

down and the individual given another opportunity to make good. It is better to write down the loss on behalf of the man who is already on the property, rather than to allow someone else to take over the holding and reap the benefit of his labour. The personal equation must be taken into consideration and, applying that to a lot of the settlers, I am inclined to think that the Government are justified in many instances, in the anticipated action indicated. The reference to development brings me to a consideration of the Midland Railway Co. and their concession. I have not been able to go into the question deeply, but there are one or two observations I wish to make. When passing through the Midland Company's areas between Perth and Moora, I have noticed that farmers generally there have not been able to progress as have farmers in many other parts, where they secured the land direct from the Government. That result is due to the fact that people who selected land from the Government direct have been able to secure assistance through the Agricultural Bank and through the Industries Assistance Board. Those conditions do not operate with the Midland settlers. They are entitled to some consideration and if terms were quickly made with the Midland Company for the purchase of the line and the concession, the interests of the State would be served. There are huge tracts of land in that part of the State that can be developed, and the result would be satisfactory to Western Australia in the long run. I had intended touching upon the fruit marketing question, but perhaps it is not necessary to do so at the present juncture. When I visited the Eastern States recently I noticed that in Queensland the authorities have taken the bull by the horns in connection with the pooling system and have made it compulsory, whether the growers like it or not. I am satisfied that if the pooling system is to be introduced for the handling of our primary products, it must be along compulsory lines. I have encroached upon the patience of hon. members long enough. From the trend of my remarks I think they will realise that my whole heart and soul is in the development of the country. It is only by that means that we can expect to get such returns as will permit us to balance the ledger. It will take a long time to do it. We must look forward, perhaps for generations, to the development of the country as the only possible means whereby we can elevate this great State of ours to the position it will ultimately reach in the Commonwealth of Australia. In conclusion, may I say that I have unbounded confidence in the possibilities of Western Australia, in the people who are endeavouring to develop it and, last but not least, I have confidence that the present Government intend to do all they possibly can to assist in that development. So long

as they look steadfastly towards developmental works, bringing all our resources into fruition and by scientific application to increase the production of lands already producing, then I can assure the Government that they will have my whole-hearted support, and that I will do all I can to assist in the advancement of the project they have in hand.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.37]: As one of the new members of this House I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Drew upon his appointment to the leadership of this Chamber. I had not met the hon. member prior to my entry here, but from remarks that have fallen from other hon. members, both inside and outside the House, I feel quite satisfied that he will conduct the business of the House to the satisfaction of members and with credit to himself. I would like to thank members for the kind remarks of welcome to new members. I realise that the Council has set a very high standard for the conduct of its business and I shall endeavour to live up to that standard. I do not intend to take up much time, but there are one or two matters to which I shall refer briefly. I would like to draw attention to the statement made by the Leader of the House with regard to our trade with Java and the Federated Malay States, particularly with reference to its effect upon the State's motor ship "Kangaroo." The Minister made a statement on this subject in the "West Australian" of the 17th July last. In the course of that statement he said--

The support given by Western Australian exporters to the m.s. "Kangaroo" on the Java-Singapore trade is, I regret to have to say, not of a very encouraging nature. I feel that our exporters should take a greater advantage of the benefits open to them by reason of the vessel being on this route. I have gone thoroughly into the question, and I trust I may receive the valuable help of the Press in my efforts to improve matters in the direction to which I refer. A survey of the situation is necessary to enable your readers to grasp the position. When the m.s. "Kangaroo" was purchased in 1915, the Government had in view that she should eventually be fitted to enable the trade, which was expected to grow up between this State and the adjacent country of the Dutch East Indies and the Federated Malay States to be adequately catered for, and also to provide a means of transporting live stock and frozen meat from the far North to the metropolitan markets. The "Kangaroo" was originally intended to provide meat that would reduce the price to the consumer in the metropolitan area. Shortly afterwards the war commenced and practically every privately-owned steamer

