

dustrial arbitration law. I hope the second reading will be carried. If the measure passes with but slight amendment, it will prove of distinct advantage to Western Australia.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly, and read a first time.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 4th November, 1924.

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

QUESTION—STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

Mr. LAMOND asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie): 1, In view of the fact that the steamship "Bambra" has not sufficient accommodation to cope with the passenger trade now offering on the North-West coast, is it the intention of the Government to replace the "Bambra" with one or more vessels suitably designed for the trade? 2, If so, can he give the approximate date when the change-over will be made?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: 1, The matter is receiving serious consideration. 2, The inquiries are incomplete, and in those circumstances a definite statement is not possible.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—TREASURY BILLS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is required to authorise an increase in the maximum rate of interest for Treasury bills from 5 per cent. to 6 per cent. The original Act of 1893 provided for a maximum rate of 5 per cent. An amendment was passed in 1916 giving the Colonial Treasurer discretionary power to increase the rate of interest up till two years after the termination of the war. No further authority was sought from Parliament, and so the rate reverted to the original amount of 5 per cent. Money cannot be obtained at that price, and therefore it is desirable that the Treasurer should have authority to issue Treasury bills at the current rate of interest. Many bills carrying 6 per cent. interest, issued during the period 1916-20, have fallen due, and we have been unable to renew them because people would not hand in a 6 per cent. bill and take a 5 per cent. bill in return for it, more especially when investments could be obtained at the higher rate of interest.

Mr. Taylor: At the 6 per cent. rate.

The PREMIER: Yes, and in many instance, perhaps more. Something like £39,000 of 6 per cent. Treasury bills falling due was paid off last year. Through our not having authority to pay a rate in excess of 5 per cent., that money was lost to the Treasury. This is a popular method of investment by small people, and it is desirable that the Treasurer should have the power to increase the rate of interest. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.42] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is similar to that of the measure we have just passed. It is required to authorise the present rate of interest on inscribed stock and debentures

being extended till December, 1925. Last session authority was obtained for a rate not exceeding 6 per cent., but that authority was limited to the end of December, 1924. Under the General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act the maximum rate of interest is fixed at 4 per cent., but that has been varied by amending Acts from time to time, which Acts have been limited to a period of one year. The authority to pay 6 per cent. will expire on the 31st December next, so, having in mind the rate of interest we are compelled to pay in order to obtain money, it is necessary that the authority be extended for another year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 15th October.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.45]: The Bill is designed mainly to relieve mining companies. We have already been engaged in affording the owners of mines some relief under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill. The latter measure declares that no tax shall be paid until the capital expended on a mine has been repaid in full. The present measure declares that no dividend duty shall be paid on profits earned by a mine after the 30th June of this year until such profits as equal the amount of share capital subscribed have also been repaid. The Bill is in no way retrospective. It represents one way of encouraging people to invest money in mining. We have also to remember that many mining investors draw utter blanks. In that case, of course, they have no dividend duty to pay, seeing that there are no dividends to pay duty on. However, the exemption here proposed will induce people to invest in mining ventures. On the other hand, many companies have paid dividends—some of them very considerable dividends indeed. In the past over 20 millions sterling have been paid in dividends; but those palmy days have passed, and the industry is struggling. I agree with the Premier that we ought to assist the industry, and this Bill represents one means of doing it. Still, under the arrangement proposed it may happen that where money is subscribed to a new share issue in an old company and dividends are paid, the people who benefit will

not be only the new shareholders, but also the men who are now holding shares and are not subscribers to the new capital. They will have their dividends freed of taxation without any justification. I mentioned this to the Premier the other day; but I have to confess that, after discussing the question with him, I recognise that there is no means of differentiating, though it does not seem right that men who have already had their money back several times over should benefit from an exemption to which they have no claim. If we could get over the difficulty, we would not agree to such men benefiting now.

The Premier: It would not occur in many cases.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It would occur in some cases, though perhaps only in a few. Generally, I agree that the idea of the Bill is a good one, and I consider that it might well be applied to other industries. I can make that suggestion, but without much chance of its being accepted.

The Premier: On the other hand, we might tax the prosperous industries with a view to relieving the others.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have been increasing taxation recently on the other industries; for instance, on the industry of the man on the land.

The Premier: There is not much capital at present going into mining ventures.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Capital will go into them. Wiluna is one case. I hope that Wiluna will turn out well, and that considerable capital will be put in there. I hope, too, that the shareholders will put in enough capital to enable the mines to be worked satisfactorily. Nearly all our mining companies hitherto have suffered from want of sufficient working capital. At Wiluna, I understand, it is proposed to put in enough capital to give the mines a fighting chance. I in no way oppose the Bill. We all hope mining will flourish again. We are all proud of the fact that Western Australian gold mines have paid 28 millions sterling in dividends.

The Minister for Mines: Western Australia has paid out in gold 160 million sterling.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We read that every day in the quarterly returns, and very good reading it is. It is a record of which we are all proud.

