

BILLS (4) RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

1. Insurance Companies Act Amendment.
2. Merredin Racecourse.
3. Anzac Day.
4. Busselton-Margaret River Railway Deviation (No. 2).

Without amendment.

House adjourned at 11.1 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 4th December, 1923.

railway, Dwarda-Narrogin railway extension, Albany-Denmark railway extension, Bridgetown-Jarnadup railway extension. 2, Busselton-Margaret River, miles of railway laid, 25; miles of railway to be laid, 16½. Narembeen-Merredin, miles of railway laid, 1¼; miles of railway to be laid, 52. Esperance Northwards, miles of railway laid, 66½. Piawaning Northwards, miles of railway to be laid, 23. Dwarda-Narrogin, miles of railway to be laid, 25. Albany-Denmark extension, miles of railway to be laid, 35. Bridgetown-Jarnadup extension, miles of railway laid, 16½; miles of railway to be laid, 28.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [4.38] in moving the second reading said: This is the first time I have had the honour of moving the Appropriation Bill in this Chamber. Seeing how ably the task has been done in the past, and the fulness of the information that has been given to hon. members, and the great care always exercised by the Leader of the House to go fully into details so that hon. members should have a full knowledge of the financial position of the State and of its industries, I shall endeavour on this occasion to give all the information I can. I do trust hon. members will not think the information too much. It is indeed difficult really to analyse the position so as to satisfy all parties. Some hon. members, not of this House, have said to me, "All you have to do is to put the Appropriation Bill on the Table, and that will be all right." Others have said to me, "If you speak for ten minutes it will be sufficient." But I have come to the conclusion that it is my bounden duty to speak as long as I think is necessary in the interests of the State, and also to speak in the manner that seems to me to be best. I have endeavoured to compile on those lines what I have to say. The last Appropriation Bill was moved on the 23rd January of this year. The delay was brought about by several factors over which the then Leader of the House had no control. He submitted the Appropriation Bill as early as it was possible for him to do so. Although in an unfavourable position from one aspect, he was favourably circumstanced from another point of view, because he possessed the knowledge of what had happened during the first half of the financial year, and from that knowledge was able to deduce the likelihood of the revenue estimated for 1922-23 being equal to or less than the receipts. On the present occasion I have the opportunity of discussing that position as applied to a period of five months, and I shall take advantage of the opportunity. The finances of the State, at any rate so far as I am able to judge, are in a buoyant condition, and are continuing to improve. The results so far of the public utilities, as they will be disclosed this after-

	PAGE
Questions: Forests Act, finance	1753
Railway authorisations	1753
Bills: Appropriation, 2r.	1753
Land Act Amendment, 1r.	1773
Stamp Act Amendment, 2r., Com., 3r. ...	1773
Public Institutions and Friendly Societies Lands Improvement Act Amendment, 2r., Com., 3r.	1774
General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Continuance, 2r.	1774
Permanent Reserves, 2r., Com., 3r. ...	1774
Veterinary Surgeons Act Amendment, 2r. ...	1775
Loan (£3,763,000), 2r.	1775
Jury Act Amendment, 1r.	1777
Factories and Shops Act Amendment, Com., report	1777

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

QUESTION—FORESTS ACT, FINANCE.

Hon. H. STEWART asked the Minister for Education: 1, With reference to the Forests Act, 1918, what was the net revenue of the Forests Department in each of the last three financial years? 2, What amounts have been placed at the Treasury to the credit of a special account for re-afforestation and the development of forestry?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, 1920-21, £55,117; 1921-22, £68,623; 1922-23, £68,302. 2, 1920-21, £33,070; 1921-22, £41,174; 1922-23, £40,981.

QUESTION—RAILWAY AUTHORISATIONS.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Minister for Education: 1, What railways have been authorised, the construction of which has not yet been completed? 2, In the case of each authorisation, how many miles of railway have been laid, if any, and how many miles remain to be laid?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Busselton-Margaret River railway, Narembeen-Merredin railway, Esperance Northwards railway, Piawaning Northwards

noon and have already been disclosed by the Treasurer, will show hon. members that we have an opportunity of very speedily reaching a position which will be far better in the interests of the State. That result is being brought about, to a very large extent, by good administration. Hon. members may reply that that may be so or perhaps may not be so. Let me say that since I have been a member of the Government I have been struck by the fact that all the officials with whom I am brought in contact—of course I do not come in contact with every public servant of the State—are very keen and very earnest in their work. I have no reason to believe that that is more in evidence in the departments over which I preside than it is in other departments. I do believe the position is better now as regards the civil service. There is a greater cohesion, and things are watched very carefully. I believe that all the public servants watch things in the best interests of the State, with an earnest desire to assist the legislator who is in charge of any particular department. The session is approaching its end. On behalf of the Government I may express the hope that we shall be able to finish this week, but I wish to assure hon. members that we will not endeavour to finish this week, or at any other time, if there is any member in this House who wishes to discuss public affairs. The discussion of this Appropriation Bill affords members an opportunity of going carefully and minutely into the finances of the State, of seeing what is going on in the State and what its industries are doing. I have no doubt whatever that hon. members will go carefully into the subject of finance, and into all matters pertaining to the advancement and prosperity of Western Australia generally.

Hon. H. Stewart: What is the reason for wishing to finish this week?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have no reason whatever for wishing it. It is desirable simply because hon. members do not wish to be kept here any longer than is necessary. If hon. members are able to complete the work of the session by the end of the week, it will be very satisfactory. If not, we will sit during the following week, and in fact as long as hon. members wish to discuss anything connected with affairs of State. I make that announcement quite clearly, and with the full approval of the Premier. Hon. members will understand that the Premier desires to get on with his work and to traverse the country in order that he may see whether the position on the group settlements is to his satisfaction as a practical man. While he is obliged to remain in the city, he has not that opportunity. Therefore it would be well if we could finish the session a week or two before Christmas. However, the matter is entirely in the hands of hon. members themselves, and they will have to determine it. This is the usual Bill for the appropriation of moneys covered by Supply Bills, Revenue Estimates, and Loan Esti-

mates. The amounts covered by the present Appropriation Bill are: Revenue Estimates (exclusive of special Acts), £4,331,846; Sale of Government Property Fund Account, £63,000; Loan Estimates, £4,474,065; Land Improvement Loan Fund Estimates, £16,093; and Advance to Treasurer, £500,000; making a total of £9,385,009.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It is a lot for a few people.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The amount provided under special Acts, namely £3,009,128, does not require to be voted. Schedule A shows how the £9,385,009 is to be appropriated; Schedule B gives the expenditure in detail of each of the respective Ministers; Schedule C covers the sale of Government Property Trust Account and the Lands Improvement Loan Fund; Schedule D appropriates £4,474,065 for the purposes of the General Loan Fund; Schedule E appropriates £500,000 for the purposes of the Treasurer's Advance, and Schedules F and G confirm the expenditure of last year in excess of the Estimates on Revenue and Loan Accounts. I want to go back to the year 1921-22, when the State's deficit was £732,135. In 1922-23 the deficit was £405,364, showing an improvement of £326,771, as the result of the Government's policy of development and production. Hon. members will admit that it revealed a highly creditable state of affairs. It was largely due to improved results from public utilities. In 1922-23 the actual revenue was £7,207,492, the expenditure £7,612,856, and the deficit £405,364.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Would it not be as well to add to that the half-million loss on the Wyndham Meat Works?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will deal fully with the Wyndham Meat Works during my remarks. I do not think the two things are allied at all. The total deficit as at June, 1923, was £5,910,929. The estimated revenue for 1923-24 is £7,542,291, the expenditure £7,840,974, and the deficit £298,683. This, if realised, will mean an improvement this year as against last year of £106,681, which will be a very satisfactory position, showing that the State has recovered, and that the public utilities are rejuvenating in consequence of the increased production and increased development going on. Judging from the five months that have already passed, there is no doubt the Treasurer's forecast will be realised; indeed, personally I am inclined to think the result will be better than anticipated by the Treasurer. Included in the estimated expenditure is £221,807 cash contributions to sinking fund. That will interest Mr. Kirwan, a past-master on the question of sinking fund.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He was not far out, was he?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have already said he is a past-master. These figures show that the actual estimated loss on the year's transactions is £76,876, proving

that Western Australia has turned the financial corner. Hon. members, although critical at times, always endeavour to be fair. In view of this, I feel sure that in the course of the debate on this Bill we shall have sincere congratulations to the Treasurer upon his handling of the finances.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are very sanguine.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You will hear something about loan money passing into revenue.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: And I hope to be able to satisfy the House that it is legitimate and fair. I want to make a comparison of this year's figures with those of last year. Last year my predecessor was able to traverse a period of six months, because his Appropriation Bill was not brought in until the 23rd of January of this year. Consequently, he was able to show hon. members pretty accurately what would be the final issue. During the five months elapsed this year, the expenditure has been £3,076,009, as against £3,068,682 for the corresponding period of last year, or an increase of £7,327. The revenue for the five months of this year has been £2,516,066, as against £2,433,538 for the corresponding period of last year, or an increase of £82,528. The deficiency for the five elapsed months of this year has been £559,943, as against £635,144 for the corresponding period of last year, or a decrease of £75,201. As hon. members know, during October three heavy payments were made in the Railways, which placed the October figures in a somewhat unfavourable light. During November there were only two such payments. Hon. members will agree that the position attained during the five elapsed months is a very satisfactory one. The Treasurer, in forecasting his deficit for this year, said he would effect an improvement of £106,681. During the five elapsed months he has already effected an improvement of £75,201, leaving a balance of £31,480 to be made up during the next seven months. To continue the comparison of the elapsed five months with the corresponding period of last year: the expenditure under Special Acts increased this year by £48,256; under governmental it decreased by £514, and under public utilities it decreased by £40,415, the net difference being the £7,327, to which I have already alluded. The governmental revenue has increased by £16,186, and that of public utilities by £61,802.

Hon. H. Stewart: Representing increased freights?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No.

Hon. H. Stewart: The increases are still operating.

Hon. G. W. Miles interjected.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have assured the hon. member that, as Minister for the North-West, I will go thoroughly into the question and see whether what he complains of cannot be rectified. The trading concerns revenue increased by £4,540. If we deduct the increased expenditure from that, we get the same position, showing an improvement of £75,201. I look upon that

as the most important of the remarks I have to make this afternoon. It is clear evidence of the vitality of Western Australia and the desire of the people to settle on the land, improve the land and so improve all the industries of the State. I do not want to go too much into detail, so I shall turn over these tables I have here.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We want to know it all.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am merely passing over an analysis of what I have already given the House. Every month the Treasury pays one-twelfth of £230,000 into suspense account in connection with the sinking fund. That is a perfectly satisfactory way of keeping the finances straight and avoiding unduly heavy payment at the end of the year. Members may think I am inconsistent in what I am going to say. It is not possible in any one month to gauge the financial position. The months vary, and show a wide disparity, owing to certain payments being made in one month that are not made in another. This difference is due in some cases to interest on money loaned being collected periodically, usually half-yearly. During the year 1922-23 a sum of £606,053 was collected by way of interest on money loaned. Practically all that money goes into the Treasury in June and December, and those months are largely augmented in the matter of revenue. The other months do not receive the same amount of revenue, and it would be unfair to arrive at the financial position on the statement published for any one month. The general public sometimes say, "Look at the deficit this month; it is going up enormously." Perhaps next month there will be a credit balance, and things will have adjusted themselves. If people gauged the financial position by the result of one month's operations, they would very often be at fault. The land rents also affect the position. In 1922-23 they amounted to £311,360, but the greater proportion of these rents came into the Treasury during March and September. This creates another disparity between the months of the year. In March and September the amount of land rents received is greater than at any other time of the year. People who gauged the financial position from the published returns for September might have a more favourable idea than they should have; if, on the other hand, they gauged the position from another month they might arrive at a conclusion which would not be satisfactory. The total amount of taxation received for 1922-23 was £987,558, and of this £329,466 was paid during the months of May and June. The fact that a third of the taxation is paid during these months confirms the position I have endeavoured to set before members. During the other months of the year we do not receive anything like the same revenue from this source. The railway earnings always show an improvement at the end of the year because of the harvest. I have figures here showing that from January to

June the revenue comes in at a greater rate than at any other time of the year. From January to June of 1923 the revenue was £1,564,488, and from July to December, 1922, it was £1,321,882, a difference of £242,606. From the results of last year and the indications for this year, we may anticipate a greatly improved position for the first six months of the present financial year, nearly all of which have now gone by. The statement I made earlier must carry great weight. We can also expect a much greater revenue during the next six months than we received during the past six months. I have here a statement showing the estimated position with regard to our public utilities. The position during the past five months justifies one in thinking that the estimates for 1923-24 will be fully realised. In 1922-23 the actual expenditure on public utilities was £2,923,477. The interest and sinking fund charges were £1,327,491, a total expenditure of £4,250,968. The actual revenue was £4,000,147, the shortage being £250,821. The estimated position for this year is very satisfactory. The estimated expenditure is £2,937,311, interest and sinking fund charges being £1,371,136, a total of £4,308,447. The estimated revenue is £4,160,434, the estimated shortage being £148,013. The difference between the shortage for last year and the estimated shortage for this year is £102,808, which is a distinct improvement.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is still a shortage.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. These figures show that the State is expanding, and also show the importance of our public utilities in the general scheme of affairs.

