

other place would not allow the amending Bill to go through. I hope the workers and also the business people of this country will soon get some reasonable recompense for attending the courts as jurymen. It is a scandalous shame that men should be forced to leave their work and function as jurymen for a fee of 10s. per day. I also wish to mention the question of protection of life in the picture theatres of this State. Action in that respect is long overdue. At present the ridiculous position obtains of firemen being on duty in picture shows from 7 p.m. It is far more necessary to have firemen in attendance at matinees when the theatres are filled with women and children. I shall use my best endeavours to see that the position is suitably adjusted.

Mr. Taylor: Are not the people about here too green to burn?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would favour something on the lines of the Victorian system, where firemen are on duty in places of entertainment during the whole of the time that these are open. For an attendance of 500 and not exceeding 1,000, one fireman must be present; for an attendance of 1,000 and not exceeding 1,500, two firemen must be present; and so on. Unless we take action in that direction we shall infallibly have, one of these days, a conflagration accompanied by serious loss of life; and we shall be culpable if we do not legislate so as to prevent the possibility of such a disaster. I am always prepared to admit a mistake when I have made it, and I think I made a mistake during last session, in the matter of the Traffic Act. Personally I did not recognise that the measure was going to operate as harshly as it has done with respect to horse-drawn vehicles. Some relief ought to be afforded to the owners of horse-drawn vehicles, because the taxation on them is much too heavy. Most of these people are not wealthy; they are generally owners of one or two drays, and they should not be called upon to pay a large tax while farmers, sandalwood-getters, and others, are allowed to go scot free in that regard.

Mr. Panton: Who told you that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Sandalwood-getters and wheat farmers are let off with about one-quarter of the taxation which these other people have to pay.

Mr. Panton: Sandalwood-getters are never on a main road

Mr. SLEEMAN: Before closing I must draw attention to that hardy annual, the Fremantle railway bridge. One of these days a train will go flying off the bridge. I was present recently when piles were being pulled out at the traffic bridge and new piles were being put in, and anyone who saw the condition of the bridge under those circumstances must have felt something like terror. As I say, new piles are now being put in. Some of the old piles on the railway bridge are in such a state that one could thrust a lead pencil into them. The time has arrived when that bridge must be moved, for the safety of the public, for the extension of the Fremantle harbour, and to permit of the provision of a dock. Fremantle will never be a port worthy of this State until it has a dock. A dock has got to come. I hope that the Premier, when he was in the Old Country, made some inquiries regarding docks, including floating docks.

Mr. Taylor: Bunbury wants a dock.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not against Bunbury having one. I am not prejudiced against Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton, or any other port. Let them all have their dues. However, seeing that Fremantle is the main port of the State, a dock must come. Probably the matter may have to be put off until the new engineer-in-chief arrives, but I hope that when he does arrive he will get busy and see that the Fremantle railway bridge is removed, for a start, and then proceed with the extension of the harbour and the provision of a dock.

Mr. Taylor: Could he not bring a dock out with him, to save time?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That has been done, though the hon. member interjecting seems to think it is a ridiculous proposition. Docks as big as the one required at Fremantle have been towed out over great distances. I shall have more opportunities of speaking before the session finishes, and therefore will not detain the House longer now.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.39]: In view of the fact that in my district there are some 17,000 persons, I feel that this session I must say a few words more than I said last session. No doubt members representing constituencies of a few hundred people can get through what they have to say more quickly than a member circumstanced as I am. On the other hand, I hope that before the end of the present Govern-

