding responsible positions. I do not wish to wait on Under Secretaries and departmental officers, but prefer to see the Ministers responsible for the departments affected. These things need some explanation. I commend to the Minister for Lands the urgent necessity and desirability of making clear the few points upon which I have endeavoured to throw some light.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [8.0]: The Department of Lands and Repatriation is the section of government supposed to be doing the most vigorous work in connection with the development of Western Australia. We are assured by the Press, by the Premier, and by politicians generally that the activities of the Lands Department are more marked to-day than during the past decade. Great things are expected of the immigration policy now in operation between the Old Country and this State. This is not the time to discuss other departments, but it appears from the publicity given to the work of Government departments that this is the one department that is receiving all the support and engaging the whole of the activities of the administration in Western Australia. Very little is heard about other departments, and little activity is noted regarding them in Parliament or in the Press. If the Lands Department be the one department wherein the Government are showing great activity, let us see what is being done and whether the expenditure, which is essentially confined to the South-West and to the agricultural industry in particular, is in the best interests of the State. Let us see whether that expenditure will bring the best return in the quickest time. I have

no knowledge whatever of the group settlement system referred to by the member for Sussex. Later in the year, I propose to see the working of that scheme for myself. I have no objection to the group settlement system. I hope it works out successfully and that the Premier secures all that success he anticipates from it. I trust it will be a great means of support for Western Australia and an important factor in its development. Why are the Government's activities confined to the South-West in particular? Why is all the money expended in the southern corner of the South-West?

The Premier: It is not all spent there; a lot goes to the wheat belt, too.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The principal activity is shown in the extreme southern portion of the South-West.

The Premier: A tremendous amount of money is going elsewhere, too.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I know money is being advanced through the Agricultural Bank for the development of the holdings of settlers in the wheat belt.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. M. F. TROY: With the exception of the wheat growing areas and the South-West, the Government are not active, particularly regarding the development of the pastoral and other industries. In the wheat belt, although the Government are advancing money for developmental work, I find that they are confining the settlers to carrying out certain work, which, in my opinion, is not to the best advantage of the State. One of the greatest handicaps this year will be the want of water. Say what members will, Western Australia is a very dry country. Apart from South Australia, it is the driest portion of the Commonwealth. One of our greatest needs in the successful development of the State is water conservation. What are the Government doing in that direction? Take the wheat belt. A certain amount of money is advanced to settlers to construct a dam. When a settler concludes that he should be able to construct a large dam capable of seeing him through one or two years, the Agricultural Bank inspectors object to any such course, and they confine settlers to putting down dams of small dimensions. This I consider is a big mistake. In the greater part of the wheat belt this year, the dams have not been supplemented by the winter rains. In my electorate, and in other portions as well, no rain of any consequence has run into the dams this year, with the result that the great majority of the settlers are left to carry on with the water that flowed into the dams last year. Unless we get heavy downpours from thunderstorms during the summer, we shall be very short of water. The Government confine settlers to dams of from 1,000 yards to a maximum of 2,000 yards, whereas experience shows that 2,000 yard dams are necessary, particularly in those parts where the evaporation is greatest. The Agricultural Bank, however,

will not advance for such a purpose. I cannot understand that policy, seeing that a great quantity of water is essential for successful farming in such parts. Farmers must carry stock to make a success of their holdings, and in order to do that, they must have water. On my property I have three 3,000-yard dams and I doubt whether I will pull through this year. In fact, I have no hope of pulling through unless we get thunderstorms during the coming summer. I have already made preparations to transfer my stock elsewhere, so that water will be procurable for them. Most settlers are not in that position, for they have not the facilities to shift their stock or the means to rent another property. The result will be that they will probably have to get rid of their stock at a loss. That means a severe handicap to the development of the State. I have told the Premier, as I have told the Agricultural Bank inspectors and the settlers themselves, that farmers should not bother about small, paltry dams because, when they want the water, it is not there for them. Surely it is time the departmental officers had some idea as to the necessities of this State. If they have never had imagination, they should have some ideas to-day which will keep pace with the development of the wheat-growing portions of the State. The Premier should see that large dams are put down so as to carry the farmers for two years if necessary, rather than to continue the construction of the present pottifogging types. The Government are settling large numbers of people in connection with the group settlement scheme. They are being settled on the Peel Estate; Herdsman's Lake is being drained at a tremendous cost—I do not know who will bear that cost; the swamps around Perth and in the South-West generally are being opened up. It occurs to me that the produce from these areas will all be perishable and Western Australia lacks a market for produce of that type.

The Premier: Dairying will be a big factor, too.

Hon. M. F. TROY: How are these people to carry on? In Osborne Park, the season this year has been a good one and there has been a large production. Despite those advantages, the growers cannot get any price for their commodities. One of the largest producers in that district told me that he could not get a shilling for his cabbages. When all these settlers commence to produce, where will be the market? There is a market for dairy produce. There is the overseas market for Western Australia if our produce can compare favourably with that of other parts of Australia. I think it will compare in time, but I doubt whether it can to-day. My idea of land settlement is to extend the development of Western Australia in those areas which will bring the quickest returns to the State. I would be chary of spending large sums of money in settling people on land where the full pro-

duction will be spread over 10 or 12 or 15 years. I would pay attention to such areas in due course, but in the meantime I would confine myself to areas from which quicker returns can be obtained. In my opinion, the South-West will be developed by money won in the wheat belt and the pastoral areas. The proof of that is in the experience of our successful settlers in the South-West areas. The men who are of high standing with good herds and splendid properties are men who have made their money in Western Australia. The Premier recently visited Gnowangerup and he knows the progress that has been made there, not under any Government system of group settlement but by men who made their money in the North-West and went to the South-West.

The Premier: That is, except for the sheep men. They have done wonderful work there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Men from my electorate have done wonderful work in developing the country at Pinjarra and elsewhere.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am satisfied that more money is to be made in the pastoral areas and in the wheat country in five years than can be made in the South-West in 20 years. That means that our land can best be developed by turning to those parts of the State where wealth can be returned quickly and with that wealth we can develop the other parts where the work is harder and more costly. Coming to the wheat belt, I am not satisfied that we have reached the extreme areas for wheat production. I do not think we have yet got farthest out, not by any means. This year's experience has taught us that we can grow wheat 70 miles out from the edge of the existing wheat area. For the past 10 years the rainfall at Warridar, 120 miles from the coast, has been better in the growing period than at my own place, 50 miles from the coast. At Warridar Mr. Leslie Parkes and others have been successfully growing wheat crops for the past five years. I have not seen better crops anywhere on the coast. Moreover, they have there an abundance of splendid water, obtainable at reasonable depth. Also the soil is 8ft. or 9ft. deep, and their season is earlier than is ours, their crops ripening more quickly than those on the coast. Out on some of the stations for the past 17 years hay crops have been grown, and have failed only when the coastal crops have failed. There is a clear line of demarcation between the wheat areas and the pastoral belt. I do not suggest that any man should attempt to grow wheat in pastoral country. The line is very clear and distinct. In the agricultural belt we have big timber, whereas in the pastoral areas we get shallow soils. That is why Mullewa, although in a good farming district, is not a favourable locality for agriculture. It is situated on rocky hills, and the soil is shallow. But within a few miles the soil deepens and farming is successfully carried on. During my visit to the Eastern States this year I inquired into the conditions under which the

farmers are producing in Victoria and New South Wales. In Queensland, of course, the production is mostly sugar. There is a good deal of dairying, and now numbers of people are going in for cotton. In Victoria I travelled right through the Wimmera and through the Mallee. I was astounded to learn that in the Wimmera they have produced profitable crops on a four-inch rainfall. So advanced are their methods of cultivation that they no longer fear drought. In the year before last they had a very bad season, so bad that there was no feed for stock, notwithstanding which they had very good wheat crops. As you drive along the roads you see everywhere beautifully cultivated fields.

