

tionable amusements tax. The hospital should be supported either by direct tax or by a State lottery or premium bonds, as suggested by Mr. Fraser. I do not see why all this money should go to Queensland, or Tasmania. I have yet to see evidence that the morals of the people of Tasmania or Queensland are worse than ours by reason of the fact that they are allowed to run consultations in those States.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There are not so many wowsers there.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: We allow bookmakers here and other forms of gambling, and why not allow these consultations also? During my election tour I was able to recognise the position of the towns along the Great Southern railway with regard to their water supplies. I went to Wagin several times but found no water there. Katanning and other towns are in nearly as bad a position. These towns will grow larger and they should receive better treatment. Efforts are made to supply them with water by means of mud dams somewhere in the neighbourhood. It is all very well to say, "Give them water"; but they want soft and clear water, something akin to the Albany water. Consideration should be given to a big comprehensive scheme for watering all these towns. Water is without limit in the vicinity of the place where Albany draws its own supply. We know that the Albany water is equal to anything in Australia, for it was so determined by the analysis that was made for the purpose of testing it for the woollen mills. I hope consideration will be given to that necessary provision. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st August, 1928.

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

QUESTION—FROZEN MEAT. WYNDHAM.

Mr. MANN asked the Premier: 1, What quantity of frozen beef is available on spot at the Wyndham Meat Works for sale for consumption in this State? 2, What quantity can be made available per month for consumption in the State during the present killing season at Wyndham?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, The works will close down on 4th September. The estimated remaining quantity of frozen beef to come to hand for consumption within the State is 353 tons. Of this quantity, 93 tons has been shipped per "Koolinda" due at Fremantle about 21st inst.; about 200 tons will be shipped per "Kangaroo" leaving Wyndham on 10th September, and about 60 tons per "Koolinda" leaving Wyndham about 26th September.

QUESTION—WHEAT, BULK- HANDLING.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Premier: In view of the interest in and importance of bulk handling of wheat to the wheat growers of the State, will the Government appoint a practical wheat grower to the committee that is inquiring into the question?

The PREMIER replied: The present inquiry into the bulk handling of wheat question is purely departmental and it is not considered advisable to add to the committee.

QUESTION—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DINNER, COST.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Premier: From where does the money come and who foots the bill for the annual Western Australian dinner held in London?

The PREMIER replied: The money is supplied by those who attend the dinner and foot the bill.

QUESTION—APPLES, PROPOSED IMPORTATION.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he aware that efforts are being made to export apples from South Australia to this State? 2, If so, what steps are being taken to prevent this action in the interests of Western Australian orchardists?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, From Press paragraphs I am aware it has been suggested that some steps shall be taken. 2, The existing regulations prohibit the importation of apples into Western Australia.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 16th August.

MR. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [4.37]: During the course of the debate, members have raised numerous questions, and mostly all of them have been on interesting matters. I am not going to delve into the Governor's Speech, but I wish to say it is pleasing that our exports have almost reached the volume of our imports, and that in all probability, if the season turns out as favourably as we expect, we shall soon reach the stage when there will no longer be an adverse balance of trade. I am sure every member will join with me in hoping that will be so, because it will have the effect of alleviating many of our present difficulties, one in particular, the unemployment difficulty—to which I shall refer later—while it will also assist the State generally. It may seem rather ludicrous to talk about the water supply at the present time. Through the courtesy of the acting Minister for Works I, with many other members, was able recently to inspect Churchman's Brook, which scheme is now practically complete. I congratulate those responsible for the work on the splendid effort they have put forward which, I believe, will be most successful. The work appeals to me as having been carried out on the latest scientific lines. Churchman's Brook has been designed as a permanent reservoir and the result, I believe, will be to increase greatly the supply of water

available for the metropolitan area. During the visit we had an opportunity to talk with the engineers, and I was astounded to learn what an enormous supply is necessary for the metropolitan area. During the last ten or 12 years the metropolitan area has increased its population greatly, and it seems that the rate of progress in future will be very much greater. If that is so, unless the Government institute at once the building of additional reservoirs, the metropolitan area in 12 or 15 years time is likely to be faced with a shortage of water. I know that the present Government are pushing the present scheme ahead, but I do not think it is too early for them to prepare for the building of additional reservoirs. It must be realised that in building the present reservoirs we have been tapping the main sources of supply, and that when the present scheme is completed our engineers will probably have to look in some other direction for water. Therefore, I urge that it is not too early to think about augmenting the supply for the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. J. George: It was all planned out when I was in office.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am quite aware that the scheme now being brought into operation was instituted by the previous Government, and I realise that the present Government have carried on the work as quickly as finances would permit. I do not suggest that the Government will call a halt when the present scheme is completed, but I do voice the opinion, after listening to what the engineers had to say, that it is not too early to prepare an additional scheme for the future. While dealing with the question of water, let me refer to the photographs that have been reproduced in the "West Australian" during the last few days of lagoons at Inglewood. Their occurrence is not common in the metropolitan area, but unfortunately they do occur in the district I represent. Notwithstanding that Subiaco is now expanding in population to the proportions of a city, very great difficulty is experienced with the drainage system. On any day during the last four or five weeks small lagoons could have been seen in some of the most thickly populated parts of Subiaco. This difficulty can be overcome—and we thought it would have been overcome before now—if the Government would carry on the drainage from Shenton Park lake. Five years ago we were definitely promised by the then Minister for Works, the member

for Murray-Wellington, that the sewerage system would be started in Subiaco early in the following year. It was started in March. Side by side with that scheme we were promised the drainage of the lake. It is 4½ years since the sewerage scheme was started in Subiaco and yet nothing has been done in the matter of drainage.

Mr. North: That is, the drainage of storm water?

Mr. RICHARDSON: The construction of the storm-water drains has not been undertaken. The local council, believing that the lake would be drained in the near future, turned all its subsidiary drains into Shenton Park lake. The consequence is that, when heavy rains occur, the water rises and banks up all the drains until they overflow into the streets. I understand that the cost of the drainage scheme would be £35,000 to £40,000. I cannot say that that was a definite estimate. I know that the Subiaco municipal engineer estimates the cost at £25,000 and I think the Drainage Department engineers estimated the cost at £40,000. Which estimate is correct, I cannot say. Perhaps a medium might be struck by saying the cost would be about £35,000. The Treasurer will naturally say, "We have not the finances to do it." But the local municipal council are likely to be mulet in heavy damages unless something is done. Recently the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) pointed out the difficulties of the situation in Inglewood. I appreciate those difficulties, because my district has experienced them to a considerable extent. They have already cost the local council a large sum. On one occasion, I may mention, a woman had to be carried out late at night from her home through several feet of water in the yard, there being several inches in the house. She and her family had to be taken to a hotel and left there until the water receded. Afterwards it cost the Subiaco council a considerable amount to have the place cleaned up. And that sort of thing is continuously going on. Therefore I do hope the Government will give serious and speedy attention to the trouble. Apart from the fact that water lodging anywhere is a nuisance to the people at the time, there is the further consideration that in receding and drying off it is a menace to health. The Subiaco council are continuously digging up areas which have been flooded so as to freshen them up, as soon as the warm weather sets in. I have brought this subject under the notice of the House previ-

ously, and I do trust that this year's Loan Estimates will make provision for overcoming the difficulty. I trust, also, that this kind of thing will not be prevalent next year. Subiaco has suffered from it now for three or four years. Strange though it may seem, it is a fact that the water level of Shenton Park lake during the last 30 years has risen no less than 18 feet. If that is to continue, flooding must necessarily take place around all the residences in West Subiaco. The water level is steadily climbing, and is becoming so high that in the near future, unless the area is drained, it will be impossible to cope with the water. I place the facts before the Government, and I hope they will take immediate action. While I am speaking of drainage, it is opportune to suggest that the Government make a start with that work. The present time is specially opportune because to-day so many men are looking for work. Unquestionably the unemployment problem ranks among the greatest, if it is not the **very greatest**, which the Government have to solve. In many quarters the blame for unemployment is being laid at the door of the Federal Government, but I cannot subscribe to that view. In my opinion, the fault does not lie at the door of the Federal Government. I readily admit that Western Australia has been receiving too many Southern Europeans, but it must be realised that a policy adopted towards a friendly nation such as Italy, and extending over many years, cannot be altered except with considerable difficulty in the direction of preventing Italians migrating from their land to ours. Let me remind hon. members that in the outside world Australia is looked upon as a nation in itself. Let us bear in mind that we are an integral part of Great Britain, and that Great Britain has an international policy. In the case of a friendly nation such as the Italians, who assisted us in the Great War and have ever been friendly to Great Britain, it is an extremely delicate task for the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth to say, "You must not allow any of your people to go to Australia," or rather, "Your people will not be permitted to enter Australia." That was the difficulty which confronted the Federal Government. When we began to complain here—probably there were complaints from other States as well—the Federal Government took action. But that action could not be brought to fruition in a day. Communications had to pass to the British Government, and from the

British Government back to the Federal Government, and many intricate matters, of which we probably have no conception, had to be arranged before anything could be done to meet our desire. The Bruce-Page Government, however, got over the difficulty, and in my opinion did so in a very nice manner. No complications have set in, a fact which no doubt is largely due to the tact with which the Italian Consul assisted the Federal Prime Minister. We are now assured by Mr. Bruce that not more than 600 Italians will be allowed to land in Australia yearly; and, if I remember rightly what I read, these are to be the near relatives of those Italians who are already in Australia. The circumstances naturally suggest that the people coming here to join relatives will become permanent residents of Australia. Amongst all the six States we should easily be able to absorb 600 or so of these Southern Europeans annually. The Italians are good citizens, reliable workers, and honest people; and absorbing that number of them Australia will not be in any danger.

The Minister for Railways: You made the qualification, amongst the whole of the States.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: But Western Australia gets the lot.

Mr. Mann: In that case some of them must come back here overland, as they do not all get off at Fremantle.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Minister speaks of all the Italians, but no doubt he means the greater proportion. I understand that Western Australia does absorb the greater proportion of them, or has been attempting to do so. Queensland comes next. However, that is an aspect which the Premier might consider with the Prime Minister. We must try to regard the matter from a reasonable point of view; and if during recent years we have been absorbing the greater part of the Southern Europeans, then for some little time to come we shall have to accept more than our quota as compared with other States. Naturally the Italians here will be desirous of bringing out their wives or mothers, and we shall have to absorb these additional migrants. If Southern European immigration is really to be restricted to closer relatives, it will mean the coming of women, and this will not affect the unemployment position at all. Instead

of condemning the Prime Minister for the action he has taken—and he took immediate action to prevent those people from coming, when we knew we could not absorb them—we should praise him highly for the diplomatic manner in which he has coped with the difficulty. Many theories have been advanced to elucidate the cause of unemployment. I do not agree with the Government in the methods they have adopted during the past four or five months. I consider it my duty to criticise the Administration when I hold criticism to be due. I do not think the Government have handled the unemployment problem at all well. They might have done very much more, and what they did they might have done very much earlier. However, I have a higher duty to perform than that of criticism. If I have any suggestions to offer for the solution of the problem, it is my duty to offer them to the Government, and in fact to assist in every way possible to overcome unemployment. That is how I view my duty here. The unemployment problem is not new. Western Australia has been favoured by reason of the fact that it has enjoyed prosperity for a number of years, and so the unemployed difficulty has not been too acute to be remedied. However, the problem has been growing larger and larger during the past two years, until to-day there are probably in the whole of Western Australia some 8,000 or 9,000 unemployed. It seems futile to suggest complete measures of relief, but we must give some measure of relief; these people cannot be allowed to starve. To put my view in plain and blunt language, I hold that in Western Australia there are now too many people trying to live on the proceeds of what comes from the primary producer. We have reached that economic stage when it becomes impossible for the primary producers to keep all those who are relying on them in employment continuously. We must look around for some means of extending employment. There is only one real method of doing that, only one method which will give permanent relief by providing work for every man in Western Australia. No country has ever grown rich or great on primary production alone. It is the secondary industries which have provided wealth and employment for the people, and made them happy and contented. First of all we must have primary production, but if we

are to grow great we must have secondary industries as well.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: And we must support those secondary industries.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, in every possible shape and form. I know it is a difficult matter to establish secondary industries in Western Australia. I have had experience of that in some companies with which I have been connected. During the time of the previous Government, however, there was initiated a scheme whereby the Agricultural Bank loaned up to 100 per cent. of money used for developmental purposes. We know the great benefit derived by Western Australia from that policy, which the present Government have continued. It is entirely due to that policy that men without means who went on the land found themselves just as independent as the men with money, since they could carry on their clearing and general development work. Indeed, they came out right on top, as we see to-day. The present Government and previous Governments have assisted secondary industries.

Mr. Mann: That assistance has not been as successful as assistance to primary industries.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Let me point out the possibility of extending what has been done in this respect. It will be said that in the case of secondary industries the asset is somewhat different. I entirely agree that the asset of, say, a manufacturing company differs from such an asset as developed land. There is, however, one example of assistance to secondary industry which I desire to bring before the House. Some years ago the Calyx Porcelain Company started operations in my district. They had rather a bad time for several years, by reason of their determination to use nothing but local materials for their manufactures. They expended a good deal in experimenting, with the result that gradually their funds were exhausted. Thereupon the Government were approached, and lent the company a large sum of money. Ultimately, however, the whole undertaking was handed over to a liquidator. I believe I am right in saying that the Government are now behind him. With good management the liquidator, who is one of our leading accountants and a man of keen business acumen, one of those men who do nothing without realising what will transpire after-

wards, brought the company to the position of a paying concern. I do not know how far the present Government assisted the porcelain industry, but whatever assistance they did render, supplementary to the assistance rendered by the previous Government, served to show plainly that if such an industry can just get over that little top, it will prove successful, giving employment and creating wealth in our midst. I am not too sure that the Government should not take into consideration the question whether they will not still further extend those activities, and provide more money for secondary industries where they are satisfied that those industries will be beneficial to the State and ultimately will be successful. I do not know upon what basis Government assistance is rendered in that direction now. Naturally, the question will be regarded by the Government from a business standpoint, but I would point out that the lending of money to farmers or to secondary industries is on a basis totally different from that of private loans to individuals. If I were to lend £1,000 at 7 per cent. to a person who was engaged upon a successful venture, my return would be confined to the £70 interest. On the other hand, should the Government make available a loan to a farmer or to persons engaged in establishing or carrying on an industry, the Government secure returns in many indirect ways to their benefit. In my opinion, the Government should go into this matter, investigate the figures and endeavour to arrive at what would represent an average return from loans of that description. I place that suggestion before the Government, believing that secondary industries can be established here. In the "West Australian" this morning I noticed that Mr. Scullin, the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, said, after inspecting the Albany Woollen Mills, that he was satisfied we could manufacture woollen goods in Western Australia, despite the competition from the Eastern States, just as well as those lines could be manufactured anywhere else. I agree with Mr. Scullin that we can manufacture as well, if not better than is possible elsewhere. But the question is: Can we manufacture goods profitably? If we cannot do that, we cannot carry on.

