

indicated that already the decision has been arrived at that a line should be run from Southern Cross southward, terminating at Lake Grace. Knowing the geographical position so well, and the great possibilities of that part of the country, for I live not far from it, and have been engaged for 17 years on the job, I breathe the hope that no authority on matters of railway construction will be so short-sighted as to stop at Lake Grace, and that the line will continue from there to the coast, and proceed until it reaches the Albany harbour. It is my earnest hope that this will be done. I have recently travelled over almost the whole of the wheat belt. During my many years' experience as a farmer I can truthfully say I have never seen better indications everywhere for a bumper harvest than I have seen lately. I believe that a 40-million bushel yield is in sight for this season, and that we can hardly fail to get it. With the possibility of a 40-million bushel yield, and with the great 3,500 farms scheme in view, founded as I hope it will be upon successful lines, placed under effective management, and supported by an efficient means of railway transport, without being unduly optimistic, I cannot take any other view than that a great future indeed lies before this wonderful State. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 15th August, 1928.

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

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR SCHEMES.

Mr. LINDSAY (for Mr. Thomson) asked the Premier: 1, What is the estimated cost of increased accommodation in Fremantle harbour to the proposed new bridge, and the number of berths provided? 2, What is the estimated cost of the outer harbour scheme suggested by Mr. Stileman, and the number of berths provided? 3, What is the estimated cost of the river extension, including Rocky Bay, as proposed by Sir George Buchanan, and the number of berths provided? 4, What provision has been made in the Stileman scheme as adopted by the Government for (a) a graving dock; (b) the suggested site; (c) the estimated cost?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for The Premier) replied: 1, The information is given in the Engineer-in-Chief's report viz.—£2,000,000 and 5,750 feet of wharf. 2, Both the cost and the number of berths provided will depend on the probable requirements of the traffic when the time comes to put the work in hand. The design is one which will enable the work to be carried out stage by stage as and when additional accommodation becomes necessary to deal with the trade of the port. 3, Sir George Buchanan's estimate was £6,747,000. This figure, however, makes no provision for the dredging required, nor for land resumption, which would both add very materially to the estimate. Length of quay provided was 28,300 feet. 4, No site has been selected for a future graving dock. The probability that construction of such a dock or its equivalent will eventually be necessary is fully realised and provided for. The actual site will very largely depend on where suitable foundations are available, and these will almost entirely govern the cost.

QUESTION—BEEF CATTLE SUPPLY

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has he seen the report of the butchers' meeting in the "West Australian" of the 14th, in which Mr. Warner says: that if he could get space on the State boats he could land cattle at £11 each? 2, Is the implication by Mr. Warner that he could not get space on the State boats cor-

rect? 3, If so, is there any way of giving the butchers the space required by them?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, Mr. Warner has not at any time applied for shipping space. 3, Space for livestock on State vessels has never been in the hands of any agents or growers to use or farm out as they desired, but applications are invited from all growers known to be interested or likely to be interested, and each grower is given his pro rata proportion of the available space.

QUESTION—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DINNER, LONDON.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Premier: What is the cost to this State of the Annual Western Australian dinner held in London?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for The Premier) replied: Nil.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Panton, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Hon. W. D. Johnson (Guildford) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.35]: I wish to be pardoned for trespassing upon the time of the Chamber in briefly making a small contribution to the debate upon the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. Like other members, I have given some consideration to that Speech, appreciating the fact that no Government are infallible, and that while they do attempt to foreshadow what legislation is, in their opinion, essential and urgent, it is the duty of every member to place his side of the question before the Chamber with the object of adding to or, alternatively, doing his best when the opportunity arises to delete some of the foreshadowed legislation. I agree with many members who are of the opinion that we are altogether too rapid in creating legislation. While there are many very neces-

sary and urgent measures that, each session, might be seriously considered, nevertheless it must be admitted that there are scores of Acts of Parliament on our statute-book which provide nothing more than fodder for silverfish, or a harbour for other forms of vermin. So when these Acts are resorted to in the law courts, generally they are taken up and used by those who are fully aware that some unfortunate member of the community is going to suffer an injustice. Even those of our Acts that are most frequently used are faulty in the extreme. This is indicated by the fact that almost invariably in every session of Parliament some parent Act is brought forward with a view to its being amended. So in piecemeal fashion we add to a parent Act amendments of which the majority of the people have no knowledge. Probably it tangles even lawyers to get hold of some of our parent Acts and the subsequent amendments thereto. None but lawyers, who generally are well feed for the purpose, could afford the time to read the amendments into the parent Act with a view to arriving at what Parliament expected therefrom. Most concerned am I respecting two of our Acts that are frequently used, namely, the Land Act and the Mining Act. If one takes the Land Act and endeavours to learn from it exactly how the law applies, he finds embodied in the parent Act scores of leaflets upon which are printed various amendments made from time to time. And having gone through them all, probably one is just as wise as when he entered upon his endeavour to see what the parent Act contained. I suggest we are in duty bound to give this question some consideration with a view of setting aside a session of Parliament for the purpose of reviewing the whole of our statutes with the object of consolidating those that are most used, and getting them respectively into one Act.

The Minister for Railways. We are doing that all the time.

MR. MARSHALL: I admit that this Government and past Governments also have practised it. Nevertheless one cannot take up the Land Act—which of all, perhaps, is most frequently used—but he will find it chock-full of leaflets containing successive amendments. It requires some study to read all those amendments into the parent Act with a view to arriving at what the law is to-day. Then we could well afford to abolish a lot of our existing laws. I do not know that a modern Parliament should

cherish and preserve ancient Imperial Acts created for the purpose of controlling the affairs of State over 100 years ago. Many of them are on the statute-book of Western Australia, and from time to time are resorted to for the alleged purpose of dispensing justice; which in these modern days, of course, could not be done upon so ancient a legal basis. I agree with the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) that, instead of rushing along creating new legislation, we should set aside a session of Parliament for the purpose of reviewing the legislation we already have. At this period of our history, when the demand for land exceeds all previous experience, it will be found that the Land Act is obsolete in many respects and quite impracticable in others. What particularly stirs me to mention all this is that recently there were in Wiluna two young men, both possessed of any amount of money, in search of pastoral country. They had travelled throughout the eastern goldfields, the greater portion of the East Murchison and over the Murchison areas, but they found it impossible to obtain any pastoral country within a reasonable distance of a railway or a port. I took the litho they had in their possession, and showed them land aggregating in four blocks a little over a million acres of pastoral country. I indicated the names of the present owners. One of these is the name of a man who is an important citizen in the State. This land has never been improved or stocked.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is held for speculative purposes.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but why should the law permit it?

The Minister for Railways: The law does not permit it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know, but the administration does nothing to enforce the law. What annoys me more than anything else is that I could point to a million acres of fairly good pastoral country between Wiluna and Meekatharra, the owners of which have never seen it.

The Minister for Lands: Why have you not told the Minister about it?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not think that a member should be asked to act as a pimp.

The Minister for Lands: What is the difference between being a pimp and ventilating the matter here?

Mr. MARSHALL: I should like to indicate to the Minister what should be done to remedy the position. If he becomes hasty,

I may not do so. There is one block about 35 miles from Meekatharra, the area of which I think is 388,000 acres. It has been held for five or six years. Certain prospective settlers thought they would like to get hold of it, and believed that the original settler had no use for it. These were Eastern States people, who induced someone within Western Australia to take it up for them.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is remarkable how these things are done.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not a post has been erected upon it, not a spade has been put into it, and not a hoof has been put there by the present owner.

The Minister for Lands: They have no hope of getting a transfer.

Mr. MARSHALL: I will give the Minister some information about that. I agree that people cannot get a transfer if the Minister knows the exact position. I know of one or two occasions when he has stood firm, and this is very much to his credit.

The Minister for Lands: I have stood firm on every occasion.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not trying to disparage what the Minister has done. These people asked £5,000 for the property. The persons who desired to get hold of it consulted me, and I told them I was afraid the Minister would not agree to the transfer. I told them to have nothing to do with it, for the reason that when it reached the Lands Department the Minister would not grant the transfer. We should have a ranger whose duty it would be to investigate such cases as these. We want an official to visit Meekatharra, Wiluna, Mount Magnet and other centres to inquire into these matters. It would be easy for him to get all the information he wanted, particularly from the statistical records kept by the police. The police know pretty well who is endeavouring to develop his holding, and who is making no use of it. In these days of demand for land, an official ranger should be on duty, and if he finds that the owners or selectors of any particular area are doing nothing with it, he should have authority to deal with them. There is a block of land approximately 200 miles from Meekatharra. I know it well. This was selected by two returned soldiers. Each took advantage of the opportunity of taking up 100,000 acres, free of rent for five years. They had held it for about two years. A would-be selector spoke to me when I was travelling through, and said he would like to get hold of it. I told him I would call at

the Lands Department in Perth. When I called there, I found that there was no rent owing upon it, because it was held by returned soldiers. I knew one of the men, and met him in the street. I said to him, "You will have to brighten up and do something with your land, otherwise it will be forfeited." I told him there were good honest men wanting to do something with it, while he and his party were doing nothing. He replied, "I and my mate are going up there immediately to start making improvements." Some 12 months later, this being approximately four years after the land was taken up, I again went to the Lands Department to find out the position. Upon the file appeared a declaration. One of the owners or partners desired to get out. He transferred his 100,000 acres to the other man, who then held 200,000 acres. In order to get that transfer through, they put a declaration on the file to the effect that they had improved the land according to the regulations, and had stocked it. As a matter of fact, neither owner had ever seen the land or been upon it at the time the transfer was made. The sum of £14 was owing for rent on the extra 100,000 acres.

The Minister for Lands: Will you give me the details of that?

Mr. MARSHALL: I will give them to the Minister confidentially. There is a great demand for pastoral country, and it is very necessary that we should have a ranger whose duty it would be to inquire into matters of this sort.

The Minister for Lands: I am appointing two additional inspectors for the purpose.

Mr. MARSHALL: Moneyed men are leaving the State and returning to their own districts because they cannot get land within a reasonable distance of a railway or port. I will give the Minister the names of the parties who have sworn to this declaration.

The Minister for Lands: Many of these declarations are false.

Hon. G. Taylor: But no one has been punished.

The Minister for Lands: I am taking action over several of these things.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am pleased to hear the Minister's interjections. We shall get good value for our money if a conscientious and efficient officer is appointed. It is a shame that other men should come here from the Eastern States with money and go back disappointed. There are over one million acres in the five leases I have mentioned, but not a hoof has been put upon them, not a

post has been erected, and not a well has been sunk. The Act might well be amended and brought up to date in the direction I have indicated. The Minister asks why these matters are not brought under his notice, in other words why applications for forfeiture are not lodged. What guarantee would a man have, who applied for the forfeiture of a block, that he would get it? I may want land in order to develop it, and I may decide to apply for forfeiture. As a result of my application, the land may be forfeited, but there is no guarantee that I will secure the block. When a forfeiture is gazetted, the land becomes Crown property and is thrown open for selection. Any individual who desires to take it up has as much chance as I have of getting it. The Mining Act is far ahead of the Land Act in matters of this sort. If a mining tenement is forfeited on an application, the applicant has the prior right to take it up.

Hon. G. Taylor: He has the first preference.

Mr. MARSHALL: He has ten days in which to lodge his claim, and this gives him some encouragement. No doubt a majority of people will refrain from making applications for forfeiture.

The Minister for Lands: Many of them do it.

Mr. MARSHALL: Only a small percentage, considering the number of those who would like to do so. In Meekatharra blocks are held and many prospectors would like to get hold of them. In Wiluna recently a lease was due for forfeiture, and a man said to me he would like to get hold of it, but would not care to apply for the forfeiture. A good deal of land is withheld from development, because the procedure under the law is objectionable to many people. Our mining inspector is one of the best in the service. He might be given power to act in matters of this sort.

Hon. G. Taylor: We have the best mining official.

Mr. MARSHALL: Our man is a very able officer and a very conscientious man.

The Minister for Railways: They are all good.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would give these officers power to call upon the lessees to show cause why their blocks should not be forfeited. These officers travel all over the country and get such information as they want from the Registrar or his deputy as to the manner in which these hold-

ings are being worked. These officials can do many things under the Act, but they cannot ask a lessee to show cause why his lease should not be forfeited. Men will not apply for the forfeiture of another man's block. A good deal of our auriferous country is lying idle because the law is not stringent enough concerning it. These are some of the anomalies that occur. There is a great demand for land north, south, east and west, and yet millions of acres are allowed to be held merely for speculative purposes. Although the regulations are not drastic in character, they do fall very heavily upon struggling settlers, people who are not financially strong, and it is therefore very difficult for them to get a footing, or to get their little holdings into a state of productivity. Several of them have battled really hard for years, but still find it difficult to comply with the regulations. Men who are seriously endeavouring to develop their holdings should not be interfered with at all. When viewing lithos showing the country east and west between Wiluna and Meekatharra, and for some hundred miles to the north, one is struck by the peculiar feature that nearly every block of 100,000 acres is held in one name, nearly every block of 200,000 acres in two names, and nearly every block of 300,000 acres in three names. The feature implies that land is either being dummed or held for a price. Apparently returned soldiers are being used for dummying purposes.

The Minister for Lands: That has been done also.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is being done now, and its continuance is a crime when so great a demand exists for land. The matter should receive the Government's earnest and immediate consideration.

The Minister for Lands: It is, and drastic consideration too.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have no wish to speak disparagingly of the Minister's attitude in that respect, though I could see no sign of departmental activity. One block I know of has been held idle for six years. I was directly interested in that block. Meekatharra residents communicated with me advising that I should take it up. I was too late by two months. The block has lain unused ever since, and has never been seen by the holder. It is situated 38 miles from Meekatharra. Having

regard to its geographical position, it is a highly suitable block, though not absolutely first-class pastoral land. In regard to gold mining, the Governor's Speech is most encouraging, and not without some justification. Wiluna and Gwalia are quoted, and the Speech also alludes to the interest capitalists are taking in our gold-mining industry. While hopeful that progress will be made in the development of our auriferous belts, unfortunately we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the industry is not now as attractive as it might be. This is due to the cost of production of gold rapidly catching up to the standard value of the product, and indeed going beyond that value in many cases. I suppose goldmining is the only industry, at all events in Western Australia, that finds itself in the awkward position of having the price of its product standardised while costs are steadily mounting. Just exactly what can be done to relieve the position is a question. Certainly I would not ask the State Government to do more than they are doing. All the Governments of Western Australia, including even the Mitchell Government, sincerely endeavoured to assist the industry. The present Government, in particular, have done a great deal to help it along the road to prosperity, but the inevitable is staring us in the face. The time appears not far distant when only big low-grade propositions, affording the opportunity of mass production on modern lines, and very rich deposits will be able to exist. The cause is the tariff, which almost strangles the industry. The effects of the tariff make themselves felt not only in regard to the cost of mining requisites, but also in regard to the cost of living generally, which reflects on the working costs of the industry. The gold miners of this State are the worst-paid men in Western Australia. With all due respect to other classes of workers, I say that the gold miners are one of the finest sets of workers this State possesses—skilled men, and men who always do a fair thing, as is expected of them. For the amount of risk they run daily and the degree of ill-health which must eventually befall them, and in view also of the high cost of living, undoubtedly our gold miners are the worst-paid workers within our borders. I do not make that statement with any degree of pride, seeing that I

represent mainly a goldmining centre. Investors in goldmining cannot accuse the wages factor of being instrumental in harming the industry. However, I suppose the Federal Government, being attacked from all sides on behalf of other industries, yielded to the point of view momentarily presented, and so protected and fostered other industries as to almost reach the stage of prohibiting gold mining in the Commonwealth. If the goldmining industry could call upon users of gold to pay for it in proportion to the cost of production, there would be no ground for complaint; but seeing that the industry has not that right, and that the price of gold is controlled by some outside influence, goldmining has to suffer. I do not know what the Minister for Mines proposes to do. Many overtures, I understand, have been made to the Federal Government, but without success. Unless the Federal Government are prepared to grant immediate relief to Western Australia's goldmining industry, I see no hope of its lasting for many more years. In the near future only mines of large dimensions, and carrying permanent and consistent values will be able to continue, unless conditions are changed. In several parts of my electorate there are auriferous belts which, had they been known at any time up to 1908 or even 1910, the prospectors could have sold for fortunes. Mt. Vernon is one of them, and not the best. There is also Cole's find, and particularly the field known as Jimblebar, one of the finest deposits of auriferous country I have seen for years. However, if a company should venture to take up Jimblebar, they would at once find themselves confronted with the anomaly to which I have referred. Nevertheless, I hope Jimblebar will turn out a remarkably good producer. With fair treatment from the Federal Government, it should do much towards raising the production of gold in Western Australia. I repeat, I cannot suggest a solution of the difficulty. Wiser men than myself are at the head of the Mines Department, and are fully conversant with the facts. I cannot castigate the State Government in any way for their treatment of the goldmining industry. The octopus grip that is strangling the industry comes from the Federal Parliament. It seems likely that the State Government will soon have to consider the advisableness of infusing a little more blood into the veins of the

dyng industry. Until recently the pastoral industry, and particularly wool raising, had received little financial assistance from the Government. However, lately means have been devised for assisting small holders to convert from cattle to sheep, and also to assist selectors of pastoral country who possess only limited capital. As soon as this became known, some of us who had advocated Government assistance in that direction felt jubilant. Unfortunately, however, one of the conditions under which financial assistance is granted is that the holder must have at least 100,000 acres. I do not see why that should be a condition. We do not desire to encourage people to become land-hungry. Land-hunger represents a drawback to the development of the State. We find many people holding more land than is good for them, complaining about rents and taxes but still continuing to hold their lands. Several of my electors have holdings of less than 100,000 acres, into which they have put a good deal of their own money. The land has been well improved and carries a fair amount of stock. Now, for the purposes of a small loan to tide over a temporary financial difficulty—

Hon. G. Taylor: Is that condition as to a minimum of 100,000 acres enforced?