The Minister for Mines: I should like to see it recur.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes; may history repeat itself. We have all tried to find some means of assisting mining in such a manner as to promote active prospecting; but so far no means have been discovered. It just amounts to this: if good mines are found, and if people who are willing to put money into them can be found, all will be well. But first one must make the gold discovery, and secondly, one must get the investors with money. With-

out those factors, it is impossible to do anything. Another reason why we should encourage mining is that we have our railway system on the goldfields, and that it is doing very little. That is one ground why we should encourage mining, and at the same time encourage half a dozen other industries. I support the Bill.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.55]: It affords me great personal satisfaction to support the Bill, and to see one of the planks of my party's platform at the last election being put into effect. I congratulate the Government on the steps they are taking to encourage the mining industry. While all Governments have been extremely desirous of assisting that industry unfortunately it did not derive any benefit whatever from the war, but, on the contrary, had many disabilities imposed on it in the form of increased costs. I trust the measure will have the result at which the Government are aiming, to encourage people to put money into mining; and I hope a resuscitation of mining will eventuate. A great new goldfield would be the best migration agent Western Australia could possibly have. It would bring thousands of people here, and much capital as well.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.56]: Those of us who were here in the nineties, locally known as "The Roaring Nineties," will welcome any attempt to revive the gold mining industry. In those days that industry was a great asset to the State, as indeed it still is. It is now hoped that as the result of the consideration which the Treasurer proposes to grant by the present Bill, there will be definite and practical encouragement given to mining. We realise that the principle embodied in the Bill is wrong; but the exigencies of the position warrant a departure from principle and a resort to what may be termed expediency. Accordingly no one in this Chamber, I am sure, will oppose the passing of the measure. I earnestly hope that as a result of this amendment of the law financial backers of gold mining will take heart, and since the Government have given them this encouragement will put more money into mining. Thus we may look in days not too far distant for a recurrence of those prosperous times in gold mining which some of us experienced in the nineties.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [4.58]: As there is no apparent opposition to the Bill, there is no necessity for goldfields members to put up any defence for it. But when it is all over, I do not think the Government will have lost a great deal on new ventures. If the new ventures are rich propositions, they will soon be paying dividends. The ventures which will be protected by this Bill will be low-

grade propositions which will be working for a considerable time on low dividends, so that a considerable period must elapse before the shareholders get their capital returned to them. In that respect this amending Bill will induce people to invest their capital more readily in our gold mines. We have heard a good deal about legislation in this Parliament and also in the Federal Parliament militating against speculators putting their money into gold mining ventures, on account of these being heavily handicapped by taxation. I am pleased the Government of Western Australia are relieving them so far as it is possible to do so by this measure, which I trust will have the desired effect of giving to the goldfields of this State a badly needed stimulus. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [4.59]: I also welcome the Bill as a step in the right direction. It is wise to exempt from taxation mines under development, so that they may have an opportunity of recouping the money invested in them. A present day mining proposition requires considerable development, involving heavy expenditure in the erection of plant and the working of the mine. We know that large sums of money are expended on machinery, and that the machinery deteriorates rapidly. Money expended in the main shafts and levels of a mine is money there for all time; because even if the mine were to close down next day, the owners are not allowed to move the ladders or timbers underground. Therefore it is only right that this concession should be given. If we can induce people to put increased money into our mines it will be of very great benefit to the railways and to the State as a whole. The Bill is a step in the right direction, for our mines should be assisted and companies exempted from taxation until the money put into the development of the mines is recouped.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.2]: As the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) has said, there is not much need for any member representing a goldfields constituency to do more than give approval to the Bill. I have in mind the mines at Westonia. Recently the Minister had before him a scheme for the unwatering of those mines with a view to bringing to development ore worth something like a quarter of a million of money. I am sure the Bill will greatly assist in that desirable consummation. Apart altogether from the immediate purpose of the Bill, members ought to back up the Premier in any endeavour he might make to have removed the imposts placed on mining by the Federal authorities. I will support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 6:

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That after "company" in line 1 the words "other than a coal mining company" be inserted.

It was not intended that this concession should extend to coal mines, for they are in a different category from that of gold mines. The ground for the concession is that gold mines and mines of a similar character are liable to be worked out in a comparatively few years, whereas coal mines are far more enduring. The coal fields, we are told, have a life of thousands of years. Therefore, we would not be justified, at all events, not this session, in extending the concession to coal mining.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I thought perhaps you were trying to encourage the discovery of a better coal.

The PREMIER: If a better coal were discovered, the reward that would come to the discoverers would in itself be sufficient, without the benefit of the provisions of the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. LAMBERT: I should like to put up this case to the Premier: A prospector may develop a show and then sell it. In such a transaction the prospector is rarely paid in cash, but has to take shares in lieu of cash. Under the Bill those who put up the actual cash will be exempt, but the unfortunate prospector who has accepted shares in lieu of cash will not be exempt.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He is exempt now.

Mr. LAMBERT: Not under the Dividend Duties Act. To-day when a mine is sold the amount paid in cash is only nominal. I suggest that there be added to the clause the words "or shares in lieu thereof."

The PREMIER: If a prospector sells a property and accepts shares as part of the purchase price, he is a shareholder, and to the extent that the company will not pay duty on its profits until the whole of its capital is returned, he will participate in the benefit under the Bill as a shareholder in the company.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is quite right.

Mr. Lambert: Probably that is the intention, but is it clear?

The PREMIER: Yes, quite clear. It is intended to give relief to the shareholders only to the extent of the cash they have put into the property.

Mr. LAMBERT: After the prospector has accepted shares, the company start making profits. Then the Taxation Commissioner says, "The amount for which cash

has been paid is exempt, but the man who has developed and parted with his mine merely for paper, will have to pay."

The PREMIER: As a shareholder he will get the full benefit.

Mr. LAMBERT: This refers to the capital that may have been paid in cash. Usually the consideration is fully paid shares. The original owner parts with his asset for paper.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All shareholders rank alike under this.

Mr. LAMBERT: I should like to see it made clear.

The PREMIER: It is perfectly clear.

