

good supplies to the public. That should mean an improvement in the interests of the consuming public. I have looked into the blocking system and I can see there are more than two sides to the question.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: That is so.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: It would be easy to make serious mistakes. I would like any such scheme not to be made obligatory at the inception. It should at first be investigated fully and made to apply economically.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: The City Council discussed the question for years.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I know there is a long file dealing with the question, and I know the City Council decided that if it could not be applied to districts outside the Greater Perth area, it could not be applied to that area itself. The final matter I will deal with relates to the centenary of Western Australia which will be celebrated shortly. I was disappointed that no mention of that subject was made in the Governor's Speech, and we have had nothing from the Leader of the House as to what the Government propose to do to commemorate the event. You, Mr. President, have made a suggestion that is desirable. I hope it will receive the support it deserves. You proposed the completion of Parliament House buildings, and if that work could be taken in hand immediately, it could be carried out in time for the centenary celebrations. That would be a fitting memorial for the occasion. I will leave the matter at that and content myself with supporting the motion before the House.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 16th August, 1927.

	PAGE
Questions : Industries Assistance Board clients ...	329
Traffic Bridge, Basseudean ...	329
Water Meters, Rental ...	330
Pastoral leases ...	330
Petrol and Entertainment Taxes ...	330
Leave of absence ...	331
Address-In-Reply, eighth day ...	331

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

QUESTION—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BOARD, CLIENTS.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many clients are operating under the Industries Assistance Act? 2, How many are soldier settlers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

	Ordinary Civilian Borrowers.	Soldier Settlers.	Total.
Land Rents paid ...	80	...	80
Fully Assisted ...	282	662	944
Partly Assisted ...	49	80	129
Stopped Accounts	341	141	482
Funded Debts ...	284	112	396
	1,036	995	2,031

QUESTION—TRAFFIC BRIDGE, BASSENDEAN.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, For how long will the road bridge over the Swan River at Basseudean be closed to traffic? 2, Could not the decking of the old road bridge be repaired sufficiently to enable tradesmen's and other lightly laden vehicles to travel between Guildford and Basseudean during the period that the main bridge is closed? 3, If so, could the repairs be done immediately?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, Four weeks. 2, The decking is very much decayed, and the extent of this could only be ascertained by an extensive investigation. It is, however, certain that extensive and costly repairs would be necessary before even light

traffic could be permitted to use the bridge. In any event the trackway is so narrow that with vehicular traffic permitted, pedestrian traffic would have to be barred, thereby causing more inconvenience than would be overcome. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—WATER METERS, RENTAL.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Water Supply: 1, What kind of water meter is supplied in the city? 2, What is the annual rental charged for a one-inch and four-inch water meter, both inferential and positive, respectively?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (for the Minister for Water Supply) replied: 1, Inferential and positive. 2, Annual rental for meters is fixed by By-law 125, as follows:—"Every person supplied with water by measure to other than rated premises or private residences shall pay meter rent in advance according to the following scale":—

Size of Meter.	Annual Rent.	
	Inferential.	Positive.
	s.	s.
$\frac{1}{4}$ -inch	10	10
"	10	10
"	10	10
"	10	10
1"	15	25
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	15	25
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	20	40
2"	25	60
3"	30	100
4"	40	130

PASTORAL LEASES EXPIRING 31st DECEMBER, 1928.

KIMBERLEY DIVISION.

Account No.	Name.	Lease No.	Area.	Yearly.	Total Area.
32	G. Layman	859/98	22,000	£ 10 0	
33	do.	424/98	26,000	6 10 0	
34	do.	549/98	64,000	18 0 0	
35	do.	584/98	40,000	10 0 0	
4937	Australasian vestment Agency	1088/98	124,000	31 0 0	152,000
789	do.	3283/102	139,000	34 15 0	
612	W. J. Coleman	931/98	50,000	12 10 0	
613	do.	940/98	100,000	25 0 0	
614	do.	633/98	100,000	25 0 0	
615	do.	784/98	20,000	5 0 0	
616	do.	946/98	55,000	13 15 0	
4212	do.	873/98	70,000	17 10 0	
5619	do.	1103/98	23,000	5 15 0	
3941	B. Copley	407/98	92,000	23 0 0	418,000
3342	do.	462/98	50,000	12 10 0	
3944	do.	505/98	45,000	11 5 0	
3355	do.	578/98	100,000	25 0 0	
3356	do.	655/98	81,000	15 5 0	
5178	do.	1067/98	60,000	15 0 0	408,000
5362	Weaber & Tro- nouth	1073/98	45,000	11 5 0	
5363	do.	1074/98	40,000	10 0 0	
4988	do.	1040/98	40,000	10 0 0	
1917	R. Hearten	487/98	22,000	5 10 0	125,000
1918	do.	488/98	23,000	5 15 0	
1919	do.	8008/102	10,000	2 10 0	
1920	do.	1603/102	48,000	12 0 0	
2377	do.	3292/102	20,480	5 5 0	
5682	do.	1099/98	20,000	5 0 0	
4985	do.	1039/98	20,000	5 0 0	
2731	Geo. Moss	285/98	20,000	5 0 0	168,480
3081	H. O'Grady	1124/98	37,815	19 0 0	20,000
4109	W. Madden	963/98	20,000	5 0 0	37,815
4110	do.	962/98	20,000	5 0 0	
5375	W. M. Madden	1072/98	18,542	4 15 0	40,000
5130	G. J. Williams	1050/98	34,700	17 10 0	18,542
3943	Madden & Brennan	1511/102	80,000	20 0 0	34,700
					80,000
				£ 458 15 0	1,760,537

QUESTION—PETROL AND ENTERTAINMENT TAXES.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many Kimberley pastoral leases expire in 1928, by whom are the leases held, and of what acreage do the leases consist? 2, Does he intend to introduce legislation relative to pastoral leases that expire in 1928 to bring them into conformity with other leases that expire in 1948? If so, when?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Thirty-six. Full particulars as to lessees, areas and rentals attached. 2, The matter is under consideration.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier: 1, What amount has been collected on account of the petrol tax up to the 30th June, 1927? 2, Has the State petrol tax been dropped altogether since the 30th September, 1926? 3, What amount has been collected on account of the entertainment tax up to the 30th June, 1927?

The PREMIER replied: 1, £71,882 1s. 2, The general collection of petrol tax has ceased, but correspondence is proceeding regarding certain outstandings. 3, £50,151 14s. 3d.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Panton, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Wilson (Collie) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. J. H. Smith, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Hon. W. J. George (Murray-Wellington) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 11th August.

MR. PANTON (Menzies) [4.39] : In addressing a few remarks to the House, may I, at the outset, take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate you on your re-election to the high and honourable position of Speaker of this House. I feel sure that the disciplining you gave members during the last Parliament will result in your having little difficulty this session. I would also like to welcome to our midst the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally), and the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Rowe), and to congratulate them upon their election to this Chamber. Having worked with both those gentlemen for a considerable time in another sphere, I feel certain they will be acquisitions to the debating strength of this House. I would also add my welcome to the member for Moore (Mr. Ferguson). In extending my felicitations to him, may I say that I deeply regret that our old friend, Colonel Denton, was the only member of the last Parliament who fell by the wayside at the general elections. With all due respect to the present member for Moore, I am sure there were very few members, if any, who could be so ill-spared as old Jim Denton. I have known him for a long period, and in somewhat livelier times than we are accustomed to experience in this Chamber. For several reasons I sincerely regret the defeat of that gentleman. However, I feel sure, from what I know of the present member for Moore, that he will make friends among those sitting in this Chamber, although perhaps it will not be possible for him to make so many friends so quickly as Colonel Denton did. Much has been said about the last election and I am pleased, notwithstanding what has been said by members of the Opposition, to be in the position of representing the smallest electorate in Australia, if not in the world.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Pleased!

Mr. PANTON: Yes. It does not always fall to the lot of an hon. member to have such a distinction.

Mr. Sampson: It is unique.

Mr. Lindsay: What about extinction?

Mr. PANTON: I have no hesitation in predicting, however, that Menzies will one day be a much larger electorate than some of those represented in this Chamber.

Mr. Sampson: Do you suggest that a redistribution will make that possible?

Mr. PANTON: At present the Comet Vale mine is going ahead. The battery is erected, and within the next few weeks a number of men will be at work there. I have received a telegram from those in charge of the Lady Shenton Mine informing me that they have struck what they think is the old lode in that mine. If that is so, it will mean a big thing. The Riverina South Mine, after lying idle since 1917, since when the workings have been flooded, has been unwatered and there is every prospect of that mine being a wealth producer at an early date. In these circumstances, I have great hopes of being member for Menzies for a considerable time to come.

Mr. Richardson: We wish you luck!

Mr. Maley: It is quite on the cards that another Coolgardie will be found in that district.

Mr. PANTON: That is so. During this session, and particularly during last session, many gibes were made, if I may use that expression, regarding the necessity for a redistribution of seats, and, of course, the Menzies and Canning electorates were always in the forefront of the arguments that were used.

Mr. Sampson: They are the striking examples.

Mr. PANTON: They represent the smallest and the largest electorates in Western Australia. Most of the argument has been on the question of one vote, one value. I am not, and never have been, an advocate of the present situation.

Mr. Maley: You can argue that Menzies has produced more for the advancement of the State than has the Canning electorate.

Mr. PANTON: The people in the Canning electorate and in others as well have been living upon what the Menzies and other electorates have produced. If it comes to a question of the redistribution of seats on the basis of one vote, one value, I

will be quite willing to assist to achieve that result. I have taken out a few figures to show just what would happen respecting some of the electorates represented by Opposition members, if the distribution were effected on the basis of one vote, one value.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: We want a more equitable basis.

Mr. PANTON: The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) and the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) have taken up page after page in "Hansard" talking about the principle of one vote, one value, and talking about equitable representation. After all is said and done, it is only a question of 17,000 odd votes or 2,000 odd votes. I will take some figures from the latest returns available, those in connection with the last general election. For the seven seats represented by members of the Country Party, the whole of the electors total 28,440. I am not one of those who contend, as do some members on the Opposition side, that the elected member represents only the people who vote for him. When a member is elected, he should be in a position to represent the whole of the electors of his district, and not only one section of them.

Mr. Sampson: Members on this side stand for that.

Mr. PANTON: And so do members on this side. What members of the Opposition stand for, however, is not enunciated in their remarks in this Chamber. The seven seats held by members of the Country Party represent 28,440 voters, an average of 4,063 for each electorate. The two electorates of Canning and Leederville represented by members on this side of the House have 29,248 electors, or an average of 14,624 each.

Mr. Lindsay: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. PANTON: I wish to show that the discrepancy is not confined to the representation on one side of the House. It is not wholly and solely a matter of Menzies and Canning.

Mr. Lindsay: There are a few other goldfields electorates.

Mr. PANTON: Then the hon. member can quote them.

Mr. Lindsay: I have already spoken.

Mr. PANTON: I shall quote what I consider necessary. With the seven country party seats having 28,440 electors, let me contrast five seats represented by Labour, having 55,602 electors, or an average of

9,206 against the Country Party average of 4,063.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Give us the average of all the Labour seats.

Mr. PANTON: As I informed the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay), the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) can do that. Let us now take the seven Country Party seats and add to them the country seats of Irwin, Murray-Wellington, Nelson, Northam, Wagin, Sussex and York.

Mr. Maley: Irwin is not a Country Party seat.

Mr. PANTON: It is not a goldfields seat; it is a country seat. The 14 seats I have mentioned have 58,614 electors, or an average of 4,186, while the seven Labour seats total 64,442 electors, or an average of 9,206.

Mr. North: The total votes cast are just about representative of the number of seats held.

Mr. PANTON: I am speaking of the number of electors on the roll.

Mr. North: But the parties represent roughly the total votes cast. Is not that correct?

Mr. PANTON: I am not dealing with that aspect.

Mr. Latham: You are not likely to deal with that aspect.

Mr. PANTON: I could do so quite easily and still maintain the logic of my argument. My intention at present is to reply to the gibes that have so frequently been uttered by members on the other side relative to the small number of electors in Menzies and the large number in Canning. I am pointing out that seven members on this side of the House represent more electors than do 14 country members on the other side of the side of the House. Consequently when members urge the need for redistribution, I am with them on the one-vote-one-value principle.

Mr. Latham: You would not be fair to your electors if that were so.

Mr. PANTON: Never mind that; I am trying to be fair to the electors of York as well as other districts. I am trying to array myself on the side of members opposite who have been talking so much of the one-vote-one-value principle.

Mr. Thomson: Do you believe in giving the metropolitan area half the representation of the State?

Mr. PANTON: I believe in the one-vote-one-value principle, which the member for

West Perth (Mr. Davy) said the Opposition favoured.

Mr. Latham: No, we do not believe in that.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member has changed his attitude already.

Mr. Maley: If you took the whole population of the State, you would not be here to-day.

Mr. PANTON: Let us carry the one-vote-one-value argument a little further. If we consider the attitude of members on the other side of the House it is obvious that they do not believe in one-vote-one-value. The three Labour members of this House whose districts comprise the West Province of the Legislative Council represent 16,330 electors, and Labour has two representatives out of three in that House. Taking the Metropolitan-Suburban Province the Labour members in this Chamber represent 40,060 and those electors have no representatives in another place. Is that one-vote-one-value? Taking the South-West Province, Labour in this Chamber is representing 11,268 electors, and there is no representative of Labour in another place for the districts embraced in that Province. The North-East and South Provinces cover ten Assembly seats, nine of which are held by Labour representatives, and yet they have only one representative in the Legislative Council. So members may take the figures right through and find how the one-vote-one-value principle works out when it comes to returning members, not for one particular Chamber, but for the Parliament of the State. Consequently before members of the Opposition clamour for redistribution of seats and throw their gibes across the Chamber, they should work out the figures and see how they stand. During this debate I have been particularly interested in the references by members opposite to the surplus that the Premier produced last year. The Leader of the Opposition started on this line of argument, and has been followed by other speakers. I am sorry that the Leader of the Country Party and his deputy have not spoken, but the third deputy has done so, and he followed the lead of the member for Northam (Sir James Mitchell).