Hon. H. Stewart: What about giving us a comparison in connection with the State trading concerns?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member seems rather anxious. I will tell the House, as far as I am able from the inquiries I have made, the true position of the trading concerns when I come to them.

Hon. T. Moore: And of State farming.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have nothing to hide. The main items of estimated increased revenue for the current financial year are: railways, £138,630; other public utilities, £21,657; taxation (due to liquor tax), £28,442; departmental (largely representing transfers), £139,485; timber, £21,255; a total of £349,469. Other items, including State batteries, showing decreases should bring the estimated increased revenue down to £334,799. The main items of increased expenditure are: Special Acts £216,334; Education (new schools), £8,620; Crown Law Department, £9,858; Railways, £24,149; a total of £258,961. Other items showing decreases in expenditure bring the net increase in expenditure to £228,118. This leaves an estimated improvement of £106,681. The estimated increased expenditure on the part of the Crown Law Depart-

ment is accounted for by there being set aside a sum of £7,545 for the forthcoming general election. Some members of this Chamber, including myself, have to go up for election in May, and I suppose this amount will cover that as well. There is a decrease in the estimated revenue of the Fisheries Department of £15,000. This is due to there being no royalty coming in from opossums.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do they fish for opossums?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There was such a destruction of opossums last year that these animals had no chance. The loss is a serious one for the Fisheries Department.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Is that due to the fact that Mr. Kingsmill, ex-President of this Chamber, has entered the Federal Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Why do the Fisheries Department handle opossums?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I confess I do not quite understand the position, or why it is there has not been the usual natural increase of opossums.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The benefit of the bonus was only enjoyed for a few years.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The trade in opossum skins during the last three or four years was enormous, and people made a lot of money out of them. Possibly that is why opossums are not as numerous to-day as they used to be.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The opossums and magpies in King's Park are dying through the stickfast flea.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I hope that is not the position in the country. It takes a large amount of revenue to keep our free services going. I do not suppose anyone has a word to say against them, but it is just as well we should know exactly what we are spending in this direction. In education for the current financial year we are spending £571,802, not including buildings, but including just the education of the children and the hundred and one other things which the department have to look after. The expenditure on medical and health will be £176,313, police £179,489, gaols £23,302, lunacy £88,864, State children £93,907, aborigines £6,815, a total of £1,140,492. This is a lot of money to spend on free services, but I believe the expenditure is fully justified in the interests of the State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How does the Education Vote compare with the expenditure for the previous year?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think it is something like £6,000 over the actual expenditure.

Hon. J. Duffell: It is more than that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It may be as much as £8,000.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I wanted to ascertain the estimated expenditure this year as against the actual expenditure for the last financial year.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will come to that point. Taxation is estimated to provide £1,016,000, and the revenue received from these departments I have mentioned will amount to £94,823, which will give a total of £1,110,823. The estimated expenditure on free services will be £29,669 more than the taxation received, plus the collections from the departments I have mentioned. This means that we shall pay away all the taxation we receive, plus another £29,669 in order to provide these services. As hon. members will see when we come to deal with the question of taxation before the session closes, the taxation received does not nearly cover the cost of free services rendered by the State.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It does not cover the waste.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is all very well to make a statement like that. If Mr. Lovekin says there is waste, he should tell us where that waste is. At any rate, I hope he will do so when he speaks on the Bill. As to the Education Department, over which I have the honour to preside for the time being, I spoke exhaustively on this feature of the State's activities during the earlier stages of the session. There are a few additional points, however, that may be of interest to hon. members. We have 53,010 scholars on the rolls of the Government primary and secondary schools. That shows an increase of 1,009 as compared with June, 1923.

Hon. J. Duffell: Things are looking up!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: As long as matters in connection with the State are looking up, we have to provide more money for the education of the children. When people remark that there is a heavy expenditure on education and say that too much is spent on it, it is difficult to find out where that expenditure can be curtailed. Mr. Colebatch, who formerly was Leader of the House, was a great educationist, and he was always desirous of economising in his department, but he found it a most difficult matter. I am directing my attention to the same object now. We have 750 schools open. Of those, 45 were opened during the current year, including 17 established at group settlements. This demonstrates that the Government are not neglecting the group settlements. On the other hand, we are endeavouring to give the settlers there all the facilities, as far as is possible, that are enjoyed by the people in the metropolitan area.

Hon. H. Stewart: But there are a great many group settlements and only 17 schools have been provided!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member should remember that those 17 were opened this year. A number of other schools have already been established on group settlements, although I have not the exact number at the present moment. I can assure hon. members that there has never been a genuine application for a school at a group settlement that I have turned down. That course is in accordance with the policy

of the Premier, who is satisfied that I should proceed along these lines. As a matter of fact, it is the policy of the Government to give educational facilities to these people, and practically every week I approve of one or two schools for group settlements. Hon. members will realise, however, that during last winter, owing to the heavy rains and the bad state of the roads, especially in the Augusta district, great difficulty was experienced in carrying out necessary works. Had it not been for these abnormal conditions, some of the school buildings authorised would have been constructed earlier. Now that the roads have dried up, everything possible is being done to facilitate the provision of schools in the group settlements as promptly as possible. Obviously the extension of the group settlement scheme necessitates increased expenditure by the Education Department. That expenditure is borne cheerfully by the people of Western Australia, and it is pleasant to know how much this sphere of activity is appreciated by the parents of the children in those centres. The work carried out is wonderful. I am experiencing difficulty, however, in securing the services of teachers for these centres. We have to send many more young ladies into the country than I think is desirable, because often the accommodation for the lady teachers is not very satisfactory. To send them out under such conditions is not desirable. We desire to send more men into the bush, and I hope it will be possible to achieve that end. It will be necessary, however, to enlarge the scope of the Training College at Claremont. Already that institution is overcrowded, and we have many applications from young people desirous of entering the institution. I intend asking the Premier for money to extend the college buildings, so that not only may we train teachers for the ordinary work in State schools, but also train them for special work, which, I think, will be appreciated by hon. members. The new high school at Bunbury has been opened, and that has meant additional expenditure. Manual training and other extensions of education have to be introduced to meet the requirements of the people in the district, and requirements in reason are met. A contract has been let for the Albany High School which will cost something like £20,000. As the years go by and the benefits of higher education are appreciated by people, they look for improved educational facilities for their children. Due care is being exercised regarding the expenditure, and we desire to see that it is kept down as much as possible compatible with the interests of the State as a whole, and with the requirements of the country districts. One improvement we have made—I think the suggestion came from the Premier originally—is that we have built a number of small school halls costing about £240, and the group settlers have been granted the use of the buildings. This policy means that in country districts where no halls are provided for the people to meet in, school halls can be

used for meeting and social purposes. Of course we insist that some responsible person shall take charge and see that the property is not injured.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is a good and sound policy.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Hon. members know that Western Australia is a sparsely populated country, with big distances. For that reason we find it better to drive children to school rather than build a number of small schools scattered throughout the country. Members will realise the magnitude of this task when I say that last year we spent £14,000 on driving children to school. That is a substantial amount, but it is good expenditure. It is better to incur that expenditure than to build small isolated schools. If we bring the children for some distance—in some instances they drive from five to ten miles to school—we enable them to attend the bigger schools where more highly classified teachers are provided to supervise their education. Country people as a rule desire their children to be driven to schools where they can get an improved type of education.

Hon. J. Dodd: What is the limit; three miles?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think that is the limit. At Toodyay, for instance, we have a big motor car that travels around that district and brings in children from considerable distances to the big school at that centre. The motor car travels around a very large circle before landing the children at the school.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is the only centre on that basis.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is so. The motor car does not belong to the State, but is owned by a private individual who contracts to convey the children to and from school at so much per head per week.

Hon. A. Lovekin: How much per head does that cost?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have not the figures with me.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How many miles does the motor car travel?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I should say 20 or 30 miles. I do not know the exact distance, but it is considerable. In any case, we gave some attention to the question of establishing several small centres rather than adopt this course. The idea of driving the children in appealed to the Director of Education, and it appealed to me too. For the time being we are carrying out that system at Toodyay.

Hon. H. Stewart: Perhaps when you are replying to the debate to-morrow, you will give information on the points raised.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I shall do so. I shall also give the cost per head, and so forth.

Hon. H. Stewart: In other districts the residents only get a driving allowance if the children go to the nearest school.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is the position. In any case, we find it better to drive the children to these bigger schools for the sake of improved education.

Hon. A. Lovekin: How many children are driven by this motor car?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will supply the information when replying. Mr. Holmes interjected as to the cost. In every country in the world, the cost of education per head is high indeed. Here in Western Australia the cost is low. In 1921-22 the cost per head of the population was £1 18s.; in 1922-23 it was £1 16s. 5d. Hon. members, therefore, will see that the per capita cost has been reduced.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: My question was as to the actual expenditure for 1923.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was about £644,000 including buildings and so forth, and this year the expenditure is estimated at £650,000. It must be higher this year, but I will give the actual figures when I reply. Wherever I have gone since I have been Minister for Education, I have endeavoured to instil into the minds of the youth of this State the necessity for rural training and the teachers have been very good in assisting me. I have asked them to attract the minds of the children as much as possible towards the country, encouraging them to go there and see what is going on. The object of this is that ultimately these children who have been highly educated in the metropolitan area will be encouraged to go into the country and, perhaps, take up country life and help in the development of the State. We are not able to do much in the way of rural work at city schools, but where water is available flowers and vegetables are cultivated and general instruction is given by the teachers in rural subjects. At Toodyay we have a rural school where wonderfully good work is being done. This school was initiated by Mr. Colebatch and, when he left office, he impressed upon me the importance of keeping it going. I intend to keep the Toodyay school going and to extend the system of rural schools as much as possible. We are endeavouring to buy a few acres of good land for cereal growing and garden purposes. At Three Springs cereals and vegetables are grown under the direction of an energetic schoolmaster, who is inculcating into the minds of his pupils the value of rural work. I must pay a tribute to the parents and citizens' associations, which received commendation from the Education Commission. The report of the Royal Commission has been of great assistance to me. Prior to taking office I had not read it, but I have since read it several times. It is a wonderfully clear and valuable report and reflects the greatest credit upon the members of the commission. The parents and citizens' associations number 120, and one has only to attend the bazaars and fetes arranged by

them to appreciate their work. At Thomas-street last week £150 was raised by means of a bazaar. These associations are doing valuable work by providing pianos, gramophones, swings and a hundred other things that the department could not provide.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do the department exercise any control over the expenditure?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is not our money.

Hon. J. Cornell: The department have nothing to do with the raising of the money.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The children raise a lot of it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is so. The parents supply various commodities and then buy them back.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Before the days of parents' associations, the children had entertainments and raised money, and the department exercised control over the expenditure.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think we exercise control over the expenditure now.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Now the money raised by the children has passed out of control.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. These associations appoint school boards of five members each and I think they exercise some control. The money is being expended in the right direction. It is a labour of love and is proving of great benefit to the children. On the Loan Estimates £30,000 is provided for an agricultural college. The inauguration of the college will be taken in hand as early as possible, but a site has yet to be decided upon.

Hon. W. Carroll: The commission recommended a site.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but the Government have not yet decided where the college will be situated.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: By what will the Government be guided?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Common sense.

Hon. W. Carroll: The commission made a good recommendation.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know what they recommended; something will be done at an early date. The Narrogin Farm School is doing remarkably good work. The number of applications for entrance is greater than ever. There is a pronounced tendency on the part of parents to settle their boys on the land, a tendency that is highly gratifying to the Government.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The more you can settle on the land the better.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member would be pleased to learn how many city people want to get their boys into the Narrogin school. My only regret is that we cannot accommodate all the applicants.

Hon. J. Mills: I think most of the boys there are from the city.