ment's term we shall have the electorates altered so as to be more uniform. I see no mention of a Redistribution of Seats Bill to be introduced this session, but I hope that next session something of the kind will happen. In spite of the fact that so many people live around Claremont, Peppermint Grove, and Cottesloe Beach, I shall keep my speech on this occasion down to five short questions which I have been asking myself, and on which I shall try to get the views which are put forward accepted by the Government. The first question is, in view of the experience of the recent industrial trouble, is the settlement of disputes by arbitration still the policy of organised labour? The answer to that question, I take it, is that it is still the policy. That being so, I feel justified in criticising in anticipation of the Bill which is to come forward the present position with regard to arbitration and its efficacy and value. At present it may be said generally that where arbitration is effective it is not necessary. As regards 90 per cent. of the trades which work decently and obey awards and agreements, the court is unnecessary; settlements could be come to without the court. But where there is trouble, as there was recently, the court proves impotent. If arbitration is to continue, I trust the Government will bring forward some effective policy to enforce any agreements come to or awards delivered. I do not think the last amendment of the Arbitration Act altogether covered that aspect. We have to face the fact that not only in the local catering dispute, but also in the big seamen's dispute, the agreements eventually arrived at were come to outside the Arbitration Court altogether.

Mr. Panton: In fact, there are just as many agreements outside the court as in it.

Mr. NORTH: That is the trouble.

Mr. Panton: No; it is a good job.

Mr. NORTH: But it makes one question how far the Arbitration Court is valuable at all.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Act is too rigid.

Mr. NORTH: That may be.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You want to amend the Act.

Mr. NORTH: I suggest, by way of anticipation, that something should be done not only to amend the machinery side of the Act but to enforce agreements when come to. When parties in ordinary circum-

stances agree to something, they go to a solicitor and get a contract fixed up. Then, if the contract is broken, they have specific performance and damages, and rescission to choose from. They can go before a judge to obtain specific performance of contract. They can go for damages for breach of contract. Failing damages, they can have the contract rescinded. In recent industrial troubles it seems as if the agreements had been rescinded. However, that is no good to the public. I think we should consider the alternative of letting arbitration go by the board, as in fact it did go by the board in the catering dispute, and that we should consider whether it would be advisable for these questions to be settled by ordinary contract or law, or whether the law should be altered to suit the position which arises during strikes. I expressed myself to the same effect the other evening, and the Premier then interjected that he was prepared to amend the law so as to eliminate from the Criminal Code and Traffic Act the provisions with regard to strikers and pickets. If arbitration went by the board and the law were tightened or enlarged or extended in such a way that when there was trouble of the sort we had recently, some arrangement could be made by which the police could handle this question, it might be well. The police could handle strikes and lockouts in the same way as they now deal with big crowds, processions, the arrival of the American Fleet, and other events of an exceptional nature which lead to unusual situations in large cities. Under those conditions the whole matter of industrial arbitration could go by the board. The second question I wish to deal with I will put in this form, succinctly, does Labour still hold that competition is wasteful, and does Labour adhere generally to its policy of nationalising the means of production, distribution and exchange? A very old writer put the position in regard to nationalisation very well. The late Edward Gibbon said in regard to monopoly—

The spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy and oppressive; their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists, and the new improvements so eagerly grasped by the competition of freedom are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations above the fear of a rival and below the confession of an error. Those are very striking words, describing the effect of monopolies. The present Government stand, so far as I know, for the gradual

extension of nationalisation. Take as an instance the railways, a large concern which has been carried on now for a great many years under political control. Recently we have had a very serious shortage of trucks.

The Minister for Railways: No, we have not.

Mr. NORTH: I am glad to hear the Minister say that, but in a conversation I had with Colonel Pope three days ago I was informed that owing to the shortage of funds the question of trucks was always in front of him. I said, "That is a curious position; why is it?" Colonel Pope replied, "The reason is because of this being a State enterprise, and run by the Government, all profits are put into general revenue, and I cannot handle the position out of my present profits."

The Minister for Railways: The railways have not had any profits for eight or ten years.

Mr. NORTH: Precisely.

The Premier: We had a profit last year from the railways and we hear you now talking about the profits of the railways as though they had always existed.

Mr. NORTH: I am raising the point of a shortage of trucks and mentioned what Colonel Pope said to me that he could not get trucks, and that if he had £100,000 he would put the whole of it into trucks.