The Minister for Railways: That is the acid test of commercialism.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Exactly, and that is the whole crux of the position.

The Premier: We could manufacture anything on that basis.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The trouble is that we are exploited by the manufacturers of the Eastern States.

Mr. Mann: We provide a good market.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, and the manufacturers in the Eastern States take advantage of it.

The Minister for Agriculture: And our legitimate manufactories become controlled by Eastern States people.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Undoubtedly. From time to time I have pointed out that when small concerns have become established here, and have reached the stage when success was assured, someone came in from the Eastern States and bought up shares, with the result that those concerns were closed down. That demonstrates clearly that we are under the thumb of the manufacturers of the Eastern States. Whether we can solve that problem or not, I cannot say, but it is for the Government, and for members of Parliament generally, to render every assistance possible in overcoming it. That is a real difficulty that presents itself at present. In my opinion it is what is mainly responsible for unemployment in our midst to-day.

The Premier: There is no money available in the State for the establishment of secondary industries, but there is plenty for the provision of a new picture show or a new motor garage.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I agree with the Premier. That is a remarkable feature of the position confronting us to-day. If we could advance a good proposition, what would be the reception of it?

The Minister for Railways: If you want to start a tin hare proposition, you can get thousands of pounds.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Of course.

The Premier: But if you want £1,000 for a factory, you cannot get it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: No. We shall have to face this problem some day, but it is not too early to make preparations that will have the effect of inducing people to come here.

The Premier: I do not think we have turned down any request for assistance that was reasonable. People do not appear to be willing to invest their money in the establishment of industries.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Premier will agree with me that that presents one of

our greatest difficulties to-day. I do not desire to be pessimistic, but unless we grapple with the position, it will become intolerable.

The Minister for Railways: You would not have us establish State factories?

Mr. RICHARDSON: No.

The Premier: But you want us to render Government assistance, and that is what we are doing.

Hon. G. Taylor: You have not refused any reasonable request?

The Premier: No.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I want the Premier to extend that assistance.

The Premier: There does not seem to be any interest evinced in that direction, because people are afraid of Eastern States competition.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We have to break that down as much as possible; if we do not, the position will be intolerable. At present our boys have nowhere to go when they leave school. They are lucky if they secure work in an office until they are 18 years of age, but then they are summarily dismissed because another junior, aged 14 or 15 years, is brought on to do the work that the 18-year old lad has been carrying out. A boy of 18 is in a precarious position because he can claim to be neither a man nor a boy. The wage that he has to be paid represents more than he can earn, and there are no openings for him. Only one in ten of our boys who enter commercial life in an office, remains to reach a higher position in that office. That is due to the fact, luckily for him, that someone ahead has died and created a vacancy that has enabled the boy to secure promotion.

Mr. Withers: You would not suggest that the employers are exploiting junior labour?

Mr. RICHARDSON: It cannot be said that one man is exploiting another, provided the former works within the law. That is the whole point. Employers are acting within the law and they are not exploiting junior labour. They require juniors.

Mr. Thomson: In plain English, the work to be done is boy's work.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Exactly.

Mr. Thomson: And an employer cannot afford to pay the boy a man's wages for it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The result is that when the boy reaches 18 years of age he is summarily dismissed and a junior taken on. I hope this problem will be faced in an earnest manner. The Premier has given some relief to the unemployed in our midst, but I venture the opinion that, notwithstanding that most of the relief works have been commenced, not a fourth of the unemployed have been engaged so far. It is pitiable to be forced to realise that we cannot find employment for them.

Mr. Thomson: The tragedy of it all is that the bulk of the labour is unskilled.

Mr. RICHARDSON: That is so.

The Minister for Railways: If we were to provide work for them all, we would have another 2,000 or 3,000 people from the Eastern States over here in the course of the next few weeks.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Our prosperity is really responsible for that. We are booming our prosperity. We anticipate another record harvest, and I hope our anticipations will be realised. We are booming ourselves in the Eastern States.

The Minister for Lands: We are not booming ourselves.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We are telling the truth, and that is sufficient to boom ourselves.

The Minister for Lands: But we are not doing it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Even if we were to issue warnings throughout the Eastern States, it would not matter, because if there is unemployment there and those who want work know that Western Australia is in a prosperous condition, they will come across in the hope of securing employment.

The Premier: Consequently the conditions obtaining in the Eastern States affect our unemployed difficulty here.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Undoubtedly. Probably if we had a succession of bad years in Western Australia, and the Eastern States experienced good seasons, our position would affect them. We have to be fair in considering these matters and we have to look at things as they are. I suggest that should there be a future failure with the harvest in the Eastern States, we will again be inundated with people from the other side. We must face the difficulty. As I have already indicated, not more than a fourth of the unemployed here have been provided with work. That leaves thousands of unemployed yet to be accommodated. How are

we to get over that difficulty? It is a big task and one that we must deal with. If the Government succeed in grappling with it, I will give them every credit for having done so. The present is one of the most difficult positions with which any Government in this State has been confronted.

The Minister for Railways: It is a world-wide problem. It is not confined to any single place.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Quite so, but we have to face the problem here.

The Minister for Railways: Unless we shut out people, we cannot successfully face the problem here.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am not altogether concerned about the unemployment in other lands, but I am concerned about the position in Western Australia. I have been endeavouring to find a solution of the problem. The Government have afforded a certain amount of relief, but they have placed the greater part of the responsibility with the local governing authorities, who have to provide the greater proportion of the money. In my electorate we have been provided with £640 from the Government, but we are spending £2,640 of our own money. This will create a greater difficulty in the future. Immediately our money is spent, the local governing authority in Subiaco will be unable to spend additional funds, with the result that in the course of three or four months the unemployed difficulty will be apparent again. It behoves the Government to look for some outlet for the unemployed.

The Minister for Railways: It is all a matter of money. If we had any amount of money, we could provide work for any number of people.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am in earnest about this matter. I am not criticising the Government, for I realise the difficulties of the position. At the same time I appreciate the fact that this is a big man's job. The Government will have to rise to the occasion and overcome the unemployment problem. The trouble that culminated a few weeks ago in quite a small riot provided a spectacle that we do not like to see in Western Australia. It has been said that there is nothing like a hungry belly to make a man bite both ways. If the unemployed are allowed to go hungry, without any attempt being made to provide work for them, we may have the experience of a few weeks ago repeated in the streets of Perth. I hope that will not be so. The task is cer-

tainly one for a big man and not only must the Government rise to the occasion, but every hon. member must rise to the occasion as well in furthering the efforts of the Government.

The Minister for Railways: If 5,000 people came into the State next week, how would all the "rising to the occasion" get over the difficulty?

Mr. RICHARDSON: We know the number we have now; let us deal with them.

The Minister for Railways: The Premier told you that there were 5,000 extra people who came to Western Australia during the last six months.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It is useless trying to dodge this question. We are sent to Parliament to undertake certain duties.

The Minister for Railways: There is no question of trying to dodge the issue.

The Premier: We cannot solve the problem of finding work for all the unemployed from the Eastern States.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I do not suggest that you can.

The Minister for Railways: But if those people come here, how can we overcome the difficulty?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I suggest that we have a certain number of people unemployed in Western Australia to-day.

The Minister for Railways: Where did they come from?

Mr. RICHARDSON: We do not know.

The Minister for Railways: The Government know.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We know where some of them came from.

The Minister for Railways: We know that 5,000 extra came here during the last six months.

Mr. Davy: Do you imagine that any more are likely to come in?

The Minister for Railways: Thousands more might come here next month.

Mr. Davy: If they did, they could not get work.

The Minister for Railways: If we were to "rise to the occasion" and find work for all of them, of course others would come.

Hon. G. Taylor: If you could find useful employment for them, it would be all right.

Mr Teesdale: Who is telling this yarn?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I have said it is a big job to get over. We shall not get over it by assuming that we are going to get 5,000 more men from somewhere else. What we have to do is to look the matter fairly and squarely in the face and say

whether we can or cannot find work for the unemployed. If we cannot find work for them, then we have to maintain them without work. I have heard members on the Government side, four or five years ago, say very clearly that it was for the then Premier, the present Leader of the Opposition, to find work for the unemployed. Those members in a loud voice declared that that was the duty of the Government. I listened and smiled, and thought to myself that the tables would be turned some day.

The Minister for Lands: Now they have turned, and you are using the old argument.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Unless the Government can find means to get over the difficulty, they will merit strong criticism during the next session of Parliament. To-day they are faced with the difficulty, and I am asking whether they have any means of getting over it. They will have to find means, for all members on the Government side have told us many times that it is the duty of the Government to provide work for the unemployed. We have our unemployed to-day, and so it is for the Government to find work for them. If there are any reproductive works, every member will agree that the Government should put those reproductive works in hand and so find work for the unemployed. No man in Western Australia would criticise the Government for extending their loan moneys with a view to providing reproductive works in order to assist the unemployed. But if the Government attempt to carry on with unproductive works, then they will deserve criticism. I hope the Government will see fit immediately to start very necessary works and to continue on with those works until, with the change of the seasons, the work provided by the primary producers will serve to furnish employment for all. I am not in a critical frame of mind, but I want to see something done for the unemployed as soon as possible. Hon. members in the metropolitan area are continually besieged by men requiring work; and if a member cannot find work for the applicant, probably the applicant puts it on the member for a few bob.

Mr. Lindsay: That is not confined to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Wilson: We country members get it double: first in the country and then in the metropolitan area.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I should have thought the hon. member was shrewd enough to put the applicant on to the local member in the metropolitan area. I hope that in the near future the majority of the unemployed will be absorbed. If that is done, due credit will be given to the Government for having carried out the job. I do not desire to say anything more on that point, except to add that unemployment is caused principally because too many of us have been trying to live on the primary producer.

Mr. Panton: Why not come with members on this side, and take up a farm for yourself?

Mr. RICHARDSON: If the hon. member can show me a suitable block of land, and find the necessary money. I am prepared to take his advice. However, as I say, that is the primary cause of unemployment. This unemployment can be temporarily relieved by an expenditure from loan funds on reproductive works, and also by increased production on the part of the primary producers. But real prosperity and work can only be attained by our having sufficient secondary industries, so that we can establish ourselves and not have to bring in so many imports.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There used to be the right to work.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It is said now that a man has no right to work, and that he is foolish if he does work. I am pleased to notice that the Government intend to bring down a Bill for a redistribution of seats.

Hon. G. Taylor: Will that create any work?

Mr. Panton: You are anxious to throw five or six more men out of work.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Some of the unemployed will be looking for the new seats. They will provide an outlet for some of those out of work.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The whole thing may create some additional unemployment.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I can assure the Government that any reasonable effort on their part to bring about a redistribution of seats will be supported by me. There are many existing anomalies. However, I do not wish to go into those at present, for the question has been thrashed out here on

many occasions. If the Government will put up a redistribution of seats that is fair and just, I will give them every support.

Mr. Withers: Who is to be the judge of its fairness and justice?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I do not intend to delay the House very much longer. I wish to give a meed of praise to the Minister for Railways. Last year, when speaking on the Address-in-reply, I referred to the dangerous state of the tramlines along King's Park-road, down to the Perth-Fremantle-road. The Minister, by interjection, said he would attend to the matter. I am pleased to say that work is now almost completed, and I desire to thank the Minister for having treated it as urgent.

Hon. G. Taylor: The same may be said of the Oxford-street line.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, I am sorry to have robbed you of a grievance you have had for the last five years.

Mr. RICHARDSON: While I applaud the Minister for what he has done in that respect, I cannot applaud him for having held up the construction of the West Subiaco tramline. I again appeal to the Minister to give due attention to that tramline. It is a very great necessity. Some facilities are provided there by the motor buses, but they are not handling the situation as it would be handled by a tramway. It would be a profitable line from the very inception, and would be a reproductive work, so I again ask the Minister to give it due consideration. I trust the session will bring forth much good legislation. I can assure the Government that if they do put up good legislation, I shall be prepared to support them to the utmost.

MR. PANTON (Menzies) [5.24]: There are one or two matters that have been brought forward by members of the Opposition upon which I desire to say a few words. One of those subjects is becoming a hardy annual. Usually the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) brings it forward, but in his absence the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) has dealt with it. I refer to the subject of apprentices. When the member for Katanning was dealing with the question the other evening he asserted that he had sufficient data to prove, to him at any rate, that the average number of apprentices to journeymen in this State was as one to three.

Mr. Thomson: That was supplied by the Registrar General.

Mr. PANTON: I do not know how the hon. member worked out his percentages. By interjection I asked him how he had obtained that quota, but he did not answer me. For many years past I have taken a great deal of interest in the apprenticeship system. It is a recognised fact that, through the Arbitration Court, our apprenticeship system is the best in Australia.

Mr. Thomson: That is not very creditable to Australia.