Mr. DAVY: The Bill exempts the company, not the shareholders.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 30:

Mr. DAVY: This clause makes a concession, more apparent than real, towards the company who wishes to appeal. A similar concession has been made to the taxpayer who wishes to appeal. I am sorry the Premier has not seen fit to strike out altogether the vicious principle that some part of the tax must be paid before a man has the right to appeal. Under the Income Tax Assessment Act the taxpayer has to pay one-half as a condition precedent to his appeal. It may be suggested that if a man has to pay part of his tax before he can appeal, this may prevent appeals that are designed merely to cause delay. That is not a sound argument, because the lodging of an appeal without payment of income tax would not delay payment for one minute. The Taxation Commissioner would have the same power to recover the tax after the appeal as before. Under the Federal Act no payment by the taxpayer is required before appealing, but he is bound to pay his tax, whether he appeals or not, within the same time. The law as it stands to-day has worked grievous hardship upon taxpayers. A Mr. Price was assessed at a large sum in respect of the sale of an oil proposition to a company, whereupon he received shares by way of consideration. He was taxed at about £3,000. His shares were then quoted at about 9s., though he could not have sold them for that. Had he sold them all for 9s. he would not have received the amount at which he was assessed. As the law stands to-day, he would have had to put up £1,500 before he could test the validity of the assessment, and he would also have been obliged to do that within a certain number of days, but his finances were such that he was unable to do so.

The Minister for Lands: That does not apply to-day; it was altered two years ago.

Mr. DAVY: The principle is the same, if a man cannot afford to put up anything before he appeals. Price could not afford to put up even a quarter of the tax. The Commissioner has no power to extend the time for the lodging of an appeal. As the

law stands, a man may have good ground for appeal, but because he cannot put up the cash his right is gone. I move an amendment—

*That all the words after "by," in line 1, to the end of the clause, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—
"deleting the words from 'after,' in line 2 thereof to 'duty' in line 3,"*

The PREMIER: I am unable to accept the amendment. We are liberalising the provisions with regard to appeals. Under the Act the whole of the duty has to be paid before an appeal can be lodged, and we are modifying that to the extent of making the amount one-quarter. A case such as that of Mr. Price would not apply very often under this Act, because we are dealing with companies, which would find little difficulty in putting up one-fourth of the amount. In some respects this provision is more liberal than the Commonwealth law. The Commonwealth Act requires a man to pay the full amount due, notwithstanding that he has lodged an appeal. In our own case the Commissioner will not have authority to take more than one-fourth of the tax until the matter of the appeal has been determined. I inquired of the Commissioner, should the provision such as the hon. member seeks to have inserted be put into operation, whether taxpayers would take advantage of it to gain time for the payment of their tax, and not as a genuine appeal. I am advised that a considerable percentage of taxpayers would avail themselves of such a provision in order to gain time. The Bill will bring the law into line with what we have already agreed to under the Income Tax Assessment Act and, for the time being, I think that is as far as we can go.

Mr. DAVY: My desire was to bring the Bill into conformity with the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act. I do not see how any person could gain one minute's delay by appealing, provided that the means were the same as in the Federal Act. The hardship under this is that one should have to pay any proportion of the tax as a condition precedent. That has always seemed to me to be illogical.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin) (North-East Fremantle) [5.35] in moving the second reading said: The Bill deals with a few public reserves. Unfortunately, when a reserve is declared to be Class "A," no matter how trifling any intended alteration might be, it is necessary to secure the consent of Parliament to effect

that alteration. All the clauses in the Bill deal with areas in various parts of the State and the alterations it is proposed to make are of a trivial nature. The first part of the Bill refers to an exchange of land at Narrogin. There are park lands in that town which have been beautified, but they are separated by a road. The Presbyterian Church at Narrogin owns a block of land in the business part of the town, and the church authorities are desirous of exchanging that block for a portion of the park land. The matter was referred to the local council, and that body considered it desirable that the exchange should be made. The second block referred to in the Bill is situated at Broome, and is an education endowment. It is necessary in Broome that there should be a place set apart as a residential quarter for the coloured people in that town. At the request of the Broome local authorities arrangements have been made for the exchange of a block of land so that the endowment block may be secured for the purpose desired.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do the endowment people agree?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. The third matter referred to in the Bill is a small reserve in the vicinity of the Old Men's Home, forming part of that institution's reserve. For some time past it has been under the control of the Public Gardens Board. The block of land is under a cliff near the river, and the proposal to declare it an area for recreation purposes will not prevent the inmates of the Home from continuing to use it. A stairway leading to the river has already been constructed on this reserve, and it is considered desirable that it should be under the permanent control of the Gardens Board. The next alteration refers to Reserve A17375 at Crawley. The object of making an adjustment here is to remove a dangerous angle in the road at that spot. The idea is to permit of a better view being obtained of the traffic that is approaching from an opposite direction. This means merely the transfer of one piece of land for another with the object of improving the road view. No harm will be done to the reserve held by the University Trustees. This has also been agreed to by the authorities concerned. The next alteration refers to a block of land at Bunbury. Two years ago a Bill was passed through Parliament to permit a public refreshment room to be erected on a part of the park lands reserve. The intention at the time was that a hostel should be erected on the reserve, and the people who leased the reserve from the local authorities were of the opinion that they could erect a hostel there, which was the intention at the time. Through an error the words "public refreshment rooms" were inserted in the Bill, and the word "hostel" was left out. It is now pro-

posed to amend the Act in question by striking out "public refreshment rooms" and inserting "hostel." The next alteration is in connection with a small reserve at Subiaco. The reserve adjoins the State school. There is sufficient land surrounding the school building to permit of additions being made to the school, but the area adjoining the school site has been reserved for a public building. It has been the desire of the local council, as well as of the people of Subiaco, that the area should be reserved for recreation purposes only. After having inspected the site I must admit that it would be detrimental to the district if buildings were erected on the block. The intention is that the area should be placed under the control of the local authorities and that it should be used, if necessary, for children's recreation, and that nothing should be done to prevent it being used for that purpose.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Council control it now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They do and they do not.

Mr. Richardson: The Council have no control.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They cannot spend sixpence on it to beautify it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And they should not be allowed to remove the trees.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All that the Bill will do will be to alter the purpose as I have stated. Realising how the James Street School area is being crowded out with buildings, we cannot also fail to recognise that additional buildings will have to be provided at Subiaco to cope with the increased population there. The reserve will therefore have to be used eventually as the main playground for the children. If public buildings are erected on this reserve it will be rendered useless as a school playground.