Mr. Piesse: Where is this paradise?

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is no paradise, but merely a prosperous farming district, the prosperity being due to the intelligence of the farmer in profiting by his experience. We have no such methods of cultivation here—we merely fallow the land and leave it—nor have we, as they have in Victoria, departmental experts to travel about and teach the farmers. There they have exhibitions, not to show what they can produce, but to show how they can conserve moisture. The officers of the Victorian Agricultural Department journey through the country making fallow tests; and if a settler has a failure, he is promptly shown how the failure was brought about. There is available to the Victorian farmer a continuous course of education, a course far more advanced than any obtainable in Western Australia. If we are to march with the times we must do the same. It will pay the Minister for Agriculture to embark on such a policy. We need expert officers who will go through the country districts preaching the gospel of moisture cultivation, and inquiring into the qualities and capacities of soils. If this were done, we would increase our production one hundredfold in 10 years.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is not easy to induce old farmers to adopt new methods.

Hon. M. F. TROY: We have had a significant experience this year; the fallowed country is pulling through all right, but the unfallowed land is a failure. We want the policy which has been adopted in Victoria.

The Minister for Agriculture: Twenty years ago they were getting the yields we are getting to-day.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But to-day they are getting their 30 and 40 bushels.

Mr. Piesse: Perhaps they use better fertilisers.

Hon. M. F. TROY: No, they use the same as we do, but they apply a heavier dressing. This year, as the result of what I saw in the Eastern States, I have used a heavier dressing, and with advantage. The men on the land require education more urgently than do any other section of the community, because the farmers do not travel about and see for themselves what is being done in other States, or even in other districts. We should have expert officers, good capable men, to

educate the farmers. We could afford to pay for highly trained men, because from their work the State would reap a tremendous advantage. It is popularly believed that the successful agriculturist must be born on the soil. Nothing of the sort. I agree that he must like the game, and must have industry and common sense. At the time of the financial crash in the Eastern States, a number of teachers in the Education Department of New South Wales were put off, and many of them went on the land. The old farmers grinned sceptically. There did not seem to be much chance of the newcomers making good. Yet when I went back there this year I found that the most successful settlers were those very ex-teachers who, although they had no experience to help them in their early struggles, yet had both intelligence and industry.

Mr. Mann: That occurred here when the Government put the civil servants on the land at Yorkraine.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That is so. To make good on the land, a settler need only be industrious and intelligent, and have a liking for the game. It must be remembered, too, that the settlers in New South Wales had not the assistance of an Agricultural bank. They were carried by the storekeepers, paying mighty heavy rates for the privilege. In Queensland they were in the hands of the biggest monopoly in Australia, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. There is no place in Australia where the farmer has as much assistance as is afforded him in Western Australia. The credit for this lies entirely with the Labour Government.

Mr. Munsie: And there is no country outside of Australia where the farmer gets the assistance granted him in Western Australia.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The consideration shown to the farmer in this State has been invaluable. Ninety per cent. of the new settlers put on the land prior to the advent of the Labour Government would have had to leave the land but for the Labour Government.

The Minister for Agriculture: Once on the land, always on the land.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I would establish agricultural farms in the far areas where the big timber still holds out and ascertain what could be done over a term of five years. I would put a good man there and give him an opportunity to test the capacity of the soil and the seasons before sending settlers there. After proving it for five years I would push on its development. It amazes me that so little regard is shown for the pastoral industry which, in my opinion, will produce more wealth to this State in the next 20 years than any other industry with which we are now concerned. East of the Sandstone railway is an area of pastoral land which is easily accessible to the railway and markets, and is well watered. The Minister for Agriculture and his brother know the value of that country. Only during the last few years have a

number of soldier settlers taken up land in that locality, and they have had a very uphill fight against the depredations of dingoes. On one station, I am informed, they got no lambs for six years, but this year owing to the work of the settlers, they had a 94 per cent. lambing, which was very good indeed. To-day, when all the coastal portions of the State are affected by drought, there is abundance of feed in the Sandstone district, and east of it to Lawlers and Lake Way. This is the finest piece of pastoral country in the State and one which can be easily developed. The country must be opened up by stock routes and water supplies, and the Government must assist in the eradication of the dingoes. A few years ago a station at Sandstone could be purchased for £4,000. To-day that same station could not be bought for £10,000, because the owner is going to put sheep on it. Nothing brings so much wealth or such a quick return as sheep. Put a settler on the land and give him a thousand sheep and he has a return within a year. Put him in the South-West areas and he might get a return in 10 years if he is lucky. Put him in the wheat areas and give him 1,000 sheep and he will clip £300 or £400 worth of wool in a year. In addition he will have the lambing to augment his flocks. Under such a scheme the Government would gain more revenue from their land and would create wealth in a very short time. I would advise any young man to go to the Sandstone district. There is an abundance of water and good feed. True there are the dogs to fight, but every settler has had to fight them. If the Government would only spend £50,000 to exterminate the dingoes in that district, I have it on the word of Mr. Nairn, who speaks with authority, that this part of the State would carry five million sheep within ten years. This is a policy the Government ought to pursue. Why expend all this money in the South-West? Why confine all development to the South-West? Is nothing to be done in those great areas which are served by railways and which are capable of bringing a good return to Western Australia? There is the question of fencing. I understand the Agricultural Bank will advance amounts for fencing. The price of material is coming down. If the Government would help in the extermination of dingoes in the wheat belt, all the farmers would carry sheep.

Mr. Piesse: Provided they had water.

Hon. M. F. TROY: An abundance of water is essential. Coming to dairying. I do not pose as an expert, but I recently paid a visit to the North Coast of New South Wales, which every year exports more butter than is produced in the whole of Victoria, where the population is 300,000 and where farmers are making a good living on 30-acre blocks. I do not say that we enjoy similar natural advantages. They have climate, soil, summer rain and an abundance of good feed. The quality of North Coast butter is renowned even in Western Australia and this is due, not to superior cattle but to superior feed.

I am pleased to learn that the butter produced in the Geraldton factory this year is amongst the best, if not the best produced in Western Australia. I am told by people in the Murchison that they prefer Geraldton butter above any other turned out in Western Australia, because it will keep. This is due to one thing, not to better cattle than are to be found in the South-West, but to better feed. The land is sweeter, the cultivation is older and the feed is more mature. I noticed in a handbook published by the Department of Agriculture that settlers going in for dairying were advised to build silos. A specimen silo was given and the settler was assured that a silo holding 80 tons could be built for £70.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is not possible.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then why publish such a misleading paragraph?

The Minister for Agriculture: What was the date of the book?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I cannot say.

The Minister for Agriculture: It could not be built for £180.