Mr. MARSHALL: So far as I know, it is. The last term of the Agricultural Bank conditions relating to these loans reads—

Applicants must hold 100,000 acres or more. Thus the holder of less than 100,000 acres is debarred from the privilege of obtaining a loan from the Agricultural Bank. I know of several nice propositions under 100,000 acres which I would not hesitate to accept as security for a loan if I were an investor. I hope the Government will review the position and have every case treated on its merits.

The Minister for Lands: Despite that condition, all cases will be treated on their merits.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am pleased to hear that.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is not a gazetted regulation?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: The idea in advocating financial assistance in this direction is not to help the large holder, but to give the small holder an opportunity to show what he can do, and also to obtain more small holders in this State. It is not a good advertisement to the outside world for us to

declare that a man requires 100,000 acres or more to make a living in Western Australia. We here know that such is not the case, but that a person can make an excellent living on a much smaller area. I hope, therefore, that the Agricultural Bank will not insist on that particular condition, but will give consideration to each applicant. In the land policy of the Government, as with Governments that have preceded them, there is no preference extended to Western Australians. Each applicant is treated on his merits, and it does not matter whether the applicant is a Britisher or a foreigner, he receives equal treatment with other applicants. I do not know that there is any other country in the world where the conditions are so free and liberal as they are in this State. In my opinion the Western Australian born should receive a slight preference over other applicants. It is not doing justice to our own young men to say to them, "Your parents have lived here for years. They have battled in the back country helping us to develop our resources, and now you, one of their progeny, require land. You will have your application considered on all fours with that of Jugo Slavs, who may receive preference,"

The Minister for Lands: Have you seen the recent decisions of the Land Board?

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot say that I have.

The Minister for Lands: If you had seen them you could not make the statement about Jugo Slavs receiving preference.

Mr. MARSHALL: I can quote an instance in which a member of Parliament secured two blocks.

The Minister for Lands: Some have three blocks. I have some myself.

Mr. MARSHALL: I did not desire to unearth these anomalies. As the law stands to-day, a foreigner can receive preference. I do not say that the Land Board would grant that preference, but the law says that such a thing may be permitted. Rather should the Board give preference to Western Australians. In most countries, and particularly in Continental countries, the authorities are much more parochial than we are. There it is a case of Germany for the Germans, France for the Frenchmen, Spain for the Spaniards, and so on. In this State the locally born has to sit back and wait his turn with the foreigner from

overseas. That is not fair. First the Western Australian born should receive preference, then the Australian born, then Britishers, and so on.

Hon. G. Taylor: At that rate, I shall be eligible for a block of land in due course.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not think so, unless the hon. member is reincarnated. He has passed beyond the time of his usefulness to the community, unless he can find an occupation in the manufacture and development of useless gases!

Mr. Heron: Highly explosive, too!

Mr. MARSHALL: At any rate, those are my views regarding the granting of blocks to Western Australians. When I refer to Britishers, I include naturalised foreigners as well. I do not desire to exclude them. If a foreigner comes to Western Australia and makes this his adopted country, brings out his wife and family, and settles down to become a good citizen by becoming naturalised and so on, I will not raise any objection whatever to him receiving preference as a Britisher. I object, however, to Jugo Slavs, Jews, Yankees and other foreigners coming here and receiving equal treatment with Western Australian and Australian born. With the development of our land and the trend of our financial transactions, there has grown up a serious problem relating to the unemployed. Recently we had demonstrations. Among the unemployed there were a number of Australians, but a singular feature to me was the large preponderance of men from overseas. When we consider the position, there is room for grave concern. Instead of progress meaning an improvement in these conditions, it seems to me that our developmental policy has tended to aggravate the position. For years past we have had a number of unemployed during certain periods of the year. The explanation has been advanced from time to time that the industries of the State were mostly seasonal and therefore provided employment during certain seasons of the year, leaving a surplus on the labour market for the remainder of the 12 months. Now, however, we find that the unemployment problem continues throughout the greater portion of the year, if not throughout the whole year. The time has come when the Government could well consider the migration policy. If we consider the argument that unemployment in

Western Australia is largely due to seasonal occupations, it must readily appeal to us that a policy of rapid development in our primary industries will merely create a greater demand for labour during certain periods of the year. It must also appeal to us that as a sequel to that rapid progress, there will be an even greater number of men unemployed when our seasonal occupations have eased up for the year. That difficulty can be obviated only by the establishment of secondary industries. That would absorb the surplus labour during the alternate periods of the year. We know, however, that secondary industries will not be established to any extent in this State for some considerable time. I cannot say what the Government intend to do to alleviate the position. There is no particular organisation that has been created to control it. The position has been aggravated by the influx of aliens and the Premier has a good case in support of his argument that Western Australia cannot be the sole employer of the surplus labour of the Commonwealth. It would be impossible for the Premier to find work for every individual who required it. Such a thing would be economically unsound. At the same time I cannot subscribe to the policy that allows the Government to invite further migrants to come here, despite the fact that during a considerable portion of the year we have to feed a large number of migrants already here and out of work. There is another singular phase of the problem. I do not know what the views of the Government may be, and I can only go upon what I hear from the man in the street. If I get my information from that source, the Government can check it. I am given to understand, however, that Australians are not looked upon with any approval when they apply for a little sustenance. While the Australian may be ridiculed and scoffed at when he seeks to secure sustenance for himself, his wife and family, the State can bring migrants out and feed them without any unfavourable attitude being adopted towards them. I do not think that system is fair to the migrant or to the State. I strongly resent the appearance of such large numbers of unemployed in our midst. It is not healthy, particularly in a State like Western Australia, that we should be called upon to face the unhappy position of having to create a miniature dole system. I have been wondering if the cheap money that we have heard so much about is not becoming rather expensive. We hear references to the

3,500 farms scheme that will mean so many millions of money absorbed in developing a new province. We hear that the scheme provides that for every £75 expended upon public works, one migrant shall be satisfactorily settled in Western Australia. The men who will come out will be very much settled! I understand that there are 50 men at Meekatharra who are sheltering in sheds on the sports ground there. Most of them are married men. They probably had glowing pictures presented to them of what they could expect in this State. They came out and there they are—settled! It looks as though further development with cheap money will merely add to the number of unemployed we shall have. That is not fair to the migrants, or to the State. We heard the replies given to the questions put by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). He was told that there was no desire to restrict migration in any way. I do not know that it is economically sound to bring additional labour into Western Australia while the labour we have available here has to be fed for a considerable portion of the year. I do not like that sort of thing. It would be interesting to know the cost of feeding the unemployed this year, when the position has been worse than formerly. It has been aggravated by the influx of aliens and the large number of Australians and others who rushed across from the Eastern States, where bad seasons have been experienced. If we have already more than sufficient labour to meet the demand in this State, I cannot see anything logical in spending money to bring others here, merely to provide them with the dole. Such a system reflects harmfully in many ways. I note that the Government have adopted a good policy in that they say that each man shall get his turn. If I am employed on a job that peters out after three or four weeks, I must stand down, and someone else must get a chance.

Mr. Sleeman: That is not the policy today.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member will have his opportunity to speak later on! The policy I have indicated is a fair one. The present system is economically unsound. The Government intimate to a departmental officer that they want some tramway extension constructed.

Mr. Clydesdale: I wish they would do that more often.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) is very successful with his applications for tramway extensions.

Evidently he has more influence with the Government than I have! After the men have been employed for four or five weeks, perhaps more or perhaps less, and the gangers and foremen have got a team who know the job and are doing the work efficiently, they are set aside to make way for a fresh team of men quite ignorant of the work. It is idle for the Government to tell me that the work can be done as efficiently and economically as it should be if such a system is adopted. I suppose it would be possible to calculate exactly what extra cost is being incurred in various public works, due solely to unemployment, and the amount it has cost to rail men to various jobs and to feed them and their dependants while they are out of work. If the calculation were made, I doubt whether the 1 per cent. money would pan out so cheaply after all.

Hon. G. Taylor: You would be lucky if you got 60 per cent. efficiency.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is difficult to ascertain the cost; all we hear is, "This is cheap money; take it." It cannot be cheap money if it is imposing such obligations on the Government. I know of no ganger who can get a job done as efficiently or cheaply by a fresh team as by trained men. Consequently public works are becoming very expensive. The Government are unwise to permit any further influx of population until the men already here can be absorbed. There are plenty of men in the State to serve all the demands for labour for quite a considerable time. Especially is this so in view of the fact that, with the publicity Western Australia has received in the Eastern States, the prospect of labour from those States migrating here is bright. We shall be able, for a considerable time, to get from the other States sufficient labour to meet all needs. The alien question has been brought into the argument. The Premier has done a great deal with the Prime Minister in an effort to prevent aliens from coming here, but I think the Premier was altogether too modest in the demands he put to Mr. Bruce. I do not know what he intends to do in future. Only the other day a number of aliens arrived here and they represented something like 15 different nationalities. They were all sorts—Yankee-Doodles, Jews, Gentiles, Jugo-Slavs, Roumanians and others I cannot remember. A small per-

centage of the foreigners who come here make good citizens. Either they marry Australian women or bring their wives here and settle down and assist in the development of the State. A majority, however, do not; they come here to amass what to them is a fair sum of money and then return to their native lands. This State is the loser by such a policy. Although the Premier is a stickler for constitutional law, I think he is morally entitled to tell Mr. Bruce exactly what this State's requirements are, even though Mr. Bruce may have the pull over him. Rather than abuse the police over their action during the unemployed demonstrations, I would, if I were a member of the Government, sentry all the ports around the coast of the State and block the aliens from coming in. Of course to do so would be unconstitutional, but if the Premier had adopted that course he would have shown himself more patriotic than have those people who a few years ago posed as being great patriots. I know it would be quite unconstitutional for the Premier to do such a thing, but he would be morally justified in compelling Mr. Bruce to accept his views as to the requirements of this State. We know well that the object of the organisation behind the influx of aliens is a bold and united attempt to Americanise industry in this State. The idea is to bring in all sorts of nationalities, no two of whom will agree on any point, thus rendering industrial organisation an utter impossibility. When that is achieved, the captains of industry will be satisfied.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you think there is an attempt in that direction?

Mr. MARSHALL: I am positive of it.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is news to me.

Mr. MARSHALL: I say that on the strength of information at my disposal, and I also speak from observations I have made in this city. When scores of men who cannot utter a word of English can come here, stay a few days, then go to the railway station and purchase tickets to the country and there secure employment, it shows that there is an organised scheme in existence. No one can make me believe otherwise. What galls me more than anything else is the love and admiration displayed for such people by some of our patriots, while scores of returned soldiers tramp the country in search of work and with the fear of hunger ever before them.

Aliens who cannot speak a word of English can get employment, and people who are employing them were amongst the loudest in promising the soldiers a new world after the war. Is this the new world? In the heart of this city is a firm, one of whose shareholders in particular is as fine a lip-loyalist as the country holds. A friend of mine, who lost his leg in Gallipoli, and was mentioned in despatches, has searched the city for employment but unsuccessfully. He is not a total abstainer, but he is a man of sober habits, and a good conscientious worker. Any member may have his name. During the Royal visit the firm in question displayed an illuminated sign, "Welcome to Loyal Western Australia." At the front door was a box for subscriptions to the war memorial. While the returned soldier to whom I have referred and others out of work were near the shop in question, they watched an Afghan going the rounds of attending to the lights at nightfall. That is the treatment that returned soldiers get from one of the patriots who promised a new world after the war and promised to make the country fit for heroes to live in.

Hon. G. Taylor: If you go on like that, we shall soon discover whom you mean.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not concerned whether the hon. member does discover it. What I have stated is a fact. I stood there with other people and watched the proceedings. When I pointed out to my friend that the patriot to whom I have alluded was a big shareholder in the firm, he said, "Well, I am astounded." I replied, "I am not." That is one instance. There are returned soldiers by the score in this city looking for work, while people who revelled in their valour a few years ago seek to employ the very men who shot bullets at them. This is done for one purpose and that is to undermine the industrial prestige of the State. The aliens afford cheap labour and that is all such employers desire. They do not want returned soldiers or Australians until another crisis occurs, and then they will promise them another new world. A few days ago I read the report of an address by Brigadier-General Jess, who said he was pleased to observe that the R.S.L. still stood for the ideals for which the war was fought. I do not know whether he was correctly reported, but if he had said that the R.S.L. stood

still in regard to the welfare of some of the returned soldiers of this city, he would have been nearer the truth.

Mr. Teesdale: But the R.S.L. is doing good work.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, for the brass hats.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you question the R.S.L.? There are very few of its men out of employment.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I were a returned soldier, I would expose the individual who employs an Afghan or a Syrian to pull on the lights at night and yet displayed over his building during the Royal Visit, "Welcome to Loyal Western Australia."

Mr. Teesdale: I have no doubt there is something in that.

The Premier: We are now getting an idea whom you mean.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not concerned if every member knows to whom I am referring. I desire to show that all such patriotism is measured by £ s. d. Returned soldiers and Australian-born workers may go to the country, while those who would not be expected to defend this country get preference of employment.

Mr. Panton: They can send someone else next time; they can send the old men.

Mr. MARSHALL: I should like to know from the Premier what he intends to do about the influx of people. I do not think it is a fair thing to bring British people here in the circumstances now existing. It is very unwise to do so. Certainly it is expensive and no one can convince me that it is economically sound. Above all it is not the function of a Labour Government to give industry a surplus of employees, because from day to day we find the economic pressure forcing workers into doing objectionable things. I know of a case where a joiner, during a scarcity of labour, accepted half the ruling rate awarded by the Arbitration Court, and I understand he was practically the only Britisher employed on that farm. So that the effect of the over abundance of unemployed is detrimental to the working masses of any country and if the policy of migration enunciated some time ago by the Premier is to continue, the time is not far distant when we shall find ourselves following the example of England and adopting the dole system. I do not know whether this Government would be wise to relieve the Im-

erial Government of their obligations, and themselves accepting those obligations. Personally I think the Government should act immediately. They have no occasion to bring in another migrant from any part of the world. There is more labour here now than can be absorbed practically the whole year round. The position as we find it is not wholesome from a national point of view and I am doubtful whether it is economically sound.

Mr. Mann: Do you know that there has been less unemployment when more migrants have been coming into Australia, and that that has been the case over a period of 14 years?

Mr. MARSHALL: That is a feature of the position that would have to be looked into. There might be a gold rush or a boom during which everybody would be employed with thousands more coming in.

Mr. Kenneally: Would the member for Perth advocate bringing in 5,000 at the present time?

