

been obtained between the two Departments, to which reference was made by the Minister in his second-reading speech, I shall be satisfied.

The Opposition does not oppose the Bill, and I do not think any comment which may be made in the course of the debate will cause Opposition members to change their minds. However, we would like to be assured that the people of Portland are happy about the measure.

Mr. McKELLAR (Portland).—I believe the history of Portland can be divided into two distinct eras, the early history and the modern history. The modern history of the port of Portland commenced in 1950, when three local commissioners were charged with the task of developing the port of Portland. They were charged with the construction of two breakwaters, the deepening of the port area and the construction of berths for shipping. This work was commenced on the 17th November, 1952. The breakwaters were constructed to protect 250 acres of water, particularly from the easterly swells. The main breakwater is 4,200 feet long with a base of 260 feet tapering to 14 feet at the top. This breakwater guarantees still water for the port.

The port area is westerly from the old port. The Commissioners set about their task but, in so doing, met with some resistance. It is to their credit that, in a short time, they have achieved so much. It is only by their persistence and faith that these breakwaters were completed. They have had the good fortune of obtaining the backing of a sympathetic Government to assist them. Victorian Governments have made a total sum of \$19,000,000 available to the Portland Harbor Trust.

This Bill is a marriage between rail and sea, which, in future, will do much for the development of the area I represent and those areas represented by the honorable members

for Lowan and Dundas, which comprise 40,000 square miles mainly of primary producing country. It is hoped to have the products from these areas channeled through the Port of Portland with more success than has previously been achieved. A grain terminal with a capacity of 1,000,000 bushels has been erected at Portland for the receipt of oats and barley. Last year 139,000 tons of oats and 5,000 tons of barley were exported from the port. A total of 176,000 tons of produce was exported and 269,000 tons of goods were imported, of which 258,000 tons were petroleum products.

I assure the honorable member for Williamstown that the people of Portland are happy with the progress that has been made. The closing of the old Portland railway station will present no hardship. This station serves the old port area which comprises two wooden wharves, one of which was built in 1858, and is still used for pleasure craft. The other wharf was constructed in 1902 and is used for the import and export of some products, although maintenance is now becoming quite a problem. Railway locomotives are not permitted to use this wharf, and a light tractor has to be used for haulage purposes. When the 1 mile of railway line covered by this Bill is transferred, it is not the intention of the Portland Harbor Trust Commissioners to dispense with it; it will be held for the future requirements of any industry that may utilize the track and yard at the old Portland station.

Tenders have been called for the construction of goods and passenger facilities at the Portland North station to serve the people of Portland as adequately as did the old station. The line runs to the new area from a point north of the old Portland station. I understand that the Commissioners of the Portland Harbor Trust have constructed 40,000 feet of rail line. The area to be transferred to the Trust is 9,960, or about 600 feet

under 2 miles in length. This includes what is known as the "exchange siding" which was so named because it is the place to where the railway has delivered the goods to the Portland Harbor Trust. Beyond the exchange siding there is what is called the "sorting siding", which will still be under the jurisdiction of the Portland Harbor Trust Commissioners. The cargo is here sorted into its correct sections for loading into the ships at berth.

I should be remiss if I did not mention that superphosphate works costing \$7,500,000 are being constructed at Portland. These works are well ahead of schedule and production may be expected in August, 1968. If it were not for the production of superphosphate, I doubt whether the Port of Portland would have become a reality. The application of superphosphate to the pastures and crops, particularly in the hinterland, has increased production to such an extent that the port became a practical proposition. Approximately 500,000 bales of wool are produced in the hinterland of Portland. Figures provided by the Harbor Trust show that 2,450 wool packs were imported from the port last year. The receivals to the wool stores at the port are expected to be 200,000 bales, which represents two-fifths of the wool produced in this area.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister of Transport—his statement has been supported by the honorable member for Williamstown—spoke of this project being an example of co-operation between the two forms of transport. If this progress continues in the future as it has done in the past, I cannot see anything but prosperity for the district. It is interesting to note that rail was first brought to Portland in 1876. There was then no direct rail link between Melbourne and Ballarat. When Sir George Bowen declared the line open, in 1878, he had to go to Ballarat via Geelong. The co-operation of all concerned at Portland will ensure that the State as a whole will prosper.

Mr. McKellar.

Mr. SUTTON (Albert Park).—It is agreeable to the fitness of things Parliamentary, historical and geographical that I should be the first to offer compliments to the honorable member for Portland on his first speech in this House. I was born in Portland, to which my grandparents went in 1841.

What is happening now is a reality corresponding to the venture, not so much of the pioneers but of those members of the first generation born in Victoria. I can remember well enough that the member for Glenelg, the late William Thomas—I was a child at the time—spoke in rhapsodies of what was going to happen to Portland. There were complaints about the differential railway rates and about the unconcern for Portland as a resort. The word "hinterland" was exclusively confined to geographical magazines or dictionaries.

It is indeed pleasant to all of us who were born there and who know anything about it to realize what is going on. I do not know who is now chairman of the Trust, but when I was there in the time of the late John Cain's Ministry, the chairman was Mr. Keith Anderson. He was a member of an old and distinguished merchandising family, and I know the great work that he put in, almost begging for money in Melbourne, until the Government came to his assistance. The honorable member for Portland has rightly referred to a progress largely due to helpful Governments. I agree with him, but I was a little concerned, as was my alert colleague, the honorable member for Williamstown, as to how the people of Portland, especially those in the immediate area, would react to the closing down of portion of the railway line. It is interesting but a bit bewildering to read the following statement in the Minister's second-reading speech:—

At the same time, as wharf traffic is no longer handled through the Portland station and the original wharves, the line