was commandeered by the Admiralty. Being a State-owned vessel, the "Kangaroo" was allowed to roam about the ocean, and she was practically what I call a "freight pirate." On six charters she made something like £300,000. The normal freight before the war was something like 27s. 6d. per ton. On various occasions the "Kangaroo" had charters at £13 per ton, and on one shipment from Western Australia to Egypt she earned approximately £100,000.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That was an indication of what the other companies had been making.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: As I have already mentioned, the ships belonging to private companies were commandeered by the Admiralty during the war and the companies had to take what they were given. I would like to know what has become of the money earned by the "Kangaroo" during that period.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It went into Consolidated Revenue.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: When the "Kangaroo" returned to Western Australia and it was decided that she should take up her running on the North-West-Java-Singapore trade, the Government also decided to send a delegation to the East Indies to ascertain what could be done to increase the export trade to those countries. I had the honour of being a member of that delegation, and I have a report furnished by the chairman of that body. I would like to read the names of those who comprised the delegation, showing the organisations they represented. They included the following: C. S. Nathan (chairman of the Council of Industrial Development), J. C. Port (W.A. Sawmillers' Association), H. A. Stephenson (Produce Merchants' Association), K. H. Watson (Flour Millers' Association), A. C. R. Loaring (Primary Producers' Association), W. M. Gray and T. Nisbet (Chamber of Manufactures), H. J. Lambert (journalist), and A. H. Macartney (secretary). Aboard the vessel was a consignment of stock for Singapore. We called at Java but could not remain there for long on account of the live stock.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Was that the delegation that Mr. Seaddan accompanied?

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, he went in his capacity as Minister for Industries. At any rate we got to Singapore. There was a building there, the old post office, with an approximate area of 3,000 sq. ft., situated centrally in Raffle's-square. It was rapidly converted into a West Australian exhibition hall. A comprehensive display was made of our primary products, consisting of flour, wheat, bran, pollard, oats, chaff, potatoes, etc., tastefully decorated by bundles of wheat sheaves. In this section we also included dried fruits, currants, sultanas, raisins and lexias from the Swan Settlers' Association and J. N. Cox

of Coolup, and dehydrated fruits and vegetables, the product of the Kendenup estate. The flour milling industry was well represented by a very handsome exhibit from the Flour Millers' Association, containing a number of receptacles showing wheat cleaned, milled and dressed, and its various by-products, while Messrs. F. & C. Picse and the York Flour Milling Co. also made attractive displays. In the general section the following manufactured products and firms were represented: Gas stoves, bath heaters and sanitary ware, Metters Ltd.; ales and stouts, Swan Brewery and Castlemaine Brewery; chocolates, confectionery and cordials, Plaistowe & Co. Ltd.; baking powders, jellies, condiments, W. D. Moore & Co. and Richard Holmes & Co.; jams, pickles and sauces, Rayner & Co.; biscuits, cakes and puddings, Mills & Ware and H. Hunt; soaps, W. H. Burford & Sons; toilet preparations and essences, Wattle Preparation Co.; medicinal requirements, Neale, Constable & Co., F. H. Faulding & Co., and British Drug Co.; leather trunks, bags, and general leatherware, Mallabone & Co.; harness and leather goods, Hugo Fischer & Co., A. E. Arundel & Co.; wines, Santa Rosa Distillery Co.; tinned fish, Westral Freezing and Tinning Co.; cyclone products, Cyclone Fence Co.; brushware, W.A. Brush Co.; paints, kalsomine, Calyx Paint Co.; sandalwood oil, Plaimar & Co.; tiles and drain pipes, Stone Pipe and Pottery Co.; cement, W.A. Portland Cement Co.; white lead, Australian Mining & White Lead Co.; manufactured stationery, Detmolds Ltd.; glycopaste, Granville & Co. So it will be seen that it was a fairly representative gathering. We had practically every class of manufacture represented. We held an exhibition for 10 or 11 days, and did all we could to push business. We then came back to Java. On the way to Batavia we had the decks fitted up, and when we got there we exhibited our goods. Despite all this, there has been very little improvement in the business. The trouble is that outside of two or three lines the goods they require in Java and Singapore are goods that we ourselves are importing, and until we can supply ourselves, we have little or no chance to supply the requirements of Java and the Federated Malay States.

Hon. A. Burvill: What class of goods?

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Butter, bacon, ham, cheese, dried fruits and the like.