Mr. MARSHALL: He would. I would like the Government to take some action in the direction of restricting migration of British-born subjects. I think, too, that the Government should act quickly and drastically in regard to the further influx of aliens. I have no wish to speak disparagingly of other nationalities, but I cannot help drawing attention to the most cosmopolitan form of migration that has been taking place lately. It has never before been so cosmopolitan. Every boat that comes to Fremantle has people of 15 or 20 different nationalities and I notice that in the shipload before the last the migrants were mostly Greeks and Jews. I do not know whether they make good citizens; I am very doubtful. The whole question is causing me great concern because in Meekatharra to-day, while there are not there very many foreigners, there are nevertheless many unemployed. That has not happened in my electorate for many years past. Even when the gold mining industry began to decline and 200 or 300 men were put off a mine in one day, they were absorbed in other industries or by other mines. The secretary of the road board there and the secretary of the union have informed me that unemployment at Meekatharra is serious, but that the public are generous enough to contribute towards the sustenance of those who are not able to get work. I am told also that these people are sleeping in sheds.

Hon. G. Taylor: It cannot be as bad as that.

Mr. MARSHALL: What I am telling the hon. member is the truth and the position has reached the stage when it cannot be ignored. I also wish to state that on the occasion of my last trip from the Murchison, some few months ago, I observed more men than I had ever seen before carrying their swags along the road adjacent to the railway line. In the early days unemployment was bad enough, but it was not as bad as we find it to-day. In the electorate of Mount Margaret, when the hon. member representing that district now was in his prime, and when he swallowed more fire in half an hour than he swallows now in a year—even in those days, bad as unemployment was, men were helped along by their comrades and work found for them. To-day the picture is more pathetic and I am very much concerned about it. It is not right that we should go on painting glowing pictures of Western Australia in other parts of the world and inducing people to come here and telling them they will be received with open arms, and that there are vast empty spaces waiting to be filled. We have no right to decoy people here to find on their arrival that they are able to obtain three or four months' work in the year and then to be given sustenance. A few evenings ago the Leader of the Country Party, in his usual fashion, advised members on this side of the House to travel and see for themselves. I suggest to my colleagues if they accept the hon. member's advice to see for themselves, that they do not allow anyone to throw dust in their eyes. It so happens that at an early stage of my career I was not too far away from some of the places described by the hon. member. In those early days I was compelled to sell the only commodity I had, my labour, but unlike the hon. member, I had not the good fortune to be driven through aristocratic quarters or invited to drink with social butterflies. I had to live and labour amongst those people; I might say that I laboured more years in Africa than the hon. member spent weeks there, though not long enough to get the opinions of the heads of industry, in that country. But I was there long enough to master the language of the country. As for India, I was there also for more years than the hon. member was there days.

Mr. Clydesdale: You will be giving your age away soon.

Mr. MARSHALL: Never mind about that. The hon. member told us what he saw and

what is done in those countries, but he did not know that they were pulling wool over his eyes. It is pretty safe to say that in South Africa he did not go down a coal mine to see the conditions under which the men worked. In the coal mines men work in a nude state. They are unable to purchase sufficient material with which to clothe their bodies. That is the condition of things in South Africa where I worked. The niggers do not get sufficient to clothe themselves when they go down below. They work in the nude and live on practically nothing. A loin cloth is all that they can afford, and their food consists of maize and fish. The member for Katanning says that the workers of Australia should return to common sense and sanity. This is it! This is the form of industrialism as he would have it. One minute he says "I do not want a reduction of wages, but I would remind members that South Africa is geographically half our distance from the Continental markets and that land is sold there for 1s. an acre." That is not a fact, and even when the land is tilled under the conditions to which he referred, it will not, anyhow, grow wheat.

Mr. Pantou: And not too much mealies.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member had the audacity to infer that under such conditions a Kaffir would till an acre a day for 1s. I know better than that, because I was there long enough to know what takes place. What the hon. member said is not correct. As a matter of fact, it would cost a lot more than 1s. a day to keep the Kaffir coolie working all the day, or even the Indian coolie. The coolie labourer has a mortal hatred of work and unless he is strictly supervised, he does mighty little. The comparisons made by the hon. member are unfair and all wrong, but of course they were on all fours with his desires. He is reactionary and conservative and would enslave the workers of this country as he would the coolies of India, if he could. Are the people likely to take the advice of this new-born leader to return to common sense and sanity? God forbid! My advice to the hon. member is that next time he travels to those countries he should stop there long enough to study and absorb the conditions and not hook on to the captains of industry, who are as glorified as he is, accept what they tell him as gospel, and then bring it back here with the advice that members of this Chamber should travel and see. I hope that when members do travel they will, like myself, stay long enough to see exactly the conditions that do exist in

those countries. He asked the workers of this State to come down to a standard of living that is even lower than that of the coolies, because we had to make some allowance for the shipping costs as between Africa and Australia and the Continental markets. His desire is to bring the workers of Australia down to the level of the coolie so that we might compete in the Continental markets and in that way satisfy his desires.

Hon. G. Taylor: You don't think he wants you to come down as low as that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Katanning openly admitted that he wanted coolie labour. Did he not say that he would be pleased to see the Navigation Act repealed?

Hon. G. Taylor: That is one of the planks of the Country Party's platform.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is one thing that can be said in his favour, and it is that he has the courage of his convictions; he makes no bones about anything that he advocates, and we know that if he had his way the workers of this State would be reduced to the level of coolies. The hon. member was born 100 years too late.

The Premier: Have you read what the President of his Party had to say about him?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; of course miracles we know will happen, but if by any chance the member for Katanning ever takes his seat on the Treasury Bench, thank goodness there will be sufficient intelligence amongst the Opposition to direct him. That is one of the safeguards the people of the State have; the people can depend upon it that the Opposition will be there to keep him along the narrow path of righteousness. With all his desire to starve the workers and their wives and children of this country—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is not a fair thing.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, what is a fair thing? It is equally as fair as the reference the hon. member made the other night to the ex-Honorary Minister.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What was that?

Mr. MARSHALL: If the hon. member will read his own speech in "Hansard" he will see what it was. My statement is just as fair as his, and far closer to the truth. As a matter of fact, the Leader of the Country Party scarcely knew where he was. One moment he was advocating coolie labour, particularly on ships; the next he said he didn't want to interfere with the standard of living, and then he wound up by saying

that we had to consider the geographical position of Africa. My interpretation of the hon. member's remarks was that to compete with other countries we had to get down to the level of the African coolies—less the difference in the freight. But he did not say anything about the London Shylock and the shipping combine, nor did he bring in any statistics to show how they acquired their wealth. He said nothing at all about the great financiers, and so of course he could not ask them to forego a portion of their pound of flesh. It seems that as long as you are in the exploiting class, you can exploit, but when you are unfortunate enough to have to sell only one commodity, and that the blessing of nature, you will be industrially crushed for all time. But of course it is not possible for them to do it. The workers of this country and every other country—even the countries of the East—are becoming enlightened and gradually rising industrially. When they become educated and are able to apply intelligence and energy to labour, those countries will be far better off than they are to-day. I have no fear of Africa, nor of India, nor even of the Malay Peninsula. Yet it makes my blood run cold when I think of the conditions in some of those places. The treatment of those people is a disgrace, not only to the Imperial Government, but to the whole of the civilised world. And I say that, as one having had experience. There men are required to live with their wives and families in skimpy, dirty, filthy quarters with practically no change from the garb that covers them during their hours of labour. In their pursuit of a little cleanliness, those people have to bathe in the very garb they worked in, and carry it around on them until it dries. If during their hours of employment they should in any way misbehave, their wages are cut, wages amounting to anything from 6d. to 1s. per day. I have read articles suggesting that it would be interesting to know how many thousands of pounds per annum captains of industry collect through this medium of cutting wages as a punishment for disobedience or insubordination. No English-speaking people living in those countries can feel proud of the British Government and their treatment of the coolie people.

Mr. Ferguson: What has that to do with Australia?

Mr. MARSHALL: Only that your leader wants to reduce us all to that level. Which serves to remind me that there is in that party another member not far behind the leader in his advocacy of reducing the standard of living to that of the coolie class. However, those two members certainly have the courage of their convictions, whereas other members of the same party have not that courage, although they have all the necessary sentiment. Let me now attempt to influence the Minister for Railways, even to the end that he may say yes to everything I have to say. The Minister will agree that it would not be fit if I were to resume my seat without touching upon the inadequate, inefficient service on the Perth-Meekatharra railway system. On a previous occasion I referred to the rolling stock as being the refuse of the department. I have had no reason to alter that opinion. Some time ago passengers to Meekatharra occupying two compartments, one first class and the other second class, got thoroughly wetted in a heavy shower of rain that fell upon the train near Mullewa. The rain, instead of running off the roof of those compartments, ran through on to the passengers below.

The Premier: It must have been the first of the winter rains and the roof, being very dry, leaked a little.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course, some excuse must be made. But I want to know from the Minister for Railways why he was so generous as to build railway coaches for the Midland Railway Company, a concern in competition with his own.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The company paid for the coaches.

Mr MARSHALL: Of course they did. The hon. member is developing perspicacity. But why were our departmental officers and our employees put on to work for a company competing against the department?

The Minister for Railways: Would you sooner have had the coaches built outside the State?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, I would have had them built for use on the Meekatharra line. I do not know why there should be so much love for the Midland Company, when we ourselves are badly in need of rolling stock. Those side-door coaches on the Murchison line are very smelly, especially in summer. On one occasion when I was travelling to Meekatharra there was not a single drop of water in the lavatory tank, and I had to use the drinking water in the

carafe for washing purposes. It is unfair that the Government should set aside the staff at the Midland Junction workshops to provide rolling stock for a company competing against our own department. And this while, I suppose, every railway system belonging to the State is badly in need of new rolling stock.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Those new coaches will be used by the people of the State.

The Minister for Railways: And they were made by men earning their living in the State.

Mr. MARSHALL: But a great many who do not live in the State derive profits from the Midland Railway Company.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Those coaches were a highly creditable job, and I am very glad they were built.

Mr. MARSHALL: I protest against the principle. Some years ago I questioned the Minister for Railways regarding the flat rate obtaining from Fremantle to Geraldton via the Midland Company's line. He assured me it was only a temporary arrangement devised to assist the company to compete with the shipping companies on the North-West coast. The Minister must confess that that arrangement is still in existence. I cannot understand how it is that the Midland Railway Company can haul their stuff at a flat rate of £2 10s. when the State railways would have to charge double that amount. A remarkable feature of the administration is that although a commodity can be hauled to Geraldton for £2 10s., yet in order to protect themselves against competition the Government have increased the rate from Geraldton to Meekatharra. So one sending any commodity from Fremantle to Geraldton for £2 10s. will find that the difference between that freight and the freight obtaining along the Wongan Hills line will be added to the freight charges from Geraldton to Meekatharra. Why the Midland Railway Company can haul their goods for £2 10s., and why the Government are willing to assist the company to compete against the departmental railways, are points I should like the Minister for Railways to explain. If the Midland Railway Company can haul goods 300 miles for £2 10s., I cannot see why the Government railways should not be asked to do the same.

Mr. Kenneally: It is the quantity.

Mr. MARSHALL: But the quantity is obtainable for the other line.

Mr. Kenneally: No, it is not.

Mr. MARSHALL: But it is. If the Midland Railway Company can do it, the Government railways can do it also; and if they cannot, why did the Minister for Railways assist the company to compete against his department for the trade? Now I want to complain about the transportation of live stock. It is a hardy annual with me, and I cannot let the opportunity pass without referring to it once more. Although they have never been satisfactorily explained by the Minister, the defects in the transportation of live stock that have brought me to my feet on so many occasions are still in existence. It is incredible that it should take a special stock train 36 hours to travel from Meekatharra to Midland Junction with only about ten necessary stops. I would remind members that the first 300 miles of the journey is almost free from interference by any other traffic. The express or passenger train can get through in 33 hours 40 minutes, doing an extra 12 miles, and having 75 necessary stops. This discrepancy takes some explaining.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: Probably the Minister for Railways is getting tired of reading correspondence from me, and hearing me enumerate many alleged grievances concerning the railway system. I have continually to knock at the door until I find I am getting some redress. My previous experience in this Chamber tells me that those who speak the loudest and the most often are those who first receive consideration.

The Minister for Railways: Can you say that of the member for Avon?

Mr. MARSHALL: I can quote only one case where that does not apply. That appertains to the Como tramway and one or two minor instances. On the Murchison we contend we have real grievances. The railway authorities have admitted that long-distances travellers should receive preference over the accommodation that is available. I had a guarantee for the people of the Murchison that there would be railway platforms to help the women and children when changing trains, and that clean compartments would be provided for them on the train from Geraldton to Meekatharra, at Mullewa where they change. None of these promises has been

fulfilled. There have been occasions when they have been fulfilled.

The Minister for Railways: There have been many such occasions.

Mr. MARSHALL: I travel only occasionally, but frequently enough to find that the compartments are just as often occupied by people who are travelling short distances, and just as often show signs of having been occupied, because of the traces of tobacco, paper, etc. No attempt is made to give clean compartments. People travelling from Meekatharra to Perth, or vice versa should receive more consideration. Many of those who travel these long distances have already come hundreds of miles by motor car before they join the train. Women and children are often obliged to sleep out two or three nights, and when they get into the train they should enjoy a certain amount of comfort. I feel aggrieved when I see the Midland Railway putting out rolling stock in opposition to the State trains, before the demands of the State have been satisfied. I admit that since I have communicated with the railway authorities, and incidentally the Minister, more attention has been paid to the provision of water bags, which are so necessary when people are travelling long distances in the hot weather. We have only two seasons in these parts, and unfortunately the summer season is the longer of the two. Whilst I admit there have been improvements in some directions, I find there has also been neglect. Occasionally people are compelled to call upon passers-by, or impose upon the generosity of anyone who is about, in order to get a water bag filled at a siding.

The Minister for Railways: If 30 per cent. of water bags were not stolen, the railways would have a better chance of keeping up the supply.

Mr. MARSHALL: We cannot blame the people who travel long distances on the train. The train leaves Geraldton and goes back to Geraldton, and that is where the bags may be stolen. Surely some system could be evolved to guard against such a thing. Why so many days elapse before the bags are replaced is a conundrum that might be solved by placing a supply in charge of the different station masters. It is not fair that because there are some dishonest persons about, the general body of people should be called upon to suffer.

The Minister for Railways: Judging by the results, half the community is made up of dishonest people.

Mr. Kennedy: Sometimes the bags blow off.

Mr. MARSHALL: And the person who picks them up will say, "Findings, keepings," although the bags may be marked as belonging to the railways.

The Minister for Railways: They cannot blow off.

Mr. MARSHALL: They do sometimes, because of the knocking about they get.

Hon. G. Taylor: They often blow off when they get dry.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister must be able to see what a burden it is for women and children to change trains at Mullewa. Only those who have experienced the trouble can appreciate the adversity of the situation. It is all very well for those of us who travel solo. We have no children hanging on to us, one crying for food and another for its mother, while some kindly passenger is rendering assistance by hauling luggage along the platform in order that the other train may be entered. The time is ripe when the Minister should see that these people receive better facilities than they now enjoy. Irrespective of what the Minister has said before, that the flushing system of the train lavatories is working well, in the summer time there is often an objectionable and unpleasant odour which is far from healthy. This has to be tolerated for more than 300 miles. The only change in this rotten environment is when the people transport themselves to the adjoining train, which runs to Mullewa only, or from Mullewa to Perth, or to Mullewa on the outward journey. People who are prepared to go out back and assist in the development of this country should receive the first consideration, even if it means an increase in the cost of working the system. In the city, where the organisations are at the doorstep of the Minister, they can by deputation and other means work the oracle, get better accommodation for themselves, and better timetables, and in many other respects receive concessions that people out-back cannot get. The latter people are spread over a big area, and cannot act collectively. I do not know that it is not the Minister's duty to give consideration to that feature of the situation, even to the extent of increasing the cost of running the system.

When women and children are courageous enough to go out and assist in the development of the country, they are entitled to more consideration than they now receive. Pastoralists have a genuine grievance in regard to the railway system. They do not enjoy any of the concessions that the wheat farmers do. I wish it to be clearly understood that I am not making these comparisons with a view to disparaging the wheat grower. I appreciate the fact that his value is on all fours with the grower of beef, mutton or wool. Farmers receive many concessions, amongst these being a reduction in freights. I think their womenfolk also receive extra concessions as compared with the people on the goldfields. This is an anomaly that works out very unsatisfactorily. In my electorate there are growers of wool, beef and mutton who are no more wealthy than many farmers, and who have to work on an overdraft. When they have to market their commodity they pay the maximum freight for transportation. In the wheat belt it is not alone those who are in lowly circumstances that are assisted. After the Agricultural Bank has helped a person to attain a certain plane of success, and he reaches that stage in his developmental policy when he can successfully finance his way, and is pretty well provided for as a result of the State assistance given to him, he is also provided with cheap railway freights. The wealthy fellow gets out of his obligations cheaply so far as railway freights are concerned, and in order that the system may pay, those who are in lowly circumstances and grow beef, mutton and wool have to pay the full rates, and assist the wealthy man in the South-West to enjoy the lower rates.