The Premier: Anyhow, I do not know what the Commissioner of Railways means by making a statement of that kind to you. It is his job to administer the railways and not to criticise us for not providing trucks.

Mr. NORTH: I understand it is common knowledge that there is a shortage of trucks. I am not sure that the Premier has not mentioned this himself. All the same, it is to my mind a serious commentary upon a public concern.

The Premier: If there is a shortage of rolling stock, as stated by the Commissioner to you, it is due to the fact that money has not been provided in recent years.

Mr. NORTH: Of course, the National Government are to blame: I do not deny that.

The Premier: We cannot in the space of a year remedy the defects of many years.

Mr. NORTH: I am speaking generally on the question of running Government concerns and classing the action as a monopoly. I maintain that the time has come for us to find out whether the railways are as good as they should be.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you want to make comparisons, why not compare the system with the Midland line?

Mr. NORTH: I think the Midland is a wonderful line.

Mr. Panton: Have you ever travelled on it?

The Premier: And incidentally they use our rolling stock.

Mr. NORTH: There are other things I could say about the railways. It was not until recently, when the motor buses appeared on the scene, that we found any attempt made to improve the system. Now we learn that owing to the competition that has sprung up, like a toadstool in the night, the railways have appointed an officer to go out and seek business. But that is a small side-issue. Let us compare our railway system with that of South Australia. In that State they imported new blood to overhaul the railway organisation, and we cannot help drawing attention to the effect of the administration of the new Commissioner in that State. I am told that a considerable sum of money was spent, a good deal of it on rolling stock, and that to-day profits are being shown and the position is different. In Western Australia the State institutions are monopolies and the present Government propose gradually to extend them, but like, shall we say, the Argentine cattle, they will become coasty and deteriorate. Then we shall find that some great man, associated with private enterprise in another part of the world, will be brought here to give us his views on the enterprises and perhaps put them right gradually. That is the kind of thing that has happened in several States, and it continues to occur from time to time. It points to the fact that all State enterprises need serious attention. The Premier himself is only too pleased to limit State activities, and from what he said last session we gather that it is his desire to transfer them to smaller planets in the shape of boards or trusts. He is prepared in the case of water supplies and tramways, to transfer those obligations to another form of control.

Mr. Lambert: And a good idea, too.

Mr. NORTH: It may be better than the present arrangement, and it certainly will relieve the Government of borrowing powers in respect of those concerns. I mentioned a little while back that motor buses have appeared on the scene, and that immediately the railways, the proud monopolist of 30 years, appointed an officer to look for busi-

ness. The move is good, and the Government should be congratulated. The motor buses also deserve to be congratulated for appearing on the scene. There has been created recently a board to decide whether or not motor buses should run. One extraordinary instance has come before my notice. Some six months ago a driver was running a bus from Fremantle to Perth, and after having operated along that route for six months he desired to serve some of the outlying districts off the Fremantle road, places like Peppermint Grove, Buckland Hill and Cottesloe Beach. The people living in those places could not reach the city except by walking a considerable distance to the station. The driver of the bus applied for permission to run a second vehicle and gave his reasons. Up to date the license has not been granted, and the only reply that has been tendered is that the Fremantle route is already sufficiently served. The attitude of the authorities in this case is particularly hard, especially when the Government declare it is their desire to help every section of the community.

The Premier: Even private enterprise!

Mr. NORTH: Why should those who live, say, 100 yards from the railway receive all the consideration, and those who may be 25 minutes' walk from the railway station not be able to get any at all?

The Premier: The hard toilers who live around Peppermint Grove!

Mr. NORTH: The present Government have actually granted a license for a bus to travel from Peppermint Grove, but they will not grant a license for the Buckland Hill and Cottesloe Beach routes

The Premier: The hardy workmen can walk.