Hon. A. Burvill: You will find them all in the South-West when it is developed.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Those are the goods we ourselves are importing. There are a few lines we can supply, such as flour, fresh fruit and sandalwood. The figures quoted by Mr. Drew refer to the last three years. Practically there has been no improvement since the delegation went up with the "Kangaroo." In flour we continue to hold our own; this year we



have done a little better. We have five or six flour millers in Western Australia keenly interested in the export trade, and they leave no stone unturned to cater for the trade. Our flour mills are capable of turning out something like 100,000 tons of flour per annum. Fresh fruit has just about held its own. But we have at least half a dozen firms who are catering for the fresh fruit trade and also other lines. Sandalwood has increased during the last year or so. Of course we have a virtual monopoly in sandalwood, something like 90 per cent. of the world's production, and so we can do as we like with it. As a rule, the sandalwood shippers make their own arrangements. So there is very little chance of improving the trade generally. Mr. Drew in his statement said that a member of the Perth Chamber of Commerce had brought up the question before that body and suggested that concerted action to improve matters be taken by the manufacturers. Unfortunately, the members of the Chamber of Commerce did not feel that there would be any great advantage in following out the suggestion. Since then one or two companies have been sending their own representatives there, but there does not seem to be any general movement towards the desired end. As President of the Chamber of Commerce at that time, I may say the reason why no action was taken was because the Chamber did not think the trade was there and, as Mr. Port and I had represented the Chamber on that trip of the "Kangaroo," on our report they thought it was useless to go any further—that if the business was not there, it could not be created. The Perth Chamber of Commerce is just as keenly alive to the interests of Western Australian trade as is any other section of the community, and is at all times anxious to assist the Government of the day in the advancement of the State. It is not the fault of the traders that the "Kangaroo" is not a paying proposition. In my opinion she never will pay on this route, because she is not suitable. She is too slow, and moreover the business is not there. She rarely does more than eight knots. It took us two months to go to Singapore in her and come back. Of course she had not been docketed for over two years, and so was very foul. Several times I looked over the side at night and could not tell whether she was going or coming back. My advice to the Government is to sell the "Kangaroo" while they have an opportunity, because in two or three years' time it will be very difficult to do so. She never has paid except when freight-pirating during the war. I am opposed to State trading. Government trading is immoral. It is the Government's function to govern, not to trade. Interference with private enterprise by Government enterprise kills energy, initiative, ambition and creates distrust in the minds of the investing public. It brings about chaos and stagnation. De-

ficiencies owing to Government mismanagement have to be made up out of Consolidated Revenue, and the whole of the community suffers for the privilege of allowing the Government to experiment in socialistic enterprises that would be better left to private enterprise to develop. I should like to read a statement by Sir Arthur Cox, Treasurer of New South Wales. This appeared in the "West Australian" of April 12th—

In the opinion of the State Treasurer (Sir Arthur Cocks), one of the chief causes of high taxation in Australia has been the entry of different Governments into business enterprises. Allowing for the profits on some of the enterprises in the Commonwealth, he said, the incredible total of £7,661,988 had been absolutely wasted. Most of that had been loan money, or if not, it had increased loan money. It had increased borrowing necessities to the amount lost. That meant that the taxpayers had to find about £459,719 annually in interest. Every taxpayer would be penalised until that money was paid back. It was a staggering realisation and a stern lesson to Governments of the future. The figures were mostly up to June 30, 1923. The Commonwealth easily headed the list with an estimated loss of £2,645,761 on the shipping and shipbuilding activities, plus a loss of £1,628,895 on war service homes, representing a total loss of £4,274,656. The accumulated net losses on State enterprises in New South Wales to June 30, 1923, were £356,981. To this sum had to be added £415,720, the net loss on Walsh Island to date, making the total £772,711. These figures took into consideration an accumulated profit on the brickworks, metal quarries, and Monier pipe works. The total losses on Queensland Government enterprises to June 30, 1923, were £823,665. Western Australia on the same date had accumulated losses amounting to £457,914.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That should have been doubled.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: That was to the 30th June, 1923, and it deals only with actual losses, not depreciation. It should be not only doubled but trebled, and then a little more could be added before one got the true position. The report goes on to say—