Mr. Thomson: Perhaps you saw my views in the newspaper.

Mr. PANTON: If I had to read the hon. member's views in the newspaper I would indeed have something to do.

Mr. Thomson: It would do you good.

Mr. PANTON: By some remarkable process of reasoning members opposite have found that the surplus came from some source other than that mentioned by the Premier. For my part the fact that we have a surplus is the main consideration. In view of the huge development that is taking place in Western Australia and the necessity for procuring money as cheaply as possible, I am surprised at the attitude of most of the members of the Opposition regarding the finances of the State. I venture to say that if one read "Hansard" from one end to the other, it would be difficult to find a debate on any Address-in-reply in which members have indulged so much in the cry of "stinking fish" as they have done this session.

Mr. Lindsay: Do not look at me like that.

Mr. PANTON: Perhaps the hon. member will take a more intelligent interest in what I am saying.

Mr. Richardson: You would not expect the chairman of directors of a company to cook his balance.

The Premier: That is a rotten thing to say regarding our finances.

Mr. PANTON: I would not expect members on the opposite side, who claim to have the welfare of the country at heart, to stand up and say the things they have been saying and practically accuse the Premier of having cooked the finances, as the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) has just done.

Mr. Richardson: I did not say that.

Mr. PANTON: That is the effect of what you did say.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. PANTON: That is the effect of what the hon. member said, and it is precisely what has been appearing in the Press day after day. The hon. member's interjection, appearing by itself in the newspaper to-morrow, could carry no other interpretation. It is most unfair.

The Premier: It is more than unfair; it is contemptible.

Mr. PANTON: I would not be permitted to use the word "contemptible."

Mr. Richardson: There are lots of things that are contemptible.

Mr. PANTON: It is not only unfair to the Premier; it is also unfair to the State itself. Instead of members indulging for a

fortnight or three weeks in carping criticism of the surplus, they should be applauding, not so much the efforts of the Premier in having produced a surplus as the country on its success in regaining financial stability. Such an attitude would redound to the credit of the State in other parts of the world. While I have no intention of discussing the financial agreement between the Federal Government and the State, because we shall have an opportunity later on to do so, I wish to refer briefly to the question. It throws my mind back to 1922, when I stood for the West Province electorate. The whole election then was fought on the question of unification. As with most other elections, some bogey had to be raised, and on that occasion, unification was the bogey selected against me. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) the other night indicated, by way of interjection, that members on the Government side of this House are unificationists. I am prepared to admit that the Federal Labour Party have been theorising on the question of unification for many years, but the Bruce-Page Government in one Act did more towards unification than all the theorising or discussing by the Labour Party is ever likely to do.

Mr. Richardson: Again, two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. PANTON: I am not suggesting that they do. Dr. Earle Page, when introducing the Bill into the Federal Parliament, said it was a pernicious system for one Government to raise funds for another Government to expend. Immediately the measure had passed through both Houses Dr. Earle Page set about making himself consistent in his inconsistency by perpetuating the alleged pernicious system for a period of 58 years. By so doing the Federal Government are taking a short, straight cut to unification. All said and done I do not think it takes a very expert financier to realise that once the Federal Government secure this financial control the people will be ready to hand over the biggest part of the business to the Government that have the money to carry on. One significant feature is this: to meet the objections of the State-righters, the framers of the Federal Constitution provided for a system whereby the several States would have equal representation in the Senate. When the Bill to abolish the per capita payments was sent to the Senate one of our State representatives, Senator

Sir George Pearce, ardently supported the Bill. Another representative, a member of the Country Party, Senator Carroll, did the same. Senator Kingsmill, the acrobat of the circus, voted for the second reading and against the third reading.

Mr. Mann: He gave reasons for doing so.

Mr. PANTON: Certainly he did, but the fact remains that he voted in that way. The member for Perth is a sufficiently old Parliamentarian to know that a member usually commits himself on the second reading. Senator Kingsmill gave reasons for altering his mind within a few hours of the second reading having been carried. He woke up to the fact that someone in Western Australia would disagree with his attitude.

Mr. Mann: You know what his reasons were.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He wanted an amendment.

Mr. PANTON: He wanted the Bill to go through the second reading and voted in favour of it. Thus three members of the Senate who were returned to look after the interests of the State deliberately voted for the Bill, and assisted the Bruce-Page Government to do what they have done.

Mr. Mann: Are you making a Federal election speech?

Mr. PANTON: I am making a speech that suits me. The hon. member for Perth need not worry. The member for Swan has what may be termed a hardy annual. We get it every session. The hon. member for Katanning indulges in it occasionally, but the member for Swan has it as a particularly hardy annual. I refer to the question of apprentices.

Mr. Sampson: It is a hard-striving annual, but does not receive too much encouragement.

Mr. PANTON: In his speech he appealed to members on this side of the House to ask the union advocates in the Arbitration Court not to be so vigorous on the question of apprentices. It is just as well that members and the public should realise something of what the position really is. In the first place, as the hon. member knows well, but refrained from saying it, the whole question of apprentices is in the hands of the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Sampson: Exactly. I said so.

Mr. PANTON: I know what the hon. member said. The court works under an

Act passed by this Parliament, and all the sections of that Act dealing with apprentices are administered by the court.

Mr. Sampson: The unions work too hard in putting up evidence to prove that there are already sufficient tradesmen, when there are not sufficient.

Mr. PANTON: The court decides on the evidence placed before it. The hon. member would lead us to believe that the advocates employed by the Employers' Federation (Mr. Carter, Mr. Andrews and others) are so quiet and have so little vigour that the union advocates put it over them when it comes to the question of apprentices. If that is so, why do not the advocates put it over them when it comes to a question of the basic wage?

Mr. Sampson: There is not much cause for complaint about the excess.

Mr. PANTON: It is the hon. member who is complaining. He is always doing it.

Mr. Sampson: And I am well justified.

Mr. PANTON: It must be remembered that the advocates in the Arbitration Court are the representatives of the trade unions of the State. The bulk of apprentices come from the unionists or the workers of the State, and the bulk of the workers are unionists.

Mr. Sampson: They are injuring their own children.

Mr. PANTON: Could it be imagined that sensible men, with all the opportunity for education they have in this country, would deliberately set about to prevent their own boys and girls from obtaining their opportunities in the struggle for existence? It is too ridiculous.

Mr. Sampson: It is wicked and shortsighted.

Mr. PANTON: It is not correct, and the hon. member knows it. Before I have finished I shall be able to convince him.

Mr. Sampson: It is increasing the number of unskilled, unemployed workers.

Mr. PANTON: Let the hon. member go to the Bruce-Page Government, which he so ardently supports, and induce them to prevent the importation of Jugo-Slavs and other foreigners, and if he would do that he might bring about less unemployment.

Mr. Thomson: There will still be a percentage of unemployed amongst Australians.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I trust hon. members, from this time on during the de-

bate, will permit a speaker who is on his feet to deliver himself without interruption. These interjections are highly disorderly. I do not desire to be constantly correcting members for their offence.

Mr. PANTON: There are two fundamental principles in apprenticeship. One is the ability of the trade to absorb the apprentices when they come out of their time, and the other, which is of equal importance, is the opportunity that is given to apprentices to be taught. If we are going to have highly skilled and technical trades and one or two apprentices to every tradesman, how is the tradesman going to teach the boys? Tradesmen of to-day are not like the tradesmen of old, when they had their own tools, their own blacksmith shop or their own engineering shop. The old tradesman was a master as well as a tradesman, and he took an apprentice and taught him. Those days are past.

Mr. Sampson: Not necessarily so.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member knows that very few to-day are running their own engineering shops. At the present time we have big organisations, combinations and other factors. There are big shops working with machinery. A man is employed as a tradesman, and in a large number of cases is working for an employer who may know nothing at all of the technical part of the trade. The employer is merely the commercial head of the concern, and he has his managers and foremen. He expects tradesmen—these words are very often quoted—to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. If he is unable to do that, he is not wanted. Consequently in our present system of apprenticeship the young men have to be taught by a practical tradesman during the time that he is doing his own work. If a tradesman is given an excessive number of apprentices it is impossible for the young men to be taught.

Mr. Thomson: I do not agree with you on that point.

Mr. PANTON: I cannot help that. The fact remains that the apprentice is taught by the tradesman. He cannot teach himself.

Mr. Thomson: Of course he is.

Mr. PANTON: If the hon. member were an engineer, and had to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, he would find that he had not much time in which to teach apprentices.

Mr. Thomson: No, but if he had one boy with him he could teach him.

Mr. PANTON: That may be so, and there is nothing to prevent him having one boy to-day.

Mr. Thomson: Yes, there is.

Mr. PANTON: All our apprentices must be registered. An apprentice is allowed, under the Act, to go to an employer for three months on probation. That protects both sides. It gives the employer the opportunity to prove within the period, whether or not the lad will make a capable tradesman. At the end of three months, if he thinks the boy is going to be a success, he accepts him as an apprentice, and he becomes registered. If on the other hand, the boy, after three months, thinks he will not get on with the employer, he can leave him and no harm has been done. In the Arbitration Court, 1,500 apprentices are registered to-day, excluding the probationers, of whom there is a large number. These apprentices are bound to very few trades.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are your figures only for the metropolitan area?

Mr. PANTON: They are for the whole State, but outside the metropolitan area, there are not many districts large enough to carry apprentices. In the metropolitan area in the baking trade there are 28 apprentices and on the eastern goldfields there are 7; boiler making 11; bookbinding, 6; boot-making, 37; boot-making (bespoke), 17; butchering, 36; slaughtering, 2; Eastern goldfields, butchering, 6; carpentering, 146 metropolitan area, 2, eastern goldfields and 6 South-West land division; clothing, 70; coach building, 73; engineering, 160; electrical fitting, 41; electroplating, 5; North-West 1, collieries 3, and South-West land division 22, and goldfields, 9; furniture, 208; hairdressing, 28; jewellery, 21; letter press machining, 39; lithography, 2; moulding, 26; optical, 3; painting, 66; paper ruling, 8; pastrycooking, 18; plumbing, 50 and Eastern goldfields 1; printing (hand composing), 42 and country, 14; saddlery and leather goods, 19; sheet metal working, 30; tailoring, 206; timber machining, 22; shipwrighting, 1; typographical, 6; total, 1,500 in these particular trades. These are the only trades to which boys are apprenticed. There is a good deal of significance attached to the numbers of apprentices employed in plumbing, carpentering and the building trade generally. As it was realised that most of the building con-

tractors do not have sufficient continuity of work to keep apprentices—except possibly Mr. Arnott, who has two carpentry apprentices—it was found difficult to get employers in the building trade to consider apprentices. It was, therefore provided that a board should be constituted.

Mr. Thomson: You would not permit improvers.

Mr. Sampson: How many thousand unskilled workers are there.

Mr. PANTON: The Act provides that one member of the Board shall be nominated by the Industrial Union of employers in the building trade, one by the Industrial Union of Workers, and that the third shall be appointed chairman and shall be a member of the Arbitration Court. As it was difficult to get contractors to take apprentices in the bricklaying or plastering division, it was decided that the apprentices should be apprenticed to the board, and that the board could then transfer them from one employer to another as the work went on. My advice is that notwithstanding all the efforts that were made by the trade unions in the building trade to have the board constituted, they were unable to induce the employers to move in the matter, which is still as it was when the Act was passed. Although bricklayers are not registered in the Arbitration Court they, being on piece work, have about 20 apprentices and are training them. A number of plasterers, who are also working on piece work, are training about 25 boys. There is no provision to prevent any one of these boys being thrown out of employment when the job is over. If the employers were so anxious to have apprentices, such as the member for Swan is always talking about, they have a big opportunity to absorb quite a large number in the building trade. My information from the painters and carpenters and the plasterers as well as the bricklayers associated with the Trades Hall, is that there are many opportunities offering for apprentices if the employers will only seize those opportunities. It is no fault of the unions that this is not being done.

Mr. Sampson: There are other trades outside the building trade.

Mr. PANTON: I will deal with those now. The Arbitration Court, after hearing evidence, decided what would be the right number of apprentices for a trade to absorb. Taking the list of registered apprentices in

the Arbitration Court, and taking the proportion as one apprentice to four journeymen, or a fraction thereof, it means that every baker, no matter how small, if he is a master baker or employs a journeyman, is entitled to have an apprentice. The proportion is one apprentice to two journeymen or fraction thereof. If the master baker has one journeyman, he can have an apprentice. In the case of plasterers, the proportion is one apprentice to two journeymen or fraction thereof, and the same in the case of plumbers and coachbuilders. In the case of timber machinists the proportion is one apprentice to four journeymen or fraction thereof. The secretary of the union tells me there are very few apprentices in this trade.

Mr. Sampson: How many could there be with that limitation?

Mr. PANTON: There are not as many apprentices as there is scope for. Men working on the timber machines do not want to apprentice their boys to that particular trade. In the case of engineers the proportion is one apprentice to three journeymen, and in the case of the railway workshops one apprentice to two journeymen or fraction thereof. In the furniture trade the proportion is one to two or fraction thereof, butchering one to one up to four, pastry cooks one to two or fraction thereof; railway unions the same. In the case of the clothing trade, females, stock tailoring one to one, whiteworkers one to one, shirtmakers one to one, vest and dressmaking and millinery two juniors to one senior, ordered tailoring one to two or fraction thereof; males, stock tailoring one to two or fraction thereof, ordered tailoring one to three or fraction thereof. In bootmaking, for the male section the proportion is one to three or fraction thereof, and for females three juniors to one senior. In carpentering the proportion is one to two or fraction thereof. There are 146 apprentices to carpentering. For hairdressers the proportion is one to two, and for jewellery one to one. For sheet metal workers it is one to three or fraction thereof, and for painters the same. In the printing trade, which the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) knows all about, there are the letterpress machinery, lithography, bookbinding and finishing sections, and the proportion is one to four or fraction thereof in each department.

Mr. Sampson: Not nearly sufficient.

Mr. PANTON: I wonder has the hon. member found out whether the employers have their full complement of apprentices now; that is, outside his own particular shop. Let him question the other employers.

Mr. Sampson: The majority have their full complement.