Hon. H. Stewart: There is a large proportion of farmers' sons.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. I have a letter written to the Director of

Education by H. J. Robinson, buyer for Foggitt, Jones & Co., Ltd., which is intensely interesting as showing what is being done in pig-raising. This should appeal to Mr. Miles. It reads—

Permit me to comment on the Narrogin School of Agriculture in regard to raising bacon pigs. My attention was drawn from time to time at the Narrogin monthly sales to the particularly fine class of pigs penned by the above farm. One lot 23 weeks old realised £4 per head. I then got into touch with your manager and found that both his foreman and he were keenly interested and combined a somewhat rare quality—practical and business ability. Last month on my suggestion they purchased some stores at 57s. (as far as my memory goes). I bought a pen of them a month later at £4 7s. 6d. and they again topped the sale. In conversation with them, I requested them to make some practical experiments on American lines, namely selecting two or three pens of say five each, weighing them, noting the increase per week and charging cost of feed separate, to enable us to get an actual value of the grain fed to pigs on systematic lines, such as these men are adopting. My firm would be indebted if you would sanction same. It is practical information for the boys. Only last week I had the pleasure of meeting a late pupil at Kulin, Mr. Workman, who is giving attention, in conjunction with other mixed farming, to hog-raising. Numerous plots of wheat are being tested on up-to-date culture, the result of his education at the farm. To use his father's words, the boy had surprised him with what he had learned. Although only a lad he is practically running the farm. The raising of pigs for pork and bacon is greatly increasing. I purchased about £1,000 worth of pigs in my various districts, which are now responding to our organising work of the last four years. We are selling stud pigs all over the State and cannot supply all orders. We have various studs under my supervision, namely Mr. Malcolm, Wagin; Mr. J. Cullen, Narrogin; Mr. Williams, Dumbleyung; Mr. Spencer, Grass Valley; and Mr. J. Mullins, Dudewa, and many others. The assistance given to this industry has been so limited that it is gratifying to see a Government farm doing such practical work. Hoping you will sanction these experiments.

The experiments have been sanctioned, and I hope that as a result of them even better results will be obtained.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It all depends on the cost of raising the pigs.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is what they are trying to ascertain. Let me now refer for a few moments to the North-West, another department under my control.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Surely the North-West is entitled to more than a few moments!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member must not take that remark too literally. There is an amount of £155,000 expenditure for services rendered in the North-West. That is exclusive of the Wyndham Meat Works and interest on loan moneys. The revenue items are difficult to segregate, and I have not been able to ascertain what revenue was received for that expenditure.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How is the £155,000 made up?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I can obtain the details.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What additional amount has the new department cost?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think it has cost less than before.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What has been done?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is much cheaper to have an engineer in the North-West—

Hon. G. W. Miles: In the North-West! He is in the Eastern States.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: At present he is in the East, but even the hon. member goes to England occasionally for a spell. The present system is far cheaper than that of sending officers up from Perth. The Works Department have charge of the Beadon Point jetty, but everything else is under the North-West department. When the Beadon Point jetty is finished, I hope that too will come under my department.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What has been done for the £155,000?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is expenditure on Government services in the North-West.

Hon. J. Nicholson: At the present price of services, £155,000 will not go far.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Perhaps I was injudicious in mentioning that amount. At any rate other things have been done in the North-West and a great deal will yet be done there. The Government have appointed Mr. Wise as adviser. Mr. Wise does not want to be called an expert. I honestly believe he is a good adviser.

Hon. J. Cornell: Has he anyone to advise?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: He will advise me.

Hon. J. Cornell: I mean in the way of settlers.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Mr. Wise has not been here very long. He has been to Wyndham and Derby, through part of the Gascoyne, and has presented several reports. So far those reports are favourable regarding the growth of cotton, especially around Wyndham. The territory around there seems to appeal to Mr. Wise. The policy of the Government as outlined by the Premier recently is to have a colony of 100 agriculturists to grow cotton, tropical fruits, and peanuts for oil on the lines of the South-West settlement. We do not know exactly what Mr. Wise's advice is worth, but I believe that he is a thoroughly practical and earnest man and that he will evolve a scheme

that will prove of great advantage to the North-West. We are all prepared to give Mr. Wise the opportunity to justify his appointment.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Where will this colony be?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will point that out presently.

Hon. J. Cornell: Peanuts will appeal to me.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am glad to have that interjection, because it gives me an opportunity to make some reference to what is known in America as the lowly peanut. I read in an American magazine the other day something about the remarkable possibilities of the peanut as discovered by Professor Carver of Tuskegee Institute. He discovered that the peanut contains no fewer than 145 different foods and useful articles. The article explained that he was approached by a wealthy cotton grower in Alabama. This grower had sustained a great loss through the boll weevil and interviewed Professor Carver for advice as to the possibility of substituting something for cotton. Professor Carver had been experimenting in connection with the peanut and had made the discovery to which I have just alluded. He declared that from the peanut there could be obtained, amongst other things, milk, breakfast foods, flour, cake, candy, oils, sauces, meal for cattle feeding, wood stains, leather dye, metal polishes, and soap.

Hon. H. Stewart: Then it must rival the blackboy.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Professor Carver found that all these articles can be produced from the peanut. Hon. members must regard that as being very interesting for the reason that the peanut grows so well in the North-West.

Hon. T. Moore: Does the boll weevil attack the peanut?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Professor Carver had made these experiments when he was approached by the cotton growers of Alabama to find a substitute for the growing of cotton which had been destroyed by the boll weevil.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How did he relieve the position?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: By advising the growth of peanuts. At the present time America produces 53,000,000 bushels of peanuts, 7,000,000 lbs. of peanut butter and 3,000,000 gallons of peanut oil. These are very big figures.

Hon. H. Stewart: Did you get that information from "The Scientific American," because if you did that journal is generally wrong.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know about that, but I have submitted these facts because I consider they are of special importance to Western Australia, and we should consider the advisability of moving in a similar direction. Mr. Miles has often told us what is being done in other parts of the world with the peanut.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Peanuts are worth £70 a ton to-day and they grow prolifically in the North.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then it is well that I, as Minister for the North-West, should direct attention to the importance of this matter. I have been reading what has been done in the North-West and the conclusions that have been arrived at by those who have had great experience of that part of the State, and what impressed me more than anything else was the wonderful possibilities of conserving water and irrigating enormous areas of territory. I do not think the cost of that would be great in comparison with the result that would be likely to follow.

Hon. H. Stewart: Have you had any advice from the Commissioner on that matter?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member cannot expect the Commissioner to have already examined all these rivers. The territory is so big that he must be given some little time.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Some of the station owners are already doing what you suggest.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I know, as a practical man with some idea of surveying and engineering, what is wanted in the North-West. We require a more accurate definition of our rivers and the possibility of making use of them for the purpose of irrigation. With irrigation we can make that part of the State a most wonderful country. It is certain that we cannot make the whole of it productive unless we have command of water.

Hon. G. W. Miles: There are no droughts there.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If there were droughts, it would be a good thing to have command of water. We are fortunate in this respect, particularly when we read of the suffering in those parts of the Eastern States that are at the present time experiencing a drought. We have spent £4,879 on the establishment of a cotton settlement. This amount covers the expenses incurred in bringing to the State Mr. Evans and Mr. Jones, as well as the cost of establishing the Derby groups and the experimental work at the missions. The Derby experiments were not favoured by Mr. Evans, and a change was made. That experiment cost the State £1,000. The houses that were built there were removed to the new site that was chosen and the report we have now is that there is a possibility of success in the near future. At the present time there are three returned soldiers settled at Knowsley. They are in a difficult position because they did not have anyone to advise them until Mr. Wise went to their assistance. I hope that what he has been able to tell them will enable them to make good.

Member: Is Mr. Wise under the control of the North-West Department?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No. Mr. Wise is attached to the Agricultural Department and his immediate head is Mr. Sutton.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Mr. Brockman does not interfere with him?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No. All who are associated with Mr. Wise are doing their level best to assist him, and to bring about the successful growth of cotton in the North.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You spent £5,000 before Mr. Wise came here?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. The returned soldiers who are settled in the North at the present time have cleared a lot of land and they have their houses erected there. It looks as if they were going to make good. The Prime Minister, who is in London, has been doing his utmost to advance the cotton industry in Australia by directing attention to the possibilities that exist here. We have sent home an exhibit and I regret that all the members representing the North-West did not accept the invitation to go to Fremantle to inspect what was regarded as a creditable display before it was sent to England. We had some cotton ginned here and sent 25 bales to the Old Country. We know that Mr. Colebatch, the Agent General, is interested in the growth of cotton, and that he will devote considerable attention to advancing our interests in that direction. We are hopeful that good results will follow from the exhibit that we have sent overseas. Splendid work has been done by Messrs. Overheu and Hay of Wyndham. They have cleared a considerable area of land and grown a fair amount of cotton which was purchased by the Government at the top market price. We are prepared to pay for all the cotton that they can produce. The Director of Agriculture has gone to the North-West, and has consulted there with Mr. Wise. He is making a report, and we are hopeful that when he returns we shall be able to get on a move with the North-West. Mr. Sutton does not for a single moment pretend to be a cotton expert, but he is a man of great commonsense, and a man of discernment; and, as he says, he will get the atmosphere. I am very hopeful that the results of his trip will prove of value in the development of the North-West. As regards the Yampi Sound iron deposits, it is not necessary to go fully into the matter, because Mr. Miles has already told us of the great possibilities there. The Government are out, not to develop the South-West or the Eastern districts or the Midlands or the North-West particularly, but to develop all of them. I hope that in a very short time the necessary money will be found.

Hon. T. Moore: But you are largely concentrating your energies on the South-West.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: At the present time, yes. That is right, because we shall get results from the South-West quickly.

Hon. J. Cornell: You will get results more quickly from cotton-growing in the North-West than from the development of the South-West.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We are endeavouring to do even-handed justice by all portions of the State. For the moment the Government think it necessary to develop the South-West in particular. That work is now going on, but it is not going on to the disadvantage of any other part of Western Australia. With regard to pearl shell, the Government have approved a reduction of 1s. per ton in outward wharfage, which concession will assist the industry. The reduction was notified in last week's *Government Gazette*. The present rate is 4s. per ton, and the reduction brings it down to 3s.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But pearl shell is not going to be treated as a primary product.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In making that interjection the hon. member has struck the right note. I hope the same treatment will be meted out to the North-West as is now being given to the South-West and other portions of the State. We know that the pearling industry, unfortunately, is not in a satisfactory position at the moment. However, we hope for speedy improvement. The Beadon jetty, it is expected, will be completed in a year's time.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have not completed the concrete.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have something to tell the hon. member on that point. The Government have arranged to appoint a board to decide upon the new townsite adjoining Beadon jetty, and the people who are now at Onslow will be given blocks on that townsite. Further, we will do what we can to help them in moving, so that the new settlement may be established as quickly as possible. I have had a look at the plans of the new townsite, and have consulted all the officers concerned. I think that portion of the coast is like nearly all the coastline of the North-West, rugged and broken; and therefore it will be difficult to find a good townsite.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: How far is the new townsite away?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is alongside the Beadon jetty.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What has been the cost of the jetty to date?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The contract price is £89,000, and £40,000 or £50,000 has been spent so far. As to the question of concrete, other parts of the world are now using a system of spraying piles with concrete. A two-inch coating is sprayed round the piles, and then they last practically for ever. I read of this system some time ago, and I have seen a photograph of the spraying apparatus in operation. The concrete is sprayed around the piles as soon as they have been put in.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: The only objection is that the swaying of the ships chips the concrete.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That may be so. I have not gone into the matter fully.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The experiment has already been tried at Wyndham, and has not proved a success there. At Wyndham there is a desire to adopt the concrete piles.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We know that the North-West is a wonderful place for wool. Last year's wool clip yielded 41,923,043 lbs., valued at £3,232,596. The North-West produced about a fourth of the wool of Western Australia. It is a fine thing to be a wool grower nowadays. Those who are growing wool in this State are the best-off men in Western Australia.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You will admit that wool-growing is better than peanut-growing.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member has peanut-growing on the brain, I think.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We want to concentrate on wool-growing more than we do.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. It is only a little time since wool buyers began to come to Western Australia, and the success of our wool sales is most gratifying.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: All due to private enterprise.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I believe in private enterprise, and I hope there will be no interference with private enterprise in wool. All the encouragement that the Government can give to private enterprise will be given. The subject of wool appeals to me, because this is one of the best countries in the world for wool-growing. At Moola Bulla cattle station we have a tannery, and very soon it will treat from 750 to 1,000 hides annually. In that connection a new shed is being built at Moola Bulla, and I think the tannery will work satisfactorily. In the North-West there is a big demand for Moola Bulla leather.