Tasmanian losses were £69,246, or, according to later figures published in the Press, £77,000. The operations of Victoria and South Australia were negligible, and in each case resulted in a profit. "My object in having this statement prepared," said Sir Arthur Cocks, "is to write in red letters one of the causes of high taxation to-day. The great adventure has been undertaken and failed. Such adventures will always fail. Business men succeed as the result of a lifetime of study and business. They pick

their managers and head men and under men for special qualities of fitness, and promptly sack them if they don't make good. Such conditions do not prevail in Government departments, and muddle and waste go on until we get appalling examples like Cockatoo Island, Walsh Island, the trawlers, and the war service homes. In New South Wales we have wiped out the worst of the socialistic enterprises, and, if the people ever again permit a Government to establish new ones, they will deserve to be called asses.'

Hon. G. W. Miles: Hear, hear!

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: What the people of Western Australia deserve to be called, I do not know.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You cannot use the word in this House.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: My advice to the Government is to get rid of the whole of the State enterprises, cut their loss and make a fresh start. By doing that they will establish confidence in the investing public. We cannot do without private enterprise, for two reasons: We cannot do without their money and we cannot do without their brains, but not until such time as Government trading is cut out shall we get real prosperity in the State. I am pleased that the Government intend to carry out the immigration and land settlement policy initiated by Sir James Mitchell. I have sat here night after night and have heard Sir James criticised in a way that I did not think was possible by either Australians or Britons. To my mind he has not received fair play. He has been kicked and knocked about while he was down, and he was knocked down from behind. I have been in Western Australia for 26 years and, as a keen business man, have noted the fluctuations not only in my own finances but in the finances of the State, and I say without fear of contradiction that on two occasions Sir James Mitchell saved the position financially. The first time was when there was a sharp decline in mining. We had unemployed in all directions; mines were closing down; men were leaving the State; business was stagnant. What were we to do? Sir James Mitchell enunciated his scheme for settling people in the wheat belt, and from that time onward for several years we had success. The financial position improved greatly and after a few years things were running smoothly. Then the war intervened and the majority of our young men went away to do their duty. The result was a decline in agriculture, which became very acute at the time Sir James Mitchell came into power. Things were very bad indeed at that time. The ship of State was drifting to leeward at a rate of £700,000 a year. We had unemployed and what were we to do? Our men were returning from the war and had not been provided for. The other States were suffering similarly. At that time the Prime

Minister called a conference of Premiers and asked them to initiate schemes for immigration and land settlement. When those schemes were presented the Prime Minister said there was only one worthy of consideration, and that was the scheme initiated by Sir James Mitchell. Sir James returned to Western Australia, laid his cards upon the table, and we were all delighted. It was then arranged that he should go to England to see what he could do to further the scheme. He was banqueted prior to his departure by people representing all shades of politics and religion and was wished success in his undertaking. When he put his scheme before the Imperial Government it was soon announced that an agreement had been arrived at whereby the Imperial, Federal and State Governments arranged to share the interest on a loan of six millions. It was considered the best possible scheme that could be advanced. Up to that time it certainly was the best scheme. Of course it is easy to be wise after the event. Now we can see where we might have done better. When Sir James Mitchell returned, business improved greatly, property values increased. There was a property in Murray-street that I could have bought for £7,000, and to-day that property cannot be purchased for £16,000. Some critics contend that the finances have not improved, but that all we have is on paper. I maintain that we have had a great improvement in the finances since the immigration agreement was negotiated. We have railways that, to the end of June, 1923, had cost the country close on 20 millions of money, and for the preceding seven years had incurred a loss of £300,000 a year. Since then the railways have paid their way with the exception of sinking fund. It is a wonderful improvement. The deficit has been reduced in two years by something like £500,000. All credit is due to Sir James Mitchell for what he has done for the State. He has done more for the advancement of Western Australia than any man living to-day. There is no question about that. His scheme may not have been carried out in detail as it should have been. He may have been told that certain work could be done at a certain price and found it was not so. It may cost a great deal more to carry out his scheme, but whatever it costs we have to go on with it. We must have more production and more people. I am pleased that a Royal Commission is to be appointed to inquire into group settlement. There can be no looking back. We must go on with the business. In the South-West is some of the finest land in Australia. I spent my young days in Tasmania, and I say that we have a lot of land in the South-West equal to anything in Tasmania, while the climate also is equally as good. In the South-West almost anything can be grown. There is no place in Australia that I know of better adapted for pig-raising than are parts of the South-West.