Mr. PANTON: Evidently we have the best of a poor lot. The fact remains that for many years past, the trades union movement in Western Australia has insisted upon obtaining as good a system as possible. The Arbitration Court, especially Mr. Somerville, has spent a lot of time in framing a system that is as nearly perfect as may be hoped for. When, the other night, the hon. member said the actual percentage was as one to three, I did not know how he arrived at it, for it is nothing like that. There are very few unions to which the Arbitration Court has granted a proportion of one apprentice to three journeymen. In almost every award the proportion is one to two, or to three, or to four, or any fraction thereof. When I asked the hon. member had he taken the fractions into consideration, evidently he thought it was not worth bothering about. But in Western Australia it has to be bothered about. For in Western Australia our factories are on a fairly small scale, and provided the employer is himself a journeyman, he has no need to employ a journeyman in order to get an apprentice. I have heard members complain that it is impossible to get an apprentice if the employer employs no journeyman. But if the employer is himself a journeyman, he can get an apprentice. Of course it is of no use taking a lad if the employer employs no journeymen and is not himself a journeyman, for then the lad could not be taught. But under the fraction system, if the employer is a journeyman he can take an apprentice.

Mr. Thomson: There are scores of places where the average is only one apprentice to three journeymen.

Mr. PANTON: That is so. There is in Western Australia scarcely a factory employing the full quota of apprentices allowed by the Arbitration Court. They are not wanted in the factory, for there is not the work for them to do.

Mr. Thomson: That is why we have so many unskilled labourers.

Mr. PANTON: Of the 12,000 migrants coming to the State every year, I suppose 80 per cent. are unskilled. That is where quite a number of the unskilled men are coming from.

Mr. Thomson: But we should give facilities for the training of men.

Mr. PANTON: The facilities are there, furnished by the Arbitration Court and the unions. Who are going to be the apprentices of the future? Will they be the sons of men with plenty of capital? I venture to say that between 95 and 98 per cent. of the local apprentices are the sons of tradesmen.

Mr. Thomson: That is the tragedy of it.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member wants the House to believe that a man and a tradesman is going to prevent his boy from learning the trade that he himself has followed.

Mr. Thomson: In effect, that is what it means.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member repeats that statement until he almost believes it, but it is not the position. The hon. member the other day quoted certain trades in which the apprentices, he said, were not sufficient. He quoted only seven. He took brick-making first as that which had the largest proportion of journeymen to apprentices.

Mr. Thomson: I took the trades in their ordinary rotation.

Mr. PANTON: I would point out that "Ba" comes before "Br," and that therefore baking comes in front of brickmaking. Let me deal with brickmakers first. The hon. member said that the proportion was one apprentice to four journeymen. How many apprentices would it be necessary to apprentice to the brickmaking trade? Would a boy want much time in which to learn how to dig clay, or wheel a barrow along a plank? There are one or two moulders employed in association with a kiln, and each wants a good hefty boy. If a boy has the necessary muscle and a good back he will soon be able to make bricks. The hon. member then referred to bootmaking, and said the proportion was one to three or a fraction thereof. The repairers in that industry have a proportion of one to one. Outside of repairing, bootmaking in Western Australia consists chiefly of machine-made

boots. Unless it be in the case of some old bootmaker, it is very difficult to get a pair of boots made by hand. Fully 80 per cent. of the employees in the bootmaking factories here are females. In every factory one sees long lines of girls at the machines. Most of the men are also machinists.

Mr. Thomson: Why the necessity for having apprentices if anyone can do the work?

Mr. PANTON: I made that remark in relation to brick-making. The proportion in bootmaking is one to three, according to the hon. member, whereas between 80 and 85 per cent. of the employees are females, and the proportion of female apprentices is three juniors to one senior. In the case of boilermakers, the proportion is one apprentice to two journeymen, or fraction thereof. In how many boiler factories in Western Australia would one find that the actual figures were not one to one? In the carpentering trade the proportion is one to two. In the metropolitan area the number of apprentices is 146. With regard to the clothing trade, the hon. member said there were three male apprentices to one journeyman. He remarked that this was a small industry. It is so "small" that there are 276 apprentices engaged in the metropolitan area. He passes this over because the proportion is three junior males to one senior.

Mr. Thomson: I am sorry I did not quote the full list.

Mr. PANTON: I am sorry too, because the further the hon. member had gone the more would my argument have been strengthened. He said the proportion in the butchering trade was one to four. I do not know where he got that information. The actual proportion is one to one up to four journeymen. Perhaps he did not notice the words "up to" and read the sentence as one to four. In this State the proportion is one apprentice to one journeyman up to four journeymen. In the case of the engineers, the proportion is one to three or fraction thereof, and 160 or more apprentices are engaged in the trade.

Mr. Thomson: How many engineers are engaged?

Mr. PANTON: Very nearly 500 engineers are engaged in this State. I am positive that there is hardly one engineering shop in Western Australia that has its full com-

plement of apprentices, as provided by the Arbitration Court.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is the only one that has the full complement, did you say?

Mr. PANTON: I say there would not be anything like the full complement in that trade. In the clothing trade, although there are 276 apprentices engaged, there is room for scores of others, but the factories will not take them. These are the only trades mentioned by the hon. member. There are in all 31 trades which have apprentices as provided by the Arbitration Court. The hon. member said he had proved his argument by quoting only seven trades, but, as I have shown, he was very much astray.

Mr. Thomson: You have not convinced me that I am wrong.

Mr. PANTON: I am not endeavouring to convince the hon. member; it would be impossible to do so. I am endeavouring to get into "Hansard" a reply to his statement, which would make it appear that trades unions were doing something that was wrong in this regard.

Mr. Thomson: I repeat what I have said.

Mr. PANTON: But repetition will not alter the facts. The hon. member referred to only seven trades out of 31. The complete list is as follows:—Baking, boiler-making, book-binding, boot-making, butchering, slaughtering, carpentering, clothing, coach building, engineering, electrical fitting, electroplating, furniture, hairdressing, jewellery, letter press machining, lithography, moulding, optical, painting, paper-ruling, pastry-cooking, plumbing, printing, saddlery, and leather working trades, tailoring, timber machining, shipwrighting, and typographical. The rest of the trades are working under what is known as the junior system. In this State that system in very few cases is awarded by the Arbitration Court. Almost without exception, where junior workers are engaged on the proportional basis, this has been accompanied by an agreement between the employer and the union made around the table. One would think, if there was any great necessity or desire on the part of the employer to get a greater percentage of junior workers to seniors, it would be at a round-table discussion that he would put forward his arguments. If employers were very anxious to obtain junior workers, they would go to the Arbitration Court, and get a lower rate provided than now exists. The Shop Assistants

Union comprise the largest section of the community, covering junior labour. The proportion there is one to one. In the case of females, there are five juniors to every four seniors. The same thing applies to clerical workers. So it is all round the place where junior workers are engaged. One of the biggest industries in the State is that connected with farming.

Mr. Lindsay: We agree with you there.

Mr. PANTON: So far as I know, there is nothing in any Arbitration Court award to prevent farmers from training as many apprentices as they like.

Mr. Lindsay: Thank God for that.

Mr. PANTON: That is something we have got. I venture to think they do not work out in the proportion of one apprentice farmer to six journeymen farmers.

The Minister for Mines: Nothing like it.

Mr. PANTON: And we do not get any "thank God."

The Minister for Mines: It is more like one to twenty.

Mr. PANTON: If members on the cross benches are so perturbed about the necessity for training our boys, surely they could not be training them for a better pursuit than that associated with the tilling of the soil.

Mr. Thomson: We are training them. Fortunately the court does not deal with those apprentices, otherwise we would have the same restrictions.

Mr. PANTON: For every British or Australian boy who is working on a farm, I venture to say that five Jugo-Slavs or Italians are employed.

Mr. Thomson: That is not correct.

Mr. PANTON: Before the hon. member complains about trade unions preventing boys from being apprenticed to trades in the metropolitan area, he should start out with his own district. Any disabilities from which boys are suffering as regards apprenticeship, can be laid at the door of the hon. member and of his friends in another place. The other night the member for Katanning replied to an interjection from the member for Albany. I do not know whether he intended that to go into "Hansard." The member for Albany said, "Do you suggest that we instructed the Arbitration Court?" The member for Katanning replied, "I do suggest that, in the interests of the boys and girls of Western

Australia." The hon. member says we instructed the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Thomson: Hear, hear!

Mr. PANTON: This House instructed the Arbitration Court in 1925. We went out of our way to instruct the court what to do with regard to apprentices, and inserted Subsection 4 into Section 55 of the Industrial Arbitration Act.

Mr. Lindsay: Which Government instructed the court?

Mr. PANTON: This Parliament did. If the hon. member likes we will say this Government introduced the subsection, and this House passed it. It reads as follows:—

Any employer who, when required by the Court or by the Apprenticeship Board in the case of apprentices in the building grade, to enter into an agreement of apprenticeship, neglects or refuses to do so without reasonable cause, shall be guilty of an offence; penalty, £50.

this House left it to the Arbitration Court to frame regulations to put the subsection into effect.

Mr. Thomson: Who asked that the number of apprentices should be restricted, the employers or the employees?

Mr. PANTON: Both sides. It all depends upon who files the claim.

Mr. Thomson: I think so.

Mr. PANTON: That is what this House decided upon. So far as I know, there was no argument against it. Everyone was agreed that the Arbitration Court was the proper place to interpret the apprenticeship clauses. The court framed a certain regulation. This is what it said—

Where in any case the court is of opinion that the number of apprentices being trained in any trade, industry, craft, occupation or calling is insufficient to meet the requirements of the particular trade, industry, craft, occupation or calling in the matter of skilled artisans, the court may make such investigation and order as it may be deemed necessary to permit or require any employer to employ such further number of apprentices as may be directed. Notice of such order shall be given to the industrial union and to the employers' association concerned.

We decided in Parliament, probably after hearing the member for Katanning, the member for Swan and one or two others as to the necessity for making better provision for apprentices, to pass this subsection.

Mr. Thomson: Why do the unions ask for restrictions as to the numbers?

Mr. PANTON: I have gone to the court and asked for a £7 a week wage, but have only received half. It is not a question of what we ask for, but what we receive. This

House, realising that fact, took upon itself to pass that subsection. Under that regulation they wanted to be able to go to any engineering shop or factory and say, "You have not a sufficient number of apprentices, you must take more." What happened to that regulation? As hon. members know, regulations have to be laid on the Tables of both Houses. Evidently hon. members in this House were satisfied with the regulation, but when it went to another place a motion was submitted for its disallowance and it was carried by 14 votes to seven.

Mr. Sleeman: Who moved it?

Mr. PANTON: That would be telling tales out of school. The fact remains that it was disallowed and that all the Government did, supported by this House, to insist that the employers should take their fair share of apprentices, our friends at the other end took fine care to see it was not brought into effect.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you think that the regulation would have worked well?

Mr. PANTON: There is no doubt about it. What was in the mind of the Minister for Labour when he had that clause inserted in the Bill relating to the building trades? So far as I know—I may be wrong—there are only two registered apprentices in the building trade outside carpentering and bricklaying. The contractor who built the post office employs two, whilst no other has any apprentices because the contracts are not big enough to permit of apprentices being taken on, the view being held that when a contract is finished the apprentices would be on the employer's hands.

Mr. Thomson: Why don't you have the improver system?

Mr. PANTON: Bricklayers themselves have taken apprentices and taught them. What the Minister for Labour had in mind was the establishment of a building trades board under which apprentices could be transferred from one contract to another. But that regulation was disallowed and the trades unions took up the matter and recently got that board going. The result will be that more apprentices will be employed than has been the case in the past. In my opinion the bigger the State grows the fewer apprentices will be trained. Time after time we have heard in this House and outside also of the necessity that exists for organising industry as it is organised in America. We have been told that if we are to compete with outside industry, that will have to be done, and that when it is done there will be

no need for training apprentices to any large extent. When industry is organised to the efficiency that exists in America, it will only be a question of a man putting in a No. 6 or a No. 8 bolt, and there will be no need for men to be taught how to do that. So that, as I have said, as Western Australia grows, there will be less need for apprentices. The member for Katanning, when speaking the other night, talked about a young fellow who got in four years of his trade. But I would ask him how many are there who are taught a trade to-day? In bootmaking a young man may be put on to a particular machine and there he stays. No man learns to make a complete suit of clothes. It is no use apprenticing a boy in the hope of making him an all-round tradesman as the member for Katanning would like him to be.

Mr. Thomson: How does he become connected with those trades?

Mr. PANTON: How does he become connected with them to-day? The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) preached the gospel of more secondary industries. That is the only hope we have. I am trying to point out that training will not necessarily be as it was in the years that have gone. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) the other evening contended that if it had not been for the basic wage, farmers would be employing more men than they employ at the present time. Like the member for Katanning, however, the member for Pingelly was not able to reply to any interjections that were made while he was speaking. I have yet to learn what the basic wage has to do with the employment of farm hands. I think I have been a fairly close student of the cases that have been before the Arbitration Court in this State and elsewhere, and I have yet to learn that the basic wage applies to farm hands.

Mr. Brown: Wages are double to-day what they were two years ago.

Mr. PANTON: I believe that. Men were getting 8s. a day a few years ago and to-day they are receiving 17s. 6d., but the hon. member is trying to tell the House, and he has also said this on the platform outside where there were no Labour speakers to contradict him, that Labour was responsible for the application of the basic wage to farm hands. I went to a district in this State and I came across a farmer who said that some union in the Eastern States was endeavouring to secure £6 a week for

farm hands and that this would be applied generally if Labour were returned to power. It had nothing whatever to do with this State, and the member for Pingelly should know there is no association between the Federal award and a State award, that the State award can be made a common rule and not so with the Federal award.

Mr. Thomson: You are not suggesting people are working for lower wages here than in the Eastern States?

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member can bet his bottom dollar that if £6 is being paid in the Eastern States it will also be paid here. An application was put in.

Mr. Thomson: It was made to the Federal Court.

Mr. Brown: What about chaff-cutters?

Mr. PANTON: There is an agreement with the shearers, but that agreement does not cover a general farm hand.

Mr. Thomson: It goes mighty close to it.

Mr. PANTON: As a matter of fact the Federal Court, when granting an award in connection with the shearing industry, refused an award for shed hands in this State, and if the hon. member has any sheep to shear he will know that.

Mr. Lindsay: We had to find the money to fight the case.

Mr. PANTON: I suppose that the hon. member also had to find money to fight the Commissioner of Taxation. However, I hope the member for Pingelly is now satisfied that the basic wage in this State does not apply to the farming industry. But there is no reason why it should not do so, and I hope the time will arrive when farm hands will organise amongst themselves in the hope of bringing it about.