Mr. Marshall: Get out! You do not know anything about it. You are guessing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PANTON: The question is why all the employers have not got the lot.

Mr. Sampson: They all should have, undoubtedly.

Mr. PANTON: I agree with that. We want the youths to be apprenticed, but the majority of the employers have not the full complement of apprentices, and we want to know why. I read out the list of trades in which youths are apprenticed, but there are numerous trades which do not go in for apprentices, preferring to deal with junior workers. Shop assistants are a case in point. They are a large section of the community, and they have no apprentices whatever, but work under the junior workers regulation of the Arbitration Court. I find that as regards junior workers there is no limitation. Under the awards and agreements regarding carters and drivers for butchers, grocers, and greengrocers, the proportion is one junior worker to one journeyman. In the case of heavy lorries the proportion is one to five, but everyone knows that it takes more than a boy to handle vehicles of that kind. In the case of male shop assistants the proportion is one junior to five seniors, and after five seniors the proportion is four juniors to every five seniors. In the case of female shop assistants, where no senior is employed, one junior is allowed; where one senior is employed, two juniors are allowed; where two seniors are employed, three juniors are allowed; where three seniors are employed, four juniors are allowed; and where four seniors are employed five juniors are allowed. In the case of the clerical workers in the metropolitan area the proportion is one junior to one senior up to five for male workers, and after that one junior to every two seniors; and the position as regards female clerical workers is the same as in the case of female shop assistants. So there is not much to cavil at as regards the employment of junior workers and apprentices. There are numerous works where there are neither juniors nor apprentices. In such works the employee naturally be-

comes an unskilled worker. In the mining districts scores of lads go mining because there is no other opportunity for them. The parents are there pioneering, and the only chance is for the boys to follow their father's trade. Thus they become unskilled workers so far as technical trades are concerned. In railway construction work there are no apprentices or juniors.

Mr. Mann: Does not that apply to farmers?

Mr. PANTON: I have just reached agriculture. I wonder how many farmers and agriculturists in general have apprentices. I do not see any reference to them in the records of the Arbitration Court. I venture to say the agricultural industry is not employing half as many juniors as it might be.

Mr. Sampson: Would you give every boy the right to learn a trade?

Mr. PANTON: Yes, provided the opportunity was there for him to be taught and provided also that the trade was able to absorb him. I have two boys. What use would it be for me to put a boy of mine to a trade from which I knew that, owing to the want of secondary industries in Western Australia, he would be driven into the labour market as soon as his apprenticeship was finished? That sort of thing is going on day after day not only in Western Australia but throughout the Commonwealth. We find good tradesmen who have gone through five, or six, or seven years' training working on construction works or on the timber mills because there is no employment for them in their particular trade. What use would it be for me to put my boy of 17, a big, hefty lad, to jewellery, or another trade in which there is no chance of his being absorbed? Why should I put him into such a trade at a few shillings a week when he can go out into the country and earn as much money at 17 or 18 years as he would be able to earn if he were 24? A young fellow will not think of such a proposition. The degree of education in this country is quite sufficient to enable boys to know whether they will get employment in a particular trade or not. The consequence is that when the case was put up to the Arbitration Court the position was exactly realised, and the court limited the number of apprentices to the number that the trade could absorb.

Mr. Mann: A trade is no burden for a boy to carry.

Mr. PANTON: No, but it is a heavy burden for a man with a large family to

put a boy who has reached the age of 14 to a trade which is not going to absorb him. It is a heavy burden for a man subject to economic pressure to put a boy to such a trade at a few shillings a week. On the other hand, there is the trade of shop assistants, in which the boy can earn big money quickly.

Mr. Mann: That is a different point altogether.

Mr. PANTON: Of course it is. We are anxiously waiting for a board to be constituted in connection with the building trade. If the member for Swan wants to do something for apprentices, let him place himself in touch with the Employers' Federation and obtain opportunities for boys to be apprenticed to plastering and bricklaying. Those two trades could take quite a large number of boys.

Mr. Sampson: The awards should be liberalised.

Mr. PANTON: There is nothing in either the bricklayers' or plasterers' award to prevent 10 apprentices being taken to one senior. In fact, there are no awards for those trades. They work under agreements arrived at between employer and employee at round-table conferences. The employer himself realises the position. Does the member for Swan want this House to believe that the workers' delegates to such conferences are so vigorous that they can induce the employers on the other side of the table to agree to a larger number of apprentices than they want? If so, the class of employer during the last three or four years is very different from the class I used to meet.

Mr. Sampson: The employers have been altogether too complaisant.

Mr. PANTON: The poor old complaisant employer! It has never been my good fortune to meet him at the conference table. I must have been terribly unlucky.

Hon. G. Taylor: Perhaps you were a disturbing factor.

Mr. PANTON: I shall continue to be a disturbing factor in behalf of the working classes. In case of any dispute, the unions are always referred to Mr. Andrews, the secretary of the Employers' Federation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You got both sides fined once for the same offence.

Mr. Sampson: What do you propose to do with the numerous unskilled workers who were never apprentices?

Mr. PANTON: If the member for Swan keeps on repeating that we limit the apprentices to such an extent, he will eventually come to believe it himself. I have some figures worked out showing how many tradesmen, with apprentices, there would be 10 and 20 years hence even subject to the limitations imposed by the Arbitration Court. Taking one apprentice to four tradesmen—which is low considering the figures I have read out—then 100 tradesmen with 25 apprentices now would mean that there would be 150 tradesmen and 37 apprentices at the end of 10 years, and 237 tradesmen and 59 apprentices at the end of 15 years.

Mr. Sampson: But some die.

Mr. PANTON: One never hears of apprentices dying. The member for Swan hears of such remarkable things. Taking the proportion of one apprentice to three tradesmen, 100 tradesmen with 33 apprentices now would in 10 years' time mean 168 tradesmen and 56 apprentices, and in 20 years' time 300 tradesmen and 100 apprentices.

Mr. Sampson: Have you allowed for deaths of tradesmen?

Mr. PANTON: That would not make any difference to the apprentices, because there is the fraction all the time. The proportion of one apprentice to two tradesmen would mean that 100 tradesmen with 50 apprentices now would be represented by 210 tradesmen with 105 apprentices at the end of 10 years, and by 472 tradesmen and 236 apprentices at the end of 20 years.

Mr. Davy: Suppose there were, would that hurt the community?

Mr. PANTON: I have been trying to put up an argument. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy), of course, walks in like another gentleman I know at the death-knock, does not know what has been said, and then wants the matter argued all over again. I am trying to explain this to the member for Swan, though I admit I am not getting very far with it. However, I will now try to explain for the benefit of the member for Swan, and also for the benefit of the member for West Perth, that the secondary industries are not here to absorb the large number of apprentices the former hon. member says there should be.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How do you know?

Mr. Davy: Would a man be worse off even if he had to do unskilled labour after that training?

Mr. PANTON: I am not going over again, for the benefit of West Perth, what I have just given Swan. If I did I would be pulled up by the Speaker, and rightly so, for tedious repetition. I have already answered that argument twice. Let me merely say that as regards the apprentices and the lack of proper training for them, there is no one to blame except the employers themselves. Parliament passed the Industrial Arbitration Act, containing subsection 4 of Section 55, which reads as follows:—

Any employer who when required by the Court, or by the Apprenticeship Board in the case of apprentices in the building trade, to enter into an agreement of apprenticeship, neglects or refuses to do so without reasonable cause shall be guilty of an offence. Penalty fifty pounds.

That was passed by both Houses. It was left to the Arbitration Court to frame regulations for the carrying out of the apprenticeship section. That section gave the Arbitration Court the very opportunity the member for Swan is looking for; it said in effect that wherever the Arbitration Court considered apprentices should be taken, the Court should be in a position to say to those employers not carrying out their obligations to the youths of this country, "You have to take apprentices; we are going to compel you to take apprentices." And they framed a regulation for that purpose. Like all other regulations, it had to be laid on the Table of both Houses before it became operative. Members here were quite satisfied with it, but in another place a motion was moved to disallow the regulation, and that motion was successful. This was the regulation:—

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.

That regulation would have overcome what the member for Swan alleges the Arbitration Court advocates are doing, namely,

preventing the taking of apprentices. Of course I do not agree that the Arbitration Court advocates are doing anything of the sort. Under that regulation the court could have moved in the matter and said to any employer, "There is room in your shop for apprentices, and you must take them." But as soon as that regulation was framed, a member of another place, an opponent of the Government, moved that the regulation be disallowed, and the motion was carried by 14 votes to 7. Yet members like the member for Swan come here and endeavour to put on the unions the onus for the non-employment of apprentices. If only the employers would work in conjunction with the trade unions, there is nothing to prevent more than enough apprentices being trained in any trade or calling. I suggest to the hon. member that, instead of cavilling in this Chamber about the matter, instead of making general statements that go out and mislead the world as to trade unionists, he should get among his own people, the Employers' Federation, and employers generally, point out the necessity for doing these things, and get them to move in the matter. If he will but do this I will give a guarantee on behalf of the trade unionists that they shall be found only too anxious to assist, to the end that their own sons and daughters may be trained to fit them for the struggle for existence going on in Western Australia.

MR. MANN (Perth) [5.35]: I appreciate the privilege that members have of taking part in the Address-in-reply debate at the opening of each session of Parliament. On that occasion it is the right of every member to criticise what he thinks should be criticised, and to put forward for the information of the Government and the House matters that he thinks of interest and importance, not only to his own electorate, but to the State as a whole. In the Speech, a good deal of reference was made to matters dealt with by the last Parliament, while very little information was given as to matters that are expected to be dealt with during this Parliament, or even this session. In that respect I think I am entitled to criticise the Premier. For in this State the all-important question is development, and the Premier might well take the whole of the House into his confidence and have its solid support in his efforts to further develop the State, rather than merely give his confi-

dence to his own side, which he does at its party meetings, leaving members on this side quite in the dark as to what he intends to do in respect of future legislation.

The Premier: That is absurd.

Mr. MANN: It is not absurd, because the Premier would have, and does have, the support of this side equally with the support of his own side on matters affecting the welfare of the State. Furthermore, during the recess we read of Ministers touring various parts of the State accompanied by one, two or three members of Parliament, but I did not read of any instance of members from this side being invited to accompany Ministers on those tours. That policy did not exist when this party were on the other side. It does not give members on this side an opportunity to keep in touch with all parts of the State, or at all events it does not give them the same opportunity as is afforded to supporters of the Government. I am sure the Premier will agree that members on this side are just as anxious as his own supporters to help him in his developmental policy.

Mr. Kenneally: You have not shown it.

Mr. MANN: On what does the hon. member base his opinion? It must be either on something he has been told or something he has read in the newspapers; for he has not been here long enough to form an opinion himself. If he is depending on newspaper reports, he may often find himself astray. When he has been here a little while, probably he will change his mind as to the support that members on this side give to the Government. Members on this side are willing and even anxious to assist the Premier in his developmental policy. During last session only on rare occasions was it found necessary to divide the House, and then always on strictly party matters. There is a tremendous contract ahead of the Government and of Parliament. Because of that, it is the duty of every member to do his best to support any policy that will make for the betterment of the State and the increasing of our production. To support my contention I am going to place before the House some figures from the statistical returns. During last year we imported from New South Wales £3,286,971 worth of produce, and exported to New South Wales only £202,916. From Victoria we imported £3,216,267 worth and exported thereto only £371,662 worth. From Queensland we im-

ported £142,918 worth and exported thereto only £13,966 worth. From South Australia we imported £841,638 worth and to South Australia we exported £535,281 worth. From Tasmania we imported £110,983 worth, but exported to the island only £3,973 worth. Those are tremendous differences, and they leave us with a deficit of over seven millions. That is the task before the Parliament of this State, namely, to overtake that deficit. No matter what methods are adopted, or whether the successful suggestions emanate from this side or the other side of the House, it is the duty of every member to do his best to help overtake that deficit. One of the lines of which we import most is dairy produce. The Minister for Agriculture, the other evening emphasised that point. It is necessary for me to give a few further figures in order to show the position as it affects us as compared with that State of the Commonwealth producing the greatest quantity of dairy produce. Victoria is selling upwards of £11,000,000 worth of dairy produce per annum, considerably more than the value of her wheat production. Victoria has 17 people to the square mile, whereas Western Australia has only one-third of one person to a square mile. It shows the great necessity for increasing our population. Notwithstanding that disadvantage we are considerably in advance of the Eastern States in our production per head per acre. Victoria with her small territory has 13,000,000 sheep to Western Australia's 6,800,000. Victoria has 1,750,369 head of cattle, against Western Australia's 893,000. I am quoting these figures, not with a view to belittling the production of the State, but to show the great necessity there is for increasing our production. The increase must come from primary production. To bring that about it is necessary that we should have an increased population. Whilst the number that arrived last year was absorbed, I think we could have absorbed even more. I do not agree with the Premier's explanation as to the reason for unemployment. He attributed it to the arrival of foreigners, and to the men who had left the groups having come to the city. The principal reason for the increase in the number of unemployed this winter is to some extent the slackness in the timber trade, brought about by South Africa having ceased to be a big purchaser of our sleepers, and

also because farmers have tied themselves up by buying motor cars and motor machinery for their farms, and in that way being unable to extend their farming operations. Many have not been able to afford to spend money on developing their farms in winter. It has been suggested that certain works should be kept for the winter months or for those seasons when there are many men out of work. The Government did not consider that in the early portion of the year.

The Premier: That is not correct; we are employing more men directly this winter than have ever been employed by any Government in the history of the State.

Mr. MANN: On the 12th January the Minister controlling the State Labour Bureau made this statement through the Press—

Eleven hundred men were engaged through the State Labour Bureau between the 5th and the 11th for road work.

The Premier: If that statement was made it was not correct.

Mr. MANN: It was in the Press.

The Premier: I do not care if it appeared in 50 newspapers, it was not correct.

Mr. MANN: I accept the Premier's statement that it was not correct and I shall make no further comment on that point. But the fact remains, it was never contradicted.

The Minister for Mines: The Minister would have a nice time if he set about to contradict everything that appeared in the Press. He would have nothing else to do. They never do publish anything correctly unless it is typewritten for them.