Hon. G. W. Miles: Except the North-West.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I am only speaking of what I know. Some members have been urging the need for providing markets, but in Western Australia we have a market at our own door. During the last 12 months it has cost us 1½ millions of money for foodstuffs brought from the Eastern States that might easily have been produced here. On butter we spend half a million, on hams and bacon up to the 30th June, 1923, we spent £176,000 and during the 12 months ended June, 1924, the total was £196,000. On other foodstuffs we have spent money in proportion. For years to come we have our own market to absorb all the dairy products that can be raised in the South-West. These are commodities that are required in Java and the Federated Malay States. It is, therefore, likely to be many years before we shall be in a position to cater fully for the trade of eastern countries, because, first of all, we must provide for our own needs. Only imagine what it would mean to the community if we had that million or million and a half of money circulating within the State!

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

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Before tea I was referring to the immigration and land settlement scheme. I am glad the present Government intend to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject, and I hope the Commission will consist of men thoroughly acquainted with the business. In my opinion the Imperial Government are not doing nearly as much as they should be doing in this regard. It is just as much the concern of the Imperial Government to populate Western Australia as it is the concern of the Western Australian Government.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I wish you could persuade the Imperial Government to that view.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: We must try to do it. Mention has been made of various gentlemen from the Old Country who visited Australia and inspected group settlements and land development schemes in the various States. Among those gentlemen was Lord Harrowby, who has been mentioned by Mr. Holmes. By virtue of my position as President of the Chamber of Commerce, I had two or three long conversations with Lord Harrowby on this very subject. He informed me that the principal aim of his trip to the Commonwealth was to look into the group settlements and land development schemes. Without any hesitation he told me that the scheme initiated by Sir James Mitchell was absolutely the best in the Commonwealth. He also said to me that he realised Western Australia could not do

more than she was doing in the matter of financing the scheme, and he assured me that on his return to England he would bring the subject before the Home Government and see what could be done. He said, "We must think in millions; not in hundreds or thousands, but in millions. To-day we have five millions too many people in England." I assured him we had 10,000,000 too few in the Commonwealth. He went on to say that Britain's average number of unemployed was one and a quarter millions, to whom £30,000,000 were being paid annually in doles. That statement in itself affords sufficient ground for our asking the Imperial Government to do a great deal more here than they are doing to-day. They should find the whole of the money for clearing land here for British people. Further, they should advance us money for 10 years free of interest, and then for another 10 or 15 years on a sliding scale. That expenditure would represent money saved so far as Great Britain is concerned. The proposed Royal Commission should inquire fully into that aspect of the matter. With regard to the mining industry, I note that a Royal Commission is to be appointed, and I hope the Commission will do something to protect the investing public. For many years past hundreds of thousands of pounds have been wasted, thrown away, taken out of the pockets of the unsuspecting public for shows which had absolutely no prospect of success.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You want the minnows protected from the sharks.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Quite so. Only recently I with two other directors of a mining company went out as far as Mt. Shenton, 100 miles north-east of Laverton, to inspect a mine. I may say that two or three years ago several returned soldiers, I mean Captain Jones and his party, went out prospecting with assistance from the late Government. After a time they reported that they had found a wonderful show 100 miles north-east of Laverton. Nearly every business man and professional man in the metropolitan area took a share or two shares to assist in the development of what was supposed to be a mine. Largely the money was subscribed out of sympathy, because the men were returned soldiers and it was thought the whole affair was straight and above board. The next thing was a very favourable report on the mine from Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer. On the strength of that report a cablegram was despatched by the late Government apprising the people in London of this great find. An option was taken by an Adelaide syndicate, which sent over a man to inspect the show. He immediately shut down on it. I believe he offered £300 for it, saying it was no good. A certain amount of development work had been