Mr. Thomson: Let us hope that the price of wheat will rise in the meantime.

Mr. PANTON: Another question that I wish briefly to deal with, and in this State we get it in Parliament and on the public platform, is the reference to continual industrial turmoil, that we are for ever without it.

Mr. Thomson: You want to travel to find out all about that.

Mr. PANTON: I do not doubt that for a moment when people like the hon. member get up on platforms and make the statements that we often read in the newspapers; that Australia is run by a set of

communists and that we are never free from industrial trouble. Such statements find their way to the Old Country and to various parts of the world, and, made as they are by responsible citizens from the public platform, some credence is placed on them.

Mr. Thomson: What about the coal industry to-day; read the article in this morning's paper.

Mr. PANTON: I read not only the articles in the newspapers, but I also read the statistics of Australia and those of other countries. The hon. member should also read the statistics of other countries before he discredits Australia in the eyes of the world. We can agree that Australia is about the best industrially organised country in the world. There is a greater percentage of workers in the trade unions of Australia than in any other part of the world, that is, on a population basis. I suppose we shall be told a great deal more about our supposed industrial troubles, right up to the 17th November, when the elections will take place, and we shall probably also learn that Australia, on account of strikes, lost more working days than any other country and that unless a party other than Labour is returned, the position will remain the same. For the information of the hon. member, I would like to quote some figures for the years 1920 to 1926 showing the working days lost on account of strikes in England and in Australia. These are the figures—

	Great Britain.	Australia.
1920	26,570,000	1,872,065
1921	85,870,000	958,617
1922	19,850,000	858,686
1923	10,670,000	1,145,977
1924	8,420,000	918,641
1925	7,952,000	1,128,006
1926	162,233,000	1,310,260

The grand total of the figures is—Great Britain 321,565,000 and Australia 8,190,821. Those are the figures over a period of seven years, and they show that Great Britain, possessing seven times the population of Australia, lost working days totalling forty times the number of those lost in Australia.

Mr. Thomson: That does not say it is right all the same.

Mr. PANTON: We never find the statesmen of Great Britain cabling out to Australia such figures as I have before me;

they are obtainable only in the pamphlets and books issued by the statisticians, and are not broadcast throughout the world. In such places where we are led to believe everybody happy and contented, it is difficult to find out what is taking place, but I was successful in obtaining figures for six months of the year 1927.

Mr. Teesdale: I would not quote those figures; they are too rotten for words.

Mr. PANTON: Still, they give some idea of what is happening there. The total number of working days lost during the six months was 25,000,000.

The Premier: There is no country in the world that is condemned by its own people as Australia is.

Mr. PANTON: That is so. Germany, with ten times our population, lost 183,230,000 days, or, taking the proportion of population, the loss of working days there was over twenty times that of Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: You must be quoting the unemployed figures.

Mr. PANTON: Germany is the country that globe-trotters hold up to us as an object-lesson, whose people are working so hard to capture our industries. France, Italy, Norway and Sweden are all well ahead of Australia in the proportion of lost working days. I claim that such facts should be taken into consideration. Yet we find members of Parliament and men holding responsible positions taking the platform and making disastrous statements that are cabled all over the world, when, all said and done, the loss of work in Australia is infinitesimal alongside the loss in other countries.

Mr. Lindsay: A great proportion of our population is engaged in primary production and cannot afford to go on strike.

Mr. PANTON: Of course the people in Canada and Germany do not grow anything! We are the only primary-producing country in the world! If the whole of our wheat production were put alongside that of the rest of the world, it would be difficult to find it. I admit that no country can afford to lose so many working days. I am not contending that it can. What I am contending is that any person holding any position in Australia should not condemn this country as is being done at present. The primary producer depends upon the money obtained from Great Britain and other countries for his products. We rely upon Great Britain for financial assistance, and yet we

have responsible men sending to Great Britain cablegrams referring to the disastrous results from lost working days.

The Premier: Did not they advertise the droughts, too?

Mr. PANTON: Yes. If they are going to advertise Australia, let them advertise the truth. If they tell the truth, they will say that the working man of Australia does as much as the working man in any other part of the world, and in some instances more, and he strikes only when it is necessary to strike.

Mr. Thomson: That is why we have had so many shipping strikes.

Mr. PANTON: For every shipping strike there has been in Australia, there have been a dozen in other parts of the world. The biggest strike we ever had originated outside Australia, and the man who caused it is now in the arms of the very people of whom I am complaining, travelling in a first-class carriage and lecturing about the dreadful trade unions and communism. The man who, a little more than 12 months ago they would have deported, is now enjoying their champagne and roast fowl. Next time he takes the platform I suppose he, too, will be defaming Australia.

Hon. G. Taylor: I thought he was lecturing under the auspices of the Trades Hall council.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member thinks a lot of peculiar things; it seems possible for him to think anything. I hope that during the next few months the people to whom I have referred will think more of Australia and less of party politics. If they do so, it will be realised that there is nothing in Australia's future of which to be afraid.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [6.5]: The few remarks that I have to offer on the Address-in-reply, I regret to say, will be somewhat similar to my speeches on similar occasions during the last four years. It is necessary to put forward the best case for one's own district, particularly when it is situated outside the metropolitan area. During the course of the debate so far I have been impressed with the fact that we must have a really wonderful Government, because most of the remarks from the Opposition have been of a complimentary kind. Those remarks that have not been complimentary, but have taken the form of criticism of the Government's administration, have, in my opinion, failed miserably. If

the opposition offered to the Government during the last four years may be taken as a criterion of what the Government have failed to do, one can only conclude that the Government have administered the State wisely and well.

Mr. Lindsay: We have not tried yet.

Mr. WITHERS: When the two parties opposite, almost equal in number to the Government supporters, fail to advance better arguments than have been offered during the last four years, the Labour Party must have acquitted themselves indeed well.

The Minister for Mines: There is a third party over there.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, but I am limiting my reference to two parties. I represent a district that has a general grouch. As one reads the Governor's Speech year after year, he sees embodied in it proposals for extensions and improvements to the harbours at Geraldton, Fremantle and Bunbury. That, however, is an old catch-cri, as my tale of woe has shown during the last four years. I am sorry to have to admit that on this occasion I am not much "forrader" than I was when I first spoke on the subject of the Bunbury harbour. Still, like the member for Avon, if I go on repeating my requests, I may eventually be successful. Do members realise the important position that Bunbury occupies? It stands fourth in the list of exporting ports in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Brown: Are you sure of that?

Mr. WITHERS: Yes. It was third prior to the war, but to-day it ranks fourth. Once it gets its just dues in the matter of natural trade, it should again occupy third place. Members who claim to represent the primary producers are advocating the construction of railways to the port of Fremantle, the port at which wheat was growing whiskers because it could not be handled, instead of assisting the out-ports to get their natural trade. As an instance I might quote the Brookton-Dale River railway, on which subject the Premier received a deputation last week. Some members seem only too anxious that wheat should be hauled to the chief seaport instead of allowing it to be exported through Bunbury and Albany, which are entitled to the trade.

Mr. Brown: Fremantle is the natural port for the Dale country.

Mr. WITHERS: How such members can call themselves representatives of the primary producers when they advocate railways that will lead to further centralisation, I cannot understand. At the chief seaport the

grain does not get the despatch it would receive if it were sent to its geographical port. The people of Bunbury are not satisfied with the treatment they have received at the hands of the Government. I have a report by the Engineer-in-Chief issued in February, 1927, giving the latest information regarding the Bunbury harbour investigations. It begins—

Investigations into tidal and current conditions in Koombana Bay (Bunbury) and also a hydrographic survey of the harbour were carried out from July to November last.

That was 18 months ago and still we are no further ahead. We were informed that when the scheme for the Fremantle harbour had been finalised, the port of Bunbury would be given consideration.

Hon. W. J. George: Why should Bunbury wait?

Mr. WITHERS: Perhaps it has got into the habit of waiting, which is a bad thing for the community of any town. According to this report, when the Fremantle harbour was finalised, the Bunbury harbour would receive consideration.

Mr. Sleeman: Fremantle has not been finalised.

Mr. WITHERS: To a certain extent it has been, but apparently the Engineer-in-Chief is not supreme.

Mr. Thomson: He seems to be.

Mr. WITHERS: I say he is not supreme because, though he concentrated on the Fremantle harbour, immediately he put forward a scheme, objections were raised to it. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) asked a series of questions as to the outer harbour and the damage done to the wharf of the inner harbour. The Engineer-in-Chief an expert of wide experience and with all the data at his disposal, came to a definite conclusion for the development of the Fremantle harbour, and yet considerable opposition is offered to his proposal. I wish the Engineer-in-Chief would bring down a concrete proposal for the Bunbury harbour whereby we could eliminate the treble handling necessitated by the present arrangement. If that were done, I am satisfied that the Bunbury Harbour Board would be prepared to put into operation the bulk-handling scheme that the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) is advocating.

Mr. Thomson: You agree with him on that?

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, we have a good deal in common. Bunbury is labouring

under considerable disadvantages in the matter of harbour facilities. There is a certain amount of shed accommodation for grain, but it is quite inadequate to meet requirements. It is possible to stack under cover the equivalent of practically one ship-load of wheat. If sufficient wheat does not arrive day by day for direct loading into ships, it is necessary to use wheat out of the stack, so that large quantities often have to be dragged a considerable distance to the ship's side at the expense of treble handling.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. WITHERS: I wish to call attention to the lack of facilities at Bunbury. The Bunbury Harbour Board have sheds of a capacity of 50,000 bags of wheat, and the sheds owned by the Westralian Farmers Ltd. can accommodate 130,000 bags, equivalent to a total of about 6,500 tons, which is hardly sufficient to load one steamer. Nevertheless, this year Bunbury has put up a record in wheat loading. Up to the end of the financial year the port shipped 79,340 tons of wheat as against 58,971 tons last year. Since the return was made up, the total for the current shipping season has been increased by a further 15,000 tons. We appreciate the action of the Government, and of the Minister for Railways in particular, in endeavouring to get wheat shipped at the nearest port; but still Bunbury suffers under a handicap. The railway rate book, which has been in operation for a considerable number of years, was absolutely just when it was drafted; and even to-day it is just for the particular areas to which it applies. Rail-
age for the first hundred miles works out at a certain amount, and after that there is a rebate for every additional hundred miles to the port. That position is absolutely fair to the grower further back. The man furthest from the port should receive encouragement in the form of a rebate. The arrangement is good for people growing wheat in the south for shipment at Fremantle, or in the north for shipment at Geraldton. As regards the South-West, however, the Narrogin and Kondinin areas are much closer to Bunbury than to Fremantle; and Bunbury, though within the 100-mile radius, does not obtain the concession. If shipment is made to Fremantle, the concession on the second hundred miles and so on is secured. The rate book should be altered so as to include Bunbury in the scope of the concession. Any port having a claim on wheat grown in a particu-

lar area should receive the same concession. I believe that under such an arrangement shipping costs at Bunbury could be reduced below the present shipping costs at Fremantle. However, whilst the rebate is granted only to the port of Fremantle, the southern farmer or producer may find it advantageous to send his products to that port rather than to Bunbury. For the first hundred miles the rate is 11s. per ton, and thence onward there is a reduction for every succeeding hundred miles. Bunbury suffers from the present arrangement, as, but for my unwillingness to weary the House, I would prove by a multitude of figures. Moreover, figures may not amount to much in the minds of some members. The representative of a country district, when speaking on the Address-in-reply, does so for the special purpose of informing Ministers of the requirements of his district, so that preparation may be made for them on the Estimates. I could go on, like Tennyson's brook, for ever, quoting figures; however, I hope the Minister for Railways will take notice of what I have said. I am not here to get on my feet for publicity purposes, but, like other members, to see that my district receives justice. At present I feel that my district does not get fair treatment. All of us realise that the Treasury coffers are not overflowing, but we do not wish to be overlooked when the contents are distributed. I have previously claimed here on behalf of the South-West that it is a highly productive area. One of the principal difficulties in the way of the south-western producer has been the lack of facilities at Bunbury harbour. The port has much to look to from the development of its hinterland and the expansion of wheat-growing. The timber trade has fallen off slightly, but notwithstanding that fact Bunbury has claims for extensive improvements to its harbour. Since the inception of the harbour board fair progress has been made as to shipment and storage of kerosene and petrol. In 1913 the rental from oil stores in Bunbury amounted to £50. The Bunbury Harbour Board have since provided facilities for people desirous of storing oil and kerosene, with the result that the present storage capacity of 75,000 cases, apart from bulk handling, returned to the board a rental of £700, which compares with the paltry return of £50 in 1913. If the Bunbury Harbour Board can provide facilities for people anxious to develop business at the port, surely the Government can do the same. A service must be created before people can be

expected to make use of it. If a service is created, someone will be found willing to avail himself of it. The cause of improvement of the Bunbury harbour would be greatly advanced if the Government would give me but one ear. I have been here for years trying to get the two ears of the Government. I say now that if they will only lend me one for a while and sit up and take notice, I will show them how they can increase the advantages of the port of Bunbury without causing any loss. It can be done by a slight alteration of the railway system. Between Collie and Wellington Mills there is a wonderful belt of agricultural country. At present congestion exists at Brunswick Junction owing to the wheat that comes from the Great Southern district. This wheat becomes mixed with the Perth down traffic. Moreover, wheat has been designated as for shipment at Bunbury when application for the necessary trucks was made in the Bunbury zone. The trucks have been supplied on the express understanding that they would come to Bunbury. However, when the loaded trucks reached Brunswick Junction, it was possible by payment of a slight charge for the alteration, to divert them from Bunbury to Fremantle. If the suggested line from Collie through Wellington Mills to Bunbury were constructed, it would relieve all that congestion, and it would also mean that wheat consigned to Bunbury would have to be diverted from port to port in order to be shipped at Fremantle. Further, there would be the great advantage of opening up a large belt of wonderful agricultural land. I am prepared to take any Minister or any member of Parliament into the Ferguson Valley and up the hills there and show him country fit for settlement. That land is held to-day by settlers who had grandchildren before the Yarramony district was known. There has been a clamour for the Yarramony railway extending over 20 years, and I consider myself right in clamouring for a railway from Collie to Wellington Mills. Some of the settlers along the route of the suggested line have been there almost since the foundation of Western Australia. I will not say they find themselves at the mercy of Millars' Co., but I will say that the railway from Dardanup to Wellington Mills, built 30 odd years ago, now offers only an obsolete service. The farmers were so anxious to obtain railway communication that they actually gave Millars' Co. the necessary land as far as Dardanup station. To-day the farmers

find themselves up against the proposition that the railway retains only one locomotive. On certain days of the week that locomotive has to run into the bush for logs. On other days it brings the requirements of the mill and of the settlers from Dardanup. A demurrage charge operated on that line for a considerable period, but I am glad to say I was able to put up to the Railway Department a strong enough case for its removal. It inflicted hardship on the settlers, who had to deposit £1 per truck, and if the truck was delayed beyond the period of 24 hours that sum of £1 was confiscated by the Railway Department. That was absolutely unfair, considering that the mill train does not return for 48 hours subsequently. The settlers in that district may not be producing sufficient to justify the maintenance of a railway, but if the traffic were diverted from Collie as I have suggested, there would be more justification for it. That we have wonderful land in the South-West is amply demonstrated by the development that has gone on there during the last few years. Another railway to which I desire to refer is the proposed Boyup Brook-Cranbrook line. When that railway is constructed, it will greatly assist in the development of that part of the South-West. Thousands of sleepers have been stacked along the route of that line ready for the work to be undertaken. The Government would be wise to push on with the construction so that the railway may assist development, and help farmers who have been established for 30 or 40 years on their holdings.