Mr. Lindsay: The South-West grows a lot more wool than the North.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not arguing about the growing of wool. That seems to be growing over the hon. member's eyes. I am talking about the anomaly that exists in respect to the concessions that are granted.

Mr. Lindsay: Are any special concessions granted to wool growers in the agricultural areas?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not say they are. The fact remains that the wool growers in the South-West are also wheat producers.

Mr. Lindsay: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not all of them. Another fault in our developmental policy is that large areas of fertile land are held up for the purpose of growing wool, when probably many more people could be settled upon them and be engaged in tilling the soil. I am not referring to the quality of the wool that is grown, but desire to point out that those who are in affluent circumstances in the wheat belt receive these concessions from the railways, and in order that the system may pay in the aggregate, repatriated soldiers, and people who are struggling to grow wool and beef, are compelled to pay the maximum freight. The member for Toodyay will admit that this is neither fair nor equitable. These are some of the burdens that are giving the people I speak of such grave concern. They observe what is going on. The individual who is fortunate enough to have chosen to engage in the industry of wheat growing, and may subsequently also keep a few sheep, is enjoying this special concession, and other concessions with respect to the carriage of super and wheat, to the detriment of those who are in a less fortunate financial position.

Mr. Lindsay: We do not consider there is any concession made for the carriage of wheat.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am referring particularly to special stock trains. I had an admission from the railway authorities. Special trains are engaged to convey stock from Meekatharra to the metropolitan markets. The number of sheep and cattle that come to Perth via Meekatharra every year is enormous. I have been informed by the department that where such trains alone are on the system the time of transit could be reduced below 36 hours. The remarkable thing, however, is that the department never succeed in doing that. Such trains never arrive at the time scheduled. The people on whose behalf I speak are not out in the remote parts of the State for the benefit of their health, and they are greatly discouraged when they find that scheduled times are not up to date, or that in cases where the scheduled times are up to date, the trains do not always keep to those times. I want to know why a special stock train, even though of greater weight, takes three hours and some minutes longer to do a journey 12 miles less than that of

the corresponding passenger train. The latter does the full distance to Perth, whereas the stock train comes only to Midland Junction. The passenger train has 75 possible stops, at all of which it stops during practically every trip. Under efficient administration a special stock train need stop only about 10 times.

Mr. Mann: But might it not have to wait at sidings to allow other trains to cross?

Mr. MARSHALL: I am just coming to that. One would naturally think that the difference in weight of trains would be compensated by the smaller number of stoppages, since stoppage and re-starting means a delay of several minutes. I should like the Minister for Railways to explain to me why the position is otherwise. I have informed the Minister of an occasion on which a special stock train, having got to Northam, where a truck had to be taken off, was afterwards held for about 45 minutes at Parkerville, waiting for two trains that were going into the country for wheat. If that is not a clear case of error, I am at a loss to understand the system. To allow two empty trains to come past Swan View while a special stock train is on the way down strikes me as absolute carelessness and utter indifference and apathy towards the welfare of primary producers. The two empty trains could have waited at Swan View just as easily as the special stock train waited at Parkerville. The Minister may have his own view of the incident, but I wish him to understand that such pinpricks cause producers to be discontented, and that consequently it is my duty to let him know the position, so that he may provide redress. I hope the hon. gentleman will at the earliest possible opportunity give the producers a better traffic system, and incidentally provide better transportation for live stock. It is unfair and unjust, when a squatter pays as much as £400 for a special stock train to bring his stock to market as rapidly as possible, that when the train get this side of Mullewa the railway authorities there, who evidently have the necessary power, hitch on empty rolling stock, sometimes wheat, and sometimes other things, to the special train. As a railway man the Minister himself knows that the more trucks are added, the more knocking about the animals get; and the more knocking about they suffer, the less price they bring here; and the less

price they bring here, the more unprofitable the business of stock-raising becomes. It is the bounden duty of the railway authorities to make out the best case possible, and the best case they can make out is to show a surplus at the end of the year. Then they say, "There you are, what splendid work!" But they seem totally unaware of the fact that they are doing grave injury to the industries of the country. I do not know that our railway system should be run solely with a view to profit. I would credit private enterprise with such a theory; but when it comes to running railways, or controlling them, nationally for the development of a State, I am dubious whether the system gives the desired results merely because it shows a profit. My criticisms of the administration of various departments are offered in all good faith, and with the object of informing the Government of the views of the people whom I have the honour at present to represent. I speak quite without prejudice against any department. I do not think the Government expect me or any other member supporting them to follow them quietly or stolidly. As I am paid to do my job, I am compelled to speak straight; and I hope Ministers accept my criticisms in the spirit in which they are offered. My object is to advance the welfare of the State, and nothing else.

MR. MANN (Perth) [7.52]: Like the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy), in speaking to the Address-in-Reply I have no claims to advance for railways or tramlines, for, as all roads are said to lead to Rome, so all tramlines lead into my electorate. If they are satisfactory to the outside electorates, necessarily they must be satisfactory to the city. Like the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), I am compelled to direct some of my remarks to the unemployed problem, though I shall not endeavour to paint a picture as dismal as that which the hon. member submitted.

Mr. Teesdale: He was very blue.

Mr. MANN: It is fortunate that we have not always so large a number of unemployed as are usually to be found here during the three winter months.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There have been hundreds of unemployed for the last four years.

Mr. MANN: Unfortunately we have had unemployment over a long period, but, notwithstanding that fact, the number of unemployed always increases towards the middle of winter, which is due to certain kinds of employment being occasional. From the report of the Migration and Development Commission, who have been investigating unemployment, I notice that as regards craftsmen the position in Western Australia is not so bad. The proportion of unemployed craftsmen here compares more than favourably with the number of craftsmen unemployed in other States. According to figures obtained from union secretaries, we have 1,490 unemployed craftsmen in Western Australia. However, the difficulty does not lie so much with craftsmen as with unskilled workers. Probably it is safe to say that if there are 1,500 craftsmen unemployed, there are nearly double that number of unemployed unskilled workers. The question is how to overcome the difficulty. Dealing with this matter on the occasion of the last Address-in-Reply, I directed the Premier's attention to the position created by the lack of homes for workers in the country districts. The report of the Migration and Development Commission makes the same point. The Commission state—

The irregularity of farm work and the absence of suitable accommodation, particularly for married men, deters men from following farm labouring as an occupation, and a poorer class of labour frequently applies as a consequence.

Men going from the city, as they will be going within the next five or six weeks, find employment during the hay-cutting and harvesting periods, and also at wheat carting, stacking and loading. These things will carry them on probably to the end of February, when a considerable number of them will get employment at cultivating and drilling. These occupations carry them on to the end of May or the middle of June. Then they drop out of work. On this aspect I have to attack the Government for a policy of centralisation in dealing with unemployed. Immediately men fall out of work in the farming areas, if they have the amount of train fare they spend it in coming to Perth. They do not go to another country district where there is hope of getting work, or remain in the same district on the chance of obtaining further

employment, but come to the city, because the one avenue of employment is through the Labour Bureau here. All the country unemployed flock to the metropolitan area. A man called on me this week and asked me to get him a pair of boots; he told me he had worn out his boots walking from Lake Brown to Perth. He said he went to the railway construction works at Lake Brown, and found there was nothing doing, whereupon he had walked back to Perth. Whether it be the Government's policy or not, there seems to be an impression on the minds of these people that they must come to Perth to get re-employed. I suggest that the Government, finding the present policy to be bad, should open labour bureaus in the country districts, not when the trouble is on—as they are doing now—but well beforehand. My suggestion is that labour agencies should be established in the more populous country centres, and should be put in working order so that unemployed men within an area of 20 miles could go to such a labour agency for employment rather than travel back to Perth. When they do get to Perth they throw themselves on the hands of the Government. The Government accept that position, saying, "It is our responsibility to find these people work, or else to keep them." Advantage has been taken of that, and men are coming back to Perth to throw themselves on the Charities Department.

The Minister for Railways: Who ever said that the Government accepted the responsibility of finding work or keeping the people?

Mr. MANN: It is ancient history, but I remember the present Premier making a speech to that effect.

The Premier: I do not think so.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But you believe in the right-to-work, do you not?

The Minister for Railways: Nobody says the Government accept the responsibility of finding people work or keeping them.

Hon. G. Taylor: Not the present Government.

The Minister for Railways: Nor any Government. The obvious result of such a policy would be that people would come here from all over the world.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That is all camouflage.

The Minister for Railways: It is not camouflage.

Mr. MANN: The present position is having a demoralising effect, because some of

the men are getting to the stage of accepting only Government work.

The Premier: Yes; that is the trouble with some of them.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That is not general. I will not agree to that.

Mr. MANN: I have been well in touch with the unemployed.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You may be in touch with them in Perth.

Mr. MANN: I have been in touch with them during this year and during previous years, and I know the effect that the belief I have indicated is having on the minds of the men. They hold the belief when they get back to Perth, that the Government must keep them or provide them with work.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That is the great principle.

The Premier: But they spend their money first.

Mr. MANN: I think the Government were at fault this year in not taking the action they did, two months or so earlier. It was apparent that the number of the unemployed was increasing daily, and there was bound to be a crisis.

The Premier: That was not such an easy thing to do. If we had started that scheme two months earlier, we would have had 5,000 people coming to Perth to participate in the assistance.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But that sort of thing has not been confined to the last two months. It has been happening during the last four years.

Mr. Clydesdale: If the Government had found jobs for everyone under those conditions, there would have been just as many unemployed two months hence.

Mr. MANN: I was referring to the arrangement made by the Government with the local authorities. That scheme extended to the country districts and was not confined to Perth. If that scheme had been propounded earlier when the men were in the country, they could have found employment there.

The Premier: Not many of the country road boards have taken advantage of the scheme.

Mr. MANN: That is a great pity.

The Premier: Even when they did take advantage of it, the funds drawn were small amounts—a few hundred pounds or so.

Hon. G. Taylor: Sufficient to keep their own people employed.

The Premier: That is all.

Mr. MANN: Prior to the last Legislative Assembly elections, a number of metropolitan members of Parliament sitting behind the Government approached the Premier with a proposal for the construction of a large number of workers' homes. The member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale), the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. H. Millington), the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson), and others were on the deputation and suggested that the time was opportune for the construction of hundreds of workers' homes around the city. The Premier promised to make available that money, for he agreed that the provision of workers' homes was necessary. The election was held; the members I have referred to were returned and the Government retained in power, but the workers' homes have not been built.

The Premier: I immediately set aside £25,000 for that purpose and since the election I have provided another £25,000.

Mr. MANN: I suggest that rather than spend £100,000 in the metropolis, the money is more required to be expended in the country areas.

The Premier: If the Commonwealth housing scheme is established, I think you can take it that there will be no more workers' homes provided by the State in the metropolis, but only in the country areas.

Mr. MANN: If the Premier follows that policy and builds workers' homes in the country, he will find that the houses will be occupied rapidly by workers there.

The Premier: I agree. That is one of the subjects I discussed with Dr. Earle Page to-day.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But it is rather late.

Mr. MANN: It must be obvious to hon. members that when a married man gets work in the country, he has to leave his family in the city. Whatever his earnings are, the greater part has to be sent to Perth to maintain his family. On the other hand, if cheap homes are provided for such men in the country areas, they will be able to take their families with them, and then they will be saved the necessity for keeping two homes going. During the slack periods, when there is no regular work available, the men will be able to live more cheaply and will be able to tide over the slack period. I believe that if the Premier constructed from 1,000 to 1,500 workers' homes in the country districts, he would provide one of the solutions of the unemployed problems.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But the men have to get work in the country.

Mr. MANN: I admit that there is not permanent work for them in the country districts, but even so, they will be able to remain in the country if cheap homes are available for them in those districts. During the slack time in winter there is generally fencing or road work to be done, and that will keep the pot boiling until the busy time starts again.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That is right; get them away from the town and out into the country and then the trouble is over!

The Premier: At any rate, there is a lot of work to be done in the part of the State where your electorate is. We could send a few thousand workers there, for there are trees to be cut down, roads to be made and railways to be built.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I wish you would do so. Why don't you live up to your reputation and do that work?

Mr. MANN: The unemployed raided the Premier's office and immediately the business men of Perth bestirred themselves to assist him. The business people could be better occupied in really seeking the solution of the problem, rather than in asking for money and soliciting second-hand clothes for distribution among the people who are out of work, particularly in view of the fact that that task is already well done by other organisations. If the business people formed a committee to ascertain the cause of the unemployed difficulty, to stir up industries and make for further employment, they would be undertaking work of much greater benefit. The report of the Development and Migration Commission indicates that this unemployment trouble crops up in Australia every seven years. For instance, it is shown that in 1914, just before the outbreak of the Great War, the unemployed difficulty was acute throughout Australia. Again, it was bad in 1921 and now in 1928. Professor Copeland went into this matter on behalf of the Commission and he has given some reasons for this cycle. The same conditions have not always been the influencing factors during each period. Referring to the position as it obtained in 1928, Professor Copeland suggested that the causes included the over-issue of credit beyond the limits allowed by reserves; the stringency of the money market and the action of the banks in respect of credit; the drop in prices of metals and of agricultural products and meat; difficulties in regulating

industrial costs to the changing price level, and to other considerations. He went on to show that a change of industries has occurred and that that has been a great contributing cause to the unemployment in different industries. For instance, many industries have ceased to employ the number of workmen that were engaged formerly, and that has been because of the advancement of motor transport.

Hon. G. Taylor: And machinery generally.

Mr. MANN: Professor Copeland has dealt particularly with motor transport and motor vehicles. His report shows that the value of motor vehicles imported to Australia has increased since 1922-23 from £12,000,000 to £24,000,000 for the year 1926-27. Those figures apply to the whole of the Commonwealth.

The Premier: I am afraid that is more than Australia can afford.

Mr. MANN: That is the point. Again, the money spent in the purchase of petroleum and oil increased from £3,500,000 in 1922-23 to £7,500,000 in 1926-27.

The Premier: That would not provide much work.

Mr. MANN: That has not provided any employment. On the other hand, it has put hundreds of men out of employment. Then again, the expenditure of that large sum of money means that those funds have gone out of the State to a foreign country, from which we secure very little trade in return. There is a heavy adverse trade balance against us. One of the largest contributing factors to unemployment, according to Professor Copeland, has been the decline of mining in Australia generally. The number of men engaged in gold mining decreased from 71,000 in 1901 to 7,000 in 1926.

The Premier: That has played a big part in Western Australia.

Mr. MANN: Yes. The actual fall in gold mining has been from 71,162 in the earlier year to 7,743 in 1926. In copper mining the number of men employed fell from 16,000 in 1907 to 1,000 in 1926.

The Premier: A fall of practically 1,000 a year.

Mr. MANN: Yes. In silver and zinc mining, the fall was from 12,000 in 1907 to 7,000 in 1926. In tin mining the decrease was from 9,000 in 1906 to 3,000 in 1926; in coal mining, there was an increase from 17,000 in 1906, to, 31,000 in 1926. Taking the mining industry throughout, the

drop was from 121,000 in 1907 to 55,000 in 1926.

The Premier: A drop of 70,000 in 21 years.

Mr. MANN: Yes; and it has been difficult to transfer that labour to other industries.

The Premier: And Mr. Padbury has shown that the number of farmers in recent years has also decreased. Had that number not decreased, more of the miners could have been absorbed. If the farmers have decreased as well, the situation becomes serious.

Mr. MANN: I do not know that I have any figures dealing with the farmers, but I have some that show that in Australia the population increased very considerably, but mostly in the metropolitan areas. For instance, the population of New South Wales showed an increase of 215,000 to 1926, but of that population 183,000 went to the metropolis and 32,000 were distributed through the rest of the State. In Victoria the increase was 154,000, of which 143,000 remained in the city and 11,000 were distributed through the country districts. In Queensland the figures were somewhat better. Of the increased population of 99,000, 56,000 remained in the metropolis and 43,000 went to other parts of the State. In South Australia the increase was 57,000, of whom 39,000 remained in the city and 18,000 went into other parts of the State. In Western Australia the increase in population was 36,000. Here 34,000 remained in the city and 2,000 were distributed through the rest of the State.