done when the favourable report was issued by our Mines Department. The net result was that some £3,000 or £4,000 were uselessly expended on the find. One of our mines inspectors, sent out by the Government to report on the show, absolutely condemned it. In submitting his report to his superior officer, however, he advised that it be not published, because it would do a certain amount of harm and would prevent shareholders from going on with the expenditure of money. The report was held over for 10 weeks, during which time the company were endeavouring to get a subsidy from the Government towards further developments. Nearly every day we had word from the Mines Department that we were sure to get pound for pound, and possibly £2 for £1. We waited, and the reports that the thing was very good, and living down, and widening out, and assaying so much continued to come in from the mine. Presently we got a bit suspicious, and I and the other two directors decided to inspect the show personally, although it was a long way off, practically at the centre of Australia. It occurred to us that before starting on the trip we might as well go to the Mines Department and tell them what we were about to do. Accordingly we went to the officials and asked them how long it would be before we got our subsidy. Thereupon Mr. Montgomery said to us, "Well, you know, I have a report here from Mr. Windsor." Mr. Montgomery read to us a little of that report, and then said, "You know, on the strength of this, I could not recommend any subsidy." He did not give us the full effect of the report, and away we went. Although we were only laymen, not professing to be mining men, although I know a little about the subject, the moment we were on the scene we were satisfied that we were on a real, genuine dud. Accordingly we paid off the men and liquidated the company as quickly as possible. In cases of that sort the public should be protected as far as possible. No matter what effect the publication of an adverse departmental report might have on the shareholders or anyone else, it should be published. There is no use in wasting money. The effect of this particular affair has been that quite a lot of good men with a little capital, who were prepared to back a prospector, would not now put a penny into a show, no matter how good it was; and one could not blame them for their refusal. As to mining generally, I look upon it now as a side line. We have to rely upon agriculture to pull this State out of its difficulties.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Western Australia has the largest and richest auriferous area in the whole world.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, but we have not got the gold.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The gold is there.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, but it cannot be found. The area is there, but the problem is to make mining payable.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: There is no other place in the world where mining on such a scale as ours would be regarded as a side line.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I went out to that wonderful mine, the Lancefield, just out of Laverton, and had a look round. I saw £100,000 worth of machinery lying idle. I saw 200 or 300 houses in which the workmen had lived, and my companion said, "You can have any one of those houses for £1." However, I was not a buyer. It was heart-breaking to see the desolation all the way down the line to Menzies. Mine after mine was closed down. In one place where I stayed for the night—I think it was Mt. Malcolm—I asked one of the persons at the hotel, "How many people have you got here?" The reply was, "There are 18 men, seven married women, one girl, and 75 goats." That was the sort of thing we saw all the way down. The inhabitants were chiefly goats. I could not help thinking of Sir James Mitchell and his foresight in the matter of land settlement. The more a business man travels in the back country, the more credit he must give to Sir James Mitchell for his vision in endeavouring to get people settled on the land and producing more. Now as to the Education Department. This is one of those public utilities which are very costly. Education cost us about £500,000 a year. Although that is a very large sum for a small population of 360,000 souls to pay, I venture to say there is not a man, woman, or child in Western Australia that would favour cutting it down by one penny. We cannot give our children too much education. The time has come when we have to look to the outside world. The Japanese and the Chinese go all over the world looking for the best education; they are met with in the universities of England and America and other countries. Therefore we must so educate the children to whom we look to carry on this great State of Western Australia, and this great Commonwealth, that they will be on an equal footing with other nations when exploiting the markets of the world. I wish to say a few words about the trams. I am sorry to note that the Government intend to take the trams over the William-street bridge. I think that is a pity, and I hope they will not proceed with the work. The locality of that bridge from a traffic point of view is the most dangerous I know of in the city. It is dangerous on the Roe-street side as well as on the Wellington-street side where there is less than 40 feet between kerb and kerb, and it is all angles. The whole of the time the trams will be crossing the bridge they will be rounding curves and there will be heavy wear and tear on the rails, to say nothing of the cars themselves. I do not know any other place in the city