Mr. Thomson: Besides that, the railway will open up thousands of acres for cultivation.

Mr. WITHERS: That is so. To-day wool shipments from that part of the State are going direct from Fremantle. In the Upper Blackwood district the country is eminently suitable for wool production.

Mr. Thomson: We want that line at our end too.

Mr. WITHERS: I am not parochial. It will be 80 miles from Bunbury before it starts to go to Cranbrook. Nevertheless, I realise what an advantage the line will be to Bunbury and to the development of the South-West generally. I have gone to the trouble of getting a few figures to demonstrate to the House what has been done

in that area over a short period. The statistics I will give should furnish more pleasurable reading than the tale of woe told to the House by the Minister for Lands regarding group settlements. The area I refer to does not represent a group settlement; the figures refer to soldier settlers and to old settlers in the district. These figures deal with the Harvey area where there is a wonderful stretch of country. It is interesting to note that we have thousands of acres of similar country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Harvey is typical of the other districts.

Mr. WITHERS: I do not desire to encroach upon the province of the member for Murray-Wellington (Hon. W. J. George), but as the representative of Bunbury, the port for the hinterland, I regard myself as the mouthpiece for the constituencies of Murray-Wellington, Forrest, Collic, and Nelson. The figures for the Harvey area show that for the year ended the 30th June, 1928, the settlers produced 145,540 gallons of whole milk, of an approximate value of £7,277; 45,379 gallons of cream, of an approximate value of £20,000; 41,215 cases of fruit, valued at £13,800; 1,000 pigs, valued at £3,000; and 500 tons of potatoes, based on an average of 4 tons to the acre and valued at £8 per ton, giving a value of £16,000. Then there is another item in respect of which the settlers themselves may not work very hard, but the insects concerned do. For the 12 months honey was produced in the district valued at £1,500. It will be seen that the settlers there do not concentrate upon one particular line. In this House we have listened to long speeches about wheat production alone. I represent an area that, while not suitable for the production of wheat, can produce practically everything else.

Hon. W. J. George: Bunbury lives upon us.

Mr. WITHERS: And I do not mind. If this production continues, I shall be a happy man. Should that result, some of our dreams will be realised in the near future.

Mr. Lindsay: You had better change the Government if you want a chance to get all those things.

Mr. WITHERS: I am not here to praise or to abuse Governments; I am here to get what I can from them. On top of the items I have referred to, Harvey has three nur-

series and does large business in the production of poultry, eggs, root crops and so forth. Hon. members will see that all this revenue has been derived from a small area of 7,000 acres and it represents 50 per cent. of the total revenue. Within 12 months, produce valued at £61,577 has been sent from the district.

Mr. Lindsay: Where did you get your figures?

Mr. WITHERS: They are official.

Mr. Lindsay: From where?

Mr. WITHERS: I got them from a friend who is in a position to furnish them.

Hon. G. Taylor: But they are authentic.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes. He also told me that when the district was still more fully developed, the returns would be doubled. He also informed me about one or two individual efforts that had been made by settlers, the details of which I cannot remember and also that the settlers who have been assisted by the Agricultural Bank were paying up their interest charges.

Hon. W. J. George: They have had a bad time.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, and they have very small holdings. They do not farm thousand-acre blocks; they make their money on holdings of less than 100 acres.

Hon. W. J. George: Some of them have ten acres or 20 acres.

Mr. WITHERS: That is so. It simply demonstrates that in the South-West broad acres are not necessary. What are wanted are broad backs and good land, and by concentrating on the development of small areas only are such returns possible.

Hon. W. J. George: That is what irrigation has done for them.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, constructed by a Labour Government.

Hon. G. Taylor: You need not have added that!

Mr. WITHERS: On top of that, we have interesting history regarding the Bunbury butter factory and the South-West Dairy Products co-operative concern. Last year I dealt extensively with the butter factory's balance sheet, but I do not desire to do so again, because repetition is not always interesting. The figures show the increased production that has been registered and they are indeed gratifying. Instead of going through the balance sheet as a whole, I have secured a few figures that will serve to show the development that has

taken place. When speaking on the Estimates 12 months ago, I suggested to the Government that they would be wise to consider the offer of the South-West Dairy Products, Limited, for the purchase of the Busselton butter factory, as it was not then functioning as it should in the interests of the people concerned. Since then the company has taken over the factory, and the wonderful progress that has followed has been due to a great extent to the fact that the group settlements in the Busselton district have gone ahead considerably, and that many cans of cream have been diverted from the Bunbury butter factory to the Busselton factory. Formerly cream from Nannup was sent through Wonnerup, six miles from Busselton, to Bunbury. Now that the one co-operative concern controls the two factories, the cream from Nannup has been diverted to Busselton where they are making butter equal to that produced at Bunbury.

Mr. Thomson: The factory was not a success when it was run by the Government.

Mr. WITHERS: The machinery was obsolete and it was not functioning properly to serve the progress of the district. I have some figures that show the progress of the Bunbury butter factory. For the year 1922-23, the butter manufactured totalled 554,443 lbs., and the gross turnover was £50,341 11s. 6d., while the total assets represented £14,514 16s. 9d. To take a five-year period for the sake of comparison, we find that for the year 1927-28, the butter manufactured increased from 554,443 lbs. to 1,304,736 lbs. The gross turnover increased to £114,800 14s. 2d., whilst the total assets increased to £42,192 10s. 8d. These figures disclose in the five-year period an increase of 750,293 lbs. of butter manufactured, of £64,459 2s. 8d. increased turnover, and increased assets representing £27,677 13s. 11d. That result is largely due to the co-operation between the farmers and the company.

Mr. Teesdale: Have you the net profit?

Mr. WITHERS: The net profit for the last financial year amounted to £10,288, after allowing £1,304 for depreciation.

Mr. Lindsay: What became of the profits?

Mr. WITHERS: After paying the highest price for butter fats throughout Australia, a bonus of 1d. per lb. was allowed to the distributing shareholders who supplied the cream.

Mr. Thomson: They really derived benefit from the Paterson scheme because they had not contributed towards it, but shared in the proceeds.

Mr. WITHERS: I also have the figures regarding the Busselton factory for the last half year when the company took the factory over from the Government. For 1926-27, for the seven months during which the Government had the factory, there were 131,760 lbs. of butter fat. During the seven months that the Busselton factory has been in possession, this has increased to 258,266 lbs., or an increase of 126,466 lbs. of butter fat. And the amount paid during the previous seven months was £9,858 as against £16,946, or an increase of £7,087. The gross turnover jumped from £13,000 to £30,000 or an increase of £17,000. That is what is happening in what some people term the sour South-West. This South-West Dairy Products Limited has been in operation for 20 years. During all that time of struggle and strife it has had to go through what other similar small industries have experienced, as mentioned by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) to-night.

Mr. Thomson: Of course it is a very efficient little concern, with the right man in the right place.

Mr. WITHERS: I admit that. Then, as I said before, they have more than that, for they have the hearty co-operation of all those interested in their own concern.

Mr. Lindsay: It should be successful after all the millions that have been spent in the South-West.

Mr. WITHERS: No millions have been spent in the South-West that will not be returned to us. We have to spend money in any good mine before we can develop it. Within the next 20 years, if we are here, we shall realise that the money spent in the South-West has not been wasted. Whatever Government may be in power, they will have to turn their eyes to the South-West in the near future; and if ever any disaster should happen in this State, the people will have to turn to the South-West for relief. Of course the South-West is developing tremendously. We have now scientific methods that we did not have in days gone by. The old-time farmer in the South-West was up against an immense proposition. Artificial manures were then unknown. With the aid of these fertilisers, land that was despised 15 or 20 years ago is to-day recognised as some of the best in the State, and as time goes on doubtless the South-West will be able to do something for the rest of the State,

which may be passing through an unpropitious period. I hope members will take this into consideration and ask themselves where we are to turn if something serious, such as happened in 1914, were to happen again. For there is nothing like being prepared. If the South-West is given all possible assistance just now, it will serve as a place to turn to if anything disastrous should happen to the remainder of the State. Of course I hope that such a thing never will happen. If it does not, no harm will be done by the encouragement given to the South-West. We have down there a fruit-growing area equal to anything in the State. There again we are handicapped, in that fruit is always shipped through the principal port. It is generally called the principal port, but to me it is merely the main port, for I regard Bunbury as the principal port. This having to ship through the main port means from 2½d. to 3d. per case extra, which is a very big item for the fruit-grower. In addition to what we can do with our fruit and milk, we can also raise fat lambs of a class capable of topping the market, as was done a few weeks ago when our lambs realised 37s. 1d. To-day Western Australia is a primary producing State, and the men who cannot look to primary production for the benefit of the State are not looking anywhere. We must look to primary production if we would have our secondary industries. Primary production is the backbone of the State to-day and I am prepared to assist it to the furthest limits. But although I am prepared to assist primary production, I am sorry that some of those interested in farming pursuits and primary production are not prepared to do the same thing themselves. For instance, take the disclosures made last week at a conference of milk producers held in the city. We read in the paper that surplus milk is being poured down the drain. That milk, instead of being wasted, should go into a butter factory.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It is going into dried milk production.

Mr. WITHERS: It should go somewhere where it will return something to the producer. I have here the reported remarks of one gentleman at that conference, Mr. J. O'Malley, as follows:—

While cut-throat tactics were adopted by retailers said Mr. J. O'Malley, nobody would do any good. A producer lived in slavery,

worked 365 days in the year, and the consumer got the benefit. He moved: "That milk is sold to the public at 9d. a quart and that the producer receive 1s. 7½d. a gallon throughout the year."

Apparently he is a producer, and he says the producer should get 1s. 7½d. per gallon for the milk, and that the consumer should pay at the rate of 9d. per quart, or 3s. per gallon. He claims that he slaves 365 days in the year and therefore is entitled to 1s. 7½d. I agree with that, but I do not at all agree that the distributor is entitled to 1s. 4½d. for distributing the milk. The sooner the milk producer up here realises we have in the South-West excellent butter factories, the sooner will he see about the establishment of a butter factory to take his butter fat. Co-operation will be the salvation of all the farmers, but before they can bring about co-operation they must learn to trust each other.

Hon. G. Taylor: The capital cost of distributing milk to-day is very different from what it was when the milkman used a horse and cart.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, I know that to-day he finds a little motor car more expeditious.

Mr. Lindsay: Have they not got co-operation already?

Mr. WITHERS: Co-operation of a sort. But it is not sufficient to talk co-operation to pull the wool over people's eyes and say it is co-operation. To be effective it must be genuine co-operation. Then the producer can say, "If there are any surplus profits I am not going to say that the consumer should have the benefit of them. We will give the consumer a good article at a fair price and if there are any profits they must go to the producer." To-day, however, they talk about pouring milk down the gutter.

Mr. Thomson: It was not the milk producers who said that.

Mr. WITHERS: However, it was said. These people require to wake up to their own interests. I have declared that I am a primary producer, at all events in principle if not in fact. Consequently I wish to mention a little matter that I referred to last session, a little secondary industry that we have in Bunbury, one of the only three factories of the sort in Australia. I refer to the clothes peg factory. This Chamber may be the place where we wash dirty linen, but at all events we never see it hung on a line by clothes pegs. When we consider the number of clothes pegs used throughout the Commonwealth in a year, and the hardships

that a small factory has to put up with in establishing itself, we realise that we should have some sympathy from the Government in the form of a direction to all departments using clothes pegs that they must use the local article. That is all I am asking.

Mr. Teesdale: It is not much to ask.

Mr. WITHERS: It is not much, and I think it should be granted. Those pegs made in Bunbury are of good quality and are selling in the Eastern States by auction. I admit they are not realising very much, at all events not at auction. I cannot say at what price they are sold retail. What happens is this: there is a clothes peg factory in Tasmania. The jam manufacturers of Tasmania send about three boats per annum direct to Western Australia with jam. They do not have the whole of the space occupied by jam, so they pack up the corners with clothes pegs. Those clothes pegs are virtually dumped in Western Australia, being sold here at 9s 6d. and even 9s. 3d. per case, whereas in the Eastern States they are sold at 11s. per case. Only yesterday or to-day I saw in the newspaper that Dr. Earle Page, the Federal Treasurer, had asked to be supplied with specific instances of dumping.

Mr. Thomson: You ought to send this instance to the Federal Government.