Hon. M. F. TROY: A friend of mine asked a Western Australian firm for a quote for building a timber silo to hold 80 tons and the quote was £400. If the Minister wishes to see dairying established, the only way to establish it permanently is to improve the feeds and conserve good fodder for the summer months, and fodder can only be conserved by building silos. Why should not the Government contract with a competent man who knows the business to build 400 or 500 silos at a reduced cost and advance the money through the Agricultural Bank to farmers anxious to instal silos? In Melbourne I met a building contractor who built the wheat silos for the wheat scheme in New South Wales. When he heard that Western Australia was going in for bulk handling, he asked me if there would be any possibility of securing work in Western Australia. A man of that type who knows the game could undertake to build a big number of silos. The farmer would secure a loan which would be a charge against his property, and there would be no risk of the silo being bad or indifferent. The Government would have the plans and specifications, the supervision, and a man who knew the game. If the Minister for Agriculture embarked on such a scheme I believe he could get 400 or 500 silos built in one lot for £100 apiece. The great trouble at the present time, apart from the expense, is the risk.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is no experimentation about the building of silos.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Is not there? There has been considerable trouble because they leak and the air gets into them.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is due to faulty construction.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Of course it is.

Mr. Money: Many of them have been abandoned although they do not leak.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They are largely used in the Eastern States, particularly on the South-Coast of New South Wales, where it is necessary to conserve fodder. In this way I think the Government could best advance the dairying industry in this State. They could also assist by purchasing good dairy cattle in the Eastern States. Only this year there was a slump in cattle values in the East.

The Minister for Agriculture: A big slump.

Hon. M. F. TROY: When in Melbourne I spent a day at the cattle market and found good cattle being sold at £7 a head. Some had been sold at £3 or £4 a head. I made inquiries of Dalgatys, but I found that the cost of bringing over a small number would be prohibitive. I felt like wiring to the Premier, directing his attention to this opportunity, and suggesting that he purchase a few hundred head, which would have been a good thing for Western Australia. We must improve our feeds, conserve fodder and improve the quality of our herds before we can hope to successfully compete with the Eastern States. The greater portion of the money now being received by the Treasurer is being expended in the South-West, even the money advanced by the Federal Government to assist in road making.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Hon. M. F. TROY: Well, where is it being spent?

The Premier: Everywhere; some of it at Geraldton.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is not being spent in any locality represented by members on this side of the House.

The Premier: It is a mere accident then.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Is the policy of the present Government one of spoils to the victors? Have they no concern for any electorates except those of their own supporters?

Hon. P. Collier: It is largely that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There is no question about it.

Mr. Munsie: They have to give it to them to keep them quiet.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They will have to give it to us to keep us quiet.

Mr. Mann: Have you heard about the Peel Estate?

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Peel Estate indeed! We ask questions of the Minister for Works. All we get are misleading replies calculated to insult our intelligence. I approached the Minister for Works with regard to a water supply on the stock route in the Murchison. All he said was "Let them do it for themselves. There is only one settler down there yet." There always will be one settler further out than the others, and apparently he is always to be made to suffer.

Hon. P. Collier: Whilst the Government are bearing the expense of maintaining as well as constructing water supplies in the agricultural districts.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but they care nothing for the other parts of the State. The policy of the Government is one of spoils to their supporters. The position is becoming intolerable in this House. The Government

can build roads to Kalamunda and Rockingham, and the Minister for Works can build roads at Maida Vale which further advance the value of the blocks there. But where does the back country come in?

Hon. P. Collier: And there is £8,000 for the Mandurah road.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Peet & Co. are advertising that the Minister for Works has agreed to advance a certain sum of money for the completion of the road to Maida Vale, and blocks are for sale there. This is an inducement for people to buy. But the Minister for Works cannot put down a well in the back country in order to assist the struggling settlers, who are so far out that the Government do not bother about them.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a shame!

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is a damned shame. I have told the settlers in my electorate that the Government are not concerned about them. That is true. I know a settler who has seven children, and who is struggling along on a station at Depot Hills on borrowed money. The Minister for Works will do nothing to assist him in the way of water supplies, but for Mandurah or for the hills it is a pleasure for him to help. It is all right to build a road from Pinjarra to Collie beside an existing railway. The money is available for that.

Mr. Wilson: He does not spend much at Collie.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Government have had a fair passage from members on this side of the House, but there will have to be a return to the old times. There will have to be justice, and some fight will have to be put up for the people in the back country. I am greatly concerned about the development of what is known as the northern part of the South-West, namely, the Geraldton district. The Government are spending a large amount of money in the South-West, but we know that much of this will be wasted, and much of the cost will have to be written off, just as will have to be done in the case of soldier settlement and Herdsman's Lake. Why do not the Government purchase some of the large areas around the Geraldton district where the soil is beautiful, the rainfall is good, and the land is adjacent to a port? The area is capable of successful development. Between Mingenew and Mullewa are numbers of stations which would rapidly respond to development.

The Minister for Agriculture: We bought two properties there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There are several stations which would provide a good living for hundreds of families. Why do the Government neglect so fine an opportunity?

The Minister for Agriculture: The Government repurchased nearly three-quarters of a million acres during the past 10 years up there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Here is a great opportunity for safe development in that part of the country. Why are the Government not interested in it? Their activities are all bent upon the South-West. Must we, who represent the northern parts of the State, feel that we are wasting our time here and

be unable to do anything for our people? Must we beg for the slightest convenience and be refused, and sit silently by while the Government turn the whole of their attention to other parts of the State?

The Premier: Twenty times as much money has been spent on the wheat belt as in the South-West.

Hon. M. F. TROY: And twenty times as much has been returned for the expenditure. The same thing would apply to the district I am speaking of. There will always be a market for wheat, wool, lambs and pigs.

The Premier: There will be plenty of lambs from the South-West.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But the most wheat and wool will not come from the South-West.

The Minister for Agriculture: In two years' time the wheat production of the State will be doubled.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The figures may be even larger than that, but there must be an intelligent method of production and an intelligent expenditure of money by the Government on the wheat growing parts of the State. Within 21 years Western Australia, under a wise policy of development, should rival the great wheat producing State of New South Wales.

The Premier: We have authorised the expenditure of £245,000 for the wheat belt.

Hon. M. F. TROY: To existing settlers?

The Premier: No.

Hon. M. F. TROY: With regard to the classification of land, there is in the wheat belt a large area of inferior land for which the Government are asking too high a price. It comprises thousands of acres of sand plain.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What is a fair price for it?

Hon. M. F. TROY: About 2s. an acre. I doubt if it would pay to fence it at that price.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That would be giving it away.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I would permit settlers to take it up on a 30 years' lease at a peppercorn rental on condition that they made use of it, fenced it, stocked it and established water supplies upon it. In that way it could be turned into a valuable asset. At present hundreds of thousands of acres of this class of country are going to waste. The Government are charging 4s. 6d. an acre for it. In addition there is the taxation upon it, based on that value, the road board rates, and so on. The result is the settler has had to abandon the proposition. Those settlers who have taken it up are clients of the Industries Assistance Board, and their rents are being paid by that board.

The Premier: They pay no rent for five years.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That was one reason why they took it up. It is absurd to let them take it up when they cannot make a success of it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You would not say that the forest country was too dear.

Hon. M. F. TROY: No. At present this area lies unoccupied, and is the home for such pests as emus, rabbits, and kangaroos, which do an infinite amount of injury to the crops of other settlers.

The Minister for Agriculture: A lot of it is worth only 1s. an acre.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That is so. The Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board are turning down all applications for aid on York gum country. At one time it was considered that this was the best type of country and the most highly productive. Of course, it may be better in some localities than in others. I am informed that the bank and the board are refusing assistance to persons except those who hold salmon gum and gimlet country.

The Minister for Agriculture: I would not say that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If that be the policy of the Government, why are they advertising this York gum country for sale? Why has it been classified as first and second class land when, in the opinion of these two institutions, it is neither the one nor the other?