The Premier: Over what period do those figures apply?

Mr. MANN: For the period 1919 to 1925. Figures like those are enlightening because they show one of the causes of unemployment.

The Premier: They are alarming, too, for Australia's future.

Mr. MANN: They are. I suggest that the report struck the key-note when it said—

Because of the want of reasonable accommodation for married men and their families in the country, a poor class of employee goes there and the better class of employee remains in the city.

Men are not inclined to leave their families without protection and go away into the country to work, especially as at the end of the period they are very little better off. The Premier would do well to take steps at once

with a view to minimising the unemployed problem next year. He should make preparations to hold those people in the country districts where their work is.

The Premier: We have approved of 15 homes for Geraldton during the last few weeks, which town has never before had any. It is our intention to use all our State money in the country. The Commonwealth money will be available for the metropolitan area. There is a terrible shortage of homes in the country.

Mr. MANN: Reverting to the question of motor vehicles in this State, a return was recently published in the "Sunday Times" giving the number of vehicles registered as 26,000. If we put down each of those vehicles at an average price of £350—and that is not high—it gives the alarming total of £7,800,000 devoted to motor vehicles. That is probably the channel in which some of the Premier's income tax money has gone. I should say that at least one-third of those vehicles have been bought on bills bearing interest at a minimum rate of 8 per cent.

Mr. Stubbs: More than that.

Mr. MANN: Then that makes the position worse. If one-third of them have been bought on bills bearing 8 per cent. interest, it means that roughly £160,000 is being paid away in interest for motor vehicles. That surely must have a serious effect on the economic position. It would be a different matter if everyone who owned a motor vehicle used it for utility purposes.

The Premier: Or if the vehicles were made here and the petrol was produced here.

Mr. Teesdale: The bodies are made here.

Mr. MANN: Unfortunately the bodies are not being made here now. The principal of the Victorian Savings Bank recently delivered an address in which he stated that in America, where the motors are built, the authorities were alarmed at the depreciation of the asset. A car was purchased and, after it had been used for a day or two and had run 100 miles, the depreciation was considerable. Further, the depreciation was continuing all the time. That gentleman said that if the money was expended in the purchase of a home, the economic advantage to the country would be considerable.

The Premier: Or in an asset that would appreciate rather than depreciate.

Mr. MANN: The same position obtains in this State. We have 26,000 motor vehicles that have cost about £7,800,000 and they constitute a depreciating asset, carrying a

large interest bill, and in the end represent a considerable loss to the State.

The Premier: Every second building in the city has a bowser pump.

Mr. MANN: I venture the opinion that easily 40 per cent. of the people running motor cars are not in a position to afford it. They have to meet the bills or lose their cars, and I think that is where some of the Premier's income tax is going. All those factors tend to create unemployment. I suggest that the Premier should commission a committee of business men to consider these questions and present a report that will assist him in framing a policy to meet the economic needs of the future. Recently I saw an advertisement in the newspaper requesting people to carry bundles of second-hand clothing to the Town Clerk's office.

The Premier: That was a chance for all those who had been turned down by the existing institutions.

Mr. MANN: I rang up the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) and asked him if he had seen the advertisement. I told him it was up to him, as president of an organisation that was doing such work, to tell the people it was being done efficiently and well, without flaunting it to the public.

Mr. Richardson: How did he come to miss it?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member, with his natural reservation, said he did not think that was the thing to do. Then I told him that I would explain the position to the people, tell them the work was being done by several organisations including the Ugly Men's Association, with which we are both connected, and that the business committee could be better utilised in helping to meet the problem in some other way.

Mr. Clydesdale: I told you to let those who were trading on it have another go.

Mr. MANN: That is so. Let me refer to the rush for publicity on the part of those who set out to help the Premier in his difficulty when the unemployed were going to pull the building down. If those people wanted to assist the Premier, they could have done it quietly. Long before that, they could have told the Premier that there was a large number of unemployed in the city and that they intended to form a committee and do all in their power to help the Premier out of the difficulty. Doubtless the Premier would then have found them something to do.

Mr. Richardson: That is the Government's job.

Mr. MANN: Of course it is, but I am sure the Premier would not be above accepting assistance from anyone prepared to give it. The present wave of unemployment should not be of lengthy duration, but it would be unwise to put all our eggs in one basket and trust to wheat growing to absorb the unemployed in the future. Each season we look forward with anxiety to rain and to a satisfactory harvest. When we have a good season we give credit to the Government, and if we have a bad season, we are apt to blame the Government also.

Mr. Kenneally: The hon. member will see to that.

Mr. Clydesdale: You could not have a bad season with the present Government in power.

Mr. MANN: I am glad the Minister for Lands realises the need for another industry, and I hope he will speed up the establishment of dairying in this State. It would be a fine thing for Western Australia if, while producing £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 worth of wheat, it also produced dairy produce of equal value. Then, if the wheat harvest failed on any occasion, we should have dairying to fall back upon.

The Premier: Any country that has a balance of trade against it is in a precarious condition. Australia as a whole had a balance of £20,000,000 against it last year. It is a most serious position, largely due to motor cars and petrol, and it cannot continue.

Mr. MANN: There is just as good a market for dairy produce as there is for wheat. Not only may dairy produce be exported, but there is a local market waiting to be supplied. It is interesting to know that progress has been made with other branches of industry. The export of eggs from this State reached 12,000 last year, and I understand they realised payable prices for the producers. We have not the secondary industries that are to be found in the other States, and if the report I have been quoting counts for anything, it is an advantage that we have not got them. Where the secondary industries are greatest, there is to be found the greatest number of unemployed.

Mr. Chesson: There was a bad season for wheat in the Eastern States.

Mr. MANN: But the report covers a period of years. A large number of the unemployed are to be found in the industrial centres. I remember reading a speech made by Mr. Scullin in one of the Eastern States a few months ago in which he directed atten-

tion to that fact. He said there were certain periods of the year when certain industries were at their peak and when there was employment for every craftsman. Then there came a slack period when men had to drop out of employment. That is a question which is absorbing the minds of all thoughtful people to-day, namely what is to be done with those men during the slack period? Is it fair that they should be asked to stand by until their services are again required, or should some provision be made to extend the work over a longer period, or should some form of sustenance be provided while the trouble lasts?

Hon. G. Taylor: Mr. Scullin referred to that in his speech in the Perth Town Hall last week.

Mr. MANN: The Premier, a minute or two ago, by way of interjection, referred to the adverse trade balance. The report says, "The imports exceeded the exports by £13,000,000, and the deficiency in respect of the balance of international payments was £27,000,000. The effect of such a position upon the credit conditions has been already referred to and is seriously discussed by Professor Copeland who investigated it."

Hon. G. Taylor: When did he investigate it?

Mr. MANN: The report has just been published. It is interesting to notice that the banks of this State have been making very reasonable advances as against local deposits, a fact which shows that they have confidence in the country and are prepared to invest their money here. The Bank of New South Wales, with deposits of £4,500,000, have advanced £6,445,000; the National Bank, with deposits of £2,600,000, have advanced £2,790,000; the Union Bank, with deposits of £1,614,000, have advanced £2,188,000; the Bank of Australasia, with deposits of £821,000, have advanced £1,383,000; the E.S. & A. Bank, with deposits of £398,000, have advanced £619,000; the Bank of Adelaide, with deposits of £111,000, have advanced £265,000. Only the Commercial Bank have clung to their deposits, advancing £511,000 as against £974,000 deposited. The banks, naturally, are in a position to adopt such a policy now, because it is no longer necessary for them to keep the large gold reserves which at one time were obligatory. To-day they can go to the Commonwealth Treasurer and say, "Here are our investments, and we desire a parcel of notes to meet demands." They can ask for

notes up to the value of their securities. Thus the banks of this State have largely assisted the Government in the development of the country. It will be suggested that the banks do it to their own advantage. Certainly that is so, but still they are doing it also to the advantage of the State.

Mr. Teesdale: It would be very painful for everybody if they stopped doing it.

Mr. MANN: I have endeavoured to place before the Chamber from personal observation, and from reading, certain reasons which I think have lead up to past and present conditions of unemployment. In my opinion there are ways and means of minimising unemployment during the period it is with us. The Premier is now on the right way towards doing something in that direction by starting to build homes for the workers in the country. I hope, however, that he will not allow the department to influence him to build homes costing from £600 to £800, because in that case the rentals will be too high.

Mr. Kenneally: Does the hon. member advocate that homes should be built in the country only?

Mr. MANN: I am advocating the building of homes in the country in order to solve the unemployed problem, and in order to do something practical towards stopping the flow of unemployment to the city. I urge that the Government should at once start a home-building policy, in country districts. The Premier said that it is no longer necessary for the State Government to build workers' homes in the city as the Commonwealth homes scheme will suffice.

Mr. Clydesdale: Are you speaking of married men or single men?

Mr. MANN: Married men.

Mr. Clydesdale: How many men working on farms can afford to keep a family?

Mr. MANN: That is just the point. Suppose that in each of about 100 small towns 10 homes were built. That would be 1,000 homes, and would represent 1,000 families taken off the streets of Perth and 1,000 unemployed put into permanent homes.

Mr. Clydesdale: How is a man getting 50s. or £3 a week on a farm to keep a family?

Mr. Lindsay: That might be the position if you owned the farm, but it is not a general thing.

Mr. MANN: The interjection of the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale)

would have something in it but for the position which exists to-day. Whatever men on farms get to-day, they have to send the money to their families in Perth.

Mr. Clydesdale: The present position is that a married man cannot go and work on a farm.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member has considerable knowledge of farms about the Swan River, but not of farms in the country.

Mr. Clydesdale: I have just as much knowledge as you have regarding the employment of men.

Mr. MANN: I tell the hon. member that there are scores of married men employed in the country, and that their wages during harvest time are not £2 a week.

Mr. Clydesdale: I did not say £2; I said 50s. or £3.

Mr. MANN: Men doing harvesting and that kind of work get £3 a week. However, the position is that they do not get any more to-day, when workers' homes are not available in the country, and when they have to send whatever they do get to their homes in Perth. Can the hon. member suggest any other place to which men can be sent?

Mr. Chesson: Farming work is a single man's job, and you know that.

Mr. MANN: Is it a single man's job to do wheat lumping at £1 per day?

Mr. Chesson: That is a different proposition altogether from working on a farm for 50s. or £3 a week.

Mr. MANN: My point—and I think time will show I am right—is that if the Premier builds homes where the rentals will be within the earning capacity of the farm worker and rural labourer, he will have them satisfied and they will establish homes in the country and remain there. Having said so much on the subject of unemployment, I now wish to refer to the meat question. I am rather pleased that the Premier contemplates the bringing down of a Bill for the prevention of profiteering. Does the hon. gentleman intend to make that measure applicable to State trading concerns? Will he include them in the scope of his Bill?

Hon. G. Taylor: That is what he is aiming at.

The Premier: Unfortunately the State trading concerns do not show large profits.

Mr. MANN: On the 30th March the agents for the Wyndham Meat Works sent out a notice to purchasers of beef stating that beef would be available from the works. Then, on the 20th April, they sent out a notice indicating the ships bringing the beef and the dates on which it would be available. On the 10th May they sent out a list of prices that would be charged for the various grades of meat, and called for applications from buyers. When they got those applications and saw what quantity of meat would be required, they decided, the demand being fairly great, to put up the prices. Thereupon another notice was sent out.

Mr. Pantou: They must have been reading up the law of supply and demand.

Mr. MANN: They sent out the following notice, dated the 15th May:—

We acknowledge your requisition for shipment per "Koolinda" and "Kangaroo" from Wyndham early in June. Will you please note this acceptance is provisional, with no responsibility on our part or on the part of the Wyndham Meat Works, as regards quantity and price, and as agents for the Wyndham Meat Works we reserve the right to vary both price and quantity. Due notice of any such variation will be forwarded to you, thus giving you an opportunity of confirming or rejecting the business.

Thereupon prices were put up from three farthings to 1½d. all round.

The Premier: That notice is just a business precaution. No butcher will undertake to supply from week to week at any given price.

Mr. MANN: I should have liked to hear the Premier's criticism of this notice if it had emanated from a private concern. I can visualise the hon. gentleman tearing the proposition to pieces.

The Premier: Profiteering, as the hon. member knows, means making excessive profit, whereas the Wyndham Meat Works make no profit at all.

Mr. MANN: That is no reason why they should submit a list of prices and then—

The Minister for Lands: Would you suggest that they should sell at a loss?

Mr. MANN: They fix prices and send them out, and when the buyers send in applications for meat the Wyndham agents write saying, "This is subject to variation in price and quantity." Then the prices are put up. If there had not been

an excessive demand, the prices would not have risen.

The Minister for Lands: The Wyndham Meat Works are operated at a loss.

Mr. MANN: That is no reason why they should profiteer.

The Minister for Mines: How do their increased prices compare with the present prices of meat? That is what we want to get at.

Mr. MANN: The management of the Wyndham Meat Works took advantage of the shortage in supplies of fresh meat—

The Minister for Mines: How do their prices compare with other prices?

Mr. MANN: The Wyndham management took advantage of the shortage in the fresh meat market to put up prices, instead of giving the public an opportunity to get meat at reasonable prices.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are beef buccaners.

Mr. Kenneally: The hon. member told us the second letter put up the prices by so much per lb. Will he be fair and tell us how much the prices were increased?

Mr. MANN: By 1d. per lb.

Mr. Kenneally: And what was the price when it was put up?

Mr. MANN: At a meeting yesterday it was agreed that not more than 7d. per lb. should be paid. If wholesale prices are put up as indicated in the second letter, more than 7d. will have to be charged in order that the businesses may pay their way. The Wyndham management wrote that they would supply crops at 2½d. per lb. and then put up the price to 3½d. Hind quarters were raised from 3½d. to 4½d.

The Minister for Mines: And 4½d. for hind quarters is not a price you can growl at very much. The butchers could still sell at 7d. and make a profit.

Mr. MANN: If the Minister for Mines says that, he knows nothing about the business. I can recollect the present Government when on this side of the House attacking the meat position severely. Members now on this side of the House have not been unduly critical. I have endeavoured to show that if the Government permit the management of the Wyndham Meat Works to issue a list of prices, and then, after customers have notified that they will purchase at those prices, to raise

them and declare themselves under no obligation to supply at the prices originally quoted—

The Premier: But the trouble is that if the Wyndham meat is sold to wholesale purchasers at low prices, there is no guarantee that they will not sell the meat at top prices to the public as fresh meat.

Mr. MANN: That has not been the experience of the past.

The Minister for Mines: A fair quantity of Wyndham meat has been sold here as fresh meat at top prices.

Mr. Heron: I suppose you are aware that any extra profit that is made goes to those who supply the meat on the hoof.

Mr. MANN: I do not follow the hon. member. I know that the Minister for Mines on one occasion moved the adjournment of the House because this meat that he now says is first-class was sent to a Government institution.

The Minister for Mines: Nothing of the kind! Be fair. I moved the adjournment of the House because the contract specified the supply of fresh meat and it was proved that the contractor was supplying frozen meat. I did not say that the frozen meat was bad, but I wanted the contract fulfilled.

Mr. MANN: If I looked up the report of the Minister's speech in "Hansard," I think I could show that he said it was not in the interests of health for the inmates of the institution to eat that meat.

The Minister for Mines: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. MANN: Now he describes it as first-class, notwithstanding the increase in price.

The Minister for Mines: I have had some of the frozen meat and it is just as good, if not better, than the best meat I can get in Perth to-day.

Mr. Chesson: It has been on the table of the dining room here.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, and probably the member for Perth ate it and did not know any difference.

Mr. MANN: I have no other grievance to air. I believe the Premier will accept my statement that the complaints I have made regarding the meat supply are genuine. I trust that he will see, as the Minister controlling the Wyndham Meat Works, that there will be no further profiteering attempted.