Mr. WITHERS: I think I will do so. It is the sort of thing that hampers a small local industry. This industry is the realisation of a young man's ambition. Leaving this State as a boy, he learned his trade in America. Then he served with the Imperial army and, coming back to Western Australia at the close of the war, he established this factory. Only last week I took the Minister for Water Supply to this factory, and on a previous occasion I had the pleasure of showing the Chief Secretary over it, and at a still earlier date, the Premier himself. The pegs go through 12 processes and the whole of the work is done by that boy himself. Some of the machinery has been brought from Germany, but other parts have been made by the boy-proprietor.

Mr. Teesdale: Let the Tender Board stipulate that wherever pegs have to be used, they must be Western Australian pegs.

Mr. WITHERS: That is my object. I hope the Government will set the example by providing in their tenders that the local product must be used. While referring to

the agricultural prospects of the South-West, I omitted to mention that a couple of field days are to be held during next spring, one at Harvey, and the other in the Dardanup district. It will be very pleasing for the South-West producers and members of Parliament to see any visiting members of Parliament who care to come down there and have a look at what is being produced.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will have to get the House adjourned.

Mr. WITHERS: No, both field days will be held during week-ends and so will be convenient to all members.

Mr. J. H. Smith: We shall have to get decent week-ends; not like what we are having at present.

Mr. WITHERS: These two field days will both be during the springtime. As showing the interest the Commonwealth are taking in the South-West, one institution, the Commonwealth Bank, has bought in Bunbury a property that will suffice them for many years to come. This is a property on which a bank is now being built at a cost of £7,500. When the Commonwealth are prepared to come West and pick out the eyes of the State whereon to establish their institutions, it shows that we are of some importance in their minds. I trust the example will be followed by the State Government. In Bunbury the Government are represented by several departments. The State Savings Bank is paying rent.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is it high?

Mr. WITHERS: About £3 10s. The Agricultural Bank is paying rent, as well as the district inspector and the inspector of schools. The forestry inspector is using the witnesses' room at the courthouse, and the Lands Department inspector is doing the same thing. The agricultural adviser at Harvey is unable to secure accommodation at the moment.

Mr. Teesdale: That is where the deficit has gone.

Mr. WITHERS: I would not say that.

Mr. Teesdale: The Government are paying rent on eight premises in Bunbury.

Mr. WITHERS: All these departments should be housed under the one roof. The messenger who receives and delivers the mails for the various departments is established at the State Savings Bank and he, too, should be under the same roof as the other departments. Something should

be done in the direction of putting up a public building to provide for all branches of the service that are established in Bunbury. A good deal has been said about workers' homes, and in that regard I claim to have a grievance. Many people have applied for such homes, but have been unable to get any satisfaction owing to the lack of funds.

Mr. Thomson: Why do they not take advantage of the Federal housing scheme? Is there not sufficient money there for them?

Mr. WITHERS: That applies only to war service homes. Last week a man told me he had put in an application six months ago for a home. He got married in the belief that he would secure his home, but he may not now get it until next October. Day after day I am witnessing applications from people who want workers' homes. Some of them are prepared to wait until next year, but others want them quite soon.

Mr. Teesdale: I have waited for many years but have not got one yet.

Mr. WITHERS: It is a scheme worthy of consideration. It is the only way that some people can get a home together. They do not feel like launching out in a home with some private concern, whereas they would be very anxious to have one built under the workers' home scheme. I trust the Government will find some means of coping with the demand. It is a paying proposition, and it is popular with the community. The Government would be well advised to find some more money in order that they may build workers' homes wherever those homes are required. Allow me to compliment the Government upon their recent action.

Mr. Lindsay: You have been criticising them all along.

Mr. WITHERS: I will be fair if I can.

Mr. Heron: There is evidently a sting in the tail.

Mr. WITHERS: My district has benefited by the action of the Premier in making money available for relief work on the pound for pound basis. My council rushed the offer with both hands to the extent of £3,500. This means that it is going to spend in the vicinity of £7,000 on work it would otherwise have been impossible to carry on. The local unemployed will also secure much relief from this arrangement. I also wish to compliment the Government upon the facilities offered for municipal loans

from the State Savings Bank. It is difficult for municipalities to float a loan for £10,000. It would have to take the whole sum, whereas it might desire to use only half to begin with. Under the new arrangement a municipality can borrow £5,000, and another £5,000 later from the State Savings Bank paying interest only on the amount actually borrowed.

Mr. Lindsay: What is the rate of interest?

Mr. WITHERS: I think it is 6 per cent.

Mr. Thomson: The Government are paying only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. It is good business.

Mr. WITHERS: They must show a profit on something. I should like to see the Municipalities Act amended in various directions. The Act at present contains a few anomalies, but if the Government would bring it down members would have an opportunity of framing amendments and placing them before the Minister in charge. By this means an Act could be framed that would be suitable to all municipalities.

Hon. G. Taylor: What are the glaring anomalies?

Mr. WITHERS: I will not enumerate them now.

Mr. Thomson: You might get into trouble if you did.

Mr. WITHERS: If I mentioned plural voting there might be room for argument. I had a recent experience in connection with the Health Act. This kind of legislation is all right until somebody is seriously affected. Recently a producer in my district sent several pigs to market. When the inspector visited the slaughter yard he condemned one of the pigs on the ground that it had been suffering from swine fever. The man who had slaughtered the pig was deemed to be the owner so far as the inspector was concerned, but he was not the actual owner. Under the Act an owner has 48 hours in which to give notice of appeal against the decision of a health inspector. In this case the inspector said it was a very definite case of swine fever. He had no doubt about it and had no occasion to consult any other authority. He said to the man who killed the pig, "Are you satisfied that this is a case of swine fever?" The man replied, "Yes." The pig was destroyed, and the original owner was the loser. He lived in the country and did not know anything about the matter or about his right to appeal. The health inspector did not send in any of the viscera to the Veterinary Department in Perth, but

sent a report for the protection of the district to the effect that this was a definite case of swine fever. The department sent a qualified officer to the farmer's property and told him it had been reported that he had swine fever there. The farmer replied, "I believe that is so." The inspector said, "What are you going to do?" The farmer said, "There are the pigs; you can take your pick." Naturally the inspector picked out the weediest looking animal and the most unhealthy looking one. The farmer did not know his position and left it to the veterinary officer to destroy the pig. This was done in such a fashion that it was not fit for human consumption, when it was found that it was not diseased. The producer, therefore, lost his first pig, worth about £2 10s., and lost another, worth about 30s., through the action of the Government official. Something must be wrong with the Act when that sort of thing can go on.

Hon. G. Taylor: Something is wrong with the administration.

Mr. WITHERS: I have been informed that, had the farmer asked the veterinary officer to destroy the pig in such a way that the carcass could be used for human consumption, this would have been done, but he did not know he could do that.

Mr. Thomson: Any veterinary surgeon should have had enough common sense to do the right thing.

Mr. WITHERS: The pig was killed and cut open in a haphazard way.

Hon. G. Taylor: It was not bled?

Mr. WITHERS: Of course it bled, but it was so cut about that it could not be used in the butchering trade. Something should be done to prevent the recurrence of that sort of thing.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: A bit of common sense is wanted.

Mr. WITHERS: There is no harm in mentioning these matters. Other members may know of similar occurrences, against which the producers should be protected. I do not know that I want to mention main roads to-night.

Hon. G. Taylor: A very popular topic.

Mr. WITHERS: It was a popular subject a fortnight ago.

Mr. Thomson: And it still is.

Mr. WITHERS: Criticism was levelled against the administration by the Main Roads Board, and also against the conferences which dealt with that administration. I think the conference was justified in what

it said. I do not blame members of the Main Roads Board, but I do say that there are many complaints from the country districts.

Mr. Lindsay: And good cause for them.

Mr. WITHERS: I had the honour of introducing the mild deputation to which the Premier referred, whose members said so much at the conference but so little at the deputation. This may be due to the fact that the member for Bunbury had no desire to antagonise the Premier or the Minister in regard to any case he might bring before them. No doubt the Premier knew what was at the back of the minds of the deputation. Members of it were more outspoken at the conference than they were before the Premier, who had the chairman of the Main Roads Board with him, and who said he was rather astounded that the deputation was so mild in the requests that were put forward. It must not be forgotten that it was not the manner of speech that counted for so much, but the nature of the representation in that deputation. Practically all the road boards in the South-West were represented, as well as three or four members interested in that part of the State. It was not necessary to say very much to prove that there was some discontent and that something was wrong.

Mr. Thomson: If everything had been in order, there would have been no deputation.

Mr. WITHERS: Exactly. On top of that, there was the conference of road boards which endeavoured to show the Government, and those who were administering the Main Roads Board business, that there was something wrong somewhere. I am not going to condemn the engineers, or the Government, or the Act, but I do contend that there is something wrong, and I hope and trust that all those responsible, from the Federal Government down to the Main Roads Board, will realise that satisfaction has not been given to the local bodies, and that something must be done so that within the next 12 months we may see an improvement. I am not casting a reflection on anybody, because I realise that everything must have a beginning.

Mr. Thomson: Even an expensive beginning.

Mr. WITHERS: Surely the Government must appreciate that the local bodies should be given a greater share in the work of road construction.

Mr. Thomson: That is the spirit that ought to be accepted.

Mr. WITHERS: From the experience I have had in my district, the Government would be wise to introduce legislation on lines calculated to meet the wishes of the conference. Another matter to which I wish to refer is the subject of workers' compensation. We pride ourselves on having one of the best compensation Acts in existence, but it has faults, just as has any other Act of Parliament. There is one particular fault which I wish to speak about, and it applies to payment for the loss of a member—a finger, an eye, etc. I know of a case recently where a man lost a little finger, and the compensation worked out at £112 10s. Six weeks after the loss of his finger that man should have been at work again, but by reason of the fact that the doctor who was attending him was receiving a weekly income from the case, the unfortunate individual continued to receive attention and was not permitted to go back to work until almost the whole of the amount of the compensation had been absorbed. If anyone can tell me that the loss of a little finger means the loss of a man's employment for six months, I can only reply that there is something radically wrong somewhere.

Mr. Mann: That is one of the weaknesses of the Act.

Mr. WITHERS: The man in question found that he was not able to bend the other finger of the same hand, and he took the opportunity to come to Perth and consult another doctor who told him that there was nothing wrong with the remaining fingers except that they had been permitted to remain in splints too long. The injured man, still not satisfied, consulted yet another doctor and was told the same thing. It was apparent then to him that he had been kept out of employment for an unnecessarily long period. From the time of the accident to the period of his return, no less than 26 weeks elapsed, and nearly the whole of his compensation money had gone.

Mr. Teesdale: Does that doctor hold a Government position, because if he does, he wants wiping off the roll?

Mr. WITHERS: He does hold a Government position. Week after week that doctor collected fees through the insurance and prevented the man from going back to work. This clearly shows that there is a serious defect

in the Act. That kind of thing should not be permitted to occur. Dr. Timms it was who told the patient that there was really nothing wrong with the other fingers, but that he should get a little more than the amount stipulated.

Mr. Teesdale: Who was paying him the insurance money?

Mr. WITHERS: It was Government insurance and, of course, the Government lost by it. The Government paid £112 plus a few pounds in addition.

Mr. Mann: The insurance companies have been complaining about the same thing.

Mr. WITHERS: It is something that needs to be looked into. Medical fees in these cases are much too high.

Mr. Mann: Probably not too high in certain cases, but unfortunately there are unscrupulous men who take advantage of the position.

Mr. WITHERS: Another matter to which I wish to refer is the completion of Parliament House during the centenary year. As a country member I regret the absence of many conveniences in this building, and I am sure other country members as well as myself would appreciate any action that might be taken by the Government towards making a beginning in the direction of completing the building. It would be advisable to make a commencement during the recess so that we might take advantage of the additional accommodation during the centenary year. One never knows, but any one of us may be defeated at the next elections. If the work is left until after the centenary, we might hear that any proposal to improve Parliament House would be a waste of money. Before closing I desire to add my simple quota to what has been said about the influx of Southern Europeans. It may be said that the subject has been worn threadbare. I admit that it has been dealt with from almost every angle and that there is not much left for me to say. As one of the members from the South-West, however, I am aware that Southern Europeans have invaded the timber trade and other avocations, and have taken the place of Britishers in many instances. I am astounded at the utterances of some members who have defended the Southern Europeans and who are prepared to take advantage of the presence of these people and give them

preference over Britishers. That is done because Southern Europeans work for lower rates. I read a good letter recently in a newspaper. It was written by Mr. Parkes of Donnybrook and dealt with the question of the employment of foreigners. It brought back to my mind the early history of Western Australia, and more particularly the early history of the goldfields. Only a week or so ago the anniversary of the discovery of the Murchison and Coolgardie by Bayley and Ford was referred to in an article published in the "West Australian." We are aware what happened in Coolgardie in the early days, and at Kalgoorlie a few years afterwards. We know that in the train of development there were thousands of foreigners and that whilst the Britisher went out to pioneer the goldfields and built streets, erected buildings and all the conveniences associated with civilisation, the Southern European was satisfied to follow and to erect a little humpy on mining leases in which to live. I do not stand for that kind of thing, and the person who upholds it is deserving of censure. Our own people have gone outback into the wheat lands and have proved that those areas are capable of being cultivated profitably. Then again there appears foreign labour, and advantage is taken of its presence. We should be British enough to stick to our own people. If the pioneers of the goldfields and the wheat areas were all loyal and employed people of their own nationality, even though they did not get quite the same satisfactory results, the position of things would be very much better. We admit that the Southern European has as much right to live as any other individual, but in choosing between the Britisher and the foreigner, we should consider the question of loyalty. Let us see how loyal the southern Europeans are to each other. Go over to James-street, and see where the foreigners' shops are and who patronises them. The wine saloons and spaghetti shops are patronised by men from the woodlines and from the timber areas. In the timber districts one may see macaroni being brought by the case to the sidings though their agents who are of their own nationality. This shows to what extent their patriotism runs whilst we have not sufficient of it to give preference of employment to our own people. That is the

position as I find it and it hurts to hear people talking about their true British spirit and all the rest of it; yet they take advantage of the ignorance of the foreigners and employ them at wages lower than those asked by Britishers. At the same time I have known some of the Southern Europeans to become the best of unionists. This state of affairs is reached when they get to know the conditions. In the interval, however, they have been exploited and for a considerable period also.