Mr. Sampson: That is a reflection on the reporters.

The Minister for Mines: No, it is not. The reporters are all right; it is done in the office.

Mr. Sampson: It is a reflection on someone.

The Minister for Mines: Your papers are the worst offenders.

Mr. MANN: The Minister for Lands told us the other evening that a number of group settlers are to be removed from their holdings to others. I venture to say that before this Parliament has terminated, the holdings from which the Minister has shifted the occupants will be taken up by persons independently, and will then be turned to useful account. If we throw our minds back to the years 1915 and 1916, we may remember the statements that were made in the Press

and by different public men to the effect that the State was on the verge of ruin because the Agricultural Bank had 800 or 900 abandoned farms on its hands, and that the loss to the State was going to run into millions. We know that in the course of two or three years all those farms were taken up by people who have since worked them satisfactorily and profitably, and to-day, instead of those properties being a drag on the Bank, they are an asset to the State and are adding to the country's production. I am satisfied that the same thing will occur with regard to those South-West holdings from which the Minister is removing settlers. I hope the Minister will not be influenced by the dismals who are always in the forefront when matters similar to that of group settlement are being dealt with. I am sorry the member for Beverley (Mr. C. P. Wansbrough) is not in his seat because I am going to refer to him as "Dismal Bill from Beverley." He told us that he had the courage to inform the House that group settlement would be a failure because he knew the land was no good, and he went on to say that the only place where good land was to be found was on the Blackwood River. He added "But you can throw a stone over the full extent of the good land on either side of the river." Generally he said that there was no land worth while, and then repeated that the whole scheme would be a failure. That is a shocking statement to make, particularly coming from one who is the leading primary producer. I submit that although the lands in the South-West vary, that some are better than others, that some are adapted for dairying more than others, there was no justification whatever for the sweeping condemnation made by the member for Beverley.

Mr. Maley: Some members of the Country Party do not know good land from bad.

Mr. MANN: I was discussing group settlement with Mr. Sutton a little time ago and he told me of the great advance Denmark had made in dairying. I went to the trouble to read up the facts, and I found that these were the conditions under which the dairying industry was established there: Just after Denmark lost that valuable portion of their country, Schleswig Holstein, they found that their staple product, wheat, could no longer be grown at a profit. They thus were forced to change over to a new industry and they selected dairying. Even

then they discovered that the most suitable land had been taken over by a neighbouring nation, and all that was left them was the Jutland Peninsula and its swamps. Denmark then set about to reclaim the swamps and sand dunes, and to-day that territory is producing wealth to the extent that in 1925, Denmark exported to England £15,000,000 worth of butter and £37,000,000 worth of other dairy products. And it all came from land that was once swamps and sand dunes.

The Minister for Lands: The economic position of Denmark forced that country into the dairy industry.

Mr. MANN: If the Danes were able to do what I have described, surely it ought to be possible for us to overcome some of the difficulties with which we are beset in connection with the land we are endeavouring to settle. I am confident that the Minister will be able to employ experts who will advise him how to treat the land, that is the low land, on the Northcliffe plains and the sand country. It should be possible to improve it with certain new fertilisers that are bound to be discovered, and in that way turn them to useful account. When referring to the sand country I had in mind the Peel Estate. My opinion is that the swamp land there was sold too cheaply. I can see no difference between that land and the swamp land at Osborne Park. The member for Leederville will support me when I tell the House that people are willing to pay £80 and £90 per acre for swamp land at Osborne Park. Yet similar land at the Peel Estate has been sold for £12 an acre. I am sure that in the course of a very few months the Minister will have buyers for those properties from which he is moving the occupants, and that he will get for them greater value than has been placed on the areas by the department.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The member for Beverley exaggerated in one way and you are exaggerating in another.

Mr. MANN: If I am exaggerating, I am doing so on the right lines.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do not talk rubbish like that. We have good land and we have poor land.

Mr. MANN: Of course we have, but my point is that all the land is worth developing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

Mr. MANN: It is just a matter of the means that we adopt in the development.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We have not the means to do it.

Mr. Maley: Then we must find the means.

The Minister for Lands: If we have the population we must find the land.

Mr. MANN: Let me refer to the Minister's interjection a little while back that the economic position of Denmark forced her into embarking on dairying, and that the economic position here is not as severe as it was in Denmark at that time. I admit that. If we were suffering, as the Danish people suffered at that time, we would accept the difficulties without complaint, and we would appreciate the privileges being offered by the Government. The settlers would not be so ready to walk off their blocks. They would be more inclined to put up with a little personal inconvenience in the first year or two rather than walk off their blocks and attempt to get employment at the basic wage and on five days a week. I know that the Minister put the position very forcibly before them. I remember reading one report of a speech by the Minister in which he told the settlers that their holidays would be in their saving bank accounts.

The Minister for Lands: That was a misprint.

Mr. MANN: I thought it was very well put.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Minister is most unfortunate!

Mr. MANN: I thought he had made a very apt statement.

The Minister for Lands: The reporter did not write that at all. What he wrote was that if they put greater efforts into their holdings their assets would be so much greater, and that that was the proper way to look at it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is always some explanation!

The Minister for Lands: I think the reporter will tell you that is what he meant.

Mr. MANN: At any rate it was a remark that applied well to the position of the settlers. Instead of desiring to take their Saturdays and Sundays off in order to play football, cricket or tennis, the settlers should devote that time to developing their holdings still further. If they were to do that, they could look forward to a surplus in the savings bank and holidays from the money they would thus be able to gain from their further efforts. That really is the position.

Of course life in the city is much easier than it is under the conditions prevailing on the groups. On the other hand, I do not know that life on the groups to-day is more difficult or more hard than it was on the wheat belt when those districts were being developed in 1909, 1910, and 1911.

Mr. Lindsay: Is life on the group settlements as hard as it was on the wheat belt then? I do not think so.

Mr. MANN: I am sure it is not.

Mr. Lindsay: We did not get 10s. a day on the wheat belt.

Mr. MANN: Settlers there had to cart water for upwards of 40 miles. You, Mr. Speaker, know what that means. The settlers who pioneered the wheat belt put up with greater hardships than group settlers are expected to put up with to-day. I do not know which is worse: a shortage of water or too much water. In the opening up of the wheat belt, it was a question of shortage of water. However, women play a great part in the development of the State. Where the wheat areas were concerned a great proportion of the women were Australians; they knew what the bush was and what it meant to them. The result was that they went there and stayed on their blocks. They were prepared to put up with the disabilities and hardships. On the other hand the women on the group settlements come mostly from cities in the Old Country. They did not understand the life or what it meant to them until they went there. They found conditions hard to put up with. If any mistake has been made in the selection of settlers for the groups, it has been in the selection of the women. I have been in touch with a good many of those who have come from the groups and I found that in most instances the settlers had left on account of their wives.

The Minister for Mines: There are a good many the other way round.

Mr. MANN: There may be. I have met a good many who have left the groups within a month. The women folk asked for assistance until their husbands could get work in Perth.

The Minister for Mines: In one instance a settler with whom I was speaking said that he wished to get away from the groups, because his wife did not like the life. His wife happened to overhear his remark and told me not to take any notice of the husband because it was he who did not desire to stay.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should not try to make trouble between a man and his wife!

Mr. MANN: Whatever troubles there may be they will have to be overcome; we must strive to develop our dairying industry and cease the importation of dairy products from the Eastern States. We must develop the country and provide for a greater population. Experience so far has shown us that while one type of grass will not grow in one district, another variety will grow splendidly. I trust the Minister for Lands will not be satisfied merely with the removal of the settlers from the holdings, but that he will proceed with investigations to ascertain the best means of making use of areas that are being deserted now. I am reminded of the fact that when the Premier visited the Peel Estate to open a hall there, he delivered a speech. His remarks showed that at that time he was not aware of any discontent, neither was he aware that we would not be able to overcome the difficulties that have arisen since.

The Premier: I certainly was not aware then.

Mr. MANN: So that the position is something that has been sprung upon us suddenly!

The Premier: No, not suddenly. The position has been developing for a year or two and there must come a time when one is satisfied that things cannot go on.

Mr. MANN: The speech to which I refer was delivered by the Premier only last year.

The Premier: It was more than twelve months ago.

The Minister for Lands: You could not expect the Premier to go on a platform and make speeches such as you suggest at that stage.

Mr. MANN: No, but I am just wondering whether the Minister for Lands has not arrived at a hasty conclusion.

The Minister for Lands: No fear! I did not want to do it. This creates further difficulty because places have to be found for the men who are taken off their holdings.

Mr. MANN: The Minister intends to appoint a board and I take it the board will comprise experts.

The Minister for Lands: Not experts.

Mr. MANN: Well, practical men.

The Minister for Lands: That is so. It all depends from what standpoint you approach the question.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a very wide term.

Mr. MANN: Are you not to have a practical man with a full acquaintance of the dairying industry?

The Minister for Lands: We want men who will be able to assist in the work.

Mr. MANN: Could the Minister not have stayed his hand until he discussed matters with the board he wishes to appoint?

The Minister for Lands: No, for the reason that the members of the board will require to have some experience too, and the expense that is going on is such that we cannot carry any further.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not proceed.

Mr. MANN: The other night the Minister said he was afraid all our cheap money had been absorbed in losses on the groups. I predict that in the course of the life of this Parliament or, at any rate of the next Parliament, the same results will follow upon the opening up of the South-West as we experienced in connection with the settlement of the wheat belt. I predict that the areas now deserted will be taken up and turned to advantage. In time those blocks will produce equally as well as the blocks on which the settlers are to remain. That was the experience of settlement throughout the wheat belt.

The Minister for Lands: I admit that time is on your side. As the years go by and more money is spent, the land must become more and more improved.

Mr. MANN: For that reason, there will be no loss before the loan is due for repayment. The assets will be so improved that the holdings will become productive and then the areas from which people are being removed to-day will be sold at prices in advance of the present-day values.

The Minister for Lands: You can—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The member for Perth must be allowed to proceed with his speech.

Mr. MANN: The latest edition of a pamphlet issued by the Premier's Department contains references to the number of groups established and the money expended on holdings. If I have worked it out accurately on the figures given, the average cost per settlement is £1,970. If that is correct, the amount does not appear to be excessive, nor does the land appear to be over-capitalised.

Mr. Thomson: Do you not think £114 is rather high for pasture land?

The Minister for Lands: That is wrong. It is £60 to £40.

Mr. MANN: During the course of the debate, the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) interjected and asked if that included everything.

The Minister for Lands: It includes everything.

Mr. MANN: Of course it is a high figure, but what prevails here to-day has prevailed in every country where land settlement has taken place. The same difficulty was experienced in Denmark, in Victoria and in this State when our wheat belt was settled. What is required to assure success is practical administration and a determination to see the scheme through to a successful issue. To use a vulgarism, we must not drop our bundle, but we must take a grip of the situation.

Mr. Lindsay: The point is that we have better land that can be dealt with more profitably, leaving the poorer land to be settled later.

Mr. MANN: When America was endeavouring to settle some of her areas that were considered poor, she experienced the same difficulty. I have read the debates that took place in one of the American Parliaments when a Bill was being discussed. It was to authorise the construction of a railway from Saint Croix River to Lake Superior. The "dismals" said that the country would not grow a pine-tree and that anyone who settled there would be mad. They predicted that the railway would have to be removed later on. Notwithstanding that pessimism, the area I refer to is now one of the wealthiest parts of America.

Hon. G. Taylor: The same sort of thing was said of our wheat belt.

Mr. MANN: The American Government appointed a Commissioner to further settlement in North-West America. I will read part of a statement he made, for it applies equally to Western Australia to-day. During the course of his remarks he said—

The principle of the conservation of national resources as the foremost and controlling policy of the United States henceforth is coming to be seen by many, and must be heartily accepted by all, as the first condition, not only of continued material prosperity, but also of the perpetuation of free institutions and a government by the people. The work now being done by the Department of Agriculture and the agricultural colleges of the various

States furnishes a broad and intelligent foundation upon which to build up a new era of national progress and prosperity. It calls for a wise, generous, and continuing policy on the part of both Federal and State Governments. If this patriotic gospel is to make headway, it must be by organised missionary work among the people, and by the people. It cannot go on and conquer if imposed from without. It must come to represent the fixed idea of the people's mind, their determination and their hope. It cannot be incorporated in our practical life by the dictum of any individual or any officer of nation or State in his official capacity. It needs the co-operation of all the influences, the help of every voice, the commendation of Nation and State that has been the strength and inspiration of every worthy work.

Mr. Lamber: It sounds like the advertisement of an American land company!

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr MANN: I had finished drawing a comparison between the conditions that prevailed in the settlement of what was known as the poor land of America and the position as it exists in Western Australia. I had casually mentioned the difficulties that Denmark had to overcome in developing and settling her land for dairying. It is worth while to read of some of the problems and difficulties that had to be overcome in that country. One authority states—

The wonderful record of Denmark in farm production is not in any way due to fertility of soil or geniality of climate, but is due rather to the fine quality of her human material. It is man's mind and will which have emancipated rural Denmark and given to it its extraordinary political and economic stability. Her people have shown what can be done by steady industry, reinforced by developed intelligence and patriotism, and directed by scientific and business capacity.

That is surely applicable to our position to-day. The Year Book of Denmark, quoting the Board of Trade returns for the year 1921, gives the value of butter exported from Denmark to the United Kingdom as £15,084,000. It says—

In reading the story of the rapid development of the Danish dairy trade, one cannot fail to recognise that Denmark's great asset is the possession of a farmer class whose minds have in some way been made receptive to new thought, who are willing to listen to expert advice, who are capable of making new adjustments, and best of all who are strongly national in sentiment and jealous of any loss of national prestige.

If a country such as Denmark can accomplish so much under tremendous difficulties surely we in Western Australia, with the ad-

vantages we possess, with modern appliances, and with money at command—a greater supply of money than Denmark ever had—should take the work of Denmark as an object lesson and strive to do likewise. I read those extracts to show that our success will not be decided wholly on the quality of the land. The personnel element enters largely; one man will succeed where another will fail. By some influence or other, we must impress upon the people of the groups that the State is bestowing a privilege upon them, rather than that they should adopt the view that it is a privilege to the State that they stay on the groups. I am afraid the privilege has been thrown at them, and consequently they do not appreciate it. They have received it too easily. If they had experienced greater difficulty in acquiring the privilege they would not have been so ready to leave the homes that have been prepared for them and their families.