Hon. H. Stewart: Are you dyeing the leather as well as tanning it at Moola Bulla?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think everything is being done there. With regard to the North-West generally, the position is that Western Australia is an enormous territory, and that a large amount of money is required to develop the South-West, and indeed all the districts south of the North-West. With a population such as ours, it is not possible for us to find the money.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Government are endeavouring to secure the co-operation of the Commonwealth and Imperial Governments towards obtaining the large sum of money that is necessary for the development of the North-West. The great factor in the development of the North-West is going to be the encouragement of private enterprise. We must give people with capital a chance.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is the advice which this Chamber gave the Premier last year on his return from England.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Premier is moving in that direction. Every encouragement should be given to capitalists

in the North-West, and I hope that before long we shall have a glorious territory there.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Get rid of the State trading concerns.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member is always putting posers to me.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You want somewhere to send men with capital, if you do not want them in the South-West. Apparently you only want people on sustenance allowance down there.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the hon. member knew what is being done in the South-West, he would not speak like that. The great value of this debate is that it encourages members to go and see for themselves. After that they can come back here and oppose or support advantageously.

Hon. W. Carroll: They will say, "The half bath not been told."

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the turtle and dugong fisheries in the North-West?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have endeavoured to say sufficient of the North-West to satisfy hon. members. I have not yet referred to the Wyndham Meat Works. If I do so, I shall "a plain unvarnished tale unfold," and "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice."

Hon. T. Moore: Is it necessary to do otherwise?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No. The estimated area under wheat this year amounts to the very satisfactory figure of 1,655,329 acres. The area under oats is estimated at 297,656 acres, and that under barley at 10,393 acres. The estimated wheat yield is 19,294,176 bushels, representing an average of 11.7 bushels per acre. It will be a record year.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: All due to the Premier.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not say that. I am only placing the plain fact before members. The estimated yield for this year is 1,057,821 bushels in excess of the 1915-16 yield, which was a record at the time. We can safely say, therefore, that the people on the wheat areas are progressing by leaps and bounds in opening up their country. I hope they are receiving the full benefit that they deserve.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Give them water.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the hon. member will refer to the Loan Estimates, he will see that provision is made for water everywhere. The estimated yield of oats for this year is 4,218,592 bushels, or an average of 14.2 bushels per acre. This also is a record. The estimated yield of oats for this year is 1,731,674 bushels ahead of the 1919-20 crop. It is estimated that there are 333,522 acres under wheaten and oaten hay, and the anticipated yield is 533,713 tons, or, roughly, one ton per acre.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Before tea I was dealing with wheat. Concluding that statement I may say the objective of the Premier is to get a 30 million bushel return. On the prospects, the day when we shall have that harvest is not far distant. In the fruit industry, the year has been notable in many respects. The past season was not a successful one for the growers. I, as representing with my colleagues the Bridgetown district, am very much concerned about the future of the industry. The area under orchards and vineyards increased last year by 1,371 acres, while 1½ million bushels were produced. The export from Western Australia amounted to 407,085 bushels. Some thousands of bushels were sent to the Eastern States. It is gratifying to those representing the South-West Province to know that last year, owing to the efforts of all in the district, 18,178 bushels of fruit were exported from Bunbury. For many years past the orchardists of the South-West have been to an extent crippled by the fact that they had to send up to Perth all fruit for export. Therefore, we were very thankful when arrangements were made last year for the shipment of 18,178 bushels of fruit from Bunbury.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But it ought to be 180,000 bushels.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I agree. Actually those who represent that district are working in that direction. But their great concern has been the Bunbury harbour, where considerable improvements will have to be effected before fruit can be exported thence in competition with Fremantle. In saying that, I am not speaking against Fremantle or any other port, because in my opinion every port ought to have its geographical trade. This is the first season that Bunbury has obtained some recognition of its geographical position, and no doubt it will come fully into its heritage and secure its proper trade. Local growers have built up orchards with a view to exporting the bulk of their produce to overseas markets. However, they have found it difficult to compete against the Eastern States in the canning trade, and consequently attention has been turned to the export of fresh fruits to the world's markets. A curious position has arisen to the disadvantage of the growers in this State. The Federal Government decided upon a Federal pool to which all our growers, in common with the growers of the other States, have to give support. However, our growers get no benefit whatever from that pool.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Not a penny.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Although our growers, in common with other Australian growers, have to foot the bill.

Hon. H. Stewart: And so have the general taxpayers.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. It is hard to find a motive for what is being done in the Eastern States. We have no canning works here, and so we get no

advantage from the canning works in the Eastern States, heavily subsidised by the Federal Government, notwithstanding which our growers are called upon to shoulder their share of the large sums lost in recent years through the Federal canned fruit pool. It is hard to understand why no sympathy is extended by the Federal Government to our growers.

Hon. H. Stewart: I suppose the State Government are going to make representations?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They are making representations. What I hope will be done for our growers is the securing of a bonus of, say, one shilling per case on all fruit shipped from Western Australia overseas; we might have that as a subsidy from the Federal Government in lieu of the canning works subsidy in the Eastern States. I propose to work in that direction.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But the Federal Government cannot give preference to one State as against another.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No, but the assistance being given by the Federal Government at present is all to the advantage of the people of the Eastern States. That being so, I am hoping it will be recognised by the Federal Government as a fair thing that our growers should have this proposed subsidy of 1s. per case on export fruit.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: That would be against the Commonwealth Constitution, which provides that there shall be no discrimination between the States.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But, although not intentional, the discrimination exists to-day. I quite realise that the hon. member is accepted as a constitutional authority.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But there is no discrimination. We get no advantage because we have no canning works.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I agree with that. I do not know whether there is any possibility of establishing canning works here, but seeing that there are none here, we might as well ask for assistance in another form as a quid pro quo. I regret I cannot say very much to-night about the gold mining industry, which unfortunately is not as flourishing as it was in years gone by. The industry has been largely responsible for the splendid position Western Australia occupies to-day. The wonderful wealth of our goldfields in years gone by astonished the world. The only way in which we can help the industry—and that will be done—is by granting a reduction in the price of water for mining purposes, and endeavouring to find a way by which low grade ores can be profitably worked. I know that that brings to the front the important question of reducing railway freights, and so giving the goldfields necessary equipment at a reduced price, thereby stimulating the industry. Some of the richer gold mines have large

reserves of ore, low grade or high grade as the case may be. The working of these in conjunction produces something worth while, but if the rich ore reserves be robbed to any great extent we shall soon come to the end of our tether. The problem is to enable the low grade ores to be profitably worked. If that can be done it will be greatly to the interests of the State. I want members representing the goldfields to understand that the Government intend to do all in their power to assist the industry and to assist the prospector, as has been done during the last year. The total mineral production of Western Australia, other than gold or coal, to the 30th June last was valued at £5,268,781, while the total coal production to the same date was valued at £3,653,500. The total gold and mineral production to the 31st July last was £158,106,610. During the last financial year 112 prospectors were assisted with equipment and sustenance. They composed 67 new parties. Altogether £7,500 was spent in outfitting prospecting parties, and £62,457 was spent on the development of mining. Hon. members may say that as compared with other expenditure that was a small sum. It is the intention of the Government this year to continue the policy of assisting prospectors and of cheapening as far as possible the commodities necessary to the industry.

Hon. J. Mills: Was that exclusively for the assistance of gold mining?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am not quite sure about that.

Hon. E. H. Harris: If so, what was granted to the other classes of mining?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I see what the hon. member means. No doubt that amount covers the whole. Where possible, if circumstances warrant it, the necessary expenditure will be forthcoming. What a wonderful thing it would be for Western Australia, if only we could get back to the glorious days of the nineties! It is often said that Western Australia has not been thoroughly prospected. Only the other day I was reading an account showing that a party of prospectors had gone to Mt. Barlee. Although they did not get anything wonderful, still they found the prospects very satisfactory.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There are millions of acres of mineral country in the North.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, that is so, and those millions of acres of mineral country all require thorough prospecting and development. It is quite possible that several Kalgoorlies or mines even richer than those will be found in the North-West. The estimated revenue of the railways for the current year is £3,025,000 and the estimated expenditure £2,235,000. The estimated net revenue is, therefore, £790,000. The interest charges amount to £775,000; so that if this estimate materialises there will be a profit of £15,000 this year. Members know what losses have occurred in railway working during the last few years,

and how well the railways have been managed recently. The position is, therefore, one for congratulation in the case of the Commissioner, his officers and the men engaged in the service. Loyal service has been given by the railway men, who are most diligent and attentive in their duties. No stone has been left unturned by the management to keep the railways working well. It is many years since there was a profit over working expenses and interest, but if this forecast is consummated there will then be a profit of £15,000, a position which will be very creditable to the railways.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That does not provide for sinking fund.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No sinking fund has ever been provided for the railways. I now come to an interesting statement showing the working expenses of the railways for the four months ended 31st October, 1923, as compared with a similar period for last year. The earnings of the railways for that period in 1923 were £940,753, as against £910,782 for the same period of last year. The loss on railways for the period under review has been reduced from £107,830 in 1922 to £44,878 in 1923, an improvement of £62,952. The position with regard to tramways has also improved. For the first four months of the current financial year, as compared with a similar period for last year, there is an improvement of £1,147. There is also an improvement in the Electricity Department of £2,186. Including railways, tramways, and electricity the net improvement totals £66,285. We may well congratulate those departments upon this satisfactory result.

Hon. H. Stewart: Congratulate everyone.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am not in that mood at all, but when we find faithful service, such as is shown here, we should give credit where credit is due. In charge of the Electricity Department we have a splendid man in Mr. Taylor. Some time ago I criticised him because I wanted certain things done, such as the generation of electricity at Collie and other things. Perhaps I said things about him that were not justified. He does deserve the commendation of members, and certainly has the approval of the Government and his Minister for the good work he has done.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He has perhaps come round to your way of thinking on the Collie proposition.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is not why I am giving him credit. Before the Commission was appointed I gave him the credit I am giving him to-night. It is gratifying to me, and must be gratifying to other members who supported me in the proposition to generate electricity at the pit's mouth at Collie, that the Government have appointed this Commission. It consists of Mr. Taylor, Mr. Williamson, electrical engineer, Mr. Wilson, M.L.A., the Mayor of Bunbury, the Mayor of Collie, and a representative of the

Amalgamated Collieries. These gentlemen are going thoroughly into the question. Their appointments have been gazetted, and the necessary funds found to enable them to carry on their investigations. I am hopeful the time is not far distant when a unit will be started in Collie, and that it will be the nucleus of a large scheme that will eventually be used to serve the people of the State. The beginning may be a small one, and may provide only for the generation of electricity to supply the Collie mines, and light the towns of Bunbury and Collie, and be used for general purposes in the district. In the course of time the railways in that locality may be electrified, and there will then be no necessity to alter the steep grades that now exist. This will mean a saving of a large amount of money. It may then be necessary to bring the power to Perth, and give the people electricity at a low price.

Hon. J. Cornell: The first thing required is the electrification of the suburban railways.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The East Perth supply could be used for that purpose. I agree that the suburban railways should be the first section of the system electrified. There is nothing to stop the Government from bringing this scheme to fruition, and establishing in Collie a large electrical generating plant that will supply cheap power to the people. In Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales progress is being made along these lines, with great advantage to the States in question. Western Australia will also progress if the cost of producing power can be so reduced as to give the people their electrical requirements at a low cost.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The only practical man on the board, Mr. Taylor, was opposed to the Collie scheme.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Perhaps when he has gone further into the matter he will change his mind. He certainly thinks it requires closer investigation. If he sees money in it and advantage to the State he is the man for the undertaking. The Government are concerned about the algae in the river, and are endeavouring to find out the cause of it. Funds are being provided to this end and the work is being gone on with.

Hon. J. Cornell: What about the algae in the domestic supply?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The algae in the river is a serious matter, and its cause does not seem to be yet understood. We hope in the near future something will be done to purify the river. It is a wicked and sinful thing that this beautiful river should be rendered impure. Never since the septic tanks were established on Burswood Island have I bathed in the river. People have a feeling that the river is not pure.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is the cause.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know. I bathed in the river for many years, but not since the septic tanks were established. If I were offered £50 to-morrow

morning I would not go into it. That feeling about the impurity of the river should be removed. If the septic tanks are the cause the trouble should be rectified; if they are not the cause, the minds of people should be relieved on that score. I hope the Government will be able to find out how the trouble is caused, and do what is right to remedy the position.