The Minister for Agriculture: Jam country gives the best results.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I know settlers who have taken up York gum and mallee country. They are good farmers, but are handicapped by the lack of assistance. On the chart shown to the settlers, when they took up the land, it is marked as first and second class land and shown as cultivable. It is charged for at the same rate as salmon gum country, and yet the two institutions I have referred to will not advance a penny on it. Do the Government propose to alter their policy? They should either discourage settlers from taking up that land or make assistance available to them. What does the Premier propose to do?

The Premier: It is good land.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then why not assist the settler?

The Premier: You cannot have the bank managed by the settlers.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It amounts to a policy of deception and fraud upon these people to allow them to take it up classified as first and second class land, and then deny them the right that is given to other settlers who have paid the same price for their holdings. Every settler who in this country takes up a certain area of land understands that he is entitled to help from the Agricultural Bank. He has that inducement before him. No assistance may be marked on the plan showing this particular land, but neither is there any notification that no assistance will be granted. The settler taking up this land, after making all his arrangements, finds that he can obtain no assistance whatever from the Agricultural Bank. It costs him a great deal of money to make his home and to bore for water. Now as regards the Surveyor General, I am amazed that at a time like this, when the State is in difficulties, when the deficit is so great that we do not bother



about it any more, the Government retire a large number of competent officers. If ever there was a time when competent officers were needed it is now, and if ever there was a time when the Government could not afford to retire competent officers, it is now. Mr. King is a man with capacity for years of good service to the State. He may be 60 years of age, but as men go he is a young man, with many years of active service before him. He knows this country from one end to the other. He gave valuable service to mining development, and he should know something about the agricultural and pastoral lands of Western Australia. I know him to be an experienced and reliable officer. And this experienced and reliable officer is being retired on a pension, paid to do nothing, while the Government will appoint another man in his place, and yet another man in that other man's place. The other day a retired civil servant told me that he was one of a party of eight who went out fishing in a boat, all hale and hearty, all looking for a new start in life, and all of them retired civil servants, drawing a total of £2,000 a year in pensions from the Government. One can hardly imagine such a thing happening in a State which is nearly bankrupt, which would be bankrupt if its creditors pressed it—a State which has a six-million overdraft, and which cannot recover in a decade. Is that sound and economical government?

The Premier: All men may not be equally valuable.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Some men may not be pliable, and may not make themselves agreeable to the whims of all Ministers; and that might be a good thing for the country. I do not suggest for a moment that an officer should dictate to his Minister, but I do think the permanent heads, if they are worth their salt, should occasionally be consulted by Ministers. A Minister may profit by consulting the judgment of his chief officers. Several civil servants recently retrenched might well have been retained for the benefit of the State. I do not know Mr. King personally; I know him only as an officer; I am not aware whether he objects to being retired, but he is capable of good service to the State yet. The same thing may be said of Mr. Stenberg and other officers. Their retirement means placing on the shoulders of the country a burden it cannot afford to bear. I hope the Premier's policy in the South-West will be successful, but I also hope that this Parliament will not allow the Premier to engage all the activities and all the revenues of the country in the South-West. I trust Parliament will insist that the other industries controlled by this department, which are equally valuable, if not more valuable, will get a fair deal from the Government in the way of assistance and development. What is the difference between a settler in the outback pastoral areas and a settler in the South-West? Why should the one get every consideration, even

to the payment of 9s. per day, while the other is left to shift for himself? I claim that the man who has gone outback is more valuable, because he has the experience, grip and courage. It is up to the Government to help that man, and this Parliament should insist that he shall be helped.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [9.8]: A good deal has been said to-night, especially by the last speaker, that is helpful to those of us who are not farmers or technically experienced in the subject. There is a phase of land settlement which I consider of paramount importance in these days of development, or semi-development. The system which the Premier has instituted of settlement by groups is a great step forward. The co-operation of individual effort must result in a great deal of progress where single effort would probably fail. But certain difficulties face practically all men farming in Western Australia to-day. The greatest problem we have to solve, alongside the settlement of our farming population, is the disposal of the articles which the farmers produce. I do not see how the provision of land on the one hand can be separated from the provision of markets on the other. I acknowledge that the Lands Department are doing valuable service in providing land, but I think the leaders of land settlement will agree with me that the greatest difficulty of the man on the land is the disposal of his products. It is astonishing but true that Western Australia in respect of certain articles has a glut at one period of the year and is barren of them at another. The Government would be well advised to create some special branch of the Lands Department to consider the preparation of goods for market and their disposal. A natural corollary to group settlement seems to be a system of group marketing, the disposal of the group settlers' products on a wholesale basis. One of the most progressive settlements in Australia is Kendenup, and there we see the very latest methods for the preparation and disposal of crops as they are grown. In connection with repatriation, numbers of our soldiers are settled on intense culture land, growing root crops, stone fruits, and such products as tomatoes, most of which, if not all, are perishable goods, the disposal of which is impossible. Within the last few days it has come to my knowledge that soldiers within 30 miles of Perth are suffering under severe disabilities. The matter is now being investigated by a select committee. Their chief disability is that of enhanced initial cost. Beyond that, however, there is the hopeless barrier of a lack of markets. Prior to the meetings of the committee, and also since the meetings of the committee, men have told me that they can see no light ahead of them; that having got their land prepared and sown their crops and reaped their crops, they have only the experience of the past to go on, an experience of utter loss of produce which has required hard toil to place it on the market. In this

connection I may refer to the fact that yesterday we had before us a Bill which sought to provide a new system of marketing. Certainly we want a new system; the present system is entirely unsatisfactory. We have the market glutted to-day, and bare to-morrow. We have prices out of all proportion to the value of goods which are offered. Unfortunately, the proportion is in the wrong direction, from the point of view of the producers. I believe that by employing up to date methods—the Government should lead in this matter, and it should not be left to private companies to teach the Government—in connection with dehydrators, cold storage, plant and machinery for the disposal of products, much good can be done. The greatest problem confronting us to-day is that relating to the disposal of our goods. There is great need for the correlation of our industries. We have members here who can see only a grain of wheat; they cannot see the needs of the State as a whole. I believe the wheat growing and dairying industries should be correlated, so that we may progress properly. I have pointed out before that we are apt to regard ourselves as a factor in the world of wheat. The day is coming when we will realise that in the world of wheat we are a very small entity indeed. If we are to grapple with this question, we should take steps which will lead to the disposal of our wheat crop within our own borders. That is not necessary to-day, but the time will come when it will be necessary to absorb the whole of our products in that direction, within the State. That can be done by the correlation of our industries and by turning our wheat into pigs, poultry, eggs and other intense culture produce. Unless something is done, all the findings of select committees, all the writing down of capital cost and all the tremendous burden on the individual taxpayers, will be of no avail. We will not be able to progress in the right direction. We cannot for ever live on capital, but we must go on producing new capital wherever possible, and unless we can find a market for the produce we are growing, these difficulties will confront us more and more. We can effect many improvements in the scheme of things as it is to-day. I would not insult the intelligence of the Premier by saying that he regards his land settlement scheme as perfect. I know he is open to receive suggestions such as those which have been placed before him to-night. With all humility, I suggest to him that he should establish a special branch of, perhaps, the Lands Department, to give attention to the problem of marketing the produce of the State, and effecting improvements in that direction. There are one or two other points to which I desire to draw attention. We are told we are to have a woollen mill in Western Australia. The Lands Department will be indirectly interested in that proposal. Could not consideration be given to opening up some of these parts of the State by means of cheaper railways? We are opening up areas which may be regarded as in the experimental stages,