Mr. Richardson: The old pioneers had not their advantages.

Mr. Maley: They are better off than were the old pioneers.

Mr. MANN: If they had had to endure the hardships that confronted the early pioneers, they would not be on their holdings to-day.

Mr. A. Wansborough: Do not you think that party politics has had a lot to do with it?

Mr. J. H. Smith: What, with settlers leaving the groups?

Mr. MANN: What could party politics have to do with it? Does the hon. member suggest that an inducement has been held out by members on this side of the House for settlers to leave the groups?

Mr. A. Wansborough: I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. MANN: Then what is the hon. member's suggestion?

Mr. A. Wansborough: Some members did, though.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not members from this side of the House.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member knows of any member who preached to the settlers the gospel of leaving the groups, he should denounce that member in this Chamber. I do not think any member would be so disloyal to his country as to go to the groups and preach such a gospel, especially when

we know that every effort has been made to establish the groups and keep the settlers on them.

Mr. Richardson: It was never a party question.

Mr. MANN: Of course not. The group settlements were inaugurated by the present Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. A. Wansborough: No one denies that.

Mr. Maley: If the member for Albany says some members went down there to induce settlers to leave the groups, who were they?

Mr. A. Wansborough: I did not say anything of the sort. I said party politics had a lot to do with it.

Mr. MANN: I repeat that the group settlement scheme was formulated by the present Leader of the Opposition, and he is jealous of the groups. No one is more anxious than he that the groups should prove successful. No one is more anxious and ready to throw in his weight with the Minister for Lands to help him through any difficulties than is the present Leader of the Opposition. I have noticed in the Press the names of various members who have toured the group settlements and, with the exception of the members representing the districts in which the groups are located, I have not seen any record of members on the Opposition side having visited them. I have seen references to Government supporters having visited the groups, and I was rather incensed that members from this side of the House had not been given a similar opportunity.

Mr. Richardson: Hear, hear!

Mr. Maley: You have a free railway pass.

Mr. Sleeman: There have been members from your side of the House who have visited the groups.

Mr. MANN: I visited the groups during Sir James Mitchell's term of office and as a member of the Royal Commission on forestry, but I have not visited them since.

Mr. Angelo: The Premier told us the other night that we had had ample opportunity to visit the groups. I have not had an opportunity yet.

Mr. Lutey: You can go to the Peel estate in an hour and a half.

Mr. Angelo: Oh, I have been there.

Mr. MANN: I have spoken of the dairy-ing industry in Denmark. The Danes have been big enough to realise that the first

qualification for a successful farmer and a successful country dweller is to be a developed man able to think for himself, hospitable to new thought, and capable of applying the conclusions of his reading, thinking, and discussion to his own special problems. A good deal has been said about bad land. In the "Farmers' Gazette" I notice that a competition was held under the direction of Mr. Sutton for a trophy presented by the "Sunday Times" newspaper, open to the settlers in each of the four districts in which the group settlements are located, namely, Busselton-Margaret River, Manjimup-Pemberton-Northcliffe, Denmark, and the Peel and Bateman estates. If the yields of the winning competitors represent an average, there cannot be much wrong with the land. In the Busselton district the winner of the competition was Mr. J. L. Murray, of Group 48, who grew 8 tons 1 cwt. 3 qrs. of maize to the acre.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That was very light.

Mr. MANN: In the Denmark area Mr. D. R. Hodgson of Group 93 was the winner with 12 tons 2 cwt. 1 qr. to the acre. I am told that that is a very fair average. Of course we are not on the northern rivers of New South Wales, where maize probably grows more prolifically, but for this State it is a fair average. We have heard much about the Peel estate. Mr. O. E. Dudfield, of Group 39, grew 17 tons 14 cwt. 2 qrs. to the acre; Mr. C. Bridgeman, on Group 81, was second with 15 tons 2 cwt. 1 qr., and Mr. Peverett, of Group 82, was third with 11 tons 16 cwt. 1 qr. Provided the settlers show application and a desire to remain on their holdings and develop them for the benefit of themselves and their families, and with land capable of producing such returns available to them, there should be no doubt of the success of the groups in those districts. I want to refer again to the holdings that have been abandoned. Like my friend the member for Beverley (Mr. C. P. Wansbrough), I am going to be brave. I predict that before the next three or four years have passed those groups will have been taken up and successfully developed. I am sure—and it is a pity to have to admit it—that if they are thrown open to Southern Europeans, who will put up with some hardship and who will do some hard work, the results will be well worth seeing.

Mr. Kenneally: Is that what you advocate?

Mr. MANN: If our own people will not take them up, they should not be allowed to lie idle.

Mr. Kenneally: Now we know where you are.

Mr. MANN: Will the hon. member suggest that abandoned holdings should lie idle?

Mr. Kenneally: I will not suggest that Southern Europeans should be brought in to man them.

Mr. MANN: I am not suggesting that. I am suggesting that there are enough Southern Europeans already in the State. If those areas are abandoned, or our people will not avail themselves of them and Southern Europeans want them, they have a right to be able to go on them and develop them. The member for Leederville (Hon. H. Millington) in his speech can tell us what has been done in his district between Osborne Park and Balcatla. It is an object lesson to see the vegetable gardens developed there by Southern Europeans.

Hon. H. Millington: They have had no Government assistance.

Mr. MANN: That is so. It is a matter of personal effort. The Minister told them they could not expect to succeed when working eight hours a day. How could anyone expect to develop a farm on that basis? There are days when a man has to work long hours, and there are days when he can take things easily.

Mr. Ferguson: There are not many of those.

Mr. Maley: You have had a lot of easy days.

Mr. Lindsay: Pioneers are in their position to-day because they capitalised their energy and thrift.

Mr. MANN: That is so. I am unable to suggest how it should be done, but we must stop that desire on the part of the big percentage of people to leave the country for the town. People who are born in the country appreciate it, and when they reach the towns they want to return. Our difficulty is that the migrants who are going on the groups have come from cities. It is difficult in the first generation to offer them sufficient inducement to take up this new life. I have taken out some figures that are authentic regarding the percentage of migrants—this is for the whole of Australia—who have remained in the country and those who have flocked to the city. The years I deal with are from 1919 to 1924. In the case of New

South Wales the increase in population during that period was 215,000, and of these 183,000 went into the metropolitan area, and only 32,000 went into the country districts. In Victoria the increase was 154,000, of which 143,000 went into the metropolitan area, and only 11,000 into the rest of the State. In Queensland the increase was 99,000, of which 55,000 went into the metropolitan area and 43,000 into the rest of the State. In South Australia the increase was 57,000, of which 39,000 went into the metropolitan area, and 18,000 into the country. Western Australia came out badly. The increase was 36,000, of which 34,000 went to the metropolitan area, and only 2,000 into the rest of the State. To a large extent that is due to the number of people who have left the goldfields and migrated to the metropolitan area. It is necessary that these figures should be put forward so that we should realise that while we are endeavouring to increase our population special efforts should be put forward to induce people to go to and remain in the country, so that they may be utilised to increase our primary production. There are prospects in the world's markets for our goods. I have here a report from the London markets dated March of this year. This shows that the purchases in the London market are appreciating the Australian products. It states—

Since our last report there has been no change in the general position of the Dried Fruit market. There has been very little business passing, with the exception of currants which have continued in good demand.

Raisins.—The recent arrivals of Valencia raisins have met with a very slow demand, and quotations now range from 47s. to 55s.

Sultanas.—In spite of the small business passing, prices for all classes of sultanas remain very steady, only limited stocks are held by the dealers, but the poor consumptive demand prevents them from purchasing larger quantities. Although only a small business has taken place, there has been a good inquiry for Australian sultanas, interest being shown chiefly for fine coloury fruit from 68s. to 72s., and the lower grades ranging in price from 56s. to 58s. Smyrna sultanas are offering from 63s. 6d. to 75s. while Cretan range from 66s. to 82s. per cwt., duty paid, ex wharf, London.

Currants.—During the month the demand for Australian currants has continued, and stocks in first hands have been practically cleared at prices ranging from 35s. to 39s., with a few fine parcels up to 40s.

The Greek market retains its firmness, and with the exhaustion of the Australian stocks, business for this fruit should materially increase at present prices. Nominal quotations: Pyrgos, 38s. 6d., 39s.; Amalias, 39s., 40s.;

Zante, 40s., 41s.; Patras, 40s., 42s.; Gulf, 42s., 46s.; Vostizza, 43s., 56s. per cwt., duty paid, ex wharf.

That shows that there is a good market for our goods. We have done exceedingly well in our wheat production. Although figures are not as a rule appreciated, if they establish facts worth establishing they should always be quoted. New South Wales in 1925 had $1\frac{1}{3}$ acres under wheat per head of its population; Victoria had $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres; South Australia $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres and Western Australia $6\frac{1}{2}$ acres per head of the population. Last year probably the figure would have been $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres in this State. We have done well in the matter of wheat production. That industry was established under hard conditions, during seasons that were dry, and established by men who had to work long hours and under difficult conditions, but who appreciated the benefits of their holdings. If we can do that in the matter of wheat there is no reason why we should not do it with the dairying industry. I am confident that we shall do it. I have no time for those dismal people who say "I told you so; I knew the groups would fail." They have not failed and they will not fail. In years to come they will be a wonderful asset, just as wonderful as the wheat industry is in this State, and as wonderful as the industry is in Victoria. I have some other authentic figures to quote. The wheat production for New South Wales for the year 1924-25 was worth £20,000,000; for Victoria it was worth £15,000,000; for Queensland £810,000; for South Australia £9,000,000; and for Western Australia it was worth £7,000,000. In 1924-25 Victoria produced £15,000,000 worth of wheat, and in dairying and wheat products produced £17,000,000 worth, £2,000,000 increase on what was produced in wheat alone. Western Australia produced only £1,000,000 worth of dairying products as against £7,000,000 worth of wheat. This shortage of £6,000,000 we have to make up by development, and by attention to our group settlement scheme.

Mr. Withers: Not necessarily the group system.

Mr. MANN: By the development of our dairying districts.

Mr. Withers: Yes.

Mr. Lambert: So long as it is a system. That is what we lack.

Mr. MANN: Whilst I desire to see our primary industries succeed, I also wish to

see the secondary industries developed. I want to see work for everyone in the metropolitan area. I deplore the fact that we have such a constant stream of unemployed. But it is no use deploring facts; we must see how we can solve the problem. The Premier said the reason we had so many seasonal unemployed was due to the fact that we had no secondary industries. Victoria is the home of secondary industries in the Commonwealth, but it has its share of unemployed as well. When giving evidence before a Royal Commission in Victoria, Mr. Duffy, the Assistant Secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, said—

There were industries which regularly paid off men for one or two, or three months in a year, owing to slackness, which was, in some cases, due to overproduction. One branch of industry affected another, and it constituted a serious economic problem, as people got into debt, or had to look to charity, for sustenance. In many cases unemployment sent men on careers of crime.

The actual reason for our unemployed is that our population is not three millions instead of only 400,000.

Mr. Panton: You do not believe in the law of averages.

Mr. MANN: How does that apply? With all our secondary industries we can in Australia manufacture only sufficient for the consumption of the people of Australia.

Mr. Thomson: We can manufacture a lot more, but cannot do so at a profit.

Mr. MANN: We cannot compete with the outside world.

Mr. Thomson: Why?

Mr. MANN: Because the economic conditions are different. We have a higher standard of living, and we do not want it reduced; but we must face the situation. For instance, Victoria formerly had a good market in Africa for her boots; but European manufacturers were able to undersell her in that market. In the Pacific we cannot compete with local manufacturers, because the conditions of life there are different: the workers live under cheaper conditions there. Thus we in Australia can only manufacture sufficient for consumption within our tariff walls. Bringing that home, we in Western Australia cannot, save under exceptional conditions, manufacture more than supplies our own requirements.

Mr. Thomson: We are not even allowed to do that. Eastern manufacturers swamp us.

Mr. MANN: I regret that we are not allowed, and that brings me to a case I wish to particularise. Four or five years ago a man and his wife started a slipper factory in Perth. By hard work and application to business they developed it until they were employing 59 persons. At that time they were manufacturing 10,000 pairs of slippers per week, selling 2,000 pairs locally and shipping to the Eastern States 8,000 pairs every week. Then the Eastern States manufacturers decided that this inflow of western goods must in some way be stopped. They approached the Tariff Board and put it to them that if a 25 per cent. duty were put on British felt and a 50 per cent. duty on foreign felt, they, the manufacturers, would start a factory and make sufficient felt for all the slipper factories in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Lambert: Then it would be felt!

Mr. MANN: That is just the point. It has been felt. The factory was duly started—in Sydney; and the Perth manufacturer wrote over for supplies of felt. The factory management informed him that he would have to take his supplies in the order of turn with the Eastern manufacturers, and that he could only be supplied with a tenth part of what he asked for. He was further informed that they were not going to manufacture the sort of felt he required, because the Eastern States manufacturers were not using it, and that therefore he could not any longer get an 18-ounce felt but would have to use either a 20-ounce felt or none at all. The result is that the Perth manufacturer has been compelled to revert to the imported felt and pay a 35 per cent. duty on it, under which conditions he cannot continue to compete with Eastern States manufacturers.

Mr. Thomson: Is not the price the same to him?

Mr. MANN: The Eastern States manufacturers are using the local felt, and this man cannot get supplies of that. Or, rather, he obtains only about a fifth of his requirements. In the result he has had to discharge half his employees, and he is considering the necessity for shifting his factory from Perth to Sydney. Next I have a suggestion which may relieve Western

Australia of her annual army of unemployed.

Mr. Kenneally: I hope it is a good suggestion.

Mr. MANN: It is, and in connection with it I have the hon. member in mind. I am sure the Government and municipalities and road boards and also private enterprise could average their work, and to this end I suggest the appointment of a diplomatic officer. At this point I have in mind the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) or the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). That officer would, during the year, investigate works likely to be taken in hand by Government departments. I venture to say there is no co-ordination between departments as to when or how work is to be undertaken.