Mr. NORTH: I would like to read an extract from an instructive article in an American magazine on the subject of motor buses. The ideas expressed, if applied here, would stop the harassing that is taking place:—

The motor bus industry has found itself. Producers of equipment and users of equipment alike now see the motor bus for what it really is—the builder of new business, not a substitute for established and necessary forms of transportation. The experience of the past year has blasted the old notion that every passenger carried by motor buses represented the loss of a fare to electric railways, steam railways or other forms of transportation. The truth is, modern buses create new business. This is nothing more than a repetition of the history of transportation. When railroads were de-

veloped, steamboats interests feared that people no longer would travel by river and lake. Instead, steamboat travel grew faster than ever. When automobiles appeared, railroads at first were apprehensive as to the future of rail travel. Instead of decreasing, however, railroad passenger totals soared to new heights.

Only a few minutes ago the Minister for Railways told us that for the first time for many years the railways had in the year just closed shown a large profit, and this, too, in spite of the competition of motor buses. These facts must be looked into when the routes advisory board considers the applications for extensions of the motor bus system. We should face the question as it is being faced all over the world, and we should realise that passengers alone do not make the railways, that the railways live entirely by freight and passengers are a mere side-line. If that is admitted to be a fair proposition, a great deal more of this unnecessary hostility to the road vehicle will disappear. I wish to make a final point in the matter of municipalities and the trouble consequent upon the extension of State activities. Within a period of six months it may be impossible to detect the effect of increasing State activities. I hear we are to have State insurance. The effect of State activities may not be noticeable today or to-morrow, but in the years to come we shall see it. In view of the present system of government in force in five of the States it is hardly competent for us in opposition to be cheerful. Those five States have gone against us. Now is the time to look to our laurels, as business men do when they suffer losses, and as Henry Ford did when he came out trumps. I suggest that in the past Governments have pursued a policy that will not have its effects until later. The present system of canned politics which leads to the creation of State activities will also lead to the lack of social vitamins. In the course of five or six years we shall know whether that is true or not.

Mr. Pantou: Why worry about posterity?

Mr. NORTH: That may be the excuse for the present Government. Now we come to question two. Has not the time arrived when steps should be taken to revive the status of public men and public questions, and to restore respect for the law? I maintain that during the last few years there has been a gradual depreciation in the status and value of our public men, and in the value of public questions. I am sure all members will agree

with me. I have heard Federal members talked about in the train, and I can only guess at what is said about State members. There are many reasons why public men have gone down in public estimation. This question should be faced during the term of the present Government.

Mr. Panton: Surely we are not to be blamed for that!

Mr. NORTH: We are speaking for ourselves also this time. Every member is entitled to greater respect than he now receives from the general public. Remarks are made of a disparaging nature concerning members of local councils and other persons who are engaged in State and Federal affairs. In some cases they are shocking. They are calculated to lead to the public being served in the manner their comments suggest. In my opinion members of municipal councils and road boards should be paid for their services. In one of the States that is being done to-day. Federation is costing Australia too much, and local government is costing too little. Our local governing bodies are costing us approximately 2s. or 3s. in the pound. In the Old Country, as the Premier will know, local government is costing anything from 14s. to 17s. in the pound. That may be too much.

The Premier: I was in one place where the rates were 20s. in the pound.

Mr. NORTH: The time has come for us to face this question seriously, and to think about the payment of members of the local governing authority. Even if this meant raising the rates there would be more competition for seats on those councils or boards, and we should probably get better local government in the long run and probably reduced rates.

Mr. Sampson: That principle has already been adopted in Greater Britain.

Mr. NORTH: Local governing bodies have a greater claim in this respect than any other body in the State. At present we expect men to become members of those local authorities and control perhaps £30,000 a year of the ratepayers' money—in Perth a great deal more than that—and to give good service and a great deal of their time, to put up with a great deal that is said behind their backs, and, in the case of Perth, the insult of an attendance of four or five ratepayers at their annual meetings to listen to the story of their year's work. The time has come when such members should

be made more respected through being paid for what they do. It would be found that not only would there be competition for these positions, but that in the long run the cost of civic administration would be reduced. If we could conjure a little of the money that is wasted in Federal expenditure, and divert it into this other channel, we should be doing a great deal of good. In my opinion the local governing bodies carry two-thirds of the weight of the government of the country upon their shoulders. Although the fountain may be in the Treasury, the streams of finance reach the local governing bodies through health, road, and other matters. They are carrying all the burden. Members of those bodies give about a third of the time to their duties that we spend in this House. They do their work zealously, but for doing it they receive a glass of beer and a little cheese once a fortnight. I commend the example of Queensland in this respect and also that of Great Britain.