Hon. J. Cornell: I hope they do not die of senile decay before something is done.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The policy of the Government with regard to metropolitan water supplies, as outlined by the Minister for Works, entails an expenditure of £3,084,000. It means building a dam at Churchman's Brook with a pipe line to Perth, a dam at Wongong Brook, and a reservoir on the Canning River No. 2 site, with an additional pipe line to Perth. There are also other works going on for the carrying of water to Fremantle. It is the desire of the Government to do this work as quietly and promptly as possible. It will take some little time before the scheme is in full working order, but when it is the people of Perth will be in a fine position. Although fault has been found with the Minister for Works over the North Perth water supply. I say again, as I said before, the blame cannot be cast upon him. He found the water by boring, and had it been what he expected all would have been well; but the Almighty was not good to him and the water that was found was not quite pure.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Almighty was good.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The water was not as good as was expected. The estimated cost of the work now in progress to improve the metropolitan water supply is £380,000. The Melville Park reservoir will be ready in a fortnight's time, and the Mt. Eliza reservoir in March next.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is it not a fact that the King's Park Board would not give an acre of ground on which to put a reservoir?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There was some trouble in that direction. A big reservoir is now being built there. The Mt. Hawthorn reservoir is complete, and the 24in. main from Cottesloe to Fremantle is now within a quarter of a mile of the bridge. Members representing the metropolitan area may be satisfied that the Government are doing their level best to overcome the difficulties that obtained last year. The expenditure of £380,000 should go a long way towards relieving the position. People of Perth, however, have to exercise caution and help the Government as much as possible in the matter of economising in water for garden use. We want to see a city beautiful and have flourishing gardens, but the gardens must not flourish at the expense of the drinking and washing water of the people. If the water supply is not equal to the demand during this summer the people must economise as much as possible. Members understand the immigration policy. It is a wonderful thing to think of what 350,000

people are now doing in Western Australia. I do not suppose there is another community of that size doing as much, finding as much revenue, and developing as much country in any other part of the world. There are only about 100,000 men in the State, the others being women and children, but they are achieving wonderful results. We must appreciate that as the country develops and our immigration policy becomes more matured, we shall double or even treble our population. What a wonderful country Western Australia will then be! If we only have the foresight, determination, and pluck to work for that end, it will not be long before Western Australia is one of the most important parts of the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is a pity that so many people are leaving the State!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But a good many people are coming to the State.

Hon. T. Moore: A lot of people with money are leaving the State and poorer people are coming here.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: When I show what is being done in the South-West and the number of people who are being settled there, hon. members will see that if people are leaving Western Australia there are many people who are coming to the State. It has been said that Western Australia is overtaxed and that, in consequence, people are taking their money elsewhere. I believe it is only a fair thing that people who have made their money in Western Australia should spend it here as far as is possible. The assertion that people who make their money here go to the Eastern States to spend it, shows that that is not a fair proposition. If we analyse the position, however, it will be seen that the opportunities for the investment of capital are greater in Western Australia than in any other portion of the Commonwealth. If hon. members realised that point and refrained from harking back on every occasion to the matter of income tax, they would commence to realise that Western Australia is the best State in which to dwell.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: People are hopping out pretty lively now!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think they are.

Hon. J. Cornell: I am sure they are.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Our population is increasing, perhaps not rapidly, but those people who are coming in now are coming in to stay.

Hon. J. Cornell: Over 2,000 people have left the eastern goldfields within a short period.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We should be able to keep those people in Western Australia, either by placing them on group settlements or establishing them elsewhere.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: But what attempt is the Government making to do that?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : Every effort is being made, and, if necessary, even greater efforts will be made.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: There are over 1,000 men up there waiting to go on the land now.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I do not think the Premier knows that is the position.

Hon. J. Cornell: Soon there will be more ready to be shifted, too.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : Hon. members must realise the progress that has been made during the last 12 months, and if there are 1,000 men waiting to go on the land the Premier is the man to put them there.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: They have asked the Queensland Government to provide land for them.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I did not know that. I will bring the matter before the Premier.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: I can show you the correspondence.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : This shows the advantage of such a discussion. If there is a weak link in the chain and hon. members can point to it, it is the duty of the Government to strengthen that link and thus help to build up Western Australia.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is strange that there are a thousand men on the goldfields wanting to go on the land and yet the Government know nothing of it!

Hon. J. W. Hickey: They know about it all right.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The immigration returns show what is the position.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : That is so, but I did not know that there were so many men on the goldfields wanting to go on the land. It is the endeavour of the Government to put people on the land available and ready for development. We desire to get the land ready for settlement, and it is certainly better to place our own citizens on the land than that they should drift to the Eastern States.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Those people are more anxious to get land than the Government are to put them there.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I am sorry to hear the hon. member say that, because the Government's policy has for its main object the placing of men on the land. If the hon. member gives me the particulars he has, I will go into them to-morrow and see what can be done.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: I am tired of doing it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Is not this a matter of common knowledge?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I did not know of it.

THE PRESIDENT : I think hon. members are interjecting too much.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : It is not the policy of the Mitchell Government to allow anyone to remain idle.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Are not the Government looking round to see what is happening?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : Of course they are. The Government can well

look after themselves, and may be trusted not to do anything that is not to the advantage of the State. The Government will see what can be done regarding these men if they wish to go on the land. The position in the Old Country is extremely interesting. On the 1st of October last Great Britain had recorded at her unemployment exchanges 929,100 men, 44,400 boys, 232,000 women and 40,700 girls, or a total of 1,246,200 individuals representing idle energy.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is a reduction by one-half on the figures of two years ago.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I am pleased to hear that, because it shows that the position in the Old Country has improved. These figures are illuminating, however, and I place them before hon. members. The people who are unemployed in Britain are losing heart, because they are not hopeful regarding the future. There is not very much ahead of them in the Old Country. Here we have land awaiting development. We have opportunities for those people. It should be the object of Western Australia to absorb some of these people who are out of work in Britain.

Hon. T. Moore: In Britain they have land that cannot be utilised. The Government are subsidising the people there to work their land.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : That is all right.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They took fifty millions off the income tax and reduced the number of unemployed by one million.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But that is statesmanship!

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : The hon. member will get enough of statesmanship when the Taxation Bill is before us. The Premier seeks to obtain £10,000,000 from the Imperial Government without interest in order to encourage land settlement.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why did he not get that when he was in London?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : When the Premier was at Home he did work from which splendid results have been obtained. We have got cheap money which only costs us 2 per cent.

Hon. T. Moore: It will soon cost the State 6 per cent.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : If we show a attitude in settling people on the land in Western Australia, the Imperial Government will be encouraged to extend their assistance to the Government. Queensland is the only State that can compare with Western Australia, because it is the only other State where land is available for settlement. In Western Australia, however, the advantages are far greater. We have more opportunity, and if the money is made available hon. members will realise what can be done here.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Why did not the Premier ask for £10,000,000 first? It was to be had.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : If that be so, I wish the hon. member had gone

Home. What he says is tantamount to suggesting that the Premier did not do his best for Western Australia.

Hon. A. Lovekin: My advice is that he botched the business.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not agree with that statement at all. At any rate, I must not dwell upon this point.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: No, it is dangerous.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There is nothing dangerous about it.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask hon. members to permit the Minister to make his speech. If they do not, we shall be here all night!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If this money is to be obtained without interest, we shall provide the land and do the work, and the capital and interest will be paid over a period of years by the success of the settlers. That is an ideal policy.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I can show you where that was advocated before the Premier went Home.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then the hon. member agrees that it is an excellent policy, and believes with me that if we can get that money without interest it would pay the British Government to make it available. Over a million and a quarter people in the Old Country cannot secure work, and instead of the Imperial authorities providing those individuals with daily or monthly doles, they should assist in the development of the State by sending them out to us and furnishing us with funds. There is nothing worse than charity to break down and undermine human nature. If the Government, instead of breaking down the determination and will of their own people by making available these doles, were to spend the money in sending the people out to Western Australia, great development could take place.

Hon. T. Moore: That is want we want.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Such a policy would enable Great Britain to save the money many times over.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are prepared to advance the money if the matter is placed before them properly.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I believe so.

Hon. A. Lovekin: And they can reduce that million and a quarter who are receiving doles by further reducing the income tax.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member is in accord with me regarding the policy of the Government. He believes that the right thing to be done for Western Australia is to get the money without interest over a number of years.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Government could have had it from the start.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think so. As it is, we have done well with what assistance we received. If we can get better terms, surely it is right for the Government to secure them.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Premier made a bad deal for Western Australia, and for every other State.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is not so. In any case we have to be satisfied with small mercies. As we show our aptitude in the settlement of the country by the employment of people from Great Britain, the eyes of the British Government will be more and more directed to Western Australia. When that time comes, the British Government, in common with the Commonwealth Government, will give us every possible assistance.

Hon. T. Moore: You are not at the mercy of the British Government, surely!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No, but we must get money in Australia or Great Britain for we cannot develop Western Australia without it, and if the British Government make available that money it will be to the mutual benefit and advantage of both Britain and Australia.

Hon. J. Cornell: You have not explained why the population has remained stationary.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No, because I do not think it has remained stationary. I will go into that question tomorrow and see what the position is. If our population has remained stationary, then something is wrong. People are coming to Western Australia, and if they are leaving Western Australia in anything like equal numbers, something must be wrong. We should keep them here. That should be the policy of any Government. As to the State trading concerns—

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is where the Government are hampering employment, and hampering industry, and it explains why people are leaving the State.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The State trading concerns represent a heritage from the Labour Government. We have to face the fact that we have them and we must do our best with them.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You have had a fair innings with them, too.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The position regarding the State trading concerns is very difficult.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: You know a good thing when you see it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is one side of the question. My views regarding State trading concerns have been placed clearly before hon. members. We must see that the money invested in them is properly protected until Parliament gives us power to dispose of them. We have not that power at the present time. We have made good use of the concerns entrusted to us, and have to see that they are kept in good order.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Do not the Government control the position?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No. Parliament controls it. What is the use of Mr. Lovekin talking like that! I will not go into the history of these concerns.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Surely the Government can bring in a Bill enabling them to dispose of the concerns.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows the policy of the Government, which is that the State trading concerns shall be disposed of as soon as possible. The time is not ripe now, and as the custodians of the invested capital in those concerns it is the bounden duty of the Government to keep them in order.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They have not attempted to do it yet.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I wish to give members a clear and explicit statement regarding State trading concerns. Last year the loss on the shipping service was £78,757, and the loss since its inception has been £21,118. Members know how that is accounted for.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Yes, by the "Kangaroo" profiteering during the war.

Hon. J. Cornell: At what does she stand in the books? Has she been written down?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: She stands at about £300,000.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And she is worth about £50,000.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Implement Works last year showed a loss of £7,324 and the loss since their inception has been £39,177, exclusive of £96,161 written off, the profit and loss account.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is not a loss, but a gift.

Hon. T. Moore: What is the capital value of the machinery turned out by the works?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I shall give that later on. The brickworks last year showed a profit of £2,232 and the profit since their inception has been £2,765.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Have they paid any rates and taxes as the other fellow had to do?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The quarries last year showed a loss of £911, making the total loss since their inception £4,408. Hotels last year showed a profit of £7,502, or a total profit since their inception of £61,955.

Hon. J. Cornell: And still people cry out for prohibition!

The PRESIDENT: I ask members to allow the Minister to make his statement. The figures are important. If the Minister addressed the Chair occasionally, he would get on better.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I apologise.

The PRESIDENT: It is not your fault.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The sawmills last year showed a profit of £62,121, or a total profit since their inception of £148,017.

Hon. T. Moore: Already they have nearly paid for themselves.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The ferries last year returned a profit of £476, making a total profit since their inception of £7,873. The Wyndham Meat Works

showed a loss last year of £88,442, making the total loss since their inception £457,723.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And nothing has been written off for depreciation.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Thus the total loss since the inception of these concerns has been £301,816, plus the amount written off the Implement Works £96,161, a total of £397,977.

Hon. T. Moore: That does not account for the deficit by any means.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is in addition to the deficit.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The position of the Wyndham Meat Works at the 31st December, 1922, was as follows: Liabilities—general loan funds, £1,014,692 14s. 8d.; Treasury and Savings Bank overdrafts, £207,887 6s. 3d.; sundry creditors (including interest owing to Treasury of £116,808 16s. 3d.), £131,338 13s. 3d.; total liabilities £1,353,918 14s. 2d. Assets—buildings, plant and machinery £737,756 9s. 8d.; products and materials on hand, £113,243 7s. 7d.; sundry debtors, £40,263 19s. 9d.; sundry items, £4,931 16s. 4d.; total assets, £896,195 13s. 4d.; balance of liabilities over assets £457,723 0s. 10d. The accounts for the present year have not been closed; all the products have not yet been realised upon.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It is useful information.