Mr. Mann: Have you seen their gardens at Osborne Park?

Mr. WITHERS: There are Southern European farmers in my district who have married Australian women and who have become good citizens. I know also of dozens of naturalised Italians whose children attend our State schools.

Mr. Mann: They are taking the place of the Chinese in market gardening.

Mr. WITHERS: That might be so, but there are still any number of Chinese who are selling vegetables. At the same time we can do that work ourselves. The Southern Europeans go out into the wheat belt and there they are employed because of their cheap labour. There is just another item on which I wish to touch. It deals with level crossings. We have dangerous level crossings in our town, crossings that were dangerous enough in the days of slow travel, but which are much more dangerous to-day on account of the fast traffic. We are living in a motor age, and the traffic is both heavy and fast compared to what it was a few years ago. I understand that the Minister for Railways has the matter in hand, and I hope that Bunbury will participate in the improvements that it is understood are to be carried out. I appreciate what the Minister for Railways has already done for the district I represent. He has been liberal to a degree, and it is satisfactory to know that the round-house workshops are almost completed. When the buildings are finished in three months' time they will be a credit to the Government and to the State. Still, it savours of a pig with one ear. While we want those facilities, we also want the harbour facilities to be provided simultaneously.

Hon. G. Taylor: You still have that two miles of railway leading to the racecourse.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, but if anyone came along some dark night and took it up

he would be welcome to it. We badly need the harbour facilities to enable our cargo to be handled and to bring Bunbury into line with the more favoured ports in the State. I trust that the few remarks I have made have reached the ears of Ministers. I have spoken not for the sake of having something to say or to play up to sentiment, but to get the Government to take notice of suggestions that are offered for the benefit of my constituents.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.46]: During the last few months I have acted for the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), who is absent from this State, and I have been able to see politics from a new angle. If some of the residents of the metropolitan area knew of some of the things that come to light when one is enabled to look at politics from such an angle, they would be very surprised indeed. I have in mind one matter that a constituent of the member for Swan consulted me about, namely, the question of his cows. He complained that of 80 cows, 20 had been condemned on the ground that they were suffering from tuberculosis. If the people of the metropolitan area realised that the dairy herds round about contained one tubercular cow in four, they would appreciate the point stressed by Dr. Saw and others regarding disease and the need for a pasteurised milk supply for Perth.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you make that statement that one in four is suffering from tuberculosis?

Mr. NORTH: No; the complaint was made to me that the department had been very harsh in that 20 out of 80 cows had been condemned as tubercular and had been destroyed. The writer wanted to know how he stood in the matter of compensation. It is rather illuminating for a metropolitan member to find that such a state of things can exist. It is fortunate for us that legislation is in force to clean up the dairy herds so that the metropolitan milk supply will be purer than it has been in the past. It is quite bad enough to be exposed to the risks of delay and contamination by disease resulting from delay, but when it is found that one cow in every four of a herd is tubercular, the position is indeed serious.

Mr. Thomson: It is also serious for the dairyman.

Mr. NORTH: Yes. He was asking for compensation under the Act, but I understand he had not registered and therefore could not claim anything. Perhaps it would

be better for me to leave another member's electorate alone because the member for Swan will be back in a month or two and will be able to deal with that question on the Estimates. There are a few matters affecting my district to which I wish to refer. It is not pleasant to have to deal with small local matters, but the Address-in-reply enables members to bring them up and satisfy their electors. If a member does not speak, it may be charged against him that he is not taking necessary action. If he does speak, it may be said that he is wearying members who are no wiser as a result of what he has said. I take it that speeches are made to forestall any complaints on the part of those electors who follow up the "Hansard" reports. Infant health centres constitute one of the most striking improvements introduced into various districts. In my district they are doing well, but there is an urgent demand for buildings for this work. While the centres are doing excellent work, what is the use of continuing them if we cannot get buildings to accommodate them? I suggest to the Government that the Entertainments Tax Act be altered in respect to the meaning of the word "hospital." The Act provides that money may be collected by way of entertainments tax for the purpose of hospitals. If the definition of hospital included "infant health centres" that would overcome the difficulty and enable the Minister to finance buildings. It would be an important improvement and would involve no definite increase in taxation at present. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) referred to the storm water trouble. This is an important question affecting the whole of the metropolitan area. The member for Perth has the same difficulty, so have I, so has the member for Subiaco.

Mr. Mann: And East Perth, too.

Mr. NORTH: Yes. I have made inquiries from men who should understand the question and they have told me that the water blanket in the metropolitan area is rising, and that this is a problem all over the world. It is suggested that the only real cure is to put in deep drainage, which is very costly. It occurs to me in regard to Subiaco that it would have been wiser to tackle the deep drainage before undertaking the sewerage scheme. The sewerage will have cost over half a million before it is finished, and yet in Subiaco one can see the same lakes and ponds that were there before. Not one inch of water has been taken off the surface.

although half a million of money has been expended. It is a serious position because the question of deep drainage for storm water is still with us and is becoming more of a menace every year. This question involves other questions. Many suburban areas are unable to undertake deep sewerage and are putting in septic tanks. That involves a question of too much water lying about in winter time. In all the low-lying levels it is quite impossible for the tanks to operate, and so we are thrown back on the same question of removing the surface waters. It would be far wiser for the Government to look into that question than to continue the extension of deep sewerage, because the curing of the water level difficulty in the metropolitan area would be the curing of a bigger evil than lack of sewerage which, after all, need apply only in special parts of low-lying districts. There is another phase of the sewerage question upon which I wish to touch. It is unfortunate that I should have to speak on this subject, but it is a vital one in growing suburban areas and I cannot refrain from speaking on it until it has been dealt with. I should much prefer to talk on some of the big subjects, but this is a question that is brought closely home to me. I ask the Government to set a good example by installing septic tanks at the schools and railway stations in my district. In the report of the Education Department for this year, there is a complaint by a lady who made an inspection in the interests of hygiene. She said the condition of the conveniences was disgusting. That is just what we should expect, and I urge the Education Department and the Railway Department to instal septic tanks wherever possible straight away. I have made a personal inspection of the Cottesloe-Claremont district where there are four or five stations on the metropolitan line. The conveniences were all disgusting in the sense that they would not be if tanks were installed. That could be done at very small cost. It is up to the Government to set an example to the local authorities who are attempting to get septic tanks installed in their areas. Coming to the question of the tanks themselves, two sessions ago we passed an amendment of the Health Act to permit of septic tanks being installed. Certain evils have arisen from that legislation, which needs to be amended. In the first place there is a difficulty regarding the drainage of low-lying areas and there is a fear that local authorities will compel house-

holders who live in flooded areas to instal tanks. That would cause difficulty until the Government are able to drain those areas. There are other difficulties confronting us, and I am glad that the acting Minister for Works is in his seat. He knows there have been increases of deep sewerage in districts where tanks were to have been installed, and the friction involved by the rival schemes has not been abated. As the Minister has not been able to satisfy the local authorities as to how far the sewerage is to be extended, the installation of the tanks is being held up. That is a pity. It is suggested for the Government's consideration that the law should be amended so that when the Government instal deep sewerage after a local authority has already installed septic tanks, the deep sewerage installation should carry compensation to householders for the money spent on the tanks. That is a reasonable provision. Where tanks have been provided, there should be no need whatever to put in deep sewerage within a reasonable period of, say, 15 years. If the Government alter their minds and instal deep sewerage, they should at least compensate the householders who have gone to an expense of £20 or £30 to meet the need meanwhile. If that provision were given effect to, there is no reason why large areas now on the verge of installing septic tanks should not come to a decision right away and clean up the metropolitan area in this way. Now I come to another matter to which I referred last session. On that occasion it caused some amusement. I refer to shags and the shag menace. It is hard to make members realise that one is dealing with a real menace—the large number of birds which are doing no good at all, but are doing much harm. I urge members to support this claim to have those birds removed from the list of protected birds.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are they protected now?

Mr. NORTH: Yes. Someone told me that if I called them river cormorants I would get a better reception than by calling them shags. I am quite prepared to call them river cormorants. Those birds are said to eat six or seven pounds of fish per day. Even if they eat only six or seven fish per day, they are increasing in thousands every year and are defiling the yachts all over the river.

Mr. Thomson: What is the reason for their being protected?

Mr. NORTH: It is because they are supposed to eat the cobbler. That seems to be a great virtue claimed for them.

Hon. G. Taylor: You do not mean the shoemaker?

Mr. NORTH: The hon. member understands what I mean. The cobbler is really a good fish to eat, so it is no recommendation for the birds. Although this may seem a very small matter to bring up in this important House, it is a big question for the yachtsmen on the river right from Perth to Fremantle. In each of the districts through which the river flows are yachts worth thousands of pounds that are being literally ruined by those birds. There is no use in them, and I do urge the Government to remove that protection and allow the birds to be kept within reasonable limits. Now I come to the matter of level crossings which was referred to very shortly by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers). A representative deputation, which I had the honour to lead, waited on the Minister for Railways some three or four months ago with regard to level crossings in the metropolitan area. That deputation included four or five members of Parliament and seven or eight mayors or chairmen of road boards. I am glad to say the Minister then made a definite promise that he would take action and would provide for one or two of these crossings every year. Some months have elapsed since then, and I would like to learn from the Government when it will be possible to make provision for dealing with level crossings. It is a matter of extreme urgency. The deputation was so influential that I think the Minister was somewhat impressed. Though at the start he seemed inclined to pooh-pooh the remarks addressed to him, having heard the testimony of doctors and others, he recognised that the crossings were a deadly danger to the people of the metropolitan area. Nowhere in the world, I believe, could one find a larger number of crossings in so short a distance and with so many trains passing day and night. The accidents on those crossings speak for the danger: they are becoming far too frequent. I would like to learn from the Government that some decision has been arrived at, and that bridges or subways are to be built. There are one or two bad places in the Guildford, Cottesloe, and North Fremantle areas.

Mr. Rowe: In North Fremantle they have been fixed up.

Mr. Thomson: There are some bad crossings in the country districts too.

Mr. NORTH: I have no doubt of it. The question is a serious one throughout the world. A train from Chicago to New York used to do the journey in 18 hours, but there were so many accidents on crossings that the time of transit was increased to 20 hours, at which it stands to-day. So that even in the United States the danger of running high-speed trains over level crossings is recognised. I now leave that question, which, however, is vital. These are all small matters, and now I would like to touch for a few minutes on a big question. I desire to refer to the article of a Frenchman published in yesterday's newspaper—I dare say hon. members have seen it—on the question of present conditions in Australia. The writer said that Australia had a wonderful race of people and that the workers were all well provided for. He painted a rosy picture of an ideal country. However, at the finish there was a nasty little rapier-like thrust, when he said that we were an ideal instance of socialism with wonderful houses and happy people and doing it all by debt. He said this country was practising "socialism in our time" on borrowed money. That was it, put in a nutshell. It was nasty of him to put a sting in the tail like that. It is nasty, too, that he should start trouble in that way among the countries that lend us money, by telling them that we are building up this happy illusion of prosperous homes on 130,000 men in the country carrying the burdens of 6,000,000.

Mr. Lindsay: It is true, all the same.

Mr. NORTH: I would like the article to be answered. We have a very able Premier, who probably has seen those remarks. The same criticism has been published in many places besides in that article. It is frequently said that things are all very well in Australia, but that it is all done on borrowed money.

Mr. Thomson: Only by borrowing money can one develop a country.

Mr. NORTH: Suppose Mr. Collier decided this year not to bring down a Loan Bill for £4,000,000, where would Western Australia be? Therefore, I consider that this criticism, striking and acute criticism to come from a stranger after a few weeks' stay, should be answered by Cabinet.

Mr. Mann: Is the writer of any prominence? Is he worth answering?

Mr. NORTH: His article will be published all over England, and all the financiers will read it.

The Premier: Is that the Frenchman?

Mr. NORTH: Yes. I think his article demands an answer.

The Premier: Oh, I don't know. He said our girls were all right, and what does the rest of it matter anyway?

Mr. NORTH: The beginning of the article made one feel proud of Australia, but there was that nasty sting in the tail. I think it would be very apposite if the next issue of the Government's publicity reports gave some figures to show the critics that we are standing on our own feet.

The Premier: That writer's book will be read only in France.

Mr. NORTH: The article has got as far as Western Australia, which is a long way from his home. Another unfortunate statement was published in regard to wheat. No doubt we are told year after year that, according to false or lugubrious reports from Europe, wheat prospects are bad. The criticisms of experts on the other side of the world regarding wheat supplies go to show—

Mr. Mann: That is not a very influential journal.

Mr. NORTH: Doubtless, but it is nice to be able to answer these criticisms, when we are shown how parlous may be the position of our primary industry. These forecasts might come true one year. I do not say they will come true this year, but they have been made year after year. We should realise that we have a market which we now despise, but which is growing and which will ultimately be something, namely, our own home market. That market it is now the policy of the Federal Government and of both sides in the Federal Parliament to maintain by protection. When such reports come from Europe, where our big market is to-day, hon. members who are inclined to cavil at protection and all it means should bear in mind that it will be a happy day for Western Australia when we have our own people to buy our own wheat. With those few remarks I will leave the debate, because, having been here three or four years now, I realise that more good can be done by writing to Ministers and seeing them than by occupying the time of the House.

MR. A. WANSBROUGH (Albany)

[9.10]: I wish to express my thanks to His Excellency the Governor for the brief and precise Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. The contents of the Speech may not have been information to hon. members, but it was information necessary to be appreciated by the general public. The Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Country Party having dealt fully with the financial position, I shall say nothing upon it except that Western Australia is to be congratulated on having attained that position. Wheat production, it is pleasing to note, increases year by year; last year the increase exceeded 5,000,000 bushels. To my mind that fact proves that with proper farming methods Western Australia can produce at the same level as the Eastern States. I sincerely hope that the campaign initiated for raising 50,000,000 bushels of wheat in the centenary year will be successful.