for the purposes of group settlement and closer settlement generally. There is one railway which I would refer to the Premier for his consideration. It is the Decauville system which, I am informed, can be constructed at a cost of only £348 a mile. The upkeep of that railway system is very small in comparison with the ordinary type. I can speak from personal knowledge of the value and the practical benefit derived from that railway. We saw it in operation in France over very long mileages. We saw one little engine pulling four or five hundred men. We saw the little boggy trucks, each capable of carrying 10 tons, conveying tremendous loads of material and ammunition under exceptionally hard conditions. The advantage of that system is its cheapness, its utility and its small running cost. I hope the Government will consider the use of that type of railway when opening up fresh lands in the South-West, even if it be regarded as of a temporary nature. These railways give very efficient service and proved themselves under perhaps the most difficult conditions imaginable, such as were to be found in the war zones in France. I believe that by the application of special brains to special subjects, we can bring in some method of adequately disposing of our goods. This, I think, is a subject of prime importance to the farmers of to-day. As a city member, I know that consumers are concerned about the wide margin between the price the farmer receives for his produce and the charges levied on the consumers. The margin is so great that people naturally ask why there should be such a disparity between the two elements, the price to the farmer and the price to the consumer. Unless we can bring into operation means of co-operation between the farmers for the conservation of their produce in some way that will regulate the flow of goods to the markets, such as by means of an improved marketing system, we will be up against difficulties which will increase as time goes on.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [9.22]: I have only a dozen words to offer.

The Minister for Agriculture: This is your first speech this session.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I was pleased to hear the remarks by the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), who always delivers an informative speech when discussing this subject. As he is a practical farmer who is tilling the soil in one of the difficult portions of this State, I hope the Government will profit from his remarks. I have no desire to speak at the length to which the member for Mt. Magnet went, but I would like to draw attention to the fact that it is increasingly difficult for people to get hold of wheat selections. The demand for land has grown apace, and, particularly during the last few months, a great number of people have evidenced a pronounced land hunger. Consequently, most of the people who are accommodated in that direction to-day are being sent to the group

settlements. That scheme is a most laudable proposal—a big, ambitious undertaking. The scheme is one that demands a great deal of patience; it involves the expenditure of much capital before it can be brought to fruition. Dealing with this question of group settlement, I noticed that when the Premier outlined a big scheme of railway construction a few weeks ago, a leading article appeared in the "West Australian" the next day. It followed on some remarks of the Premier at Parkerville and on a speech delivered by the Minister for Railways at Gordon River. The article struck me as one of the finest penned for many a day, inasmuch as it demanded caution. Why do we demand caution? We realise that the progress of the South-West will be slow. The big timber that daily issues a challenge to man is the greatest obstacle to speedy development in those parts to-day. As a result, the 20 odd groups located in the timber country are progressing slowly because the timber is there in abundance. Although those groups are progressing, they have the advantage of the sustenance allowance which enables them to continue. Their difficulties still lie ahead of them. They cannot get as quick returns as are possible from other parts of the State. My only object in rising to speak is to deal with the condition of affairs I noticed at Denmark a few weeks ago. With the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), I spent three days in that locality. I put it to the Premier that the experience of Denmark is the most damning indictment against the profitable settlement of the karri country, under the conditions carried out there, that can be brought forward. It is up to the Government to follow bad money a little further, and make it good or go slow regarding this scheme generally.

The Minister for Agriculture: Shut up shop or stick to it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Minister has outlined his proposal. If Denmark is to be closed up, the same proceeding might apply to other parts.

The Premier: We are not going to close up.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I hope not.

The Premier: There are a lot of settlers there.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The lesson of Denmark is that there was a good deal of bungling by the Lands Department in the days when settlement was being encouraged there. People who had a good deal of money were anxious to take up holdings at Denmark, for it was described in those days as the "Gippsland of the West." Many months elapsed before intending settlers could get on their holdings. Many went away disheartened and impatient at the delays. The result was that the land was thrown open. The settlers struggled hard to subdue the luxuriant growth of vegetation in that most beautiful spot around Denmark. Vast sums of money were expended, and we have this outstanding feature, that the people who settled at Denmark were mostly men with money. I know many

who came from the Menzies district, and who left those parts with a good deal of money in order to take up blocks in the Denmark district. To-day they have broken hearts and empty pockets. That is the fate of many pioneer settlers in typical karri country. Of the original settlers, 52 left their homes. When I was in the district the other day, I had an opportunity of visiting a number of those who are struggling against fearful and overwhelming odds. The Government have endeavoured to help them. A butter factory was established, but the first output was condemned by the health authorities. The settlers were encouraged to go in for dairy farming, but, owing to the temporary depreciation in the price of butter fats, dairying failed and the people did not have sufficient fodder to keep their cows at concert pitch, with the result that the stock had to be sold. To-day on many of the holdings the selectors are gazing at their crop of young karri that is coming along nicely, and longing for the day when a paper pulp mill will be erected to turn their karri into paper. These men of big hearts and many disappointments, are struggling and hanging on in the hope of something eventuating. Some people have spent as much as £3,000 on their properties. I know people who have lost a lot of money there, but there is no reason why, with a little more assistance and encouragement, Denmark should not even now be made successful. It has all the advantages necessary with running streams, magnificent water, and splendid soil, and settlers prepared to do their part. The people there have been on their properties without Government assistance. Had they been in receipt of a sustenance allowance of 10s. per day, Denmark would now be one of the most prosperous settlements in Western Australia. The Government did not adopt present methods in the earlier days and many of the settlers, rich and poor alike, have gone down in the attempt to conquer the forces of nature. Those settlers need a guiding hand to-day. They want practical assistance, and one of the crying needs there is the provision of silos. Repeated applications have been made to the Agricultural Bank for assistance in that direction, but in no case would the bank grant the necessary advances.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The Agricultural Bank has no imagination!

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: As to the officers of the Agricultural Bank, I will not adopt the same attitude as most other hon. members regarding the principal officer, Mr. McLarty.

Hon. M. F. Troy: He is a good man, but stodgy.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I will not attempt to eulogise him to the extent others have done, but I will say he is a splendid officer, who is overworked. It is possible there may be a little prejudice against the district. I was told at Denmark that the impression there is that the settlers have no more hope of getting additional assistance from the bank than the Premier has of riding the winner of

the Melbourne Cup. It is not possible to get it.

The Premier: I would ride the winner.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The consequence is that these settlers are devoid of any hope of assistance.

The Premier: I rode a horse at Flemington.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I suggest to the Premier that he should ride to Denmark and view the situation on the spot.

The Premier: We will go together.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is no good boasting of the possibilities of the country from Flinders Bay to Denmark—

Hon. P. Collier: The Premier's new loves!

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is no good boasting of the possibilities of Nornalup—we have nothing to approach that beautiful garden inside our borders—or of other parts, unless some assistance is given in the direction I have indicated. The Premier proposes to spend money in constructing two railways to span this country, watered by about six or seven magnificent rivers, one of them the best in the State. It is of no use talking of developing that country, until we demonstrate that we can make a success of similar country at Denmark. I ask the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture, is it their intention to provide silos for those settlers?