Hon. H. Stewart: I thought you said £457,723 was the amount of the loss!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The accumulated deficiency is £457,723. Last year the loss was £88,442 which included £76,744 for interest and £1,369 deficit on 1920 realisation of products account. The 1923 season should show a surplus of £3,000 over working expenses, exclusive of depreciation and interest. This, I am informed, is a conservative estimate. The estimated cash receipts are £235,455, which allows for realisation of two-thirds of the production. The cash payments during the year amounted to £291,931.

Hon. H. Stewart: What is the estimated loss on running the works for the year?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The figures I have just quoted are merely estimated cash receipts and payments. The main items of expenditure in 1923 are:—Payments to cattle owners, £114,000; wages, etc., £65,500; materials, £35,000; wharfage and handling charges, £6,300; freight, insurance and commission, £69,600. The interest for 1923 is £78,000.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That means you add £75,000 to the deficiency.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: During the season 30,418 bullocks were slaughtered at the works. The average return to the growers was £3 15s. per head.

Hon. J. Cornell: How many of them came from Vestey's?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know. The cattle were not as good as last year's, though some of them realised £5 18s. per head. Some members contend

that a large amount of depreciation should have been charged against the works. Depreciation has never been charged against the undertaking, but heavy maintenance costs have been debited to operating expenses. No sinking fund has been provided.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Depreciation on freezing works is very heavy.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I myself have argued that.

Hon. A. Lovekin: So that when you put the assets against liabilities you ought to make a good allowance for that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am doing the best I can. The manager of the works, Mr. McGhie, is an excellent man. There is nothing in the trade he does not understand. He is keen and earnest, and saves money in directions that members would scarcely credit.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does he approve of the Sheed, Thomson agency?

Hon. A. Lovekin: He says "My friend Sheed."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Members must make allowance for the war period, the heavy freights, and the adverse conditions obtaining at Wyndham. We are endeavouring to get freights reduced. If the meat market recovered to the extent of only a halfpenny per pound, Wyndham would be a paying concern. We have been unfortunate in that the price of meat has kept so low, and there is no silver lining to the cloud. High wages have to be paid at Wyndham. I do not say they are too high; people working in that locality must be well paid. All we can do is to keep the works going until the happy day comes when we can sell them to someone else and recoup the State.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are a lot of happy days ahead.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the works had not been started it would have been a serious matter for the cattle growers. Their cattle must have been brought to Perth, and that would have seriously affected the market prices to growers down here. During 1919 the works were not operated, and £44,000 had to be advanced to the East Kimberley cattle growers. All things considered, members must be satisfied that the best course was adopted last year when the Government decided to operate the works. The position this year is better, and we hope that before all the meat is sold, the price will have increased and the loss will prove to be less heavy than we expect at present.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would not the growers get the benefit of any increase in the price?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The growers would get the bulk of the benefit, but the State would get a small benefit.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The growers get a bonus from the Federal Government on all cattle exported.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but I do not know whether that will be continued next year. When framing loan

proposals care must be exercised that the money borrowed is expended on works that will return interest and sinking fund. We admit that capital invested in the Wyndham Meat Works has been lost. Now when money is hard to get, and interest rates are high, the Government must see that the money expended produces the best results. The headings of loan expenditure are (1) money loaned to individuals; (2) Money required for special areas for such works as metropolitan water supply for which the residents pay; (3) money expended on public utilities that will pay, and (4) money for roads, bridges, buildings, etc., that do not show any direct return. The Appropriation Bill provides for advances to individuals to the extent of £2,039,500. On this sum borrowers will pay the interest and eventually will repay the loan. That seems a safe investment. A lot of it will be loaned to farmers in the wheat belt.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They all pay, I suppose?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Not all; we must lose a little for the time being, but eventually the property will return the amount of the advance. Works in special areas (interest and sinking fund covered by rating and charges) amount to £358,930; public utilities—those that will earn interest and sinking fund—£959,459; roads, drainage, building, etc.—from which we get a return by way of taxes—£261,176. The total loan proposals amount to £4,474,065 including last year's Loan Suspense Account of £271,217. Last year we spent from loan funds £3,660,514. Of that amount 65 per cent. was devoted to agricultural development. The net loan indebtedness of the State on the 30th June last was £49,704,803, and the gross loan indebtedness £58,485,854. The sinking fund amounts to £8,781,051. Against our loan indebtedness we have invested in revenue earning concerns £44,025,000, so that practically there is only a matter of four millions that is not covered by good investments. The position, therefore, cannot be said to be too bad.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You would not like to take the assets at the price.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: My word I would.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Wyndham Meat Works, too?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, and the Wyndham Meat Works.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I would like to see the financial institution that would take them.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I repeat that our loan money generally speaking is well invested. Our aim is to spend money on production so that the public utilities may be used and made to pay. Since 1919 we have spent £7,359,651 on agricultural development and the result has been that the loss on public utilities, which amounted to £630,000 in that year, was reduced to £250,821 in 1922-23. It is estimated that that loss will be further reduced to £150,000 this year. The recovery of the

public utilities indicates that loan money has been wisely spent. This expenditure has had the effect of giving the people a good heart. We must borrow money if we are right up against it. While we are in that position we must keep on borrowing and if the borrowed money is wisely spent, we must have development and advancement.

Hon. A. Lovekin: How much loan money has gone into public utilities?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have told the hon. member that 65 per cent. of it was spent in agricultural development.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: All the time you are borrowing, the indebtedness is becoming heavier and heavier. Ten years ago the indebtedness was £85 per head and to-day it is £142.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If we get into a better financial position, we will be able to pay off our indebtedness. We shall certainly do that as the country progresses.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And as the population grows.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Instead of having 350,000 people we shall have a million.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The indebtedness is increasing in greater proportion than the population.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: When we get people coming here earnestly and seriously to develop the North-West and the South-West, and when the potentialities of Western Australia are recognised, we shall become a State of great importance.

Hon. A. Lovekin: A few millions have already been spent and the people have not come in at a very rapid rate.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The railway proposals that are included in the Loan Bill are of long-standing authorisation, except perhaps the Pemberton-Denmark line and the Piawaning North line. Provision is also made for acquiring more rolling stock for the railways, for the reason that the agricultural activities demand it. Some money has been provided on the Estimates for the harbours at Fremantle, Geraldton, and Bunbury. The amount set down for Fremantle is over £34,000. The idea is to deepen the entrance and generally improve the position so that vessels of deeper draught may enter in safety. The improvements at Geraldton have been well worked out. Dredging at Albany has been completed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The harbour there is deeper inside than it is outside.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I did not know that. With regard to Bunbury harbour I do not know that I can say too much except that it is silting up. The Premier is making provision for properly attending to improvements there.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you going to keep on tinkering with the harbour at Bunbury?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Government propose to carry out improvements there.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you speaking for the Government now?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am speaking for the Government to-night except, perhaps, in respect of one or two words that may slip out, and I shall ask hon. members to take no notice of them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You had better tell us what they are.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Premier is concerned about the Bunbury harbour and he has given it considerable thought. The difficulty is to know what to do there. The Premier has always said that as the South-West developed, the Bunbury harbour must be improved.

Hon. J. Cornell: What about the Esperance harbour?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That, too, will be necessary when the line goes through. When it is necessary to do anything, the Government will do it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Are you speaking for the Government now?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member can be quite sure that when it is necessary for anything to be done, it shall be done.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Esperance harbour is necessary now.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will not bind the Government to do any work at Bunbury or at any other harbour. I can tell the House that Bunbury harbour is to be dredged and made fit to accommodate the shipping that will require to use it in the near future. The Premier is evolving a scheme to bring this about.

Hon. H. Stewart: Did you say the Premier was evolving the scheme?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes.

Hon. H. Stewart: Will he not consult engineers?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Although the Premier is a very able man, I do not suppose he professes to be an engineer. He is making the necessary inquiries and will become possessed of the information that will enable him to arrive at a decision as to what should be done at Bunbury. It would not be right for me to conclude without making some reference to the group settlements and to express an opinion on the work being done there from a knowledge obtained by visiting the settlers. I am glad to note the enthusiasm they are displaying in their undertakings. During the last winter months it was a dreadful thing to travel in amongst some of the group settlements. As a matter of fact some of them were inaccessible. The time was not available to permit of the proper macadamised roads being made during the summer months. The settlers cheerfully bore the disabilities and now they are well satisfied with what has been done, and the Government are seeing to it that the conditions of these people are made as comfortable as

possible. All that we require from the group settler is faith in the work he is doing and faith in the settlement policy and a determination to work. The Premier, who is in charge of the scheme, is not going to give countenance to any man who will not work. He declares that the Government will do their share provided the group settlers will do theirs likewise. Those people are doing it and personally I know of no instance, although there may be some, in which the group settlers are not endeavouring to carry out what they undertook to do. The organisation in connection with the group settlers is very good indeed. There are different officers looking after different sections. It is easy to find out what is going on, and the Premier has his finger on the pulse of the scheme all the time. He has only to touch his bell, and he will find out just what is going on and what the expenditure is. If hon. members knew the wonderful organisation that exists, they would agree that there is nothing to fear regarding the scheme.

Hon. H. Stewart: It is more assured than Kendenup.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Kendenup was absolutely unfortunate. I believe it is a beautiful settlement capable of being satisfactorily worked. There must have been some mismanagement. We are hopeful that those who have borne the heat and burden of the day at Kendenup will yet reap their reward. I trust that the outcome of the Royal Commissioner's inquiry will be something of a tangible nature to be done for the Kendenup settlers.

Hon. A. Burvill: Reduce the price of the land.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There are 86 group settlements, on which there are 1,628 settlers, representing a population of 6,000 men, women and children. The expenditure at the 31st October, 1923, was £637,212, apart from expenditure on roads. On roads there has been expended £58,832, which I may inform Mr. Nicholson, who has interested himself in this phase of the subject, is national expenditure, and will not be charged up against the group settlements. The Governments will not load up the group settlers with expenditure on roads which are absolutely essential in order that the group settlements may develop.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How much of the £637,212 has been expended on the Peel estate?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: From memory, I should say more than £300,000. I shall be glad to give the figures to-morrow.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And do you still anticipate settling people on the land for less than £1,000 a man?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: At about £1,000 a man.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Can you say what is the number of acres cleared on the Peel estate?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will find that out too. The groups are rapidly reaching the producing stage. They will go in for dairying and pig-raising, root crops, and fat stock, and, later, fruit, tobacco, hops, and other products which can be satisfactorily grown in the South-West.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: To how many have you actually handed over the blocks?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know the figures.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I do not think there are any.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Oh, yes, there are! I know of several myself. There are a considerable number.

Hon. H. Stewart: Has sustenance been discontinued in those cases?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is the policy.

Hon. H. Stewart: I asked, not for the policy, but for the fact.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think it is the fact. I know it is the policy. I know also what is at the back of the hon. member's mind. He thinks the 10s. per day will go on. If a settler wanted another 12 months to make good, I would give him the 10s. every time; and I believe that is the policy of the Government. When the group settler gets his land partly cleared, and gets a cow and a pig or two, and has his house built, he is supposed to fend for himself. Some men can fend for themselves under any conditions and succeed, but others are not so adaptable and require a little more nurturing and assistance to make good.

Hon. H. Stewart: The personal equation.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. It is interesting to know that the group settlers are doing so well. It is certainly the best scheme within my knowledge. I do not think that anywhere in Australia one can find a scheme that is so much in the interests of the State and for the good of mankind generally.

Hon. J. Cornell: It differs very little from the old Victorian village settlement scheme.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Perhaps not, but I do not know that the Victorian scheme was very successful. If this is a good scheme, let us continue it, and not only in the South-West, but in the North-West too. We know that in the North-West labour and all other costs are very high; and if we can get community settlement there, and induce the people to join together for the purpose of garnering their crops and so saving labour costs, the group settlement scheme will be just as successful in the North-West as in the South-West. With regard to soldier settlement, Agricultural Bank approvals up to date exceed £5,180,000. That money has not all been spent, but it represents the total of approved loans up to date. Further we have 1,687 qualified applicants waiting for land, but many of these applications are not "live." I hope the position in regard to settlement of soldiers on our

lands will be considered satisfactory. With regard to markets, it has been said that the difficulty will be to dispose of all the wonderful things we are going to produce in Western Australia. I have here a return for the year 1922-23 showing—

Values of certain agricultural produce, fruit, vegetables, wine, live stock, farmyard and dairy produce, etc., imported into Western Australia.