The Minister for Railways: You are quite wrong there.

Mr. MANN: If it is done now, that is probably due to the Minister's foresight. I suggest that an officer looking forward to the work likely to be undertaken should approach the Government departments, municipalities, road boards, and persons about to embark on large building operations, and endeavour to get the work averaged through the year.

The Minister for Railways: Building is difficult to carry on during winter, because there is so much lost time owing to wet weather.

Mr. Lambert: The member for Perth is blown out, I think.

Mr. MANN: Under present conditions the unemployed get no work at all during the winter, so that even if they got broken time it would be something and would relieve the Minister of many of his present worries.

The Minister for Railways: All the tramway reconstruction work is done during winter time.

Mr. Clydesdale: If daywork had not been stopped, there would not be unemployed.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member interjecting throws out a brilliant suggestion. I feel confident that with proper investigation and inquiry, certain works could be deferred to the slack season.

The Minister for Railways: So they are, I can assure you of that.

Mr. Lambert: Does the hon. member mean Government work?

Mr. MANN: Not altogether Government work; constructional work generally.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, and that is so as regards the City Council.

Mr. MANN: Roads, for instance.

Mr. Richardson: Roads cannot be constructed in winter.

Mr. MANN: In certain districts roads cannot be constructed during summer.

Mr. Kenneally: I am afraid the suggestion will not come off.

Mr. MANN: Whether it does or not, I am confident that some attention to this problem would relieve Western Australia of the distress that prevails every winter.

The Minister for Railways: It has already been done, and with good results too.

Mr. MANN: I know it has been done to some extent, and that improves my point. If it is being done to a limited degree—

The Minister for Railways: It has been done to the utmost degree possible.

Mr. MANN: The Minister says it is being done to its fullest degree. That may be so in his department, but his department is all he is able to speak for.

The Minister for Railways: No. I am speaking for the Government.

Mr. MANN: I mean that the Minister cannot speak for road boards or private individuals.

The Minister for Railways: I have had conferences with the City engineer myself.

Mr. MANN: Successful conferences?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Mr. MANN: The thing can be still extended with greater success.

The Minister for Railways: How do you know it can be extended still further? I have been in touch with every conceivable person.

Mr. MANN: Now as to apprentices. I am glad the member for Menzies (Mr. Pantton) has entered the Chamber, because he gave us an hour's address this afternoon on the position of apprentices, and I am about to make a suggestion in that regard.

Mr. Lambert: You have not finished with your previous suggestion yet.

Mr. MANN: Yes. The Minister tells me he has adopted it to a certain extent.

Mr. Lambert: You should not be bluffed off like that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: With regard to apprentices to-day, it is only influential people who are able to get positions for their sons as apprentices. The average man, who has to

spend the whole of his time in earning the bread for the home, has not the same opportunity or privilege of getting his son apprenticed as the influential man has.

The Minister for Railways: That does not apply in the Government. You know that, do you not?

Mr. MANN: I am not speaking only of the Government. I know that the Government call for applications.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, and have a board, and every boy gets absolute justice in regard to selection.

Mr. MANN: There, again, the thing goes by preference.

The Minister for Railways: No. It goes by personal inspection of the applicant and personal conversation with him.

Mr. Thomson: Some people seem to have a lot of luck in getting appointed.

The Minister for Railways: Some have a lot of luck in stopping out.

Mr. MANN: I know that every lad applying to the Government has to obtain two references. While those things are true, it is also true that the man who has time on his hands and is in touch with departmental methods has a much better chance of obtaining a position for his son. Many working men do not know when applications are being called.

Mr. Lambert: It is advertised in the paper.

Mr. MANN. Of course it is, but the hon. member knows that any number of people see something in the newspaper, and even then cannot apply themselves to do what is necessary.

Mr. Panton: Now you are under-rating the intelligence of the worker right enough.

Mr. MANN: I am not under-rating the worker in any way. I am putting the position as it exists.

Mr. Panton: As it appears to you.

Mr. MANN: No, as it exists. I suggest that the Education Department should appoint an officer to receive from the schoolmasters reports as to the natural abilities of boys, and what they are most likely to be adapted for, during the last year of their attendance at school. Then any employer looking for an apprentice could make application to that officer, in which case the son of the highest and the lowest, the son of the richest and the poorest, would have an equal chance and the employer would get a boy adapted to the trade, while the boy would get the opportunity of securing ap-

prenticeship to a trade for which he is suited.

The Minister for Railways: Those things cannot be known unless the boy goes to a technical school. The ordinary school teacher could not furnish that information.

Mr. MANN: During the years of a boy's tuition, the master of the school has time to learn something about the boy's disposition.

Mr. Lambert: Could you not extend this and apply it to our future members of Parliament?

Mr. MANN: In that case the hon. member interjecting would have a very bad chance.

Mr. Lambert: God help the school teacher who had the responsibility of teaching you!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: The member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) said this afternoon that every member had criticised the surplus, and the hon. member said they should be ashamed of themselves for the way in which they had ridiculed it, and had endeavoured to show it was fictitious, and so on. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) spoke, and I was sitting next to him, and I do not remember his criticising the surplus.

The Minister for Railways: Are you going to follow his good example?

Mr. MANN: Neither did the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) criticise the surplus. I only wish to show that the member for Menzies was wide of the mark, and that he made a sweeping statement which was not quite correct.

Mr. Sampson: They are sensitive on this question.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They faked the balance.

The Minister for Mines: You ought to be ashamed of yourself for saying such a thing.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do say so.

Mr. MANN: Members on this side are just as keen on seeing a surplus as are members on the Government side.

Mr. Sampson: Are you in favour of giving every boy the right to learn a trade?

Mr. MANN: Not every boy's parents can afford it.

Mr. Thomson: But would you give the boy the right?

Mr. MANN: If the system I have put forward were adopted, all boys would have the same right.

Mr. Panton: Would your scheme make the employers take the boy when recommended by the schoolmaster?

Mr. MANN: I am prepared to go so far as to compel the employer to take his quota of apprentices.

Mr. Panton: So is the Arbitration Act, but your friends in another place prevented it.

The Minister for Railways: Go and have a word with Mr. Nicholson in another place.

The Minister for Mines: He it was who moved the motion disallowing the regulation that would have compelled the employers to take apprentices.

Mr. MANN: I am not responsible for Mr. Nicholson, any more than is the Minister responsible for everything said and done on his side of the House. If I had my way I would compel every employer to take the quota of apprentices prescribed by the court. The member for Menzies this afternoon referred to the building trade, and said it was difficult for an employer in that trade to take apprentices, because he might not be able to carry them continuously through the period of apprenticeship. But provision could be made to transfer an apprentice in his second, third, or fourth year to another employer.

The Minister for Mines: That has been done already.

Mr. Kenneally: Provision is already made for that.

Mr. MANN: Then there is no difficulty.

The Minister for Mines: Yes there is, for the employers will not take them.

Mr. MANN: Well the member for Menzies has made that assertion, and it has been made also by the Minister for Mines by way of interjection, but no concrete case has been put up. The only case I know of is that of the Midland Junction workshops, a Government concern. They do not take their quota of apprentices.

Mr. Lutey: They take far more now than when your crowd was in power.

Mr. MANN: Now the hon. member butts in with an assertion. He has no authority to speak. It is easy to say they are taking more now than they did at some other time.

Mr. Richardson: What is the difference in numbers now?

Mr. MANN: The responsibility of a private employer is the responsibility of a Government department, and I think the Government should at all events show the way to the private employers. The Commissioner of Railways or the controller of the Mid-

land Junction workshops should be compelled to take his quota.

Mr. Sleeman: The State Implement Works have shown the way.

The Minister for Railways: The number of apprentices has been doubled during the last two or three years.

Mr. MANN: What is the quota now? I ask that so that the Minister can answer it later. In conclusion, let me say the Government will get loyal support from me and from this side of the House for any measures calculated to be of benefit to the State. But I will hold myself free to criticise any measure that I think will not be of general benefit, but rather is designed to benefit one special class.

Hon. G. Taylor: Or to be mere kite-flying.

Mr. MANN: I trust the session will be beneficial and will make for the prosperity of the State.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [8.20]: I should like first of all to say I consider myself privileged to be back in this august Chamber, and that I am looking forward with pleasurable anticipation to another three years of interesting work here. The three years during which I have occupied my seat have always been interesting in the Chamber, and always pleasant outside. One has made many good friends, and I do not know that I have ever found anything more pleasing than the good fellowship that exists among all members in the corridor. We are back here after a very peculiar election at which practically every member who stood was returned to his seat in this Chamber, in most instances with an increased majority. It is certainly very difficult to say how the voice of the people has spoken. I am inclined to suggest that if it has not been smothered it has been at least muffled by the present iniquitous distribution of seats in Western Australia. I regret very much that the Government have not seen fit to forecast any change in the distribution during this session.

Mr. Lambert: The member for Mount Margaret didn't hear you speak.

Mr. DAVY: And apparently the member for Canning did not hear me speak.

Mr. Clydesdale: Yes, I did.

Mr. DAVY: Well, you gave no sign. However, I do not propose to deal at any further length with the question of redistribution; in fact, I do not propose to deal with

anything to-night except the question of finance. In choosing that subject to speak on to-night it is not because I pose as an expert in finance; rather on the contrary. My experience is that experts, when they talk on a subject, wrap up their thoughts with so much verbiage that it becomes extremely difficult for an ordinary person to understand what they are talking about. I have made some endeavour to study the Treasurer's financial statement for the past year, his Estimates, and that volume known as the "Public Accounts" to arrive at just what the financial position really is. Having done so, I believe I can explain to persons ready to have it explained to them just what is the meaning of the Treasurer's financial statement for the year ended 30th June, 1927. If I fail to make clear to members what those figures mean, it will certainly be either because they refuse to understand or because of some imperfection on my part. We have heard in this Chamber and read in the daily Press the criticism made by Sir James Mitchell on the Treasurer's financial statement; and we have heard in this Chamber and read in the daily Press the Treasurer's reply to that criticism. There are three ways in which a criticised person may meet his critic: one is to give straightforward and definite answers to the criticism; the second is to pour ridicule on the criticism; and the third is to abuse the critic for having made his criticism. I submit to the House that the Treasurer adopted the second and third methods only in dealing with Sir James Mitchell's criticism.

Mr. Lutey: That is your opinion.

Mr. DAVY: I have said it is my opinion. On the evening of last Thursday week the Treasurer made his reply, and I am sure we all thoroughly enjoyed his little effort at ridicule. There is no other person I know who is more capable of introducing into a debate the light word and the light spirit. We all laughed heartily at the way the Treasurer passed his ridicule around the Chamber. It was most amusingly and cleverly done. But when he changed his attitude and assumed a serious, if not a threatening mien, and charged the persons who dared to criticise his surplus with being disloyal to the country, and mean and paltry, we stopped laughing with him and I for my part began to feel that I wanted to laugh at him. Of course from the purely selfish point of view

it may be wise for the State to endeavour to conceal from the rest of the world just what our true financial position is; but can it by any conceivable argument be held to be wise to conceal it from ourselves? And is it possible to conceal our true financial position from the rest of the world and know it ourselves? I submit it is not. One or two members on this side of the House have spoken of the surplus in terms that surprised me indeed. One member said he did not care how the surplus was arrived at. He did not care where the money came from, so long as there was a surplus. It did not matter to him what it meant when at the bottom of two columns of figures the Treasurer showed a credit balance.

Mr. J. H. Smith: He said it didn't matter about the £58,000 taken from the water supply sinking fund.

Mr. DAVY: Then it must have been the member for Nelson.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It was, and what he said was quite right.

Mr. DAVY: I remember another member whose name I shall not mention. He spoke in somewhat similar strain. I feel quite differently from that. I feel that we ought to know exactly how the surplus is arrived at; exactly what the figures on the two sides of the statement are composed of, and just whether those figures ought to be where they are. I shall not shrink from an attempt to show why I am convinced that the surplus is a paper surplus as alleged—a statement that the Treasurer so much resents. In so far, of course, as a surplus represents the difference between a column of figures called revenue and another column of figures called expenditure, I have no doubt it is arithmetically absolutely correct. I have not added the figures myself and I venture to suggest that the Treasurer has not added them either. I think, however, we can assume that the two columns are correct.

The Minister for Lands: Do you suggest that the Under Treasurer and the other officials are doing something that is improper?

Mr. DAVY: I made no suggestion at all. I have said that in my opinion the surplus is not more than a paper surplus, and I propose to endeavour to show just how it is not. Then, when I have advanced arguments, the Minister for Lands may draw his own conclusions as to what it is I charge

the Treasurer with having done. Arithmetically, I have no doubt the surplus is genuine, but the genuineness of the surplus depends first of all on whether the revenue column contains entries of true income and nothing more, and whether the expenditure column contains all the items of expenditure and nothing less.

Mr. Lambert: That could never be.

Mr. DAVY: If either of those columns falls short of that test, then I submit that the surplus, which is the difference between the two columns on the credit side, is misleading. I propose to endeavour to show, by dealing with very few figures, that it does fall short of these requirements.

The Minister for Railways: Can you show that the procedure was different last year from what it was before?

Mr. DAVY: Wait until I have finished. I shall be surprised if the Deputy Premier will not agree with me that the three matters I propose to criticise are without precedent. The Premier has stated, though it was not necessary for him to admit it, that it would not correctly show the position if he had taken into revenue the Federal disabilities grant, or got an advantage from any portion of it. But he has asserted in the most vehement language possible that his revenue this year has not benefited to the extent of one pound from the £565,000 received from the Federal Government.

Mr. Panton: How do you make it £565,000?

Mr. DAVY: Out of that amount £200,000 went into revenue. The Premier has said that as against the £200,000 he reduced income tax by 33-1/3 per cent., and, he added, that that reduction had more than compensated for the payment of the £200,000.

Mr. Panton: He said he lost £50,000.