Mr. Davy: Is no one to do anything for nothing?

Mr. NORTH: It looks like it. The good old days seem to have gone when we could get men of means to come from the Old Country and enter public life in this State.

Mr. Sampson: Honorary workers are usually the most industrious.

Mr. NORTH: If we can get them, but in local governing work they are as rare as the dodo.

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. NORTH: The days have gone when we could get men who would come here and do this work for nothing. Has not the time come when we can consider that health matters, drainage, and the making of roads are quite as important as the making of money over the counter?

Mr. Davy: It is not suggested that local authority members are such a poor lot.

Mr. NORTH: No, but there is room for a great revival in local government.

Mr. Panton: Then one has to judge the question of respectability by L.S.D.

Mr. NORTH: I wish to judge the value of the work by payment. The Act was modelled upon times when we had a number of rich landowners in the Old Country, who were willing to give their time for nothing. It was not for nothing, after all, for they may have been sitting back behind a capital of £100,000. If the Act comes forward for

reconsideration, I am prepared to move that members of local governing bodies shall be paid for their services. It would not cost much to do so.

The Premier: You mean the money would come out of the rates.

Mr. NORTH: Yes, and the ratepayers would get back more than they lost.

The Premier: You do not mean it would come out of Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. NORTH: No.

The Premier: Go ahead then.

Mr. NORTH: That makes all the difference, does it not?

The Premier: Quite.

Mr. NORTH: I now come to the question of members of this House. I admit that for such a beginner in politics as I am, it may be a little too early for me to bring the matter forward. But I fear that constant association with a job makes one become too tolerant and conservative. I hope I may be here for a few years yet.

Mr. Marshall: I am wondering if you will.

Mr. NORTH: The future is uncertain, but I was wondering whether in course of time I would become hardened and accept things as they are. I can understand the Premier, when he is asked to present a Cup at some race meeting, or two guineas to a charity, doing so, because he has done it for 20 years.

The Premier: You do not know me.

Mr. NORTH: Not many years ago it was enacted that no candidate for political honours might within three months of an election give a donation.

The Premier: They made a mistake in confining it to that term.

Mr. NORTH: I should like to see the law amended so that no man while in politics should give a donation. If it is bribery to give these things before an election, what must it be to give them during the three years in which one is a member of Parliament? It is also the law of the land that a member of Parliament shall receive roughly £8 a week for his services, but, through a system of partial bribery and partial blackmail—if the member is rich it is bribery, and if he is poor it is blackmail—this £8 a week may be reduced to £4 or £5 a week, upon which remainder the member must be respectable and uphold his position. That is entirely wrong, and I should like to see the law amended to cover the whole term during which a man is a member of Parliament.

Mr. Panton: You are getting a lot of support now.

Mr. Taylor: We are solid on that.

Mr. NORTH: There may be support inside this Chamber, but the stormy winds may blow outside.

The Premier: I assure you it is not a party question.