The return shows that of wheat, barley, oats and so forth we imported £218,414 worth, of fruit and vegetables £316,195 worth, of live stock £186,454 worth, of farmyard, dairy and other produce £964,601 worth. Then there is a column of miscellaneous articles of which we imported £851,682 worth. The total amount is £2,609,796, most of which can be and should be produced in Western Australia. These figures are a direct answer to those who were saying that there is no market. Let us overtake our own market, and in the course of doing so let us gradually work up markets outside Western Australia, markets in England and in other parts of the world. Above all let us see, as a State and as part of the Commonwealth, that the right article is sent in the right condition.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We have sent £30,000 worth of potatoes to New South Wales.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And the group settlers get their vegetables from Perth three times a week.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am sorry to hear that, but it is all the better for my argument, as showing that the market is there on the group settlements. I thank hon. members most sincerely for bearing with me through the long time I have found it necessary to speak. It has been a pleasure to me to place before them as far as I am able the financial position of Western Australia, and also to enlarge, I hope sufficiently to satisfy hon. members, on the development of Western Australia and its various activities. I believe truly and honestly that the present Premier is working in the right direction. I hope he has the support of members of this House in the work he is doing. If any hon. member is dissatisfied or has any fault to find, now is the time for him to speak. By speaking now, he may perhaps prevent mistakes being made in the future. It is a pleasure to me to listen to hon. members and to learn from them. We all wish for the prosperity of the State. The time is not far distant, I believe, when under the development policy of the Government the clouds will be lifted from Western Australia. I am satisfied that with the abiding confidence of the people of this State in their own country, we shall reach the goal of contentment and prosperity. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly, and read a first time.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from 29th November.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

New Clause:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 3: "Amendment of Section 73. Subsection (4) of Section 73 of the principal Act is amended by inserting after the word 'duty,' in the second line, the words 'or refund any such duty already paid on'; and by inserting after the word 'property,' in the fourth line, the words 'or any conveyance on the purchase of property.'"

In Subsection 4 of Section 73 of the principal Act it is provided that the Treasurer may exempt from ad valorem duty any deed of gift or settlement for the purposes of a public park, a university, or a charitable institution. That section was inserted to cover transfers granted for educational or charitable purposes. But it was overlooked at the time that it left patriotic bodies liable for the payment of stamp duty. An instance has arisen in which three such bodies have been called upon to pay stamp duty on the purchase of a property as a home for maimed and limbless soldiers, those bodies being the Red Cross Society, the War Council, and the State Children's Empire League. The property has been transferred to one of the trustee companies to be held in trust. The Minister for Education has been consulted on the matter, and has accepted the proposed new clause drafted by the Crown Law authorities to meet the position.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have no objection to the new clause. I congratulate the patriotic bodies alluded to on the fine work they have done in providing a home for the maimed and limbless men.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Is the hon. member sure that the new clause will attain his object?

Hon. J. Nicholson: No. It is left in the hands of the Colonial Treasurer.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Some time ago, Mr. Harry Boan and I had an experience with the purchase of Keane's Point. We were called upon to pay £60 stamp duty on the transfer. The Treasurer said he would refund the money. However, when it came to be refunded, we were charged £10 for office

expenses. I am wondering how much the Treasurer will stick to for office expenses in this latest instance.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The new clause merely authorises the Colonial Treasurer to refund "any such duty already paid."

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILL—PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from 29th November.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [9.14] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill fixing the rate of interest for the coming year. Authority was obtained last session, fixing the maximum rate of interest at six per cent. This authority is limited to the 31st December, 1923. Therefore, it is necessary to submit this continuance Bill, otherwise on the 31st of this month we should revert to the rate of four per cent. fixed by the parent Act in 1910. Each amending Bill has been for a period of one year only. The Bill provides for the continuance of the rate of six per cent. until the 31st December, 1924. At a recent Premiers' conference it was decided that the rate of interest should be fixed at 5 per cent. It was then found impossible to secure money in Australia at that rate.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It has been found since then.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. On the Notice Paper for some time appeared a Bill which had come from another place providing for a rate of 5 per cent. That Bill was discharged, and this one, which is simply a continuance Bill from last session,

takes its place. The reason why that Bill was discharged was that the money could not be obtained in Australia at 5 per cent., and it was necessary to amend the rate to 6 per cent.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Why is it 5 per cent. in Victoria?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They should be able to get it at 4½ per cent. in that State.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Which State broke the agreement not to pay more than 5 per cent?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is difficult at present to get money from the Old Country at a satisfactory price, because the rate of exchange is against us. It would be more satisfactory to us if we could get money from England, because there is a large amount available there at call, but it cannot be done under existing conditions. It has been found necessary, in order to redeem a loan that falls due in January next, to issue a loan in Australia. That loan is now on the market. The money will be free of the State and Federal taxation.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Will this 6 per cent. apply only to money used for redemption purposes?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The 6 per cent. will apply to any money that is borrowed. That is the maximum, and if we can get it at 5 per cent. we shall do so. It cannot be obtained in Australia at present at 5 per cent.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What is the interest on the overdraft of the London and Westminster Bank?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The position at present is adverse to Western Australia so far as loans from England are concerned, and it has been found better and cheaper to get the money in Australia. When the rate of exchange improves we may be able to get larger loans from the Old Country. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [9.20] in moving the second reading said: This Bill applies to Darlington and Doonybrook. Darlington has not a centrally situated recreation ground. The Government desire to assist the residents there in acquiring one. Reserve No. 6922, hatched in red on the plan as a public park, is not suitable for recreation purposes. It is proposed to sell the southern half of that reserve, which is worth from £20 to £25 an acre, and to apply the proceeds in acquiring 8½ acres on what is known as the Darlington vineyard estate. The estate it is proposed to purchase adjoins two acres already purchased by the local progress association for recreation purposes. This will

give the community 10½ acres of land centrally situated for the purposes required. The road board has no objection to the arrangement, and is satisfied in the interests of Darlington and the recreation of the people that this should be done. Donnybrook reserve 136 is coloured red on another plan. This was a school site. Unfortunately the school was burnt down. Another school site was acquired, and a very fine building has been erected upon it. This reserve, on which the old school stood, was gazetted as a Class A reserve, and the fact was overlooked that the school quarters were situated on it, and were intact. The necessity now arises for excising portion of the reserve on which the quarters stand, in order that the Education Department may have the use of them, the remainder still being a recreation reserve. I know Donnybrook very well. Why the existence of the school quarters on the reserve was overlooked is rather astonishing. This Bill will rectify that omission. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [9.25] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill which should commend itself to members, because it is designed to do something that will be of benefit to country districts. The Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1911 regulates the practice of veterinary surgery, and also provides for the establishment of a Veterinary Surgeons' Board. Mr. Rose, I think, has been a member of that board. Difficulties have arisen which could not be overcome because of the lack of legislation enabling the board to do certain things. The board is permitted to register only those persons who possess the qualifications set out in Section 21 of the Act. Experience has shown that the services of qualified veterinary surgeons are very much needed in outlying country districts. The position has caused considerable disability to settlers, hence the necessity for the Bill. There are men capable of treating ailing animals residing in these outlying districts, and the Bill is brought in to enable something to be done to enable them to receive fees for the services they render. The principal Act debars them from accepting such fees, and they have to render assistance in an honorary capacity. These men are

doing good service for the settlers and possess considerable veterinary knowledge. They should not be precluded from receiving fees if qualified surgeons are not available. Veterinary advice should be readily available to all settlers. There are many settlers living a considerable number of miles away from townships, who have not the opportunity of getting the advice of such persons. This Bill will remove such an outstanding disability. It is desired to empower the board to issue permits to persons capable of attending ailing animals. This amending legislation will not interfere with the rights of qualified surgeons who may live in these outlying districts. The man who will come within the scope of the Bill must be 30 miles away from a properly registered and qualified veterinary surgeon. Authority is given to annul any permit in cases where a qualified man starts practising in a town. If a man is able to do the work and is appointed under this Bill, and is 30 miles away from a properly qualified and registered man, he will be entitled to carry on his work, but if a properly qualified man, with the necessary diplomas, establishes himself within 30 miles of the other man, the latter will have to cease practising, because it would be in contravention of the provisions of this Bill that he should continue. There is no disability placed upon the man who now possesses his diplomas. In addition, the Bill provides that returned soldiers who prior to the war served for three years in the veterinary hospital, shall also be registered. The Bill will considerably reduce illegal practices, and will prove helpful in the country districts. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—LOAN (£3,763,000).

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [9.32] in moving the second reading said: I do not intend to make a speech in placing this Bill before hon. members. I have said all I can on the finances when addressing myself to the Appropriation Bill. This Bill merely authorises the borrowing of certain moneys. The manner in which the money is to be expended is clearly shown in the Appropriation Bill, which is now before members for their approval or non-approval. I need hardly say more than that the time is opportune for passing the Bill. I ask hon. members to allow the Bill to go through because it is in the interests of the State that they should do so.

Hon. H. Stewart: The time is not opportune to get money out.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows the position thoroughly. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [9.33]: In formally seconding the motion for the second reading, I take exception to the casual way in which the Leader of the House placed the Bill before members, and said it was only to permit the Government borrowing £3,763,000. The mere borrowing of such a large sum of money in view of the population of the State and the effect this has on the State's indebtedness, seems to me a serious matter. Furthermore, we have only just passed a Bill authorising the Government to borrow money at the enormous rate of 6 per cent.

The Minister for Education: If hon. members do not wish to assist the Government on this point that is their concern. I have already told members that the interests of the State are involved in this Bill.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I am endeavouring to place before members the seriousness of a Bill to borrow such a large amount. That is all I wish to do. I do not desire to delay business, but I want the Council to clearly understand what we are doing. The Government are asking for permission to borrow this huge sum of money. We have just authorised borrowing at 6 per cent. There are one or two facts that ought to be taken into account. In 1916-17 the total amount borrowed for the year was but £855,000. During the last four years the loan indebtedness of the State has been enormously increased. In the period covering the years 1919-20, 1920-21, 1921-22, and 1922-23 it has been increased to an extent that I do not think is realised in Western Australia. During that period we borrowed something like £11,000,000 at an unusually high rate of interest, and now we are asked to authorise an additional loan of £3,700,000. A little while ago the Minister was talking about getting £10,000,000 free of interest.

The Minister for Education: That is the way to get it!

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: If the Government can get it, it will be remarkable. Almost immediately afterwards, however, we passed a Bill authorising the Government to borrow money at 6 per cent.

The Minister for Education: But that was totally different.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I admit that is so, but still one cannot ignore the fact. While the Minister was speaking, I referred to how the per capita indebtedness of the State was increasing so much more than our population. Ten years ago, as I indicated by way of interjection, the per capita indebtedness was only £85 17s. 2d. for every man, woman, and child in Western Australia. At that time we regarded that as a tremendous amount. To-day that per capita net indebtedness is far exceeded, and stands at the enormous total of £142 9s. 6d. When we take this matter into consideration, we must also have regard to the per capita indebtedness of the residents of Western Australia in connection with the Commonwealth. The indebtedness of the people of Western Australia on account of the Com-

monwealth is £74 14s. Thus if we add the two items, we get the heavy per capita indebtedness for the State and the Commonwealth of £217. That is a staggering figure. If we take into account that in a family in Western Australia where the bread-winner is responsible for five people—that is to say, for a wife and three children in addition to himself—we find that the per capita indebtedness of such a wage earner stands at £1,085. The astounding feature is that although the Government are proceeding with their immigration policy and bringing out numbers of people to the State, our population, unfortunately, is not increasing as it should. If the Government were successful in the endeavour to adjust matters by bringing out a large number of people, and so reducing the per capita indebtedness, the position would be brighter. I have some figures, however, the significance of which I do not think is properly realised. For the last four years the assisted or nominated immigrants brought out to Western Australia by the Government totalled 13,931. The excess of arrivals over departures for that period represents a total of only 5,154.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It does not represent the excess of births over deaths.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: That shows clearly that while immigrants have been brought in, the increased population of the State by immigration, apart from the excess of births over deaths during the four years, is but 5,154.

The Minister for Education: Could not the hon. member say all this on the Appropriation Bill, and let us pass this measure?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: It was because of the casual remark of the Minister regarding a Bill authorising the borrowing of £3,700,000 that I am mentioning these facts.

The Minister for Education: The hon. member cannot expect me to give the full reason for so doing. I said the course I suggested was in the interests of the State.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I am only protesting because of what I regard as the indifference of the Government regarding the finances of the State generally.

The Minister for Education: The Government are concerned regarding the finances which necessitate the Bill.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The price of money is getting higher and higher. That is indicated by the Bill we have just passed. This is a serious thing, and should not be spoken of lightly as though it were only a trivial matter.

Hon. H. Stewart: What Bill do you refer to when you say we have passed one authorising borrowing at 6 per cent.?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The Bill we passed a few minutes ago regarding inscribed stock.

Hon. H. Stewart: But the debate on that Bill was adjourned!