MR. FERGUSON (Moore) [8.47]: I do not intend to detain the House very long. As to the Governor's Speech, I am not much concerned about the statement of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the egotistical character of it, or about the claims of the Premier to the contrary. I do not see anything in the Governor's Speech that cannot be regarded as moderate. I am mostly interested in the last paragraph of the report that refers to prospective legislation the Government intend to introduce during the session. I am particularly interested in the proposal for the establishment of a rural bank department of the State Savings Bank. If the object is to assist the rural districts, I am sure that any Government that introduces such a measure will receive the approval, not only of those who reside in the country areas, but of city people as well. Naturally the metropolitan area depends upon the rural development of the State, and I believe that the metropolitan people will applaud the decision of the Government to introduce such a measure. Naturally, the proposal to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill will be of great interest to the whole of the State. The present boundaries of electorates in many instances are shocking. There is no doubt that a revision is necessary. Not only are there large electorates very ably represented in this House, but there are small ones, such as Menzies, with a mere handful of electors.

Mr. Panton: I thought it was time someone mentioned it!

Mr. FERGUSON: It is quite a long time since we have heard something about it, and it is quite a long time since the hon. member opened his lips to let us know he is here.

Mr. Panton: You will hear quite a lot when the Bill is before the House.

The Premier: There has been an increase of 15 up there during the last few months.

Mr. Teesdale: But there have been two deaths.

Mr. FERGUSON: I understand that the member for Menzies has been endeavouring to assist, for I hear that he has established a matrimonial agency and aims at assisting in the development of his electorate!

Mr. Brown: He will have to wait a long time before they are 21 years of age.

Mr. FERGUSON: My objection to some of the electoral boundaries is that they are entirely inequitable. For instance, my electorate mainly consists of sheep and wheat-producing areas, but at one end there is

tacked on a considerable area of viticultural country.

Mr. Panton: I think I have more sheep in my electorate than you have in yours.

Mr. FERGUSON: I think there is room for discussion on that point, but that can be settled later. My difficulty is that the boundaries of some of the electorates are entirely unsuitable. What interests in common with a sheep and wheat electorate have a viticultural district like the Swan and a market-gardening area like Wanneroo? It is unfair to those engaged in the last mentioned industries because their interests could be better looked after by a member conversant with viticulture or with market gardening interests.

Mr. Kennedy: You would not tack any more on to the Guildford electorate?

Mr. FERGUSON: No, but I think the Swan viticultural district could be tacked on to the Swan electorate, and Wanneroo could be tacked on to the same electorate that embraces Osborne Park. Possibly, the Minister for Agriculture may not deem that desirable.

The Minister for Mines: He has about 16,000 electors already.

Mr. FERGUSON: When the redistribution of seats is undertaken, probably the Leederville electorate will be divided so that those portions engaged in primary production will be included in a separate constituency.

The Minister for Mines: There is room for three electorates in the Leederville constituency.

Mr. FERGUSON: I am also interested in local government matters. The time is long overdue for the amendment of the Road Districts Act. We have been promised legislation of that description, and I hope that the Minister in charge of the amending Bill will show a little more sweet reasonableness than he did on a former occasion, and that this time he will accept the advice and suggestion of those who take a deep interest in the work.

The Premier: Think of the mellowing influence of travel!

Mr. FERGUSON: Quite a number of the members of this House have had considerable experience in local government affairs and I hope the Minister will pay some attention to their views. The questions involved have been discussed on many occasions by the Roads Board Association and they have decided upon certain directions in which the Act could well be

amended. I hope the Minister will accept their requests. During this session a good deal of time has been taken up by discussions upon unemployment. In my opinion, that problem is a serious one. We have far more unemployed to-day than ever before in the history of the State. The Premier has my sympathy regarding the difficult problem he has to deal with. I can imagine nothing more demoralising to an Australian than having no work to do. A married Australian or Britisher is keenly appreciative of the responsibilities he owes to his family and to the State. It must be galling to such a man to have no work to do that will enable him to provide adequate sustenance for his wife and family. I have not been placed in that unfortunate position myself, but have always had rather more work than I have been able to perform. Nevertheless, it has always appealed to me as being one of the most unfortunate positions a man can find himself in when he is unable to provide the necessities of life for his dependents. I commend the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) for the time he has devoted to this subject, for the information he has placed before the House, and for the common-sense suggestions he has made. The Government would do well to compare the suggestions he made with the absurd proposals advanced by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). The latter has suggested that the more we develop our country areas, the more unemployment there will be. That unfortunate condition has nothing whatever to do with the development in our country areas. The reverse is true. It was the condition of the country districts throughout Eastern Australia that was mainly responsible for the unemployment problem here. It is certainly hard luck for us that in Western Australia we are expected to carry so many of the unemployed who do not really belong to us. Owing to the bad seasons in the Eastern States and the large number of men who were put off by the State Government in South Australia, men from the East flocked across to Western Australia. In a large measure that was due to the wonderful advertisement we have received owing to our succession of good seasons. I am concerned with the fact that although we have had those good seasons, we have such a large number of unemployed in our midst. I hesitate to conjecture what would be our position if we had not had that succession of good

seasons. Western Australia will certainly be in a very regrettable position if we should ever find ourselves confronted with a succession of bad seasons. The member for Murchison mentioned that, in his opinion, the time of Parliament should be devoted to the consideration of old Acts of Parliament that required revision. I agree with him to a certain extent, but I believe that it is not only the old Acts that require amendment, but some of those passed during recent years should receive attention as well. Some of them are unjust, and the member for Murchison assisted in the passage of one of them to which I shall refer. When the cleaning-up process starts, I hope that hon. member will assist us in securing relief. A few years ago Parliament passed the Vermin Act Amendment Act and I wish to refer to the inequitable incidence of the taxation it imposed. That point has been mentioned already, but I wish to stress it to impress the House with the necessity for that Act being further amended. When the amending measure was introduced, it was assumed by Government officials that a tax would be imposed on the unimproved value of certain lands outside the metropolitan area—those areas exceeding 160 acres in the country districts. On that basis it was estimated that farming districts would contribute £20,000 and the pastoral areas £12,000. Even to that extent, the proposal was unjust. It is hard to understand just why Parliament passed the amending legislation in that form. Surely, seeing that there was an equal number of sheep in the pastoral and in the farming sections, it would have been fair to levy a tax that would hit both sections alike. It was not an ordinary tax, but a levy on those who owned sheep, made for the purpose of paying a bonus on the destruction of certain vermin.

Hon. G. Taylor: It was payment for services rendered.

Mr. FERGUSON: Seeing that there were about 4,000,000 sheep in the farming areas and a similar number in the pastoral areas, it would have been fair to impose a tax that would bear equally on both sections. Instead of that, Parliament passed a measure which in the opinion of the departmental officers would collect £20,000 from the farming community and £12,000 from the pastoral community. And the distribution of the funds raised has been even worse in its lop-sided result. About

three times as many dingoes have been brought in from the pastoral areas as from the farming areas.

Mr. Chesson: It was a good thing for the farming areas that so many dingoes were killed while still in the pastoral districts.

Mr. FERGUSON: But many of those dingoes could never have come into the farming areas. Actually, £23,000 was spent in the pastoral areas, and only £10,000 in the farming areas. So it will be seen that the figures are inverted, as against the taxation figures.

Hon. G. Taylor: At all events, both sections got the necessary protection.

Mr. FERGUSON: Yes, and both ought to be prepared to pay equally for that protection. So when our legislation is revised, I hope that measure will receive special consideration. I want to congratulate the Government on having speeded up the construction of the Ejanding-Northward railway, now nearing completion. No other railway authorised by Parliament is calculated to give so immediate and so good a return as that line. The land at the north end and to the east of that railway has been inspected by the Migration Commission and other visitors from outside the State, and the reports on it have been most favourable. In years to come there will be more wheat carried down that line than on any other agricultural railway in the State. Touching the construction of that railway, I wish to draw attention to a little matter to which I and others take strong exception. Years ago in that district there was only one settler, a man named Cadoux. To-day there is a railway siding on the very block that was owned and worked by Cadoux, who was one of the first to enlist at the outset of the war, and who made the supreme sacrifice in France. For some time that siding was known as Cadoux, and indeed the whole district was known by that name. But during the last few weeks, without reference to the people of the district, the name of the siding has been changed to Hackett. No man of the name of Hackett was ever heard of in that district. The people of the district are very much incensed about the change, and I appeal to the Minister to have the name Hackett expunged and the name Cadoux reinstated.

The Minister for Railways: What do the Lands Department say about that? Perhaps it is that there is another place named Cadoux.

Mr. FERGUSON: I cannot say. Only quite recently has my attention been drawn to the matter. I have never heard the name Cadoux applied to any other place.

Mr. Mann: Then the Ejanding siding has been re-named Amery Junction.

Mr. FERGUSON: But that siding had no right to the name Ejanding. The proper Ejanding was 15 miles to the north, and when the railway reached the real Ejanding, it was only right that the name of the siding improperly referred to as Ejanding should be changed. It is now known as Amery Junction. Nobody takes any exception to that. I wish to refer to the outbreak of disease amongst the sheep in the Eastern and Great Southern districts, the braxy-like disease. For some years the losses from this disease have been very considerable. I have been informed on very good authority that in some of the districts along the Great Southern the losses in sheep during the last 12 months have been as high as 15 per cent., which is a pretty serious thing for the sheep growers. We have in my district a man named Graham, who has been managing a farm up there for some years and has had a long experience of the disease. He has devoted the whole of his life to the study of sheep, and he emphatically declares that he knows the cause of the braxy-like disease. He has placed the matter before the Minister for Lands; but unfortunately he did it in such a way as to have a somewhat humiliating effect on the officer in charge of the investigations. I am afraid he got on the wrong side of that officer, and so he can get no farther with his proposition.

The Minister for Mines: That is the Minister for Agriculture, not the Minister for Lands.

Mr. FERGUSON: Well, I am sorry the Minister for Agriculture is not here just now, because I wanted him to take notice of this. Those of us who have had opportunity to hear Mr. Graham's exposition of the case are convinced that there may be something in it. I urge upon the Minister for Agriculture that he should get his chief inspector to collaborate with Mr. Graham and see if something cannot be done to assist to terminate the devastation in certain districts of this braxy-like disease.

Hon. G. Taylor: It has baffled veterinary and stock experts for years.

Mr. FERGUSON: This man Graham is satisfied that he knows the cause of it, which he says is a certain shrub. He has been in

communication with people of the Great Southern to find out if they had any of that shrub on their farms. The people with whom he communicated replied that they had none of the shrub on their properties; that they used to have it, but had ploughed it all up. During his annual leave recently, Mr. Graham made a tour of inspection of many of those farms. He reports that in every instance he found that although the people had cleared their paddocks and ploughed them up, yet wherever he went along the fences on those properties he found sufficient of the shrub to kill half the sheep in the district. So he is confirmed in his theory. I suggest the Minister should take steps to prove that theory. I wish to refer to the viticultural industry in the Swan district. According to figures supplied by the Government Viticulturist, there are in Western Australia 5,330 acres under vines. A little more than half of that area is devoted to wine grapes, the balance being under table grapes and dried fruit. The industry is not in a very satisfactory position. Recently the Winegrowers' Association approached the Minister for Justice and suggested that something should be done in the way of assisting the men engaged in the industry, more particularly with regard to the obtaining of licenses in the metropolitan area, under which those people could exclusively sell the products of their vineyards. For many years past we have been told that nothing could be done in that respect because it would conflict with the Federal constitutional law proscribing any restriction of trade. It was suggested that if a license were issued for the exclusive sale of Western Australian wine, it would come into conflict with that provision in the Federal Constitution. When approached by the winegrowers, the Minister for Justice replied to their request as follows:—

Further to the deputation and your subsequent interview and letter regarding the sale of Western Australian wines and an amendment of the Licensing Act to give effect to the desire to encourage the sale of those wines, I have gone into the matter with the law officers, and now find the position is that any statutory provision which will have the effect of affecting prejudicially the sale of Eastern States wines whilst the sale of local wines will not be affected, will be invalid. In the circumstances I regret that the suggested legislation cannot be proceeded with.

That is the opinion of the Crown Law officers. But I want to point out that in the opinion of an eminent constitutional authority in the Eastern States, the position is not as stated by the advisers of the Min-

ister for Justice in this State. I should like to read an opinion signed by an eminent authority in the Eastern States, a K.C. with considerable experience of constitutional matters, and whose opinion I prefer to take rather than that given to the Minister for Justice. I think the Minister himself will be inclined to accept this opinion I have in my hand. He has shown his sympathy for the requests of the wine-growers and his interest in their industry and the problems confronting it. I am sure he will be anxious to assist them in every way.

The Minister for Justice: Is that Mr. Latham's opinion?

Mr. FERGUSON: Yes.

The Minister for Justice: I have submitted his opinion to the Crown Law officers and they are still of the same view. No Minister could bring down a Bill to the House if his law officers advised him that it was unconstitutional.

Mr. FERGUSON: It has been said that comparisons are odious. Does it not appeal to the Minister that the opinion of Mr. Latham might be as good as that of the local Crown Law officers?

The Minister for Justice: I do not know.

Mr. FERGUSON: I was not going to mention the name until the Minister asked me whose opinion it was.

The Minister for Justice: That is all right, it is common property.

Mr. FERGUSON: This is the opinion—

Section 92 of the Constitution provides that trade commerce and intercourse amongst the States shall be absolutely free. This section has been interpreted by the High Court to mean that State Parliaments cannot by any legislation or by administrative Acts, depending for their authority upon such legislation in any manner restrict interstate trade. Accordingly the State of Western Australia would not be at liberty to prohibit the import into Western Australia of wines made in other States. Section 113 of the Constitution provides that all fermented, distilled or other intoxicating liquids passing into any State, or remaining therein, for use, consumption, sale or storage, shall be subject to the laws of the State as if such liquids had been produced in the State. Accordingly the Parliament of Western Australia has full power to legislate in respect to the sale of intoxicating liquids within the State. If the Western Australian Parliament were to prohibit the sale of wine produced in other States without prohibiting the sale of wine produced in Western Australia, such action might possibly be regarded as a breach of Section 92, in spite of the terms of Section 113. There is therefore no reason why the Parliament of Western Australia should not provide for such

licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquids as it thinks proper. It may have a special spirit license, a special beer license and a special wine license, and it may also provide for special licenses for the sale of Western Australian wine. I am also able to see no legal objection to a provision, if Parliament thought it proper to adopt it, to the effect that all holders of wine licenses should keep available for sale Western Australian as well as other wines upon pain of penalty or forfeiture of their licenses in the case of default.

It appears to me that we have ample power, if we wish to exercise it, and we would not be restrained by anything in the Federal Constitution from granting licenses for the sale of Western Australian wine alone.

The Minister for Justice: The whole thing arose out of the Robbins's case. The High Court held a view somewhat contrary to that opinion.

Mr. FERGUSON: That has been stated before. Although I have no particulars here, I am given to understand that the Robbins' case was not on all fours with this one.

The Minister for Justice: It was sufficiently close to give a line as to what the Constitution stood for.

Mr. FERGUSON: As time goes on we learn things. The information we are now possessed of is more favourable than anything we have had in the past. I suggest that the Minister might get some other advice if he is not satisfied with the position. I realise he would be inclined to take the advice of the officers of his department. Ordinarily no one would question that, but when we have the opinion of so eminent an authority as Mr. Latham, the Federal Attorney General, who has gone very closely into the matter at the request of the Federal Parliamentarians representing this State, I think the matter might be pursued a little further in an endeavour to do something to assist local winegrowers. There is one aspect of the case which may not be generally known, namely, that wine-growers here have considerable difficulty in placing their products on the market. One of the difficulties is that Eastern States wine-growers are very powerful and wealthy people. It is common knowledge that a number of their agents gets a license in a suitable position in Perth, that agent will sell almost exclusively Eastern States wine.

Mr. Sleeman: They are in the same position as the machinery men.

Mr. FERGUSON: They are in a different position. No license is required for a machinery man, but a license is required for premises where wine is sold. When a license in a suitable position is obtained, the wealthy firms buy the freehold of the property, and once they own it the man who holds the license will sell almost exclusively their wines. Most people who go into a wine shop ask only for wine and not for that of any particular State. This wine is made in Western Australia. We have it on the authority of the Government viticultural expert that it compares favourably with any wine made elsewhere in Australia.

Mr. Sleeman: You can get the same thing with machinery, too.

Mr. FERGUSON: I have said nothing about the State Implement Works. I do not know why the member for Fremantle is worrying about it. I could give him the opinion of some of the people in my district who use that machinery.

Mr. Sleeman: I thought it was the opinion of your party.

Mr. FERGUSON: It is the opinion of most members of it that when they buy one of these implements they never buy another.