Mr. DAVY: I will demonstrate that he not only did not lose it, but that he gained £27,500, and if there is an hon. member who does not agree with me when I put figures before the House, I can only say it is because he has refused to listen. The Premier said the other night that by reducing the income tax—I do not remember his exact words—by 33 1/3 per cent., he considered that he had lost about £250,000. Every hon. member knows that what he got from income tax was precisely £345,000. That was obviously two-thirds of what he would have got if he had not reduced the tax by 33-1/3 per cent.

Therefore, the £345,000 is exactly two-thirds of what possibly he would have got if he had not reduced the tax by a third.

The Minister for Railways: He got a lot of arrears from the previous year.

Mr. DAVY: Precisely, and that helped him.

The Minister for Railways: You said it was exactly two-thirds.

Mr. DAVY: The point the Minister for Railways raised is against himself.

The Minister for Railways: You said "exactly" and it is not "exactly."

Mr. DAVY: That is childish. I will put it this way—the Minister wants me to alter my language. The point that he raises is distinctly and strongly against him. I will say that the Premier got exactly £345,000. There may have been some odd shillings and pence, but in round figures that was the amount. I will say that the most he possibly could have got, if he had not reduced the tax by one-third, would have been exactly £517,500. I am using moderate language; if I wanted to be really hard on the Minister I might have said that the Treasurer could not possibly have got £517,500 if he had not made his reduction. What I do say is that the most he could have got would have been £517,500 if he had not made the reduction. The Premier took into revenue £200,000, from the disabilities grant, and by his reduction, the most he could possibly have lost was at least exactly £172,500. So that his advantage from the Federal disabilities grant was at least exactly £27,500, and there we have his surplus except for about £1,000. Is there any hon. member who is not prepared to put it to any schoolteacher in Western Australia to submit it to his class as a simple calculation? The Treasurer reduces his taxation by one-third for the year, and gets £345,000. What did he lose by taking off a third? The answer from any child except the very stupid, would be £172,500. If that is capable of any other solution, I am not aware of it.

Several Members interjected.

Mr. DAVY: I am not going to weary the House at any great length; if members do not like what I say, the sooner they let me say it the sooner they will be put out of their misery.

Mr. Clydesdale: What a nice advertisement you are giving the State to say that we have not a surplus.

Mr. DAVY: I am not going to be a party to broadcast to the world that we have a surplus when we have not one.

Mr. Clydesdale: No, you prefer to cry stinking fish.

Mr. DAVY: That is the sort of argument that makes one sick of the game. Because one offers criticism he is accused of crying stinking fish. The member for Canning ought to be ashamed of himself for making such a remark.

Mr. Panton: You are the only man with correct ideas.

Mr. DAVY: At any rate, I am endeavouring to express my honest ideas clearly.

Mr. Panton: Then all our ideas are dishonest.

Mr. DAVY: Not at all; I have made no such suggestion. I have pointed out that it is very difficult to understand the Treasurer when he made the statement that he had not derived any advantage from the £200,000 he got from the disabilities grant. The next point I would like to deal with is the £58,000 of which we have heard a great deal. The origin of that £58,000 is not in dispute.

Mr. Latham: Or left in the sinking fund.

Mr. DAVY: The Treasurer very naively said that it came out of revenue, and therefore the only thing to do with it was to put it back into revenue.

Mr. Lambert: Quite right too.

Mr. DAVY: The member for Coolgardie, who, I understand, is a very successful business man, says that it is quite right to put into this year's revenue what you took out of last year's revenue. Revenue from past years cannot in any conceivable way be regarded as revenue for this year. That £58,000 was accumulated over many years from contributions out of revenue. As a matter of fact the creation of that high sinking fund was to a certain extent, over a number of years, responsible for our annual deficit. My friend from Coolgardie tells me that because it comes out of revenue for a succession of years we should treat it as revenue obtained last year. Of course it may be that the State method of book-keeping differs in some mysterious way from book-keeping practised by accountants, business men and ordinary citizens. If the same fundamental principles apply to the book-keeping of the State as apply to the book-keeping methods of the community, then I say that that £58,000

has no more right to go into revenue than has the alleged surplus of £28,000 to go into this year's revenue. That £28,000 is out of revenue. Does the hon. member propose that we should start this year's finances with a credit balance of £28,000? Does he mean to tell us that because the £28,000 came from revenue last year it should go into this year's revenue? I will give one or two more illustrations.

The Minister for Railways: That is what commercial firms do—carry over profit.

Mr. DAVY: Does the Minister say that a balance from the previous year is carried into profit and loss of the next year? Does the Minister wish to have it broadcast in Western Australia that that is really his opinion?

The Minister for Railways: They call it by a different name; they call it reserves.

Mr. DAVY: If the Minister for Railways has ever looked into the statement of accounts of any business firm, as the member for Coolgardie has done on many occasions, he will know that at the end of the year the balance on profit and loss account is carried to capital. Last year's profit becomes this year's capital. If the Treasurer is right that because the £58,000 came from revenue it should go into revenue, then if I bought a house out of revenue on the instalment plan and subsequently sold it, I am entitled as a prudent man to treat the proceeds as revenue. If I pay premiums on an insurance policy on the endowment plan, then when the insurance company pays me a lump sum I am entitled to treat it as income and spend it in that direction. I suppose the Treasurer's worthy henchman Mr. Black, the Commission of Taxation, would be entitled to tax me on that amount.

Mr. Sleeman: Where should the amount go?

Mr. DAVY: Just as with the £58,000 in its partial responsibility for the aggregation of the accumulated deficit, now funded, I suggest the proper place for it would be back into the fund to help the accumulated deficit.

Hon. H. Millington: Do you suggest Sir James Mitchell would have dealt with it in that way?

Mr. DAVY: I suggest that if Sir James Mitchell had been Treasurer, he would not have put that £58,000 into revenue and called it revenue.

Mr. Panton: There would have been no surplus to argue about.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVY: There is another amount about which a great deal of argument has taken place. I do not propose to take that argument much further to-night. We have heard about £150,000, which was the interest and sinking fund contribution the Treasurer failed to pay this year. I do not dispute his statement when he said that the £150,000 that was put into revenue went out again into a reserve for losses in connection with group settlement. He was asked by the Leader of the Opposition where that amount was debited, but Sir James received no reply. It was not debited to the interest and sinking fund account, and I can only conclude from an examination of the accounts that it was debited to miscellaneous services. That item shows an enormous increase compared with the amount for the preceding year. We can, however, let that matter pass. I do not know the exact sum that was not paid over, but it may be treated, for the sake of argument, as standing at the figure mentioned by the Premier. I now come to the fourth point which tends to create much doubt as to the genuineness of the so-called surplus. One day last week we listened to an extremely interesting and able address by the Minister for Lands on group settlement matters. I do not think many of us were surprised to hear from him that there had been serious mistakes made in the course of the group settlement operations. The Minister was candid enough to admit that these mistakes were not confined to either one of the two Governments that had handled the group settlement scheme. We all realised that mistakes were absolutely unavoidable in connection with such a scheme. After all, group settlement is a pioneering effort and no pioneer can carry out such work without straying from the path from time to time. Although we were prepared for mistakes, we reckoned that the final benefit from the group settlement scheme would more than counterbalance the mistakes. The greatest optimist in the world and the most enthusiastic supporter of the group settlement scheme never dreamed for one moment that the State would get any direct profit out of the scheme for many years to come. Therefore it will be very surprising to some hon. members to

find out that the Premier has actually achieved his surplus by reason of the fact that the group settlement scheme is in existence! Surely that must come as a considerable surprise to those who knew what the group settlement scheme was likely to be and who have studied the financial position over past years! Yet had it not been for the fact that the group settlement scheme had been embarked upon, there would, apart from the items I have mentioned already, have been no surplus this year at all. The revenue this year has benefited directly from the group settlement scheme by a sum of money the exact amount of which I cannot state. It represents a considerable sum, somewhere in the vicinity of £100,000.

Mr. Clydesdale: Was that not so in previous years?

Mr. DAVY: What does the hon. member mean?

Mr. Clydesdale: Was it not so in Sir James Mitchell's time?

Mr. DAVY: No, that is not correct.

Mr. Clydesdale: Yes, it is.

Mr. DAVY: No. During the past year the Treasurer has had the benefit of $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions of cheap money, the interest on which is 1 per cent. only. He has taken into revenue out of Loan funds, sums of money varying from 5 per cent. to $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. of the $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions of cheap money. On the expenditure side has had to pay only 1 per cent.

Mr. Thomson: Do you suggest that he has booked up $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.?

Mr. DAVY: I do not suggest anything at all, but assert definitely that on account of the $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions, the Treasurer's revenue has benefited by sums varying from 5 per cent. to $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., according to the amount borrowed as part of that $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions, on which he has to pay interest at the rate of 1 per cent. only. That is to say, on £100, the lowest amount he could make was £4 and the highest £5 5s.

Mr. Lambert: But do you not know that he has not received one-twentieth of the interest yet?

Mr. DAVY: I have already stated that he received every penny of it. I do not suggest that the group settlers have paid it. The money has been paid out of loan funds.

Mr. Lambert: Taken out of loan funds!

Mr. DAVY: Most decidedly. I state that as a fact. It was not denied by the Treasurer, when he and the Leader of the Opposi-

tion discussed the matter over the floor of the House.

Mr. Mann: The member for Coolgardie is surprised!

Mr. Richardson: He ought to wake up!

Mr. DAVY: The exact amount could be ascertained by a qualified mathematician, but the amount is in the vicinity of £100,000.

Mr. Richardson: All taken out of Loan funds?

Mr. DAVY: Yes. (Now the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) says that Sir James Mitchell did the same thing. I do not care whether Sir James did the same thing or did not. I am not responsible for what he did.

Mr. Clydesdale: You know that he did.

Mr. DAVY: No, I do not. I say he did not do it and could not have done it, because all that he borrowed in respect of the cheap money before he left office was £750,000. He left office before the end of the financial year during which that money was borrowed, so that he could not have benefited by this process while he was Treasurer. I have dealt with the three outstanding amounts: the £27,500 received from the Federal Disabilities grant, which might properly, perhaps, have been placed to the credit of revenue but respecting which I complain that the Treasurer denied that he had received any benefit towards revenue; then there is the amount of £58,000 that also benefited revenue, and finally the £100,000, which I can leave to the House to judge for themselves. By the manipulation of these three amounts we have achieved a surplus which is illusory. It is a snare and a delusion, and nothing but a fraud and a sham. If we are not prepared to face the financial position as it arises from year to year—

The Minister for Railways: We are prepared to do so.

Mr. DAVY: —without camouflaging the position, we have nothing but ruin ahead of us. I am sorry the Treasurer is not here this evening.

Mr. Panton: So am I.

Mr. DAVY: I am sorry because I waited all last week to speak while he was present, but was not able to do so.

Mr. Panton: It was not the Premier's fault.

Mr. DAVY: Had the Premier been present, I was prepared to issue this challenge to him. I would challenge him to submit three questions to any reputable and ap-

proved firm of accountants in Western Australia, and I would guarantee that the answers would be as I have indicated to-night. The three questions I would challenge him to submit are: 1. Did revenue benefit from the Federal disabilities grant to the extent of £27,500? 2. Was the crediting of the £58,000 to revenue a sound book-keeping act? 3. Has revenue benefited by the difference between 1 per cent. and from 5 per cent. to 6¼ per cent. on 2¼ millions of money this year? If so, was that a sound bookkeeping act?

Mr. Panton: Do you suggest that there has been any alteration in financial methods adopted by this Government compared with previous Governments.

Mr. DAVY: I said that no preceding Government has had any such opportunity.

Mr. Panton: Answer the question!

Mr. DAVY: Well then, yes, I do.

Mr. Panton: Then you are wrong.

Hon. H. Millington: interjected.

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps the member for Leederville—

Mr. Panton: You are casting a slur upon the Government.

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps the member for Leederville (Hon. H. Millington) will get up and make a speech. I do not think he has started yet. Perhaps that hon. member will quote three instances that can be described as anything approaching analogous to the three I have dealt with to-night.

Mr. Panton: You said it was impossible for any other Government to do it. You made a deliberate statement that there had been an alteration in the financial methods adopted by the Government.

Mr. DAVY: I said that there had never been any analogous instances of these happenings.

Mr. Panton: You are qualifying again.

Mr. DAVY: Do not let us get away from the point—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Panton: Will you answer my question?

Mr. DAVY: I have answered the question. There is supposed to be a surplus this year.

Mr. Clydesdale: It is nothing to what it will be next year.

Mr. Mann: If you adopt the same methods.

Mr. DAVY: If this is the way the finances are dealt with, why do the Govern-

ment not take credit for the Table on the floor of the House or, if I may refer to you, Mr. Speaker, why not include your wig as well? All those items come into question equally with some of those I have referred to. I make the challenge to the Premier on the lines I have indicated, and am prepared to submit to anything that the Premier will submit to, if the answer of any reputable accountant is not as I have indicated.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.0]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Mr. Barnard rose at the same time to speak.

The Minister for Railways: Why prevent a member from speaking when he is on his feet?

Mr. THOMSON: I have no desire to do that. The hon. member was behind me and I did not see him. I thought you would want to adjourn after the statements of the member for West Perth.

The Minister for Railways: Not at all.