Mr. NORTH: I am surprised it has been overlooked for so long. I now come to the question of election days. I mentioned this last session, but it sounded at first utterly impossible and ridiculous. If we could have one particular day in the year set aside for elections and voting, dealing with all public questions, we should do a lot to educate the public, and remind them of the importance and value of giving attention to such questions on one particular day in the year. While the present system operates it is a question of pull devil, pull baker. We may have the Federal elections affecting the national policy in one direction. A little later on we have the State elections resulting in an opposite form of government. Further on still there may be municipal elections, and a mayor with Conservative tendencies may be elected. So it comes about we have a policy of pull devil, pull baker, instead of having one or other of the three types of policy placed before the people as a straight out issue so that they may know exactly what type of Government to expect in all its resulting effects.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. NORTH: Before the tea adjournment I was attempting to suggest that there were certain reasons, why, in recent years, the status of public men has not been maintained. I was suggesting the setting aside of an annual election day when all elections for that year would be held—municipal, State and Federal. The object would be to increase the interest taken by the public by focussing the attention of the people upon the issues. If, as the result of such an election, all affairs were conducted on a uniform policy, we might be ruined, as the Premier suggested, but, on the other hand, we might be agreeably surprised. At any rate, we would know where we stood and it would give us greater confidence in voting solidly at future elections. The swing of the pendulum might be quicker, but public questions would probably be dealt with more succinctly than would be possible with muni-

cial, State and Federal polling taken on different policies at different times. Coming to the question of lack of interest in public questions, as opposed to that of public men, and also the growing disregard for law and order, I suggest that the time is ripe for many of our laws to be codified. Some of our laws date back into the dim distant past. The present affords the Government a splendid opportunity to undertake the arduous process of codifying such laws. If that were done completely, it would be necessary to refer to four or five volumes only, instead of having to go back to antiquity in order to ascertain what the law is. Such a step would be in the interests of not only the public, but would be of benefit to lawyers as well. The Bills of Sale Act is in a shocking condition. If one is asked to give advice on a question affected by that Act, one has to look through numerous amendments as well as the Act itself. I cannot see why codification should not be undertaken. If that were done, we would know what the law was and it would be easy for all to read. I cannot see the sense of continuing the present state of affairs. Then, as to the amendment of laws. There is a growing lack of interest in public questions and obedience to the law. One instance was the recent strike in the catering trade, while another is to be found in gaming. If we cannot bring Mahomet to the mountain, we should take the mountain to Mahomet. If the people will not obey the laws, the latter should be brought into conformity with the views of the majority of the people. In the "West Australian" recently there appeared references in one column to the use of gambling devices by some people, and in another column to a common gaming house. The former paragraph contained the following statement:—

Some weeks ago a "White City Carnival" organised by a financial officer of the Trades Hall, Perth, was held for two weeks at Collie in aid of a Trades Hall building fund. Over £1,500 was raised, and £100 was donated to the Collie hospital.

Mr. Wilson: That was not the amount raised.

Mr. Sampson: That was the salve to their conscience!

Mr. Wilson: It was not a salve, it was a gift.

Mr. Richardson: Where did the other £1,400 go?

Mr. Wilson: There was no £1,400 raised.

Mr. Richardson: The published statement has not been denied.

Mr. Wilson: You can take my word for it.

Mr. NORTH: The particular words I wish to refer to follow—

Both the police at Collie and at Narrogin were instructed from headquarters that there would be no objection to the use of gambling devices.

Then the other paragraph refers to a case before Mr. Craig, the resident magistrate at Fremantle, in which men were charged with having kept a common gaming house and were fined £20. In that instance the police had not given instructions that the men could gamble. Thus we have one instance where people are permitted to gamble by permission of the police, not Parliament, while in the other no permission is given. Such instances should not be permitted and they emphasise the necessity for an amendment of the law. If gambling is to be permitted, some people consider it should continue in the interests of charity. If that is the view of the whole of the people in the State, why not have the law altered to that extent, and then we will know where we stand. Those who are desirous of building roads, promenades, improving beaches, and so on, would then have the power to do this instead of having to seek permission from the police.

Mr. Richardson: The Trades Hall does not constitute a charity. I reckon that was an absolute corruption of the law as it stands.

Mr. NORTH: There is room for an amendment of the law, and I would be prepared to vote for it if gambling is to be monopolised for charities or the public benefit.

Mr. Taylor: The Trades Hall is not a public benefit.