The Minister for Justice: You mean they last a life-time.

Mr. FERGUSON: It may be the same with regard to the wine.

Mr. Sleeman: "Since when I have used no other."

Mr. FERGUSON: I wish to refer to some of the disabilities under which my electorate labours. Ever since we entered into Federation, Western Australia has been talking about the disabilities under which it labours as a consequence of Federation. The disabilities under which the Midland districts labour under the State Government are on all fours with the difficulties and disabilities that the State labours under through Federation. The districts served by the Midland Railway are generally recognised as some of the best in the State.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not believe in interfering with private enterprise.

Mr. FERGUSON: I have always been in favour of public utilities being State-owned, and am particularly anxious that this should be so with respect to the Midland Railway. I have formed one of a

deputation to every Government that has been in office since I was 21, asking that the State should acquire the Midland Railway. Then we have a senseless interjection like that.

Mr. Sleeman: Where do you draw the line between a public utility and some trading concerns?

Mr. FERGUSON: The hon. member would not be classed as a public utility. I am not used to interjections such as those which come from old and hardened Parliamentarians.

Hon. G. Taylor: You did very well just then.

Mr. FERGUSON: The unfortunate part of it is that the evil influence is spreading to this side of the House. The districts that are traversed by the Midland Railway are some of the best in the State. I think we have there the biggest farmer in the world. Certainly we have some farms that produce more than any others in the State. One belonging to the New Zealand Land Company last year produced 26,000 bags of wheat, besides 9,000 bags of oats. There are not many places in Australia that can do that, and we are proud of this one. Unfortunately a big proportion of the country about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, was owned by the company that owned the railway. That company in a very short-sighted manner sold a lot of the good land in large parcels, and this has been detrimental to the development of that portion of the State. We have been suffering from it ever since. For ordinary mixed farming and stock-raising purposes I have no hesitation in saying there is no other part of the State to beat it.

Mr. Withers: It is out of the South-West.

Mr. FERGUSON: The best average wheat yield in the State has been for many years captured by the Midland district, but last year we were beaten by the Southern Cross district. I should be very glad if the Southern Cross district could beat us again in its wheat yield. When the people there get a season that will give them an average return of 18 bushels to the acre, Western Australia must be on a good wicket.

Mr. Sleeman: They had a pretty good drop on the wharf this year.

Mr. FERGUSON: If the hon. member will persist in interjecting I hope he will

do so loud enough for me to hear him. It would, however, be far better if he kept quiet. Land settlement in these districts has been brought about on wrong lines, the method adopted having retarded the development of this part of the State generally. We have many other things in the way of drawbacks which I think might easily be alleviated. A couple of years ago the present Government were good enough, in the interests of the farming community, which was genuinely and honestly striving to develop the State, to reduce freights on all first, second and third class goods carried over the State railways. This, however, did not apply to the Midland Railway. This is where the difficulty comes in. The reduction in freights amounted to something like £45,000 for the first year. I think the amount has increased since as the result of the increased business the State railways have done. We on the Midland line, whilst we had to contribute towards the cost of some of the facilities provided on the State railways, were not entitled to benefit by the reduction in rail freights. A land tax was imposed to recoup the State for the loss of that £45,000 worth of rail freights. The Taxation Department have collected a sum equal to about £50,000 out of this additional land tax. The people in the Midland Districts have been called upon to pay their quota of the taxation, but have received no benefit by way of reduced rail freights. I took this matter up with the Premier a little while ago with the object of seeing whether some scheme could not be devised whereby the people in whom I am particularly interested could get the benefit of the reduced rates. We have been unable to induce the present Government or any other Government to assist us. I think some of the other Governments were worse than this Government in that regard.

Mr. Pantou: We all agree with that.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are a long-suffering people.

Mr. FERGUSON: We are. We put up for a long time with the hon. member as Minister. I asked the Premier if something could not be done to relieve the people of the additional burden they had to bear. I suggested, if no other solution of the difficulty could be found, that the additional land tax paid by the Midland settlers should be paid to the Midland Company, provided

that company reduced freights to the level of those imposed by the Government on first, second and third-class goods.

Mr. Kennedy: It was on everything that goes up the Midland line, stock, parcels and all.

Mr. FERGUSON: The hon. member is wrong.

Mr. Kennedy: I am not wrong.

Mr. FERGUSON: As I have said, freights were reduced to the tune of about £45,000, but that reduction did not apply to the Midland line. I suggested to the Premier that if the additional land tax that the Midland settlers paid were passed on to the company, on condition that the company reduced the freights on the carriage of first, second and third class goods over their railway to the level of the reductions made on the State railways, it would be an equitable way out of the difficulty that confronted the settlers along the Midland line. The Midland settlers are part and parcel of the State of Western Australia, although the member for Murchison said this evening that they were not. I maintain that they are; they are paying all the taxes being paid by other people in the State and more as well. It would have been only fair if the Government had relieved those settlers of the additional burden by doing as I suggested and recouping the Midland Railway Company for the loss they would have sustained by reducing their freights to the level of those on the Government railways. Mr. Poynton, as manager of a privately-owned railway, could not be expected to reduce his freights because, by doing so, he would have incurred considerable loss. In fairness to the Midland Railway Company, let me remind members that about 30 years ago people in the Old Country put their money into the company and expected to get some return from it. They have never received one penny in the shape of dividends on the money invested until last year. In fairness to the manager of the company, I want to say that the Midland settlers realise that. It would have been distinctly unfair to the shareholders to ask them to bear this loss. The Midland Company have no chance of recouping their loss as the Government have. It was a simple matter for the Government to reduce their freights and make up the loss by means of increased land taxation. That course was not open to the Midland Company and, if they

had reduced their freights, they would have had to bear the loss. Let me quote what the Premier said in reply to my request—

An analysis of the proceeds of the additional land tax indicates that considerably over 50 per cent. of the collections are from taxpayers who receive no benefit from the rebate in railway freights. The settlers on the Midland line are therefore not alone in suffering the disability to which you refer. Your suggestion for the payment of a sum to the Midland Railway Company would create an entirely new departure in Government finance, and would open the way to very wide and undesirable extensions for which legislative authority does not exist. In view of all the circumstances of the case, it is greatly regretted that there is no method by which relief can be given to the Midland settlers without creating other anomalies of a character at least as undesirable.

I put forward my proposal as a good-natured suggestion, hoping that it might lead the Premier to evolve, in his fertile mind, some other scheme by which the object I had in view could be achieved. If my method was crude or wrong, I expected, and the Midland people expected, that some other proposition would have been put up by the Premier, by which we could have obtained the relief we were seeking. But our position is as we were and we are a disappointed people. There is another matter that affects us detrimentally, but before dealing with that I wish to refer to a question asked this evening, that if the Midland Railway Company could carry goods at such a cheap rate, why could not the Government do the same? The member for Murchison criticised the Government because he inferred, if he did not actually state, that the Midland Railway Company were carrying goods at a cheaper rate than were the Government. I would like to refer to the freight charges on one or two commodities.

Mr. Kenneally: He was referring to the special agreement with regard to £2 10s. per ton for a through truck.

Mr. FERGUSON: I believe that is so. Here are one or two freight rates that go to show that the people on the Midland line have a lot to put up with as compared with their fellow producers who are fortunate enough to be served by a State railway. From Fremantle to Moora, a distance of 120 miles, the freight on a 6-ton truck of power kerosene is £3 12s. 2d. more than for 120 miles from Fremantle to Wongan Hills. That is a very serious handicap to the people on the Midland line. A good deal

of power kerosene is being used in farming operations nowadays, and seeing that the Midland people have to pay that additional amount of freight, it means a serious diminution of the profits, and goodness knows the profits from wheat growing are pretty small as it is! Most of the power kerosene carried over the railways is used in connection with wheat growing, and owing to that and other high costs of production, the margin of profit at the present price of wheat is not very great. The freight on a truck of sheep from Moora to York, a distance of 166 miles, is £5 17s. 11d., whereas for a similar distance over the State railways it is only £5 8s. For 10 tons of wheat from Moora to Fremantle, a distance of 120 miles, the cost is £6 10s., whereas for a similar distance over the State railways the cost is £5 15s. 10d. Those are hardships that the Midland settlers have to bear as compared with their fellow producers fortunate enough to be served by a State railway. Again, the first class fare over the Government and Midland railways is 2d. per mile, but the second class fare over the State lines is 1½d., and over the Midland line 1½d. I am hopeful that the Minister for Railways will take that matter up with the company and see if he cannot have something done to equalise the rates.

Mr. Panton: But look at the nice new carriages you have.

Mr. FERGUSON: According to the agreement entered into, the Midland Railway Company are allowed to charge only such freights and fares as the Government from time to time may approve.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is in the agreement.

Mr. FERGUSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: Have we approved?

Mr. FERGUSON: If the Government have approved of the differential charges, the time has arrived when they should withdraw their approval, and intimate to the Midland Railway Company that they should bring their fares and freights into line with those of the Government, in the interests of the people who are compelled to use the Midland railway.

The Minister for Railways: Apparently that is something that cannot be done, unfortunately.

Mr. FERGUSON: The Minister will find that a jolly lot can be done if he has the will to do it. The Government have the power to give or withhold assent to any freights or

fares that the Midland Railway Company may impose.

The Minister for Railways: Not if consent was given 20 years ago.

Mr. FERGUSON: I do not think that is so.

The Minister for Railways: It is.

Mr. FERGUSON: Then, according to the Minister's suggestion, there will not be any possibility of getting any reduction whatsoever until the crack of doom. The only solution I can suggest is that the State should acquire the Midland railway, lock, stock, and barrel. It has been a great disappointment to me that other speakers more or less interested in this question have not referred to it during the course of this debate. The member for Murchison spoke eloquently on other matters but ignored this one. He has had many years' experience of the disabilities that we on the Midland line suffer and yet I have not heard him say a word to assist Midland members to get the Government to acquire the concession.

The Minister for Railways: Get the Midland company in a reasonable frame of mind and we might do something.

Mr. Chesson: It was carried in this House almost unanimously.

Mr. FERGUSON: The question of the purchase of the Midland railway is a big subject, which I did not intend to mention this evening, but I should like to refer to the interjection made by the Minister for Railways just now about getting the Midland company into a proper frame of mind. We had the Midland company in a proper frame of mind about 12 months ago, and it is a matter for great regret that the Premier did not conclude a definite bargain with the company at that time. The Premier stated that every time he approached the Midland Company they put up their price. While that is so, let me say in fairness to the company that, though they put up their price on more than one occasion, in every instance they offered the Government more for their money. On the last occasion, when they put up their price by about £300,000, they offered the Government the equity in the land which they had sold but the payments for which had not been completed, amounting to about £200,000, in addition to three new engines and additional rolling stock. After all, what would it matter if the Government

paid a little more than the concession is worth, so long as they satisfied the people who are living along that 277 miles of railway? Instead of having a discontented, unhappy section of the community located along what should be one of the main trunk lines, we should have a happy and contented people who would be recognised as part and parcel of the State, which the member for Murchison says they are not at present.

The Minister for Railways: There have been Governments in this State that have lost their political life over that question.

Mr. Kenneally: The hon. member should not be unmindful of the fact that the company have been operating 32 years and have not declared a dividend until last year, and that was only 2½ per cent., and yet they are putting up their price every time they are approached.

Mr. FERGUSON: If the hon. member had a business concern which was a losing proposition, but which, by capable management, had in course of time been made to pay, perhaps he would put up his price a little.

The Minister for Railways: A lot of their prosperity is due to the Government having opened up a good deal of land along their line.

Mr. Chesson: And their asset is improving every year.

Mr. FERGUSON: While the natural development of the State has helped to make the Midland company more prosperous, we must bear in mind also that the activities of the State have made other people prosperous as well. The Midland company have taken part in the development of Western Australia, and while I consider they have carried on the development of their huge territory along wrong lines, we should be fair to them. The shareholders invested their money in all good faith, and they are entitled to some return for the capital invested.

Hon. G. Taylor: Their property is enhanced in value by the prosperity of the State and the money expended by the State.

Mr. FERGUSON: It is hard for the settler on the Midland line to have to suffer the disabilities that exist there, especially when he goes to a State railway and sees the facilities provided by the Government. In the event of the State railways making a loss on their operations, the Mid-

land settlers have to contribute their share to make it good. We on the Midland line are taxed to pay for any deficit incurred on the State railways, and yet we are not getting any of the facilities provided on the State railways. If a Midland settler travels a few miles to the east, he comes to a State railway and finds all sorts of facilities provided there that he does not enjoy. In the district where I live we wanted a siding between two other sidings that were a long distance apart.

Mr. Kennedy: What do you call a long distance?

Mr. FERGUSON: Twelve miles. We could not get it and we had to pay for it out of our own pockets. I am now speaking of 30 years ago when I went to live there. As time went on and we developed our holdings in that little locality, we required trucking yards for our sheep. We could not get them from the company, but had to pay for them out of our own pockets. When I go to the State railway a little to the east I find sidings where there is hardly any stock at all, and up-to-date facilities are provided for trucking stock. I have sent away more sheep and lambs in one year out of trucking yards that I myself helped to build than are sent from the whole of one of the districts where the Government have provided those facilities. The hard part of it comes in when we have to help to pay for facilities provided on the State railways, while we cannot get any facilities ourselves. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) and various Country members ask for a railway somewhere whenever they get on their feet. In our district we do not get many railways.

Mr. Lindsay: I got you your railway before you came here.

Mr. FERGUSON: I am greatly obliged to the hon. member, and I shall very much appreciate his assistance in getting another line. The particular railway to which he refers is entirely in what may be termed a Government district. We want another railway in what may be regarded as partly a Midland district. It is a railway with a port at Jurien Bay and extending eastward to Mollerin. From inquiries made, we believe that Jurien Bay is a suitable site for a port. If expert examination proves our present information to be authentic, we hope that before long the Government will take steps to ascertain whether the construction of a railway from Jurien Bay to Mollerin is justified. I believe the water in Jurien Bay is deeper than the water in most Western Aus-

tralian ports. The report submitted leads us to believe that the depth of water at Jurien Bay varies from $5\frac{1}{2}$ to $8\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms. If there are no other obstacles, then there seems no reason why eventually a port should not be opened up there. We want railway communication from that port to link up with what will be the eastern spur of the Ejanding Northward railway at Mollerin. Such a line will open up a fine tract of country and enable the people growing wheat over a huge portion of Western Australia to ship their product at Jurien Bay instead of having to transport it a hundred miles parallel with the coast for shipment at Fremantle or Geraldton. In that district there is an area of about 13 million acres, most of it agricultural land. About four million acres are now under process of alienation from the Crown, about 2,500,000 acres have been cleared, and nearly one million acres are under crop. The whole of that area of 13 million acres is nearer to Jurien Bay than to either Geraldton or Fremantle. If a railway were built to Jurien Bay, there would still be ample wheat for shipment at Fremantle to keep that port busy. The zone rightly belonging to Fremantle extends out beyond Southern Cross, and is capable of growing enough wheat to keep the port of Fremantle well occupied for many years to come. I suggest to the Government that instead of embarking on a costly and hazardous outer harbour scheme at Fremantle they should, in the interests of Western Australia and in the interests of the outports, as well as in the interests of decentralisation, help the men who are building up our back country, by spending some money in constructing a port at Jurien Bay. I recommend the Government to do that instead of going outside the river at Fremantle.

Mr. Mann: They have not yet finished the port at Geraldton.

Mr. FERGUSON: It is not right that our district should have to wait until a port has been built at Geraldton.

The Minister for Railways: The Government cannot build four or five ports at the same time. We shall have to take on a big liability at the port of Esperance before long.

Mr. FERGUSON: A visit to the Esperance district has satisfied me that the port there should be opened up, and that the country at the back of Esperance will grow an enormous quantity of wheat. I made a thorough inspection of the mallee country

there, and am thoroughly convinced that in years to come Esperance will be one of Western Australia's finest wheat districts. While this is so, other natural ports should not be neglected.

The Minister for Railways: The trouble is to find money for all of them at the one time.