Mr. Teesdale: I hope they will not provide tennis courts there just for a few.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not see that tennis courts will do any harm. The parents' and citizens' associations are providing tennis courts.

Mr. Teesdale: Yes, but all the kids do not play tennis.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is plenty of room in these grounds for tennis and everything else. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.43]: I wish to thank the Minister for Lands for having brought in this Bill, so far as it relates to the exchange of blocks at Narrogin.

Mr. Marshall: Why do you not sit behind us instead of over there?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The reserve referred to, No. A11306, is a beautiful park of five acres in the centre of the town, and

across the road there is just over a quarter of an acre of land, Narrogin town lot 343, which is entirely separate from the park, and has never been improved. It is this quarter acre that is being excised from the park reservation, but it is quite separated from the park by a road. The Presbyterians wish to build a church on the block No. 343, which at present is lying idle, and the Government very properly have agreed to hand it to the Presbyterians if the present reservation is removed. If it were a matter of taking a piece out of the park, I would be one to object to any encroachment upon a park reserved for the use of the people for all time. This reserve, however, is a separate quarter-acre block. The Presbyterians have never been able to get a suitable site in Narrogin. One gentleman has given a donation of £500 towards the erection of a church and other sums are in hand. The exchange is approved of by the municipal council and the residents; there is no local objection whatever, and I support the Bill.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1924-25.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 30th October. Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Department of Education, Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie in charge of the vote).

Vote—Minister for Education, £592,894:

Mr. MILLINGTON (Leederville) [5.47]: It seems to me too much stress is laid on the question of economy in regard to education. Members have referred to the action of the Government in reducing the driving allowance in country districts. I know the conditions in which parents, teachers, and children are placed, and I cannot see that the reduction is justified. There are other ways in which economy could be exercised, but this is one of the last economies that should have been thought of. To reduce the driving allowance in country districts, where already the disabilities are sufficiently serious, is most regrettable. We are continually talking about the necessity for bettering the conditions in country districts, and nothing causes greater concern to parents than the difficulties confronting them to educate their children. Many parents go to the expense of sending their children to the city because of the poor facilities for education offering in the country. Therefore, instead of giving less consideration, we should be giving more consideration to the country. Instead of economy the first consideration should be efficiency. I presume the department have recom-

mended the reduction of the driving allowance. If the heads of the department cared to tackle the question of economy, they could start much nearer home. Attention might be given to the inspectorial staff. I do not suggest that the inspectors are overpaid; I do not suggest that the increases recently given were not justified, but the fact remains that increases have been given and in some instances inspectors have reached their maximum in two years, whereas ordinarily it should have taken three years. Therefore, economy has not been considered as regards the heads. There could be a reorganisation of the inspectorial staff. In the metropolitan area there are three inspectors. One of them, Mr. Clubb, inspects only 19 schools. I do not know whether that is a full-time job.

Mr. Mann: He is employed at night on other work.

Mr. MILLINGTON: These schools have head teachers who are highly qualified, and in point of experience are equal to the inspectors. They are judged by results, and they do not need to be continually watched by an inspector. I do not know that an inspector could give them much advice. All things considered, I think the inspection of those schools could be lessened without affecting their efficiency. The head masters have proved by results that they know their work.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Inspector Clubb has a lot of other work to do.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I presume all the inspectors have. In the country districts inspectors have to travel considerable distances and probably more inspectors would be justified. Yet we find one man inspecting as many as 80 schools.

Mr. Mann: Could you compare the 80 schools in the country with the 19 in the city?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The teachers in those schools are not as experienced or qualified as, nor have they the facilities of urban school teachers. Thus there is justification for more frequent inspection in the country. The country teachers would require the advice of the inspector in order that they might keep up-to-date. Methods are continually changing and the country teachers need to be informed of the changes. An inspector would be of real assistance in that respect, whereas in the metropolitan schools he is practically not required. The work would go on with less inspection. The inspector, in addition to his salary, also receives a travelling allowance, and his fares have to be paid. Therefore care must be exercised in organising the visits of inspectors. I believe an improvement could be effected there. Then there is considerable duplication of inspections; in fact, as many as four inspectors visit the same school. There is a rural inspector, and another who has to do with nature study. The nature study required to be dealt with in country schools would

be of the most elementary description, and instead of having a special inspector, covering the same ground as fully qualified inspectors, to give lessons in nature study, the average teacher, properly trained, would be quite capable of imparting that knowledge. The same argument applies to the rural inspector. I do not know what his qualifications are; I do not know that he possesses any special knowledge that the other inspectors could not impart. Considering the amount of general knowledge they have, it should not be asking too much to require them to specialise in such matters as nature study and rural work. The headmaster of the Perth Modern School inspects the high schools in the country districts. Are not the ordinary inspectors capable of doing that without taking this man from his work at the Modern School? Another inspector also visits the high schools—another teacher taken away from his special work. Attention might be given to reorganising the inspectorial work, and probably a good deal of money could be saved without in any way impairing the efficiency. Another matter to which I wish to direct attention is the Teachers' College. That is a residential college. Students qualifying for the higher grades take a two, three, or four year course, whereas others take only a one-year course. This, again, is an injustice to country schools. Considering the disadvantages they are under, they are entitled, instead of being given a teacher with the lowest or "C" certificate, or possibly a teacher without any certificate whatever, to have a teacher of equal qualifications with those of teachers for metropolitan schools. This will involve some expense, but it can be done if the Education Department will give their minds to it and if we will bear the cost involved. At present country children are under a disadvantage solely by reason of the petty economies being practised. They are in every instance being given the worst possible service, the best teachers being invariably reserved for the urban districts. At present students at the Claremont Training College, in addition to being instructed in the art of imparting knowledge, take certain subjects. Here, once again, is duplication, because we have a University at which those subjects are taught. With a little reorganisation the training college students could take those additional subjects at the University, and the training college itself could be reserved for its special purpose of giving tuition in the art of teaching. The University staff, I understand, could do the work suggested; and then the training college would not need so large a staff as it has at present. Besides, overlapping would thus be obviated. For high schools there is a demand in every district. They have become fashionable. It is a democratic ideal that all children should be given equal opportunities, but our high schools are building up what may be termed class education.