Mr. NORTH: Here we find Fremantle lumpers fined £20 for doing something that the police authorised others to do in another place. I think the whole question should be gone into and legislation more in keeping with the times introduced to Parliament. So long as legislation is out of pace with the people, so long will it be useless.

Mr. Taylor: The law is all right now if only it is carried out.

Mr. NORTH: Unfortunately the previous Government set the example in this matter.

Mr. Richardson: But the late Government permitted gambling only for charities.

The present Government permit it for Trades Hall purposes, and so on.

Mr. NORTH: We should allow this movement in the interests of charities, but it is a peculiar spectacle to have hundreds of thousands of pounds gambled away at the river side while local bodies are starving for money for roads.

Mr. Sampson: This is a great industry in Queensland.

Mr. NORTH: I come to the fourth question I wish to refer to under this heading: Is not provision out of industry for existing wives and children better than a basic wage for a wife and three children, whether they exist or not. Assuming that industry is not able to find sufficient money to provide for a man, his wife and three children, whether they exist or not, it is possible that industry may be able to provide for the wives and children that do exist. I hope that if this question comes before us this session, legislation will follow those lines. This is not socialism; it is specialised individualism, because even to-day wives and children are provided for, but there is an unfair handicap on married men as compared with single men. That brings me to the deeper question of improving the lot of the average man. I can see only three ways. One is to reduce his desires and turn all people into philosophers; the second is the increase of inventions, which we depend upon, and, thirdly, reduction in numbers. The last mentioned has not been contemplated so far. Thus, of the three possible means of improving present day conditions, practically one only remains— increase of invention. I now come to the last question I wish to raise in this debate. I refer to public health. This is a very old subject and I think that the distribution of health should receive more attention even than the distribution of wages.

Mr. Marshall: If you had worked on some of the mines you would not talk about health in that way.

Mr. NORTH: We see the results at Wooroloo. We can see many directions in which the public health of the country could be better attended to. I would cite the new shops recently erected in Perth. Ventilation has been practically ignored.

Mr. Marshall: Are you referring to the Town Hall shops?

Mr. NORTH: Yes, partly.

Mr. Marshall: I agree with you.

Mr. NORTH: They are, in my opinion, like dog boxes. We have a Public Health Department, a Commissioner of Public Health and a Minister. The department was in existence long before many of the trading concerns of recent years were heard of and it seems to me that the more we go in for trading concerns the less interest there appears to be in the Public Health Department. In view of the wide powers possessed by the Commissioner of Public Health, I cannot understand why these new shops, without any attempt at ventilation apart from the doors and fanlights, have been allowed to be erected. Those who work there will exist in an unhealthy atmosphere, which is quite unnecessary. Perhaps we may be inclined to regard such matters as trivial, but in a time of epidemic, bad ventilation is one of the main causes of the spreading of disease. Bearing that in mind, I am at a loss to understand why the erection of such shops should be allowed in modern times. At Cottesloe recently the Electricity Department supplied cheap current for cooking and domestic power purposes. The Government took over the scheme, but for the sake of £2,000 they are likely to lose the benefit of that scheme, because the Fremantle Gas Company intend to operate in the town, and take much of the trade from the Government. At the instigation of Mr. Taylor, manager of the Electricity Department, £2,000 was put on the Estimates for installing cheap cooking by electricity in every house, but the proposal was turned down by Cabinet. That £2,000 might have earned something like 30 per cent. for the department, but it is now likely to go to the Fremantle Gas Company. I trust that before it is too late the £2,000 will be provided by the Government. The water supply in our district has been very well handled during the past 12 months, and I congratulate the Government on the work done in that regard. Now I come to another question of health, namely, whole-meal bread versus white bread. Let me read the following letter from the "Spectator":—

Sir.—The letter of Mr. Francis Hughendon in your issue of February 14th under the above heading clearly expresses the state of uncertainty existing in the minds of the majority of English people with regard to the important question of wholemeal bread—what it is, and why it is so necessary for the physical well-being of our race. With your indulgence, Sir, I will endeavour briefly to answer these questions. Before doing so let me point out that the so-called wholemeal bread at present sold by the bakers of this country is not

germ bread at all, but white bread made with devitalized flour, to which has been added a certain amount of "offal" or bran, almost worthless as food and withal indigestible.