that is more congested with pedestrian traffic. On the top of the bridge there are gateways and steps leading into Roe-street and into Wellington-street, and these are used by thousands of men, women and children. It will be a fatal mistake if the Government carry out their intention of carrying the trams across that bridge. I agree with the suggestion made in this Chamber that the line should be carried along Wellington-street, over Thomas-street, thence by way of Oxford-street to Leederville and Mt. Hawthorn. I do trust that this suggestion will be investigated and that the Government will pause before they carry out their original intention. I desire also to enter a protest against the introduction of the 44-hour week. That action was not in the best interests of the community and will recoil on the Government's own shoulders before they are much older. I am pleased to note that the Government intend to introduce a main roads Bill and I trust some good will come of that. I do not know of anything that is more necessary. We have thousands of miles of so-called roads, the foundations of which have gone, and it will take millions of money to put them back into a good state of repair. So long as the Government introduce legislation that will be in the best interests of the State, so long will they receive my support. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Hon. G. POTTER (West) [7.50]: With other members who have spoken on the Address-in-reply I should also like to congratulate the Leader of the House and the new members of the Chamber. Regarding the Leader it must be particularly pleasing to members to know that the brilliancy with which this House has been led, and the un-failing courtesy extended to members, is to be perpetuated. I also congratulate Mr. Hickcy on his elevation to honorary Cabinet rank. I shall have something more to say regarding the appointment of honorary Ministers. Before dealing with certain matters connected with my own constituency, I should like to refer to some of the remarks made by my colleague, Mr. Gray. Mr. Gray seemed to call into question the wisdom of the Government in employing that beautiful emblem of liberty, the Union Jack. I can hardly understand, nor can I believe that the hon. member really considered the effect of his words, in respect of the flying of the Union Jack from the flagstaff at Parliament House. In any part of the world we know that the Union Jack stands for freedom and justice, and wherever we may see that flag we know that there is freedom from aggression on the part of anyone that has not right on his side. It seems to me very strange that any hon. member should try to create the impression that such a thought would exist in the minds of the citizens of Western Australia; because after all there is no State in the Commonwealth that does

more for the Union Jack than does Western Australia. Take it from another viewpoint: We look at the Australian flag as one of which we are also very proud because it incorporates the Union Jack, and we, as citizens of the Commonwealth, have a share in the Union Jack, just the same as have the people of South Africa, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and the day that the Union Jack is dragged from the flag post of any outpost of the Empire, then that particular place will be the prey of the strongest country most closely adjacent. I would like to refer my friend to a little memorandum that is in our library here. It is a White Book dealing with certain affairs that happened between 1914 and 1918 some thousands of miles from here, and where Australia had the finest escort that anyone could wish for, and where 300,000 people from the comparatively small population of Australia went. Mr. Hamersley regretted that there was no escort for His Excellency the Governor on the occasion of the opening of Parliament. My friend took exception to Mr. Hamersley's remarks and said that he would rather have had an escort drawn from the boys and girls of the State. I know that my friend is not disloyal to the Empire, neither is he disloyal to the Commonwealth. His remarks, however, will have a far-reaching effect, because it is on account of being able to secure the possible furnishing of an escort of boys and girls that the escort of 300,000 to which I have referred became possible.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There was no slur on the Union Jack intended.

Hon. G. POTTER: I am sure my friend is using only a small segment of his mind if he thinks the Australian flag is above the Union Jack, because the Union Jack is also the flag of Australia.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is incorporated in the Union Jack, too.

Hon. G. POTTER: If Mr. Gray would look up the geometrical formula he would find that the part is never greater than the whole. The Union Jack represents the whole. Regarding this particular Chamber, I wish I had been longer in it so that I might have been in a better position to reply to what has been said about it. It has been said that the Upper House is in a great measure in disrepute in the eyes of the electors of Western Australia and that it is to an extent held in contempt. On account of what? On account of the lack of demonstration of democracy? I wonder if the hon. member—again I am referring to my colleague, Mr. Gray—has given a thought to the wonderful democracy that has been demonstrated in this Chamber. If he looks up the dictionary meaning and interpretation of democracy or autocracy—

Hon. J. Cornell: He is the leader of the new democracy.

Hon. G. POTTER: That was just what was in my mind, only I did not think it would be Mr. Gray who would be the leader.