Hon. A. Lovekin: I secured the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I thought that Bill was passed. We have put through so many with such rapidity that I thought that Bill was one of them. I thank the hon. member for correcting me on that point. However, it does not affect my argument. I thoroughly approve of the immigration policy of the Government, but I desire to point out that while the Government have brought in 13,931 assisted or nominated immigrants, the excess of arrivals over departures for the period I referred to was only 5,154. It is clear that while many immigrants are being brought into the State, large numbers of people are also leaving it. Hence our high per capita indebtedness. A Bill authorising such enormous expenditure ought not to be allowed to pass without someone sounding a note of warning and impressing upon members what it really means to continue the heavy borrowing policy on which the Government have embarked.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; Hon. J. W. Hickey in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2—Provisions applicable to factories where lead, arsenic, etc., are used:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That Subsection 1 of the proposed new section be deleted.

This is an amendment of the Factories Act, and the places where compounds of lead are manufactured become factories under the Act. Subsection 1 provides for regulations to prescribe a standard of efficient ventilation, but Section 63 of the Act contains a more valuable provision. It says—

A factory or any portion thereof shall be ventilated so as to render harmless, as far as practicable, all the gases, vapours, dust and impurities generated therein, and in the opinion of the Chief Inspector injurious to health, and shall contain such amount of window or light area for each workman as an inspector shall in each case determine; provided such window or light area shall not be less in proportion than one-tenth of the floor area.

Section 134 makes provision for sanitation of shops and warehouses, and shops include factories. Section 144 provides irreducible minimum penalties of 10s. for a first conviction and £2 for any subsequent conviction. The

Bill is more moderate, as the fine may be any amount under £5. The white lead industry is a harmful one that is absolutely prohibited in France, and some harsh provisions are required to protect the workers. The existing Act provides much better protection than does the Bill.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I see no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in Subsection 2 of the proposed new section the words "where lead, arsenic, or any other poisonous substance is used" be struck out, and the words "white lead, red lead, litharge, or other compounds of lead, mercurial or arsenical preparations are manufactured or produced" inserted in lieu.

On the second reading Mr. Hickey admitted that this provision was intended to apply to factories where white lead or compounds of lead were manufactured. "Lead" might be construed to include the solder that a plumber or farmer uses, a capsule on a bottle, or the type used by a printer. The wholesale chemist manufactures lysol and other poisonous substances, but no one would dream of applying the measure to those things. It will be noted that I suggest the word "produced" instead of "used." Otherwise the farmer that wanted to paint his cart wheel might be brought under the Act because he would be using red lead or white lead. Litharge is really white lead, but it contains another volume of oxygen and is lighter.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That all the words after "used" in line 3 of paragraph (b) be struck out.

If the amendment be passed, the occupier shall not allow any employee to take a meal in any room in which lead substances are used. Scientific and medical opinion show it is harmful for any employee working in a lead factory to partake of a meal therein. Dr. Saw told us the greatest danger arose not from ingestion of lead by means of food, but from inhaling it. For 40 years I have been associated with stereotyping rooms where lead plays an important part. The worst that can be done in the interests of the employees in this business is to let them have a meal anywhere near the factory. It is unfair to call on the employer to put up a separate meal room; it is far better for the employees, whom I desire to protect, to have their wash and change, and go away from the factory and obtain their meal in a different atmosphere.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I appreciate Mr. Lovekin's desire to tighten up the Bill a little. I raised no objection to the other amendments, but this one I cannot support. It is admitted that it is dangerous and

against the interests of public health that the employees should have their meals on the premises wherein they are employed. But I point out that this particular factory is on the beach and almost half way to Rockingham, and there is no shelter anywhere away from the factory. If the employees are compelled to have their meals away from the factory they will be obliged to go to Fremantle.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are we legislating for one factory?

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: Yes, in this instance. We must not lag behind the old country in a manner such as this. I strongly oppose the amendment.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Following on Mr. Holmes' interjection, I have no desire that we should legislate for one particular factory. This will be a matter for all time, and I want to tighten up the position as much as possible, remembering that a great nation like France has seen fit to abolish a similar industry because of its harmful nature. It is only a small industry, and if I had my way I would not permit it to be established here at all. If we cannot have industries in this country better than this, we shall be in a poor way indeed. As it is established, we must protect the people who are employed in it. All authorities are agreed that meals should not be taken in or near the factory where this kind of work goes on. I had a copy of the "Forum," published in Queensland, given to me, and in this appears the report of a lecture given by a Queensland doctor in which he set out the facts precisely as Dr. Saw submitted them the other evening, showing the harmful effects of permitting meals to be taken in or near the factory.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is generally accepted by all employers that facilities should be provided for employees to have their meals on the job. If the nature of a particular industry is such that it is a menace to employees to have their meals within the precincts of the premises, on whom should the obligation be thrown to see that adequate provision is made for the workers to have their meals in reasonable comfort and without menace to their health? I say certainly on the person conducting the industry.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: If we are going to ask an employer to provide a mealroom, not in the vicinity of the factory, but at some distance away, we shall be asking too much.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: The reason for the closing down of this industry in France was, I find, that provisions such as are embodied in legislation of to-day, were not in force in that country. Somebody was neglectful. A certain amount of responsibility rests with the employer, but if we carry the amendment employers will tell us that we are endeavouring to cripple the industry. I have no desire to take steps that will afterwards mean unnecessary hardship. I trust the amendment will not be carried because its effects would be too far reaching.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I understand that Mr. Hickey agrees to the rest of my amendments, except one to which he will draw attention presently. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2, paragraph (c), "reduction" be struck out and "manufacture, production" inserted in lieu.

In the plumbing and printing trades, "reduction" is used in the sense of reducing a solid to a liquid. That is not intended here.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 3, after "whenever," line 2, there be inserted "it comes to his knowledge that."

The trouble arises internally, for instance, in the colon. The employer should not be held responsible for an offence he cannot avoid.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I see no objection to the amendment, but neither do I see any necessity for it.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 4, paragraph (a), the words "a medical practitioner, with power to order suspension from such employment" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"the Superintendent of Public Health or some duly qualified medical practitioner appointed by him, who shall have power to order suspension from such employment; provided that such examination shall be without charge to the occupier."

Who is going to pay the medical practitioner? In a factory employing a couple of hundred men, the fees for the inspections prescribed by the medical practitioner might absorb all the profits. And who is to have power to order the suspension? In England this work is always done by the Public Health Department, who originally insisted upon doing it because it afforded means of information to them. If the employer is to provide the medical inspections at intervals, they will prove very expensive to him. The Superintendent of Public Health can arrange the inspections without involving the industry in cost.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: Mr. Lovekin might add to his amendment the words, "or employee." The hon. member has taken it for granted that the Public Health Department will not penalise the employee.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I ask leave to amend my amendment by adding to it the words, "or employee."

Leave given, the words added.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The effect of the amendment will be to place in the hands of the Government.

Hon. A. Lovekin: This work is always done by the Superintendent of Public Health in connection with noxious trades.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But this might grow into a big industry. Are the Government to be called upon to find the medical examiners then? I advise the member in charge of the Bill to stick to his measure a little more than he is doing at present. Mr. Lovekin seems to be revising the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Not at all.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Those conducting the industry should take the responsibility.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But under the Health Act the Government deal with noxious trades.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Quite so, but if this industry grows, there should be a subscription of so much per week towards obtaining the services of medical officers as is done in connection with gold mining and coal mining. The amendment will take from the Government the power to make regulations.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Not at all. It is all in the hands of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The member in charge of the Bill should not allow it to be cut to pieces.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The Minister need have no fear on the score of expense. It is all in the hands of the Government, who will settle everything by regulation.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I certainly have not objected to one or two amendments, in which I saw no harm at all, and which were evidently satisfactory to Mr. Lovekin and other members. In the Old Country this matter is under the control of the Public Health Department, and the work is on an extensive scale. No compulsion is imposed on the Government by either the clause or the amendment. The Government are merely given power to do certain things if they feel disposed to do them. Moreover, the amendment seems to protect all parties concerned.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That all words after "require" in line 1 of paragraph (c) be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu, "Every employee to forthwith notify the occupier as to any symptoms which lead such employee to believe he has contracted poisoning of any kind, and require the occupier to record such notification in a health register to be kept at the factory for that purpose."

The only difference between the amendment and the provision as it stands is that I want the employee to immediately notify the occupier.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. When we had plague in Australia a man was afraid to sneeze, for fear he should be hauled up. Under the amendment, if a man felt a

little indisposed he would be afraid to report it, in case he should get the sack. This sort of thing has occurred before, and will occur again.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I am out to protect the unfortunate employees from poisoning. If an employee feels bad, it will be no hardship on him to report it to his employer. The last thing an employer would do would be to dismiss a man working in a harmful trade because he felt bad.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I cannot understand Mr. Hickey's objection to the amendment, for it is entirely in favour of the employees. If a man in this dangerous trade finds he is suffering from poisoning, it should be his duty to report to the employer forthwith.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That all words after "wet" in line 5 of paragraph (e) be struck out.

The cloakroom requires to be at the factory. It should not be anywhere near the meal room.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (d) "meal-room" be struck out.

If there is to be a meal room, the employees should be able to use it, as in other factories, and be themselves responsible for it and the condition in which it is kept.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: The hon. member is afraid the provision in the Bill will inflict a hardship on those responsible. That is not so. A foreman in charge can be responsible, and can detail one of the employees to look after the room. The only provision is that the room shall be kept clean.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That after "damped" in line 2 of paragraph (h) the following be inserted: "(i) require that no occupier shall permit an employee to partake of a meal in and upon the factory; (j) require the occupier to provide for the employees such suitable drink as may be prescribed as an antidote to poisons inhaled or ingested;"

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

New clause:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 3, be inserted as follows:—"Amendment of Section 114. 3. Section one hundred and fourteen of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition of a subsection, as follows:—(3) The Minister may, when-

ever he thinks fit, delegate to the Chief Inspector of Factories any power or discretion vested in the Minister by this section. Any such delegation may be either general or special, and shall be revocable by the Minister at any time."

The Act throws a great deal of work upon the Minister in charge. He has to take the responsibility of all things, and he finds his time too much interfered with by reason of his administration of this particular legislation. He has asked me to request the Committee to agree to this amendment. The Chief Inspector of Factories is a responsible officer, and if he puts anything before the Minister that is not right there will be a row.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I hope the Committee will not agree to this clause. It is only a means to enable the Minister to shirk his responsibilities.

The Minister for Education: That is not so.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: If any officer of the department is harsh or harassing in his actions, the Minister will say he is not responsible. Some of these inspectors are very vicious. Under this new clause they could give any orders they liked without consulting the Minister. It was felt that this Bill would work oppressively and it was suggested that the Minister should take the responsibility. He now wants to get out of it. If the Minister gives orders he knows what he is doing, and he is responsible to Parliament.

New clause put and negatived.

New clause:

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: 1 move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—"Amendment of Section 119. 4. Section one hundred and nineteen of the principal Act is hereby amended by the excision of the word 'and,' in the sixth line of the section, and the substitution of the word 'until.'"

This clause will rectify a grammatical error in the Act.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 4th December, 1923.

	Page
Questions: Railway employees' pensions ...	1780
Railway project, Kondinin-Newdegate ...	1780
Bills: Vermin Act Amendment, 22. ...	1780
Land Act Amendment, Com., 32. ...	1785
Motion: Allowances to wages men ...	1789
Bills: Jury Act Amendment, 22., Com., 32. ...	1793
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, 22., defeated ...	1798
Control of Rents, 22., defeated ...	1798
W.A. Trustee, Executor, and Agency Co., Ltd., Act Amendment (Private), 22. ...	1805

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' PENSIONS.

Mr. McCALLUM (for Mr. Willcock) asked the Minister for Railways: Is it his intention to lay the papers on the Table of the House in connection with the applications for pensions of Guard J. R. Holmes, of Kalgoorlie, and Frederick Rhodes, car and wagon examiner, Perth?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (for the Minister for Railways) replied: The papers will be tabled to-day (4th December, 1923).

QUESTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, KONDININ-NEWDEGATE.

Advisory Board's report.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Works: Is it his intention to lay upon the Table of the House the Advisory Board's report upon the proposed Kondinin-Newdegate railway?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes. Papers are already on the Table.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 29th November.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [4.39]: I feel disappointed with the Bill. For several years hon. members representing the farming and pastoral industries have pointed out the serious position, which has become more and more alarming, regarding the increase of dingoes. In areas where previously dingoes were unknown they are now numerous and causing great loss among sheep. They have also been known to tackle bigger stock, especially calves.

The Premier: The lessees are supposed to destroy dingoes on their holdings.

Mr. ANGELO: Before I sit down I hope to prove that the dingoes that are causing