The idea is spreading that high schools are of a superior social grade; the teachers are capped and gowned, and the youngsters get the impression that the high schools are on a higher level. In order to give to the child who has left school and taken his or her place in the industrial world an opportunity, the system of continuation classes should be extended. The idea is not new, and it is favoured by the Director of Education. When speaking of giving adolescents an opportunity, we must bear in mind that facilities for education are necessary. In the State of New York the youngsters get two half-days per week off work for the purpose of attending continuation classes, and the law provides that there shall be no reduction in wages for the time off. A youngster who leaves school gets out of the habit of studying, as a rule, but the two half-days' tuition per week would preserve the habit. In the continuation classes subjects of vital importance to citizens, such as history and economics, and also vocational subjects, could be taught. In New York it is found that although the employer loses the services of the child for the two half-days per week, that loss is more than compensated by the increased efficiency of the child. In the industrial world there are now two systems in vogue. Certain countries have an unlimited supply of cheap labour, and for that reason can carry on manufactures cheaply. Australia has a different ideal, namely, that instead of industry being carried on with an unlimited supply of cheap labour the rising generation shall be so equipped as to have greater efficiency, thus enabling them to compete effectively. A really civilised nation can compete even against countries relying on a cheap labour supply. We have to realise that Australia cannot maintain its present high standard unless it is prepared to grant to its youth the education which will enable this country to compete. We must not merely imagine that we are superior, but we must be actually superior, to other nations. We are apt smugly to assume that we are up to date and have nothing to learn from other countries. But other up to date countries realise that in the hard struggle for existence in the industrial world it is necessary that youth should be equipped with every available educational advantage. To a great extent we in Australia are isolated from the civilised world; and if we are not careful, we shall get out of step and fall behind the times. In view of the standard which Australians set, it is necessary that they should be in advance of the times. Therefore, instead of agreeing that the only thing to do is, in the words of an ex-Treasurer, to cut to the bone in the Education Department, we had better turn our attention to the question of efficiency and see how our Education Department can be brought thoroughly up to date. On the question of expense, I note by to-day's newspapers that

a new Engineer-in-Chief has been engaged for this State, and that the Minister for Works rightly declares that the extra £1,000 per annum to be paid to the new Engineer-in-Chief is a mere trifle and more than justified, having regard to the importance of the position. In the same way, increased expenditure on education will be justified. Unless we adopt that course, we as a nation shall not advance but go to the wall. Therefore, whatever is done in other departments, I hope that in connection with education no more will be heard of the nonsense about economy. I have made inquiries from those most intimately associated with education, and the views I have expressed this afternoon are held by very many who take the keenest interest in our educational system. There is a local matter I have to refer to. West Leederville is a district which has advantages, but because of poor communication with the city, no tramway or railway service being available, advances but slowly. There is a motor bus service during the day, but not during the evening. Some of the residents have been settled there for 10 or 12 years, and they are quite right in demanding that the ordinary facilities associated with civilisation should be granted to West Leederville, or, as it is now named, Wembley Park. I have previously requested the Education Department to establish a school at Wembley Park.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Before tea I was putting in a claim for the establishment of a school at Wembley Park. It is a fine idea that any given community should have public facilities, including a school. The residents can then give to the school the personal touch so advantageous to the scholars. I do not know why steps have not been taken to grant this particular request. The population at Wembley Park justifies it and, in many instances, the residents are over a mile from an existing school. In an isolated district such as that, the people should be encouraged by the establishment of a school. This brings me to the subject of parents and citizens' associations. They are attached to all the schools in my electorate and are doing remarkably good work. I have been associated with the North Perth body for a long time, and am also a member of the school board. That association at North Perth has raised hundreds of pounds and provided sport for the youngsters. It has also established a library, purchased a piano and gravelled the school grounds. All this has been done by men and women working in an honorary capacity. Such associations not only bring the parents together, but provide for the scholars conveniences and advantages that the department cannot give. I am afraid the school boards have not been very successful. The

real moving force of improvement in the schools is, not the school board, but the parents and citizens' association. Not only have such associations provided prizes for sports and all kinds of sporting material, but generally they have entered into the school life of the children. Apart altogether from the usual curriculum, it is necessary that the parents should take an interest in the general well being of their children at school. The importance of the question justifies the time I have given to it to-night. If we are to advance, our children must be given every advantage, given not only an ordinary education, but opportunity to continue it after leaving school. Parents are prepared to devote time and spend money for the advantage of their children. If any political party were to go to the country advocating a parsimonious educational policy, while another party held that the people were prepared to spend additional money on education, I am convinced that the last named party would win. Although there is a general desire that economy shall be exercised in Government departments, the community as a whole is prepared to shoulder an additional financial responsibility in the cause of education. Just as a parent will make any sacrifice in order that his child shall have educational advantages, so should the State, representing the parent, be prepared to make any sacrifice in order that our educational system should be improved, and better facilities given for the training and equipment of our children.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [7.36]: One approaching the Vote for the Education Department with a view to criticising feels that he is about to touch one of the prickly porcupines of the Annual Estimates. I have been trying to find out just how our education system has grown, and who has been responsible for it. As far as I can gather, our expenditure on education has grown up at the whim of successive Ministers. To-day we are faced with an expenditure of £636,452. When I suggest that it might be possible to effect some economies, I realise that, in doing so, I am placing myself in a difficult position. As a general rule, when it is suggested in the House that we should reduce this Vote, we are met with the reply from the Minister, "If you do, we are going to cut out your country schools." To an extent that restrains the hands of those who believe that economies might possibly be effected. The late Government appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Education Department. I congratulate those in authority at the time on having selected one who, to them, seemed the right man to go through the ramifications of education in Western Australia. He was the chief of the Education Department in New South Wales, whose system is practically on all-fours with our own. Consequently, his re-