The Minister for Agriculture: we are going to spend £1,200 on equipping the State farm, so as to give the farmers better stock.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But the place is too small for an experimental State farm. Instead of equipping the farm, it might be better to give a winning settler assistance. Of course, there are settlers and settlers. As the select committee inquiring into the management of the I.A.B. will find out, a great deal of money has been wasted on settlers who will never make good. That applies also to group settlements. One and a quarter million of money has been lost to the I.A.B.

Hon. P. Collier: Only about £100,000 has been written off.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But I am speaking of bad debts. Against that, has to be recorded the fact that through the agency of the I.A.B. over eight millions of new wealth has been produced. So, even if that loss eventuates, the wealth produced by the I.A.B. has been a good thing for the State.

The Premier: Over a million has been paid to the Crown.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, but there is no helping hand for the people of Denmark, no further assistance from the Agricultural Bank. Settlers there are waiting for the Premier to establish a group amongst them, so as to cause a little boom and enable them to sell out and get away.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a pretty bad spirit.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Some of the settlers there are tired of the whole business. If the Government wish to succeed at Pemberton and other places, they ought first to complete the work of settling

Denmark. So many grievances have the settlers there that every shop in the town is plastered with notices convening meetings.

Hon. P. Collier: Grievances are becoming the principal industry.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If a politician goes near the place they fill a hall and demand a speech from him. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) when there told them the true story of his life, and they appreciated it.

Hon. M. F. Troy: How long did it take him?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: About three-quarters of an hour.

Mr. Chesson: He must have condensed his remarks.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Minister for Agriculture proposes to spend £1,200 in equipping the State farm. Settlers there would be doubtful as to whether expenditure in that direction was the best thing.

The Premier: They require stud stock.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Perhaps so, but owing to the exceedingly heavy rainfall the roads are impassable, the road board has no funds, because nobody pays rates, for the reason that nobody has any money, the Government will not make a grant, and so there are no roads. It took the member for Sussex and me nine and a half hours with good horses to go a few miles after the car broke down. We had to stop for refreshments at three different houses along the track.

Hon. P. Collier: You would cheer them up a bit.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We could not; we could not even give them promises. All we could do was to sympathise with them, and that was no good.

The Premier: Surely you did not stop for refreshments three times in nine hours?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We stopped to give the horses a spell, and we found the hospitality of the people wonderful. Some years ago the Premier put about 1,000 goats into the district, but they all perished in the scrub.

The Minister for Agriculture: It's not much of a district if goats can't live there.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: They had to exist on the young karri shoots. Karri shoots make good paper, but will not keep goats alive. The district is capable of being made a wonderful place. Certainly it is a better timber district than a district for agriculture. On some of the selections are to be seen magnificent karri trees, thousands of trees to the acre, so close to one another that they are fighting each other for a share of the sunlight and the soil sustenance. They are not able to come to anything like maturity because of their remarkable number, and as a result selectors have given up thoughts of farming and are waiting for the establishment of a paper-pulping mill.

Hon. P. Collier: It seems to be a fair field for the Tourist Department.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Tourists could not be sent to a finer spot. If only one were a painter one might hope to depict the scene,

but words are quite incapable of describing the beauties of the place.

Mr. Durack: Is there good fishing there?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Splendid. The hon. member could not do better than go and see the place for himself. The Minister for Agriculture, too, ought to inspect the district, particularly if he really thinks of spending all that money on the State farm. Owing to the impassable state of the roads, settlers six or eight miles out from Denmark are quite unable to bring in their produce. What they require are silos, if only in the proportion of one to every four or five settlers. They can manage to get into Denmark with the product of their separators, but they require silos to keep their stock going. They produce many varieties of vegetables, only to feed them to the cows, for there are no means of getting the stuff in to the market. Denmark can grow anything, but its most profitable lines must inevitably be butter and bacon.

The Premier: The place will grow beautiful apples.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It may, but the trouble is the settlers are growing into chronic growers. There is throughout the district a feeling of despondency because of the lack of sympathy and assistance. A number of the settlers have left the place and gone up to the district of the Minister for Agriculture. Nothing but silos can save the remainder. If Denmark fails, the failure will go a long way towards killing the other projects, and certainly will not win support for the twin railway proposals, the one to Mt. Barker and the other to Denmark. I hope the Premier will fulfil his promise to those settlers. The thing was bungled from the start. The settlers did not get assistance in their preliminary stages.

The Premier: Yes they did.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: At all events they require further assistance, but the Agricultural Bank turns a deaf ear. The Premier has spent a lot of money there, but unless he spends more, Denmark will be the graveyard of the hopes of many settlers.

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [9.40]: The remarks of the hon. member certainly do go home. The Premier and the Minister for Agriculture should see what can be done. I have heard appalling accounts of the position of the Denmark settlers.

The Premier: I have been there frequently, and I have assisted them tremendously. They are not so badly off.

Mr. PIESSE: More than half of them have left the district.

The Premier: I am not responsible for that. We have helped them and are helping them still.

Mr. PIESSE: But they require further assistance, and I hope the Premier will extend to them the fullest consideration. He is always kindly disposed and anxious to see settlers progress.

The Minister for Agriculture: The position requires collective effort rather than individual effort.

Mr. PIESSE: I can only hope that better results will be achieved in that district. The land policy of the State requires amendment. Different methods are necessary to ensure successful settlement of the great inland wheat belt. I endorse the remarks of the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) in respect of water supplies. To ensure the successful settlement of the wheat belt, good water supplies are essential. It would pay the Government to spend half a million of money in providing ample water supplies.

Mr. Latham: And reserve supplies.

Mr. PIESSE: If water is provided—and it can be provided—there will be no difficulty in settling the big areas of country at present lying idle. The Premier is aware that there is still a large area of land east of the Esperance-Norseman route enjoying a good rainfall, but in the summer time it is impossible to find a bucket of water anywhere between Israelite Bay and Mt. Ridley situated 60 miles north of Esperance. Between those two places there is a large area of land which will some day be settled for wheat growing. It would be a wise policy to expend a considerable sum of money in providing water supplies in the wheat country. The position to-day is more serious than it was 12 years ago. There is a large settlement in the Mt. Marshall, Kununoppin and Mt. Brown districts where the people are short of water, and this summer they will be faced with all the difficulties of carting water for many miles. A meeting held at Wyalatchem the other day was attended by representatives from districts as far distant as 100 miles east of that town, and it was decided to send a deputation to the Premier to impress upon him the seriousness of the position as regards the water supply. Given reasonable supplies of water, that country will carry many thousands of sheep. The water difficulty is not confined to one district. It is a problem that confronts the settlers throughout the wheat belt from Mullewa to Esperance. The Government should give early consideration to this matter, and I sincerely hope that at no distant date measures will be adopted to effectually cope with the difficulty.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [9.48]: What applies to the settlers in the Denmark district, as has been well pointed out by the member for Forrest, applies to settlers south of Pemberton and in the Warren River district who are situated 30 miles from communication. In 1911 these people were persuaded to go there on the promise of a railway being constructed in three years. Dozens of these men, after getting advances from the Agricultural Bank, have left their holdings. Some are working in the timber mills, some in the wheat belt, some in Perth. They are sticking to their holdings in the hope that the timber one day will be profit-

able. This condition of affairs is due to the lack of Government assistance to get their produce to market. The Government should have constructed roads and provided railway communication.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They have not had the assistance of the I.A.B. either.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Quite so. Between Bridgetown and Mt. Barker we find settlers of the third generation on the land, some of the finest farmers in Western Australia. I wish the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) would go down and see that land. These men have planted orchards and, owing to the lack of railway facilities, they have to cart their produce distances of 40 to 50 miles. We hear a lot of boasting about what the Government are doing to settle people on the land. I wish the Premier would tour the Pemberton district and see those hard-working men, who would make the best of settlers, men who have a few hundred pounds in their pockets and require no assistance, but who cannot get land. If he did so, I am sure he would make land available for them. At the present time no land south and east of Bridgetown is to be thrown open except under group settlement conditions.