Mr. FERGUSON: The time is approaching when the Government will have considerable difficulty in supplying the demand for land. After the huge area between the Great Southern and Esperance railways has been settled, I do not know where the State will look to supply applicants for for land. In the area which would be traversed by a line from Jurien Bay to Mollerin, there is a large tract of country well worth opening up. A good deal of it is not wheat country, but is capable of development in other directions. I am of opinion that instead of spending money to find work for the unemployed in the metropolitan area—work that may not be reproductive and that is not altogether essential—the Government would be acting in a more statesmanlike manner if they embarked on the development of some of the country I refer to. Throughout Western Australia there are many thousands of acres, mainly comprising light lands, which could be developed far more quickly if the people who own them and the people who are likely to select such of the lands as are still held by the Crown, were given more assistance in the work of development. I suggest to the Minister for Lands that he would get a far better return if his department assisted in the development of those lands to a greater extent than they are doing at present. The Government are finding money to provide the unemployed with work that is not altogether necessary, though some of it will be very useful; I do not condemn the Government for embarking on it. However, a greater and more lasting return would be obtained if that money were expended on the development of our light lands. If the Government would assist the owners of light lands to increase their production, it would provide more work for the unemployed than can be created as the result of the construction of roads around the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Lands: The Government are assisting fifty-fifty in connection with country roads.

Mr. FERGUSON: I realise that, but I suggested that if the Minister saw the advisability of risking expenditure a little more for those settlers, it would be much wiser than to spend money as the Government are now doing, simply to find work for the unemployed. Not in many cases would the State be taking great risks by assisting on a 75 per cent. basis instead of a fifty per cent. basis. And even if the Government did run a little risk, consider the increased production which would result. Many people now on the land were formerly in the ranks of the unemployed. Many of them are doing well on the land, but a considerable number are held back by want of capital. In my opinion it would be better for the State to take a little risk in financing them to a greater extent than is being done at present, so as to enable them to increase their production.

MR. BARNARD (Sussex) [9.55]: I have read the Governor's Speech through, and turned it over and twisted it about. It contains many things which the Government have done, and which I agree are necessary for the benefit of the country. I do not wish to find fault with those things, but with some of the things the Government have left undone. As the Speech states, it is gratifying to note the increase in wheat production, the development of land settlement, the supply of wire netting to settlers, the provision of water supplies, railway construction, and assistance to mining. It is pleasing also to note that several railways are in course of construction and that one has been finished. However, while building new railways the Government should not forget that old railways, which have existed for years, need attention. Some of the older settled towns are provided with railway stations of which any Minister for Railways ought to be ashamed. A new station at Donnybrook was promised two years ago.

The Minister for Railways: But the people there want their own plans and specifications, and want to fix the cost.

Mr. BARNARD: Naturally the Minister will not allow them to do those things, but I take it some additions to the station are necessary. Undoubtedly something should be done to maintain that phase of railway service. Again, the accommodation in Busselton railway yards is not adequate to the

traffic. Turning to the paragraph that deals with harbours and rivers, I find that improvements are being carried out at Fremantle, Bunbury, Geraldton, and North-West ports. Those are all necessary works, I agree; but for two years there has appeared on the Loan Estimates a small item of £5,000 for improvements to the Busselton Jetty. One of those amounts was put on the Estimates just before the last general election, and the other after that election. During the election campaign some members sitting on the Government side of this Chamber were busy in my electorate, holding forth from platforms to the effect that the Premier was looking after the district generally, and that he was providing money on the Estimates for the improvement of the Busselton jetty, which improvement he intended to carry out. Up to the present, however, nothing has been done. It is not fair that men who largely depend on that jetty for work should be standing idle while the timber which ought to be shipped at Busselton goes past it to another port. The Busselton jetty now has accommodation for only one vessel. If another happens to come along while one is loading, it goes on to another port instead of waiting a day or two for the one in process of loading to complete. Forty or fifty men are dependent for their livelihood on that work, and they are not able to obtain employment for much more than half the year. I hope the Premier will in the near future do something to utilise the amount placed on the Estimates for Busselton jetty. I do not know which is the correct time to approach the hon. gentleman. When the Estimates had been passed, he informed me it was too early then to come to a decision about the matter. I went to him again a month later, and then he told me it was too late this season. I am almost afraid I shall find myself in the same position as the hon. member who is put on the list to be pushed back whenever he asks. However, I hope that will not be the case. Another matter I wish to mention is the charge for accommodation at the Cave House. The building has existed for many years, and I am surprised that no additions have ever been made to it. Every year the booking for the Cave House is filled up in about 25 minutes. The Cave House is one of the chief tourist resorts of Western Australia, and we expect our people to visit our own beauty spots in-

stead of going beyond the borders of the State for recreation. The Government, however, instead of increasing the accommodation at the Cave House have increased the price. I do not know whether the object was to bar more visitors from going there. It seems strange, though, that a Labour Government should be increasing prices at the Cave House, which has always been looked upon as one of the resorts where people of limited means could go for a week or a fortnight during the summer. Now the charge has been raised from £3 3s. to £4 4s. per week, and probably some of the people who have looked forward to a visit to the Cave House will be debarred from that pleasure. If the place had been a losing proposition, one could understand the increase. Seeing that it has shown a profit for years, it would have been a good business proposition for the Government to increase the accommodation.

Mr. Clydesdale: Another State trading concern.

Mr. BARNARD: This is one that could well be regarded as a public utility.

Mr. Chesson: When it suits you, you regard it as a necessary evil.

Mr. Mann: If the Government would lease Cave House, someone else could do the work well.

Mr. BARNARD: As the Government will not allow a private individual to secure a license there, it is up to them to look after the resort for the people.

Mr. Chesson: The accommodation is good.

Mr. BARNARD: Yes, what there is of it, but as it can all be booked up within 25 minutes, that is not saying very much. Not only is revenue derived from the people who secure accommodation at Cave House, but the Railway Department secure their share of the revenue as well.

Mr. Panton: People go down there in motor cars.

Mr. BARNARD: It is not necessary for me to say anything about the Main Roads Board; they have had a fair innings during the debate. I cannot say very much about the way the board has constructed roads in my electorate, because very little has been done there.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then you are all right.

Mr. BARNARD: It seems as though the metropolitan area must have first con-

sideration in everything; we are left to come last. At present the board are doing some work in my electorate, and I am waiting to see how the costs will pan out. So far the job seems to be fairly good so long as the price is right. There is one other question that concerns me. I refer to group settlement, about which we have heard so much. Every session we have had a long speech by the Minister for Lands upon this subject, and we have heard what is to be done in the future.

The Minister for Lands: I have been in that position for one session only.

Mr. BARNARD: I refer to the holder of that portfolio for the time being, whoever he may have been. The present Minister for Lands seems to have a much better grip of the scheme than had the former occupant of the office. I have to thank him for the courtesy he and the members of the board have extended to me, and also for the attention that has been given to complaints I have brought forward from time to time. When those complaints have been reasonable, the board have rectified them. At the same time, we hear so much about the money that has been wasted on the groups, and we have had it attributed from time to time to the bad scheme, the bad land, and the bad settlers. I maintain that the largest proportion of the waste has been incurred by the management of the scheme. The Minister told us the other night that he had followed the scheme of the Leader of the Opposition only to discover he had no scheme. If that is so, I do not know what the Minister was following; perhaps he was somewhat in the dark. According to the Governor's Speech, the reclassification of the group areas has been completed, and it is pleasing to know that that has been done. Now they may have something else to occupy their attention for a while. Speaking for the portion of the group settlement scheme that is to be found in my electorate, the reclassification has merely amounted to a shuffling of the cards and a juggling of locations. Settlers have been taken from one group and have been sent down to the Margaret River district, and settlers from the Peel estate have been brought down and placed on the group from which the settlers were sent to the Margaret River.

The Minister for Lands: Not on the same locations.

Mr. BARNARD: I did not say that. The expense of shifting settlers from one group to another and placing others on the first group has merely represented the addition of so much extra cost to the settlers.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know of any who were taken from the Peel Estate until there was a vacancy?

Mr. BARNARD: Yes.

The Minister for Lands: That is not a fact.

Mr. BARNARD: Every settler was taken from one group and sent down to the Margaret River, with one exception. Between 150 and 200 head of cattle were brought down from groups much better than Group 36 and were put on to pastures that were going to waste.

The Minister for Lands: No

Mr. BARNARD: Yes. A hundred acres or more of pasture were wasted when the groups were abandoned and those pastures were subsequently burnt by bush fires.

The Minister for Lands: We had to take some of the cattle and put them on pastures to save their lives.

Mr. BARNARD: I was on one group where there was clover up to my knees without a hoof having been on it during the season. The bush fires burnt up that clover. That is one of the effects of the reclassification.

The Minister for Lands: When I went to Busselton, you did not tell me anything about that. You did not give me instances like that.

Mr. BARNARD: On one occasion the Minister invited me to go with him.

The Minister for Lands: But I have seen you, and you did not tell me.

Mr. BARNARD: All this means added cost to the settler. Some of these things may appear to be small, but in the aggregate they operate to the detriment of the settlers. One man told me that 30 bags of superphosphate had to be sent to his selection, which was three miles from the railway siding. The fertiliser was carried eight miles further on; it was brought back by lorry past his door and on five miles to where the foreman was located. Subsequently the settler had to go and cart it back in his spring cart.

The Minister for Lands: What was the name of that settler?

Mr. BARNARD: They know about it at the office.

The Minister for Lands: Let us have the name so that we can find out.

Mr. BARNARD: I gave the particulars to the office, and certain reasons were given to me in explanation. Nevertheless, all that means added cost.

The Minister for Lands: What were the reasons?

Mr. BARNARD: They said that there was no one at the siding, and it had to be taken on to another station where there was someone in charge.

The Minister for Lands: I have investigated some of these matters and have found nothing in them.

Mr. BARNARD: Another settler was brought from the Peel Estate to Group 61 near Yallingup. He was taken on to Cowaramup four or five miles away, and had to drive back within a mile and a half of Yallingup station.

The Minister for Lands: There are piffling rumours.

Mr. BARNARD: They may be, but the fact remains that the costs are added to the amount the settler has to pay. There was another instance of which the Minister is aware. One man was taken from his location and sent to Margaret River. The man considered that he could make a living on his block, but was told he could not do so. During the year before he was taken away, he sent £150 worth of cream to the factory, and he had 20 tons of hay on his block.

The Minister for Lands: I am glad you mentioned that instance, because it will serve to expose the whole of your statements.

Mr. BARNARD: The Minister reconsidered his decision, and the man went back to his location.

The Minister for Lands: He went back and now he can stay there. He now wants to leave because he is not satisfied, but he will have to stay there.

Mr. BARNARD: As to the losses on group settlements about which we have heard so much, it must be remembered that some of that loss was caused by the purchase of inferior cattle that had to be repossessed later on and sold. At auction some of the cattle brought as low as £3. Some of these things are matters over which the settlers themselves have had no jurisdiction. Hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of machinery is lying about

the groups. That machinery was of no use to the settlers who had no voice in the purchase of it. Here again is added cost to the scheme. Had better methods been employed and less land been cleared, it would not have been necessary to spend so much money during the last four years, and the land would have been worked better. One man who has over 100 acres cleared has not sufficient pastures to carry a few cows, and he is afraid he cannot carry on. He has been told that if he cannot do so, he will have to leave the block. I maintain that if that man's block had been worked, pastures provided and less clearing done, the capitalisation of the block would not have been so heavy, and the man would be in a better position to-day. While a lot of money has been spent, much has been wasted. I am satisfied that in future the position will be much improved. The Minister has appointed a board that, I think, will do good work, particularly if they are left alone a bit more than has been customary in the past, and if they are not interfered with by Ministerial control.

The Minister for Lands: You admit that the board are doing good work.

Mr. BARNARD: I do; I am talking more about what has happened in the past and what has kept the group settlements back. The settlers have not received that encouragement and assistance from some of the officers in charge that they expected. We realise that many of the settlers were new to that class of work, and that the foreman were supposed to instruct them in the way they should till the land, so as to give them every encouragement. It was a pretty hard job, but the settlers did not get much encouragement from anyone. When speaking at Katanning recently, the Premier referred to dairying as drudgery that no one loved.

Mr. Mann: But are these people interested in their job?

Mr. BARNARD: The Premier pointed out that as a boy he had had to milk cows before he went to school and that in consequence he had been rather dull. Certainly the Premier has brightened up since those days and since he has been in Western Australia he has learnt to know a good job when he has it, and has learnt how to keep it. He added that dairying interfered with sport and Sunday afternoon pleasure. We all know that, but we do not want it

dinned into the ears of the settlers that it is going to interfere with their pleasure, and that they should go into the towns or the cities, where they can get all the pleasure they want. Rather do we require to give them every encouragement to stay on the land. We should do all we can to make their lives as pleasant as if they were nearer to the city. I hope that is the last time we shall have criticism of group settlement by those who know nothing about it and have never seen it. I noticed in the paper recently that Messrs. Gepp, Gunn, and Banks-Amery had visited the group settlements, that they had inspected the Busselton and Manjimup River areas on the Thursday and Friday, and had gone as far as Flinders Bay. I defy anybody to do much inspection of all that area in that short time. Quite a lot of people view the group settlements from the main road, when going to the Cave House or to Flinder's Bay for a holiday. Those who criticise the group settlement most know the least about it. If the critics would go among the group settlers and see what they are doing, and give them the encouragement and help that are wanted, I am satisfied we should be able to look on group settlement from a better standpoint in the near future. Next week the Minister for Lands is going to hold forth and tell us all about group settlement and, according to the Governor's Speech, he is about to start off on a new policy. I hope it will be a really good one.

The Minister for Lands: What is your opinion of the new policy?

Mr. BARNARD: From what little I know of it the Minister seems to be on right lines. However, I do not know much about the new policy other than the 10-cow standard mentioned at Abba River the other day, but I hope we shall not have so much criticism of this land development in the South-West.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Why can they not criticise some of the other institutions, such as the Main Roads Board?

Mr. BARNARD: We do not criticise the development of the wheat belt.

Mr. Mann: There was a time when it was freely criticised.

Mr. BARNARD: Rather do we look forward to the day when the 1,000 farms are established in the wheat belt, and we hope they will be fully successful. I hope some day to see 1,000 farms equally successful

in the South-West. Moreover, I trust that wheat belt members will be as kindly disposed towards settlement in the South-West as the South-West members are towards the settlement in the wheat belt.

On motion by Mr. Kenneally, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.26 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 16th August, 1928.

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| Question: Miners' phthisis, use of konimeter | Page 230 |
| Personal explanation, Hon. J. Cornell and railway construction | 230 |
| Address-in-Reply, seventh day | 231 |

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

QUESTION—MINERS' PHTHISIS.

Use of Konimeter.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is the use of the konimeter for taking dust samples in the Kalgoolie and Boulder mines restricted to Government inspectors? If so, what are the names of inspectors using it? 2, Has any request been made by, or opportunity given, to workmen's inspectors to take check samples simultaneously with Government inspectors? If not, why not. If so, what methods are adopted and what instrument is used? 3, At what intervals are konimeter samples taken in any one mine in (a) development work; (b) stopes; (c) shafts through which men are being frequently raised and lowered; (d) other working places? 4, Are konimeter samples taken throughout the 24 hours in every mine during each shift upon which men are working, or are they taken only during the day shift? 5, Has any systematised attempt been made to take konimeter samples con-

tinuously in working places in any mine (a) whilst men are at work there; (b) whilst men are not working? If so, what is the name of the mine? 6, As the aid of a powerful microscope is necessary to count the dust particles obtained by konimeter sampling, what inspector or other person uses this instrument for the purpose of dust determination? 7, Has any series of konimeter samples taken in working places in any mine or mines during the past three years been so tabulated as to show—(a) the places and times when taken whilst men were at work; (b) similar places and intervals when men were not at work; together with the actual dust determination at the time each sample was taken? If so, will the Minister lay such tabulations on the Table of the House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. Mr. Phoenix. 2, No. 3, (a), (b), (c), (d). When required and found necessary but at no regular intervals. 4, No. 5, No. Done at intervals when required. 6, Inspector Phoenix. 7, Yes, in the annual report of the Department of Mines.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. J. Cornell and Railway Construction.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I ask the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation. During the course of my speech last evening, I said—

Since the present Government came into office, 94 miles of railway has been constructed and handed over to the Working Railways Department.

That statement may be misleading. What I intended to say and should have said was—

Since the present Government came into office it has constructed and handed over to the Working Railways only 94 miles of railway for which Parliamentary sanction was given during the Government's present term of office.

To-day I had recourse to the reports of the Commissioner of Railways and other sources and have prepared a statement which I shall not read, but which I shall hand to the Chief Secretary for him to check, as that may save him a good deal of trouble when he replies. I have summarised the position thus: During that