port was signed and sealed before he began his work at all. I do not say that with the intention of casting any reflection on that gentleman, because no doubt his report was sincere. I suggest to the Premier that, during the recess, an honorary Royal Commission appointed from this House to inquire into the working of the Education Department might be able to show where some economies could be effected. When one enters on an argument about education, he is met with the contention that no education imparted to our children is utterly wasted. To a certain extent perhaps that view is correct; but the trouble is we are endeavouring to educate all our children along given lines. I do not say that we should differentiate between our children; on the contrary, every child should have the same opportunity as the rest. But a boy who, on leaving school, takes up carpentering, at once concentrates on that avocation, with the result that a good deal of the knowledge imparted to him at school is lost to him as soon as he leaves school. Generally speaking, our teaching staff is enthusiastic and desirous of imparting the best knowledge to our children; but of what use is it teaching extra subjects to a boy who, on leaving school, will take up pick and shovel work, or perhaps drive a cart? We should carefully review our position. Although the House was never asked about the establishment of any of them, we now have four high schools in Western Australia and, naturally, towns without high schools want to know why they cannot have such institutions. Many parents of boys and girls can afford to pay a small amount by way of fees. The Christian Brothers' College, the High School, the Scotch College, the Church of England Grammar School, the Wesley College, and other institutions of a similar nature, have built up a high reputation for secondary education, and in many instances it is difficult to get a child into one of these unless the parent applies early. In Katanning the Church of England authorities opened a girls' school in a small wooden building. To-day that school is practically full of pupils, drawn from all parts of the State. Generally speaking, secondary education could be left more in the hands of the private institutions than is the case to-day. We boast that our technical and modern schools are free to all, but that is not so. Not every boy or girl can get into the Technical School. If the pupil cannot pass an examination of a certain standard, he or she will not be admitted. I know of a boy who attended a country school, and had therefore not the same standard of education as a town boy would have. This boy wished to enter the Technical School to gain certain knowledge that he required, but, because he failed in the examination, he could not enter the school.

The Minister for Lands: There is no examination for the Technical School.

Mr. THOMSON: There is.

The Minister for Lands: So long as a boy is over a certain age.

Mr. THOMSON: I can prove my statement.

The Minister for Lands: It is not correct.

Mr. THOMSON: It is.

The Minister for Lands: Every boy over a certain age can enter free.

Mr. THOMSON: The member for Leederville stated that any party that went to the country with a parsimonious policy in regard to education would undoubtedly be beaten by another party whose policy was one of vigorous expenditure on education. A large sum of money is tied up in this way. I do not say that our high schools are not giving good results, but there are districts in the country where it is difficult to get the ordinary school facilities for the children. The correspondence classes do good work, and, to a certain extent, fill a long felt want, but they impose an additional burden upon the parents. The latest economy shows in what direction the department is trying to save money. Some people may be taking advantage of the driving allowance who should not do so. I have been trying to ascertain who promulgated the regulation governing this allowance, and find that it was introduced by the Labour Government some 10 years ago. That Government certainly endeavoured to meet the requirements of compulsory education in the country districts. If people are compelled to send their children to school, they should be assisted by this means. Children can, of course, travel free on the railways to the nearest school.

Mr. Heron: In some cases the trains do not run often enough for them.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so. When the driving allowance was introduced it cost £4,000 for the first year. Last year I am told the cost was £14,000. With the reduction of £3,000 the expenditure for the current year would be £11,000. It is a difficult matter to advocate economy in education. That is why I suggest the appointment of an honorary commission from this House. At the Katanning Show I was waited upon by a man who worked on the roads. He lives some distance from the school, and has to keep a horse and sulky in which to take his children to school. The cutting out of the allowance of 6d. per day, for he has three children, will mean a considerable loss to him. I hope the Premier will be able to do something to meet the situation. Undoubtedly some people are unjustifiably availing themselves of the driving allowance.

Mr. Taylor: In much the same way as they are doing with the baby bonus.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so. Because of these people others are detrimentally affected. The department might be able to reinstate the allowance of 6d. per child in cases where two children come from the same family. If three or four children are

using the same vehicle there might be a slight reduction. We have been repeatedly told that if we interfere with the Education vote the country schools will suffer. As the country opens up and develops, new schools will have to be established. I honestly believe that some of the subjects in which the children are being taught are not essential to 90 per cent. of them.

Mr. Taylor: You do not think we are getting value for our expenditure?

Mr. THOMSON: No.

The Minister for Lands: It is not much more than two years ago since a Royal Commission was appointed.

Mr. THOMSON: The Chairman of the Commission, who was Director of Education in New South Wales, was conducting exactly the same system as that which exists in this State.

Mr. Taylor: He could not be expected to condemn his own system.

Mr. THOMSON: A large percentage of men who have made a success in life have not had the advantage of higher education. I do not say that a man is not the better for a higher education, but I fail to see that we are getting full value for the enormous amount we are spending on education to-day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [7.58]: The member for Katanning said this Chamber had not voted the money for the building of district high schools, and that these had been built without authority.

Mr. Thomson: I did not say that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Three of these schools were established while Mr. Colebatch was Minister for Education. They were built at Northam, Bunbury, and Albany, and the buildings cost about £25,000. The money was voted by Parliament.