The Premier: That is not so.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Mr. Camm told me so when I made application to him. I am told that all this land is held up for group settlement.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is true. I have had five letters from Pemberton.

The Premier: That was a special area, was it not?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have approached the Premier and he has promised to make land available, but it has not been made available. Applications of this description have been coming year after year. First of all the land was held up for forestry purposes, then for soldier settlement, and now for group settlement. These men require no assistance from the Government and yet they cannot get land. Still we hear all this talk about the wonderful land settlement scheme of Western Australia. I compliment the Premier on what he has done towards the settlement of the South-West. The member for Mt. Magnet was distinctly unfair in his references to the South-West. He spoke disparagingly of the land, but I do not think he has ever been through that part of the country. He spoke about the wonderful land in New South Wales, but I believe that the land in our karri country is equal to the best land in New South Wales.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The member for Mt. Magnet was referring to the time it would take to bring the land into production.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course it requires time and money. After this money has been spent, it will be necessary to make provision for the stocking of that land.

The Premier: We cannot stock it until we get it grassed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: What are the Government doing to-day with regard to dairy cattle? The very best pedigreed bulls are necessary, and it might be advisable to place them in charge of local authorities so that, from the cows in the district, dairy herds may be bred up. We must breed our own herds. When the land is cleared and prepared for dairying, we shall have to provide butter factories. It will be impossible for these men to meet the heavy interest and other charges unless provision is made for the marketing of the produce. The men on the land in the South-West require better facilities for marketing their produce and for getting machinery, implements, fertilisers, etc., on to their holdings. The railway from Jarnadup to Pemberton is controlled by the State Sawmills Department, who are not sympathetic toward the people on the land. All they consider is the question of getting their timber away and, as this is a trading concern, I suppose that is only natural. To them the men on the land and their produce do not matter; anything will do for them. The Acting Premier, when down there, promised that loop lines would be constructed.

The Colonial Secretary: No definite promise was given.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It was practically a promise. The settlers have to depend upon the Sawmills Department for their stores. The baker's shop, butcher's shop, and general store are all controlled by the Sawmills Department, and the people on the land are not getting a fair deal. Unless something is done there will be great dissatisfaction, and if dissatisfaction prevails, the people cannot be expected to make good. Referring to roads and surveys, the member for Mt. Magnet said the whole of the £16,000 advanced by the Federal Government had been spent in the South-West portion of the State. None of it has been spent in my district. I represent four or five road boards, and although I have applied to the Minister, I have not been able to get so much as £100. I would like to know where the money is being spent. If it is being spent to construct a tourist road to Mandurah, I am strongly opposed to it. If it is being spent on a road from Kalamunda through the hills, again I am opposed to it. It should be spent in the country for the benefit of people situated 20 or 30 miles from a railway, who require decent roads to facilitate the transport of their produce to market. \* It should not be spent on tourist roads or pleasure resorts or bowling greens. When the Minister for Works is approached, he says it depends on his chief where this money is spent. If the Premier is approached, he replies that it is of no use talking to him about roads, but that one should go to the Minister for Works. In this way members are put off by one Minister or the other, while road boards continue to press for small sums of £50 to £100 to carry out urgent works.

Mr. Lambort: We did not know exactly where you were standing until the other day.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have always been the same, but I have joined the Country Party because I believe—

Hon. P. Collier: Do not give reasons.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Because I believe that only through the united efforts of members representing agricultural constituencies will we be able to get any satisfaction. That alone will enable us to combat the metropolitan area and the principle of centralisation. That is why I am here.

Mr. Lambort: What about the miners?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Let them look after themselves.

Hon. P. Collier: They are rural miners.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I trust the Premier will show more sympathy to the outback districts, and will give the settlers roads and railways where necessary.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [10.0]: I wish to stress the importance of surveying roads before settlement. We are losing hundreds of thousands of pounds because blocks are being surveyed prior to the roads. It is essential for proper transport purposes that the roads should first be surveyed. I hope the Premier will instruct the surveyors accordingly. Roads should be surveyed along the driest parts and where the best drainage can be found. This would be of great assistance in haulage operations, and would save a good deal in the way of resumption. How is it proposed to make a success of the cleared land in the South-West when the capital improvements amount to something like £25 an acre? I understand a lot of this land is costing upwards of £20 an acre to clear. Those who have induced settlement in that part of the State should be prepared to show how success is to be attained. We all appreciate the necessity for a proper system of production. In the wheat belt it has been said that a man cannot be a successful farmer unless he is cultivating 300 acres annually. The same system ought to be applied to the far South-West. If men are to go in for dairying, the land should be brought to such a state of productivity that they can keep that number of cows which will make the venture a profitable one. I understand that a settler must keep at least 20 cows and be able to produce about two tons of butter fat per annum. Are we prepared to carry our settlers through to that point? Is it sufficient to place a settler on the land, clear some of it, and give him a cow or two? In every community of settlers it is necessary for the less experienced men to have before them an illustration of what can be done under proper methods. It is suicidal to expect the farmer to find out for himself how to get rid of the surplus water. The drainage of the land should be arranged on scientific lines. We have just had a moderate winter, but two-thirds of the crop between Perth and the South-West is ruined because of the water-

logged nature of the country. The land has not been drained as it should have been. That is a matter for the surveyors. Every settler should know when he takes up a block where the proper drainage channels lie, and be given the levels, along which he should work. It is just as necessary to know the levels of land as it is to know the boundaries, and the surveyor should be instructed to carry out this work. We have heard a lot about the necessity for keeping silos. Two silos were erected at Brunswick by the Government but they were sold for firewood. There is another farm about two miles away which possess a silo, but that silo is empty. There are other farms on which the same thing appertains. This subject is worth inquiring into. A considerable quantity of good fodder can be saved by cutting it and stacking it. I am a great believer in natural fodder. By cultivating the soil and seeding it at the proper time farmers should be able to grow green feed for their dairy herds as late as March and April. They should be encouraged to fallow their land and work it well with this object in view. If we look ahead we can double our dairy production. A good farmer knows what to expect and provides for it, while the inexperienced farmer should be instructed by the officers of the department. On the cleared land in the settled parts of the South-West the carrying capacity could be increased by greater subdivision. I know of excellent lucerne crops that have been grown without irrigation. Crops can be taken off every month four or five months in succession without any drainage. With drainage the carrying capacity of the land can be increased tenfold. At Denmark and at Manjimup there are excellent lucerne and other fodder crops. These are grown without irrigation and can be cut four or five times. I could show members where this is being done over many acres of land.

Mr. Harrison: I have done more than that in Queensland.

Mr. MONEY: That is very good indeed. Instead of trying to do too much, let us get a few farms completed, and not have a score incomplete. Undoubtedly the problems of land settlement and repatriation are the greatest problems facing us. It is no use producing unless we can dispose of the products. We are an exporting country, and we have perhaps the biggest handicap of any exporting country in the world—namely a distance of 12,000 miles to our market. It is up to us to take away every other handicap that we can remove. We have a right to provide the settlers with roads, because without roads they cannot succeed. If we invite settlement out ahead of the railways, we must give railway communication. In a wet district, we have a right to give drainage. Those are three essentials without which the settlers in the South-West cannot succeed.