The true wholemeal or germ bread, which was the staple food of England seventy or eighty years ago, can only be made from flour from which the vitamins have not been extracted by over-milling. This flour, so vital to the stamina of our race, the elaborate roller mills of this country are unable to produce. Only the old-fashioned stones of the old-fashioned mills, most of which have been dismantled, could produce it.

Our Health Department has never yet publicly stated whether or not white bread is harmful. As usual, it is left for private enterprise to step into the breach and tell us the value of whole-meal bread. I have to go, not to the Health Department, but to a little shop in Hay-street to read on its window, "Stop! You are starving your children. Cease giving them white bread." That shop, if its story be false, is guilty of libelling all millers and all who sell white bread. On the other hand, if its story be true, how is it that the Public Health Department has never publicly advocated the use of whole-meal bread?

Mr. Griffiths: When they started erecting the roller mills, they started erecting pill factories.

Mr. NORTH: In this, as in many other particulars, we should expect more than we get from the Health Department. We should expect that department to give us information on these matters. Then there is the value of being able to recognise the symptoms of deadly diseases. Few people know the early symptoms of consumption or of cancer, and so those symptoms are not recognised until the disease is no longer preventable. About three weeks ago I was glad to see in a Victorian newspaper a long paragraph published at the instigation of members of the State Parliament, telling the people the simple essentials of health, and how to attain it, what to eat and what to avoid. There is room for great extension of the activities of our Health Department in this and in many other directions. Take sewerage. I see no reason why Peppermint Grove or Guildford should not receive the same benefit from a public scheme of sewerage as do Perth and Fremantle, particularly since we now have a practical method of cheaply connecting houses one by one. I cannot see why the Health Department does not advocate the fitting of a septic tank to each house, as is done in Adelaide, where in certain specified areas every house has to be

fitted with a septic tank. I understand the cost is £25 per house, whereas the average rates represent 30s. or £2 per annum. So it is cheaper to instal a septic tank than it is to perpetuate the ghastly night cart service. In all these matters the Health Department has a lot of work ahead of it. I wish it success, and I trust the Minister will tackle some of the questions I have raised. Of course one can only reason as best one may, and I recognise that sound reasoning may be a beacon in the gloom of doubt, but it fades away before the daylight of actual experience.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [7.55]: We have heard the member for Fremantle, who represents the chief port of the State, and we have heard the member for Claremont, who represents a large metropolitan electorate. I represent the biggest agricultural electorate in Western Australia. It is the practise for members to bring forward on the Address-in-reply the various requirements of their electorates. If I should ask for more than my fellow members, it is because I represent a large electorate with a large population, an area which, nevertheless, is still in the development stage, most of it being but partially settled. It is only to be expected that the old established districts, that have had their needs served for so many years, should not now require as much as my electorate does. Last session I attempted to tell the House what was the production of my electorate. My figures then were not complete, but I have since approached the Government Statistician, who has provided me with the necessary data. In the Statistician's office are certain statistical plans. Each plan covers 600,000 acres, whereas my electorate comprises 6,600,000 acres. The production of wheat in Western Australia last year was something under 24,000,000 bushels: of that quantity my electorate produced 5,624,994 or nearly one quarter. Also it produced oats, hay and other things. Although my electorate produced a lot of wheat, the average for the whole of the land in the district is still a lot less than a bushel to the acre. I have here a map published by the "Western Mail," which makes the matter quite clear. The Dowerin-Wyalcatchem district has produced 1,485,000 bushels of wheat, the average yield being 14 bushels 12lbs. This sub-statistical district has three plans of 1,800,000 acres—only a small portion of my electorate. Of that area there is but 170,770