The Minister for Mines: He knows as well as I do that there is nothing in them.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. BARNARD (Sussex) [9.1]: I shall not detain the House long. We have heard quite a lot about the surplus for the last financial year. I am sorry to have to mention it again, but I must say I was pleased to hear from the Premier that we had a surplus in fact and not simply a surplus on paper. During the last three years I have been asking the Government to give attention to certain requirements in my district. They are necessary works, but I have always received the reply that there was no money available for them. Therefore I am pleased to hear that the Government have a surplus, because I now entertain the hope that probably a few of the small items I have been endeavouring to get for my district will be realised. It may be well for me to mention them again, so that the Ministers concerned will be acquainted with them. One of them is a small siding required on the other side of Donnybrook. People have been asking for this accommodation for many years, and it is certainly a very necessary work. The Minister for Railways has informed me that there are other works of greater urgency, and that

owing to the shortage of money they could not be provided. I hope that when I approach the Minister for Railways again he will be able to indicate that the work will be carried out in the near future. The people of Donnybrook have been agitating for railway station improvements for many years, and a promise has been made that a new station would be built. So far nothing has been done. I hope that this promise will be fulfilled in the near future. It is essential that a new station should be provided. There is quite a lot of work in that centre, and it is dangerous for the people to have to cross the railway when moving from one side of the town to the other. An overway bridge is required. When I approach the Minister on this question I hope I will not be met with the old answer that there are no funds available for the work. Last year an amount of £5,000 was placed on the Estimates to commence improvements to the Busselton jetty. During my election campaign I was twitted a good deal with the statement that the provision of that amount was only an election bait on the part of the Premier. I denied that statement, and my denial was supported by the Labour candidate, who said the amount had genuinely been placed on the Estimates and that the work would be commenced. So far nothing has been done in that direction. The Minister for Works has informed me that as soon as the Treasurer makes the money available he will proceed with the work. I hope it will be commenced at an early date. It is very necessary that improvements to the jetty should be carried out. Shipping is retarded and vessels often have to pass the port because there is not sufficient accommodation for two vessels to berth at once. The revenue of the port is of great assistance, and better accommodation should be provided. Reference has been made to the good work of the Main Roads Board. I have heard quite a lot about the good roads that have been provided, but I have not found any of them in my district. I had the pleasure on Sunday of seeing portion of a good road constructed by the Main Roads Board in the Bunbury district, but unfortunately an aeroplane is necessary to get to the good section. From the Bunbury end to the good section the stretch of road is almost impassable, and the same applies to the other end.

Mr. Withers: I am not game to go out and look at it.

Mr. BARNARD: I do not blame the hon. member for that, especially if he has any regard for his motor car. I realise that the board cannot do everything at once, but I hope that as soon as the weather improves, they will make better progress than they have made in the past. Group settlement has been the subject of a lot of comment during this debate. There is one statement I wish to contradict for the second time, and that is the assertion of the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) that the primary producers were the people who first suggested group settlement. I had reason to contradict it on a previous occasion when a member of the Primary Producers' Association made the statement. Mr. Griffiths said that at a conference of the Primary Producers' Association in 1915 the question of group settlement was brought up and Sir James Mitchell followed that suggestion. In 1911 when the late Mr. Frank Wilson delivered his first policy speech in Busseton and the present Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Lands, he said—

The future of this country depends so largely upon a constant stream of immigration to our shores that the matter must not be neglected in the slightest degree. A vast territory lies in the south-west of Busseton around Nannup, Bridgetown and Denmark. The Government is determined to take immediate steps to encourage settlement in this area, and will, therefore, seek approval of a railway from Busseton to Margaret River as a commencement of a general scheme which includes a railway from Manjimup to Denmark and Nannup to Deep River. It is proposed to settle as quickly as possible fifty farmers in the Busseton district, fifty in Bridgetown, and fifty in the Albany district. The Government will erect a small cottage, dairying building, and boundary fence, and clear a small area (say ten acres) and provide them with ten cows.

That was the origin of group settlement, and when Sir James Mitchell was in power. he brought the scheme into operation. When the ex-Minister for Lands (Hon. W. C. Angwin) undertook the administration of group settlement I am satisfied he was keen in the desire to make it a success, but he always admitted that he was not a farmer and had no experience of farming, and therefore he had to be guided by his advisers. It was thought fit to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into group settlement generally and decide what should be done. As with most Royal Commissions, the result was small.

Mr. Lindsay: It was the fault not of the Royal Commission but of the House, which did not discuss the report.

Mr. BARNARD: The ex-Minister for Lands, however, did accept one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, namely, that the clearing should be done by contract. That proved an absolute failure and was the worst thing ever done in connection with group settlements. Up to the present the groups have not recovered from the effect of adopting that recommendation. The men who were on the groups to become farmers were converted into wage-earners or land-clearers. They forgot that they were there to carve out farms for themselves, and they set to work to earn as big a cheque as possible. Some of them earned very large cheques. Then it was found that a mistake had been made, and circular No. 88, of which so much has been heard, limiting the earnings of group settlers, was put into force. Under it the settlers were allowed to earn not more than £20 per month and deductions were made for every cow in excess of two. Consequently the men that had gone on to the groups for their own convenience left. Some of them engaged in road and drainage work, some in sleeper carting, and some started small businesses. Instead of contract clearing having proved a benefit, it has proved the reverse for everyone on the group settlements and has been the cause of much discontent. If the original system had been continued, less money would have been expended, and possibly much more farming would have been done. While contract clearing was permitted, the men engaged in no spare time effort, because they put all their time into clearing work. I do not blame the ex-Minister for Lands; it was the administration that was at fault. Now we have been informed through the Press that 500 blocks are to be condemned or linked up with other blocks. The settlers are anxious to know which blocks are going to be condemned. Some of the men have been living on their own blocks and working on other blocks, because they have been informed that theirs will probably be linked up. All this has made for discontentment. I have a letter here from a number of group settlers saying they do not know whether their blocks are going to be condemned. One of them says, "I heard my block is going to be condemned, and if so I do not want to put in any spare time

effort, and I shall not plant any vegetables. What is the position?" One of the arguments raised at the inception of group settlement as to security of tenure has been strongly revived. In fact, it has been one of the bones of contention practically all through the piece that the settlers had no security of tenure. They were always told by the Government that they need not worry as the Government would look after them. Having learned that 500 blocks are to be condemned; they ask, "Where is our security of tenure now? The Government are letting us down." Some of the men, who had small amounts of capital, have spent it on their properties, and they are wondering whether they will receive any compensation for that expenditure. I have half a dozen questions from an association, and am going to submit them to the Minister for his answer. That is one of them.

The Minister for Lands: You are in the happy position to communicate them quite soon.

Mr. BARNARD: Much has been said about the Abba River country, the linking up and the condemning of blocks. In his speech last week the Minister for Lands said, when quoting the difference between fertilising on poor land and fertilising on good land, that it cost £1 14s. per acre to fertilise at Jardee, and £3 17s. to fertilise at Abba River. I can understand that. The land at Jardee is much better than at the other place, but it costs twice as much to clear that land. In many cases on the Abba River the fertiliser was put upon land in such a way that it was wasted. The pastures that were sown for two or three years did not germinate, because the land was under water. It could easily cost £3 17s. an acre to fertilise the country in that condition. The money was wasted.

The Minister for Lands: Why was not the country drained first? Why put the cart before the horse, and start sowing the seed when the ground was under water?

Mr. BARNARD: That was a question of management. The people in Perth who issued the instructions did not see the land. The foreman had to do what he was told whether he liked it or not, so that quite a lot of the seed was wasted. The Leader of the Opposition said that it had taken a long time to find out that the land was no good, and the Premier replied that the land had to be proved. Quite a lot of the country

has not been proved. Instructions have frequently been issued from Perth that certain things had to be done. I know that foremen themselves would not have approved of certain things, but they had to carry out the instructions. Some men have not had an opportunity of farming their land, such as I would like to see given to them. I asked the Minister for Lands the other night whether they had had this opportunity, and he said that they had in some instances. I am told that in one group in my district the settlers are not allowed to suggest what should be done. Everything is done from Perth, and it has to be carried out accordingly. On some of the groups are men who could buy and sell the foremen as farmers, but they have no voice in what is done. Some of the foremen have not been in Australia very long. It is not necessary for a foreman under present conditions to know very much, because he is merely there to carry out instructions. There are people who have been in Australia all their lives and know a lot about farming. They are handicapped on their holdings because they are not allowed to do what they think is right. In the much despised Abba River district one man told me he went there with £10, and now he is able to buy a motor car and is quite satisfied with his lot. He is quite prepared to carry on. If the Minister has seen fit to condemn his block he should be allowed to carry on if he wishes to do so. No man who is willing to stay on his block, and is prepared to make a living upon it, should be turned out. He should not be taken away from that location and put upon another, merely because it will not carry 20 cows. If he can make a living he should be allowed to stay there.

The Minister for Lands: Is this man you speak of on a group, and is he still receiving wages, or is he on contract?

Mr. BARNARD: I do not know what he is doing. He is quite satisfied to stay where he is. No doubt his block is entirely cleared by now.

Mr. Lindsay: He must be one of the £6 5s. men.

Mr. BARNARD. No. He is not only milking cows. The Minister for Lands quoted the evidence of a Mr. Smith, who said a man must have 300 or 400 acres and run 40 or 50 cows in order to make a living. The man I speak of has been there for several years, and is making a living off 100 acres of

pasture. Last year he milked 80 cows. He did not elect to do this. He bought a lot of young stock, which he hoped when matured to sell to the Government. He slipped, however, and he has had to milk the stock himself. It has paid him to do so, although he had to hand-feed them. The engineers have laid down a wonderful drainage scheme for the Busselton area. As the Minister stated, it is not yet completed. I understand that some of it is to be stopped, because it goes near the locations that are going to be condemned. Those who have locations which are not condemned will not be able to get that drainage. I understand that levels have been taken on every block. From the lowest portion of the location drains could be made and connected up with the drainage scheme, so that all the blocks in the area could be drained. Those who have had the ordering of the ploughing have not always ploughed the land in the right way so that it would drain properly. In many cases the ploughing has been done in a circular fashion, so that the land will remain wet all the winter. Two-thirds of that country has not been properly investigated for the growing of pastures, and we do not know what it will grow until it is proved. I have seen maize growing on the Abba River plains 10 feet high. I have known that country all my life, and would not have dreamt of its doing this. Members from the wheat area who condemn our country know very little about it.

Mr. Lindsay: Did you show that to the Royal Commission?

Mr. BARNARD: Many members have never been there. The member for Toodyay was fortunate enough to be on the Royal Commission. Most of its members were wheat farmers, and knew very little about farming in the South-West. They could not speak from personal experience of the South-West. If they were honest they would agree that they are growing wheat now on land they never expected would grow any. I have heard a lot about light lands and the growing of wheat upon them. I am sure that wheat growers will be pleased to know that our light lands will grow good pastures.

Mr. Lindsay: We proved our light lands without Government assistance.

Mr. BARNARD: We have land that will grow good pastures that were not expected to grow anything. I do not profess to know anything about wheat farming, but I have

seen land in the wheat belt that I would not expect to grow any wheat. At any rate, I would not display my ignorance in the House as other members have done. The member for Beverley (Mr. Brown) is the only authority we have on land. He knows all about it. He said we had the wrong class of men from the Old Country on group settlements. Most of the people from the Old Country were good enough to fight for the Empire, but when they come here, take up land and assist in the development of the State, they are despised. Amongst the early settlers on the groups were many Western Australians and people from the other States. Some of them were amongst the first to leave. In many cases inducements were offered to them to earn more money elsewhere. A lot of work was going on in the way of sleeper cutting, carting and road and drainage work, and this took a lot of them away. Many of these people have since applied to go back on the groups. The Minister said in Busselton that over 100 applications had been received with this object. Many people have written to me desiring to go back. I hope if the Minister has decided to condemn a lot of these blocks he will throw them open for selection at a reasonable price. I know many persons who are looking for land. I had a letter to-day from a man in the Margaret River district saying he had applied on two occasions for land, and had been refused because the land was reserved for group settlers, although never surveyed for that purpose. He has a family of seven, including four sons, and he wants to take up land. I will call upon the Minister later about him. Many of the condemned blocks will be taken up and some use will be made of them. It would be a pity to allow them to revert to their old state. They have been cleared, some decently, but others not too well, and they can be turned into good pasture land and will help the people along. The little pinpricks which have been administered to the man on the land have caused quite a number of good settlers to leave. Many settlers have had very inferior stock allotted to them, and that applies to both horses and cattle. In some cases the horses supplied have not been fit to do the work; in other cases settlers have not been able to get horses at all to do their ploughing. Some locations which have been in occupation for four or five

years have not their pastures down yet, this being due to the fact that the land has not been ploughed owing to the lack of horses. Frequently the conditions have not been satisfactory. Quite a lot of the £4,000,000 spent has been absolutely wasted. That is undeniable. Let us hope that the new Minister, who I feel sure has made up his mind to do his very best—

Mr. Thomson: Do you say £2,000,000 has been wasted?

Mr. BARNARD: Yes, easily. The money could have been used to better advantage by encouraging the men to grow something, even if the Government had to buy the produce and dispose of it at a loss. That would have been more to the advantage of the settlers and of the country, because the men would have been engaged in developing their holdings. The Government might even have given a bonus on butter fat. I shall be told, of course, that the Government are not permitted by the Federal Constitution to do such a thing; but there are ways in which they could have assisted the development of the dairying industry in the South-West by something in the nature of a bonus. We know that the butter industry in the Eastern States was built up by bonuses. What strikes me as very strange indeed is that the majority of the people, and of members of this House in particular, appear to think that south-western dairying should have been developed in the course of five years to a position almost equalling that which Eastern States dairying has attained in the course of 40 or 50 years. I am satisfied that when we have been at dairying in the South-West for half the time that the Eastern States have been at it, our industry will be quite equal to all the requirements of Western Australia. The Minister has decided, I understand, to appoint a board to deal with the question of group settlement. If he is successful—and I hope he will be—in getting the right men for that board, undoubtedly group settlement will be put on the track towards doing some good for the settlers and for Western Australia. Having travelled through the group settlements with the Minister, I am convinced that he is anxious to do his very best for them; and with the assistance of a suitable board he will certainly achieve considerable good. Anything I can do in my part of the country to assist him, I

certainly shall do. So much has been said about group settlement, and most of it against group settlement—

Mr. Thomson: Not necessarily against it.

Mr. BARNARD: I do not think I have heard hon. members in general say anything in favour of group settlement. The administration has been criticised freely, and we know it has not been all that was expected; but I still maintain that many settlers have not had a fair chance and have not been given proper assistance to develop their holdings. I look forward to that genuine assistance being rendered to them from now on, assistance that is needed to enable them to make a success of their holdings. The members of the new board, I understand, are to be practical men with a knowledge of the South-West, and are to instruct the settlers how to go about their work. They will have a pretty hard job to carry out, but if the right men are chosen we should during the next few years have better results from the groups than we have had so far, and with the expenditure of much less money.

On motion by Mr. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.35 p.m.