Mr. HARRISON (Arvon) [10.18]: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. HARRISON: There is nothing more important, in my opinion, than the success of the Premier's immigration scheme. Western Australia has the necessary climate and soil conditions, and land settlement, properly administered, can succeed here as well as, if not better than, in other parts of Australia. I confirm the statement of the member for Bunbury with regard to lucerne growing, having myself taken off several crops of lucerne per year grown on river flats in Queensland. We have a similar climate, and soil which is at least as good. If the South-West is to be drained, the main drains will have to be provided first of all, and main roads must be constructed, and the blocks surveyed, so that the settlers will know how they can get the water off their blocks. As regards development of the land here, I can speak from years of experience, applying to the country along the Great Southern railway, the Eastern Goldfields railway, and the South-West and Bridgetown railways, and beyond to the Warren River. I have some knowledge of developments there. More recently we have seen the excellent results obtained with subterranean clover and other grasses. Considering that there exists the experience of years as to the capacity for growing subterranean clover and paspalum, I am astounded that more advantage has not been taken of that knowledge.

Mr. O'Loughlen: As regards the plains, the discovery was made only 12 months ago.

Mr. HARRISON: I am aware of that, but these grasses can be grown even on the top of hills. In surveying blocks care should be taken to give each settler a due proportion of first class land. There should not be cases in which one settler has 100 per cent. of good land while adjoining settlers have only 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. Roads are second in importance only to railways, and the formation of roads with culverts in connection with the development of our lands would save enormously in the cost from a cultivation point of view. Moreover, proper survey of roads would be a great help in the survey of railways. As regards dairying the member for Bunbury said he thought that 20 cattle would be about a sufficient number. That would mean providing for 20 heifers coming to take the place of the cows in milk. That raises another question. Years ago it was contended that cattle on the class of country which is now going under cultivation wanted an annual change to the coast. Such a change may not be required when the farmers go in for cultivating lucerne and other grasses. However, in case it should be needed on account of the zamia palm and other scrub to which the cattle will have access before the land has been properly cleared, it would be an advantage for the Government to set aside large reserves in the coastal areas for the benefit of the cattle of smaller settlers.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Which locality do you suggest?

Mr. HARRISON: The hilly country as against the flat. I am only going on what the

old settlers state. I agree with what has been said as to pure bred stock and developing the type of dairy calves. Years ago I suggested that the Government on their farms should have different strains of cattle. Had that suggestion been adopted, our objective as regards dairy stock would have been reached at a much earlier period. The Government have decided to adopt the lines laid down in the two dairy Bills which recently passed through this Chamber. It is certain that the progress of the dairying industry will be greatly assisted by retaining only such stock as are up to the standard set by the officers of the Agricultural Department. I support the remarks of the member for Toodyay as to water conservation. That is the greatest difficulty in the back country to which the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme is not reticulated. The Eastern Wheat Belt is up against it to-day. Several farmers saw me at the Merredin Show. The settlers want the Premier to visit their district. I am afraid they will be in great straits for want of water unless some bigger scheme of water conservation is taken in hand soon. Great difficulty will be experienced in keeping the grass down and the holdings clean, because they will not be able to carry the stock necessary from that standpoint, unless water is supplied. In view of the present price of wool and the future prospects in that direction, I think it would pay the Government to deal with this question promptly, and also to give farmers advice as to the best catchment areas on their holdings. Owing to the failure of the cotton crops overseas, there will be a big demand for merino fine wool for light materials used in Asia, the lower parts of Europe, and by the British people as well, to take the place of cotton goods. We should take advantage of that position. We will lose much capital in the near future unless assistance is given to the farmers in the direction of providing wire netting and wire generally for fences to assist in checking the wild dog pest. Without such assistance we will not get those results from the wheat belt that we expect. East of the Burracoppin fence as far as Southern Cross they have as good a fighting chance of making good as we had west of Merredin 20 odd years ago. The interest taken in the Merredin State Farm during the past two years has been astounding. Farmers are realising the benefit of that farm and are reaping financial results in consequence of the experiments carried out there. Wheats have been established and now farmers know which wheats are true to type and which are the most suitable varieties. They have their check crops, and the Director of Agriculture, Mr. Sutton, stated recently that the present season with its light rainfall and the period when the rain did fall, has proved what varieties of wheat can be grown with proper cultivation, better than several years of average seasons and close research work could have demonstrated. Mr. Sutton's forecast has thus been carried out.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Which varieties did he suggest?



Mr. HARRISON: Nabawa wheat was recommended by the director as the best for an early season. The standard crop he recommended was Gluyas, and that is the check crop. Every check crop was distinctly better than the adjoining variety. The Gluyas wheat has a weakness, which is in connection with its straw, but that is more than counterbalanced by the results of this season. I am satisfied that if the farmers have regard to his recommendations and follow his advice generally, they will get the best results from his experiments, thus actually saving considerable capital outlay, energy and time. The State farm has proved these things for the farmers, and if the settlers, who have recently taken up their land, will only realise that it is worth visiting the farm to see what has been done, they will benefit considerably. The settlers between Burracoppin and Southern Cross have a much better chance in these days than had the pioneer settlers of 20 years ago. All this research work, with which Mr. Sutton has been connected, means that latter-day farmers have much better opportunities than were available to earlier settlers. I do not know why we should not get equal results in our sand plain country with the aid of the blue lupin as are secured in the districts surrounding Geraldton. Results in that district have surprised the farmers there. As the result of this plant, the carrying capacity of our sand plain country could be increased considerably. That should be done with the aid of research work.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What about stinking roger? You told me that was a good fodder plant.

The Premier: He did not.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Yes he did. Let him tell the House about it now.

Mr. HARRISON: I am satisfied that that weed has wonderful fattening properties, from the flower to the seed stage. I know a farmer who had a piece of fallow on which was quite a crop of that particular weed. He put on 700 sheep to clean the land, and the crop of oats that succeeded was the finest I have ever seen. I want the Minister to follow this up, because, if the Premier's land settlement policy be not successful, it will mean a long period of heavy depression for the whole of the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you think we have sufficient competent officers?

Mr. HARRISON: I believe that a Minister of the Crown should be specially detailed to exclusively administer the land settlement policy.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 31st October, 1922.*

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

### QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS WATER SCHEME PIPES.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Minister for Education: 1, Before the Works Department removes goldfields water scheme pipes from auriferous localities suffering from a depression that may be but temporary, does the department consult with the Mines Department as to the future possibilities of boring in the locality? 2, If not, will the Government see that in all such cases the opinion of the Mines Department is first ascertained?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, The Mines Department is always consulted. 2, Answered by No. 1.

### MOTION—STANDING ORDERS.

#### *Notices of amendments.*

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan). [4.36]: 1 move—

That it be an instruction to the Standing Orders Committee to consider the desirability of framing a Standing Order as to the placing of suggested amendments to Bills on the Notice Paper of the House after the second reading has been moved and prior to the Committee stage of the Bill being reached.

We have no Standing Order dealing with the placing of amendments on the Notice Paper. On several occasions the Minister has objected to notices being placed on the Notice Paper before the passing of the second reading. I understand that in another place the Speaker takes no notice of the placing of amendments on the Notice Paper until his attention is called to it, when he rules that notices of amendments cannot go on the Notice Paper until Bills have been read a second time. We have no Standing Order on the point, and when we have no Standing Order we fall back upon the practice of the House of Commons. That practice, it is laid