Mr. Lindsay: It cannot be done by campaigning; it can only be done by work.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It will be done by work. While on the question of wheat production, I am glad to note certain figures on the wheat map produced by the Deputy Government Statist. That map shows the yields of the various districts, and I observe that the despised districts of Ongerup and Needilup rank fourth in the State. Bullfinch has 19.5 bushels, Southern Cross 17.67, Dalwallinu 17.27, and Ongerup 16.9 per acre.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is that the average for each district?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Yes, according to the Deputy Government Statist. I mention these figures because I wish to remind the Cabinet, and especially the Minister for Lands, that in the area between Ongerup and Newdegate there are still hundreds of thousands of acres of similar land awaiting development and productivity. To my mind, the development and productivity can only be brought about by railway communication. I trust that the Migration and Development Commission who are now investigating the 3,500 farms scheme will investigate that country also. As to the 3,500 farms scheme, I do not wish to be sarcastic, nor do I wish to cast reflections on my friends who occupy the cross benches. However, the speech of the Leader of the Coun-

try Party appeared to indicate two policies—one policy as a producer, and another policy as a member of his organisation. While the hon. member was speaking I took notes of his remarks, and this is exactly what he said—

I want it to be clearly understood that our party stand strictly to this policy, namely the natural flow to the nearest port of shipment, providing that there are natural facilities. The Country Party cannot be accused of feeling in any way antagonistic to the port of Esperance.

A little later he said—

A phase of the question well worth considering is whether it would not be cheaper to construct a few additional miles of railway than to incur the expenditure in developing another port.

I do not know what the hon. member meant when he referred to a "few additional miles." I assumed the hon. member was referring to the Forrestania country, for which the natural port is Esperance.

Mr. Thomson: I was drawing attention to the natural port at Albany, which you represent, and it is my port, too.

Mr. Lindsay: You do not object to the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) supporting Albany?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: No. I do not. I do not want a diversion of trade to the port that is not the natural one for the district. Further, the hon. member said—

I know that in this matter the member for Albany will welcome my co-operation and that of my party, because it is vital to his electorate and mine also, that the utilities at the port of Albany shall be utilised to the fullest extent.

Mr. Thomson: There you have it.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: I am not prepared to support a policy of diversion of trade, for I stand four-square in favour of a policy of decentralisation. I am not in favour of any diversion of trade as suggested by the member for Katanning. If he advocates that each port shall have the advantage of its geographical position, and have the advantage of the trade within its natural zone, I am with him, but I do not want any unnatural diversion of trade to the detriment of another port.

Mr. Thomson: Do you not think it would be more profitable to build two or three miles of railway, instead of spending a million pounds or more on constructing—

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: The hon. member now indicates what he means! The

country he refers to is 100 miles further away.

Mr. Lindsay: Even so, that would cost less than a harbour.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: By diverting the trade to a port that is not the natural outlet, we add to the cost of transport and that is reflected in the cost to the consumer. Albany does not ask for the trade that belongs geographically to another port.

Mr. Thomson: Do you suggest that I propose that?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: That is what I gathered from the hon. member's speech.

Mr. Thomson: I suggest that you read it again.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: All that Albany wants is the trade that the port is entitled to, nothing more but nothing less.

Mr. Mann: To which port do you suggest that produce should go?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: I am not making any suggestion at all. If the member for Katanning referred to the Forrestania country, that trade should go to Esperance.

Mr. Thomson: I would not refer to land in the south-eastern portions of my district, would I?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: That land would be 120 miles from Albany. I am not prepared to go out of the Albany zone, or for diversion of trade.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: That zone has yet to be defined.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It has been defined.

Mr. Thomson: You are attempting to place a limitation upon the area I referred to.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: In dealing with the 3,000 farms scheme, I have sufficient faith in the personnel of the Development and Migration Commission to know that they will view the position as they find it and do justice all round. I desire to see the available utilities made use of to the fullest extent, but I do not desire trade to the detriment of another port, or additional cost of transport. I congratulate the member for Katanning upon his references to the Fremantle bridge and harbour extensions. I agree with him that before the House should be asked to pass the necessary appropriations for the construction of that bridge, a full

and comprehensive scheme covering the development of the Fremantle harbour should be laid upon the Table. Unless that is done, I shall oppose the construction of the Fremantle bridge.

Mr. Lindsay: Another rebel in the ranks!

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: This is not a party question; it is a State matter.

Mr. Thomson: That is the way we should regard it.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: I listened to the speech of the Minister for Lands regarding group settlement matters and I regret to admit that the picture he painted respecting my constituency was fairly true. It will make unpleasant reading for the general public. We should be extremely pleased to know that the Government are determined upon a policy of fixing a period during which Government assistance will be extended, thus putting the group settlers on a sound footing. The group settlers in the Albany electorate will welcome the change. They have been a long-suffering people and, had this policy been in operation three years ago, many of the earlier settlers would still be on their blocks.

Mr. Thomson: Many of them were good men, too.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: We have probably lost some of the best migrants we ever had.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Where have they gone?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Some of them are to be found among the unemployed. I hope that, under the new arrangements, many of the outstanding disabilities and grievances will be rectified. I congratulate the Minister upon the energy he has displayed. Most hon. members have dealt with the main roads question, and I wish to refer to it. I do not propose to exonerate the members of the Main Roads board from their responsibilities, but I regret that members who have spoken have not seen fit to place the true position before the people. Every hon. member knows that the construction of roads under the Federal system is governed by the Federal Roads Act, not by the State Main Roads Act.

Mr. Lindsay: There is nothing in the Commonwealth Act about plans and specifications.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: The Federal Act governs the position and the Main Roads Board have to work under it. Two years ago the construction of King-Napier road in my district was approved. Three sets of plans and specifications were submitted and only a fortnight ago was approval obtained for the work, which was gazetted yesterday. Hon. members have not yet been fair about this matter, and it is regrettable that they have not been prepared to be honest and admit where the responsibility lies. It has been insinuated that the chief cause of the trouble has been Ministerial interference. Mr. Hector Stewart, M.L.C., in a letter appearing in the Press made certain statements that should be on record in "Hansard." His letter was as follows:—

The views expressed in a recent statement by Mr. A. H. Malloch, who, through the Good Roads Association, took a prominent part in advocating the formation of a Main Roads Board free from political interference, are undoubtedly very widely held. In effect his main contention is that much road construction is being carried out on a basis beyond the present economic capacity of the country to bear, and that opinion is generally held by those who by travel and experience are qualified to judge. Mr. Malloch appreciates the influence of the Main Roads Act in encouraging local authorities to provide continuity of good roads. The pity of it is that the powers introduced into the Act—on the recommendation of the Select Committee—whereby the services and valuable knowledge and experience of the local authorities could be fully utilised, were ignored, and in consequence an enormous amount of the work was carried out by the Main Roads Board, utilising inefficient day labour, under Ministerial direction, and debarring the needy settler and his team, whereas the local authorities could have done the same work at a fraction of the enormous cost for which they are now being called upon to contribute according to allocation on the basis of benefits conferred.

The responsibility for the work is governed by the Main Roads Act and it is not subject to direction by the Minister. Hon. members know that that is the position. Therefore the least they can do is to be honest and admit where that responsibility lies.

Mr. Lindsay: Under which Act?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It is under our Main Roads Act.

Mr. Lindsay: What is the trouble?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Some members complained about the apportionment to the various road boards.

Mr. Lindsay: Not at all. The complaints were about inability to get the work done. The only trouble about the apportionments is that local authorities are asked to pay for something for which they have not received value.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: That may be so, but hon. members should be frank about a big job like this. They know that at the outset they were running from Minister to Main Roads Board and back again to get unfortunate men at work before Christmas. They know perfectly well that there was no approval for the Commonwealth part of it until the 16th December.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is that last year?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: No, that was in the first year the scheme was in operation.

Mr. Lindsay: You know that 1,100 men were put on from the beginning of January till the 10th of that month.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Would the hon. member suggest that those men should have been sent out on the 17th December, brought back, and then sent out again later on?

Mr. Thomson: The remarkable thing about it was the way men were sent to particular districts.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: That did not make any difference. At any rate, it was no advantage in my electorate so far as the rolls were concerned.

Mr. Thomson: Was it not?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Of the men sent to my electorate 50 per cent. were not eligible to be enrolled.

Mr. Lindsay: That was unfortunate.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: No, it was not.

Mr. Teesdale: This was in 1926—pretty old stuff?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It is time we had the truth.

Mr. Lindsay: It was Federal money that was being expended and the Act said the work had to be done by contract.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: And those responsible for this work did it by day work.

Mr. Thomson: And that explains why the Commonwealth held up £53,000, as disclosed in the returns.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was the early part of last year.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Of course, we know where the complaint came from.

Mr. Teesdale: I wouldn't go into it.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: The complaint was made by the members for Forrest and

Swan in the Federal House of Representatives.

Hon. G. Taylor: Was it not justified? Mr. Thomson: Evidently it was; else they would not have stopped the £53,000.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Those members did an injustice to the State.

The Premier: And will be punished for it in another two months.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Of the men that came into my electorate, 50 per cent were not eligible for enrolment.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was only a mistake; it was bad luck.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It has been said over and over again that men were sent out without tools. That was not the men's fault.

Mr. Thomson: Of course not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Every member making a speech to the Assembly has the right to be heard in silence. Members by consulting the Standing Orders will know where and how they can interrupt. I hope I shall not have to draw attention again to our Standing Orders.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: It was pointed out to me that my district also had a quota. It got a paltry 25. That did not affect the majority. Why should we have these insults hurled across the Chamber? Let us be honest. As for the tools, they were delayed in transit. It was not the fault either of the men or of the Main Road Board.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Whose fault was it?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: The delay occurred in the Railway Department. It was admitted by the Minister for Railways himself. Why should the blame be cast on the unfortunate men? The other evening I was pleased to hear the Premier in reply to the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) state that it was proposed to consider on the Loan Estimates the construction of the Cranbrook-Boyup railway. I hope that will be done, although it will not affect my district very much. I might be permitted to remind the Premier that the Advisory Board reporting on that district estimated that from 2,000 to 2,500 settlers could be placed in that area in the form of group settlements. Then there is a very large belt of country between the Pardelup settlement and the Frankland River. This, too, might be considered for future settlement, for it is well watered and it carries good natural grasses.

Coming to the question of railway communication for the Needilup and Salt River districts, I may say these subjects have been placed before the Premier on two occasions. I hope the Premier will give early attention to them, and I hope the promise that the Railway Advisory Board will be requested to report on these districts will soon be fulfilled. The Salt River district is one of the oldest districts of the State. In many instances the settlers are compelled to cart their produce up to 40 or 50 miles. In the Needilup district there are 50 or 60 settlers carting distances up to 40 miles. To give members an idea of what this district is like I propose to read the following paragraph issued by the State Publicity officer under the authority of the Premier:—

Favoured Districts.—The Gnowangerup, Borden and Salt River districts, east of Tambellup on the Great Southern Railway, and spread over the rich plains on the northern shed of the Stirling Range, are amongst the favoured districts of Western Australia. Situated in high southerly attitudes, the climatic conditions throughout the year are as near ideal as possible. The towering peaks of the Stirling Range form a rugged and picturesque background to the fertile undulating plains, mile after mile of which have been brought under cultivation. During a recent visit of the Premier (Mr. P. Collier) statistics were furnished showing the productivity of the land for wheat growing and the suitability of the country for raising high-grade sheep and wool. It is estimated that the wheat average of the Gnowangerup district is, approximately, double that of the State average. Last year some magnificent crops were harvested, ranging from 30 to 42 bushels to the acre. Splendid sheep studs have been established, the sheep being huge in frame, and one grower averaged a return of 14 lbs. of wool per fleece for the whole of his flock last year, almost double the average fleece yield for the State. The Gnowangerup Road Board area comprises only a little more than half a million acres, and last year the value of wool handled through brokers was £68,000, whilst 127,000 bags of wheat were produced.

I have here some statistics arranged by the Government Statistician. They give the production for the season 1927-28, showing that the land held under conditional purchase was 1,408,431 acres, the land cleared, including crops, was 598,602 acres, the acreage under crop was 203,225 acres, the wheat produced was 1,730,902 bushels, the oats 209,793 bushels, the hay 19,009 tons, the potatoes 2,843 tons, apples 231,846 bushels, pears 18,202 bushels, butter 282,054 lbs., wool 1,681,867 lbs., horses 5,815, cattle 4,208, sheep 223,818, pigs 2,077. I believe I can say that at least 50 per cent. of that production, except perhaps the apples and potatoes, came from beyond a 20-mile radius of any railway. I repeat that there are still

hundreds of thousands of acres lying dormant in that district, purely a breeding ground for dingoes. It will produce quite equally to the statistics I have just read. The last subject I wish to touch upon is the Albany-Katanning-Bunbury train service. I approach this matter rather in the way of complaint, and I trust the Minister for Railways will do something to remove the cause of that complaint. Briefly the position is that a passenger wishing to travel from Albany or any intermediate station between Albany and Katanning, to Bunbury finds it necessary to stay at Katanning for 24 hours. This means that a passenger journeying to Bunbury by the Monday, Wednesday, or Friday trains, the only trains running, has to arrive at Katanning on the Sunday, the Tuesday, or the Thursday by the 11.46 p.m. train, and remain at Katanning until 10.35 p.m. the following day. I know the Commissioner will say it is not possible to delay the departure ex Katanning to connect with the Albany train on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays, owing to having to connect with the Bunbury-Perth train ex Bunbury.

Mr. Thomson: It is remarkable that they cannot study the convenience of the public.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: I wish to suggest to the Minister that the crossing be made at the Brunswick Junction instead of at Bunbury. This would enable the departure ex Katanning to connect with the Albany train. The journey by this train is quite sufficient punishment on any passenger without his having to wait 24 hours at Katanning. I do hope the Minister will give consideration to my suggestion. As an old Western Australian, incidentally one of the second generation, I am pleased to learn that it is proposed to fittingly celebrate the centenary of Western Australia. Whilst I realise that none of us will be here to see the second centenary—

Mr. Thomson: Speak for yourself.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Well, I confess I do not wish to see it. Still, I do hope the coming celebration will be well recorded in history so that future generations will know that Western Australia looked after itself on its first birthday. I regret having kept the House so long.

On motion by Mr. C. P. Wansbrough, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.