Mr. Thomson: Parliament did not inaugurate the system.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The House approved of the expenditure, and could have refused to do so. It would have been almost insane to have refused to the country districts some of the advantages enjoyed by the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Lands: More than 75 per cent. of the expenditure is on primary schools.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. There is another high school at Geraldton and one at Kalgoorlie. I think the system will have to be carried even further as we get more people into the country. We cannot have very efficient schools where the number of children is small; therefore, the metropolitan area enjoys many advantages that cannot be given to sparsely populated districts. The high schools were authorised by the House, and the money was voted by Parliament. I hope other high schools will be established in some of the bigger

towns. The Royal Commission that was appointed had as its chairman an officer of the Education Department of New South Wales, an excellent man, known, I believe, to the Minister for Mines. Dr. Saw and Mr. Pitchford were also on the Commission. The chairman of the Commission naturally approved of what our Director was doing, and of the system that was in force in this State. He came here as an honest man, and found that two other honest men were members of the Commission. All were capable of doing their job properly and thoroughly. It was a rattling good Commission, and it did good work.

Mr. Thomson: It all depends on the point of view—what it was appointed for.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It was certainly not appointed to whitewash the department. I do not think the hon. member would suggest that it was. That Commission was appointed by this House. I do not know whether the Government will accept the invitation given to them. If they do I hope the Commission to be appointed will not sit while Parliament is in session. I do not mind who is appointed to the Commission so long as the members of it carry out their duty in an honorary capacity, and so long as the evidence is recorded in a proper manner. I am certain, however, that the report of such a Commission would be of no avail, for it would be as dead as Julius Cæsar before the ink was dry on the paper. Reports of Royal Commissions are seldom read, and seldom have any influence.

Mr. Lambert: Is that why you inflicted so many on us?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier smiles. I do not think I ever appointed one. The House appointed the Commissions. What I did was to see that the members of the Commissions were not paid very much. I certainly never mentioned two Royal Commissions in the Governor's Speech.

The Premier: I think you appointed quite a number of them. There were twelve going on in one recess.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The House appointed the Commissions.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You had a majority in the House while the Commissions were being appointed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We had no great boss. We were free men. If I had been in the fortunate position of having 26 supporters all saying "Yea, yea," things would have been very different.

The Premier: You will disturb the cross benches if you talk like that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I wish I could wake them up to a sense of their responsibility. Then they would vote against the Government. But I cannot move them. The Minister for Railways said that there

was only one voice on his side of the House, and I believe him.

The Premier: Wonderful solidarity!

Mr. Taylor: Nothing like an early training.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I congratulate the Government on the magnificent support they are getting. The members on that side of the House are always there when they are wanted. I congratulate the member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) on much of his speech. I agree with a great deal of it, but I do not understand how he can know much about the work of the inspectors. There are not very many of them, and certainly not very many senior inspectors. All are doing excellent work. The hon. member must know that an inspector of schools, who has a thousand children under his charge, finds it a different proposition from that of inspecting a school where there may be only 20 or 40 children.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of the inspectors get good pay.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When I was in Nottingham a few years ago I saw an advertisement for a school inspector, and the salary offered was £1,250.

Mr. Teesdale: That is nothing. The Government are appointing an Engineer in Chief and giving him a salary of £2,500.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Even at that salary the officer will be cheap if he is a good man.

Mr. Millington: There is a lot you do not know about Nottingham.

Mr. Teesdale: That is not a nice remark. The Leader of the Opposition complimented you just now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I congratulated the hon. member on much of his speech. I admire the wisdom he displayed. The hon. member referred to the difficulty of finding teachers for country districts. I agree that that is so. But of course we cannot pay them the same rate of salary that is paid to others. I do not object to the vote at all. I believe we get excellent value for the money we are spending, and I do not believe that the vote can be reduced. We must provide education for our children in the country. The transference of people from the goldfields to the country districts, and the arrival of immigrants mean additional expenditure. The people who are coming here have a lot of children. I wish they had twice as many. All that costs money. Then we are getting far more children of our own. May they increase still more rapidly. The money that is voted for education is well spent, and the system is good. We talk of a free University. It is certainly free to the man who lives next door to it, but it is not so to the boy from the country. He cannot get to it except at considerable cost. I hope we shall be able to spend some money in agricultural education. The Government have bought a farm near Nor-

tham, and we shall have an agricultural college there very soon. I doubt whether we can economise very much, and carry on the work that is being performed now. There will be even more work to do with the increase and spread of population in the agricultural districts. I do not know that we should approve of the cutting down of the driving allowance. It is the custom now to have schools serving a fairly big area, and the driving allowance is substituted for additional schools. Although it appears as a special item the expenditure very often means economy because it saves not only school buildings, but a teaching staff.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [8.15]: While the Government have not had a great deal of opportunity to do or undo many of the things we should like them to undertake, I must refer to the reduction in the driving allowance.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Move a vote of no confidence in the Government.

Mr. CORBOY: I may be critical without wishing to turn them out of office. The saving of £3,000 effected by the reduction of 2d. per day in the driving allowance is very tiny, and hardly worth while when we consider the amount of good being done by paying this allowance. I know of many people who, without the allowance, could not afford to keep a horse and sulky to get the kiddies to school. The amount seems great, but I do not think the remedy should lie in reducing the sum available to people who really need the money. There are people in the country districts to whom the driving allowance is a godsend, because it enables them to get their kiddies educated. Without the full allowance many of them will not be able to provide for their children's education. The Treasurer might have adopted other means to effect a reduction without reducing the amount of this allowance to all at present in receipt of it. No doubt there are people availing themselves of the allowance when they really do not need it.

Mr. Teesdale: Of course there are many, some of them with motor cars.

Mr. CORBOY: I have heard of people driving their children to school in their own motor cars and charging up the allowance.

Mr. Sampson: What is the difference?

Mr. CORBOY: People who can afford to keep a motor car do not need the allowance.

Mr. Sampson: You cannot make a sweeping statement like that.

Mr. CORBOY: The allowance is not a charity, but a compassionate grant to enable people, who could not otherwise afford it, to get their children to school and educated. It would be ridiculous to claim that a person who could afford to drive his children to school in a motor car would come within that category.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of them with chauffeurs would do so.

Mr. Sampson: There are many poor people with motor cars.

Mr. CORBOY: I have not met many of them.

Mr. Heron: There are many more poor people without them than with them.

Mr. CORBOY: Quite so. There are many people who need the 6d. and who will be affected because the Government desire to get at the people who are improperly receiving the allowance. I do not know what to suggest. The Treasurer might find some means of ensuring that the allowance is paid only to the people who need it. Surely he could say that a person who pays income tax does not need the allowance. If there is only one child in the family the man has a £200 exemption and £50 for the child under the Income Tax Act, and surely such a man should be able to scrape along without the driving allowance. A man making less than £5 a week would probably need the allowance. However, it is not my duty to devise means for the Treasurer to effect savings, but I suggest that he should reconsider the matter, and find some other way of making a saving without reducing the amount available to many people who really need the money.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.21]: It is a little difficult to criticise the vote because the moment one says anything, it is suggested that he desires to reduce the education standard. However, there is a feeling of uneasiness at the enormous growth of expenditure on education, and I feel there are many frills that could be cut out without impairing the general efficiency of the system. For manual training and cookery, £14,420 is provided. It is remarkable that in a young State like this we can provide £14,000 for manual training and cookery, and disregard such an important matter as dental clinics. Give good healthy lads a football and cricket bat, and they will derive as much good from them as from manual training. Next to giving a child a good sound education, it is the duty of the Government to see that in the early stages, at all events, it receives proper dental treatment. Other countries have long regarded dental clinics as all-important.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no item under this vote dealing with dental clinics.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am speaking on the general question.

The CHAIRMAN: That comes under the medical vote.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am referring to a dental clinic for State schools.

The CHAIRMAN: It does not come under this vote.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is a shame; I want to get it brought under this vote. We are spending £14,000 to teach girls to make plum puddings and boys to kick a football. It is time we dispensed with many of the frills. Better provision should be made in

some parts of the country for carrying on the work of education. At the head of the Kurrawang woodland is a settlement a quarter of a century old, and there in the depth of winter children were being taught in a bush shed. The building was in a hopeless state of disrepair. I desire to be lenient to the department, knowing its many commitments, but while provision is being made for the new-comers, the population on the goldfields deserve reasonable accommodation. I understand some attempt is being made to remedy the condition of affairs at Kurrawang. There seems to be a hopeless mix-up over some of the officials. I refer particularly to the Director of Technical Education. He receives £402 per annum as Director of Technical Education and £402 from the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie, £804 in all. I do not know the duties he is called upon to perform, but I hardly think the bracketing of these positions makes for efficiency. If the work of the technical school is so important as to warrant a director, I cannot see why he should be subordinate in the matter of remuneration to the assistant director. The director gets £402, but the assistant director receives £636 per annum. There may of course be sufficient work for a director of technical education at £402 and an assistant director at £636 a year.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The director gets twice £402.

Mr. LAMBERT: But the amounts are under different votes. The two positions of Director and Assistant Director of Technical Education aggregate £1,038 per annum. If a full-time man is needed as director of the technical school, he should be there all the time, instead of his energies being shared by another institution. I agree with the member for Katanning that the most searching inquiry should be made into the Education Department, in spite of the Royal Commission which sat a couple of years ago. I feel sure that the last word has not yet been said upon our system of education or upon our expenditure in that connection. Surely our people are not so blind to the need for school hygiene as to be content—

The CHAIRMAN: School hygiene comes under the Medical and Public Health Vote.

Mr. LAMBERT: A few paltry pounds are provided under that vote, whereas sums aggregating £14,000 are spent on frills. The expenditure on the important matter of hygiene is not one-tenth of what it should be. The repairs needed in our existing schools should be carried out. I do not know who is at fault, but for the sake of a £20 note the schools in my district are without windows. Parents' and citizens' associations have made representations on the subject resultlessly. The rousing of public indignation should not be needed before the department move. Let us not be unmindful of the scholastic needs of the children of outback pioneers.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—in reply) [8.35]: I am grateful to members generally for the manner in which they have received these Estimates, and I wish to congratulate the member for Coolgardie on being, out of all the members who spoken, the only one who has not referred to the reduction of the driving allowance. As to that allowance, it is not so easy as some members apparently think to alter the system otherwise than by making a general reduction. Though it is easy to suggest that the department should discriminate, withholding the allowance from parents able to pay, I would not envy either the Minister for Education or the Director of Education if he had to make the discrimination. When, in the latter part of 1913, the Government introduced the driving allowance, their object was to assist parents not possessing vehicles to get their children to school. During the first two years of its operation, the allowance cost the State only about £4,000 annually. Last year the vote rose to close upon £14,000. Numerous parents are accepting the driving allowance while undoubtedly in a position to bear that expense themselves. Further, in some districts where children are taken to school by motor, some parents take their children by motor to the place where the school motor picks them up, and then claim the driving allowance. However, the question will receive further consideration. The member for Toodyay suggested that the Government should build hostels in country centres, for children to board at; and he said that in many cases the parents would be glad to pay for their children's keep at such hostels, taking them home at week-ends. That matter also will receive consideration. The member for Toodyay complained about a school which he said had been promised in September, 1922, and with regard to which nothing had yet been done. I shall have to search "Hansard" for the unpronounceable name of the locality to which the hon. member's complaint refers, and will then go further into the matter. The member for Perth, while naturally not complaining greatly about the driving allowance, did complain with regard to the education being given to mentally deficient children. I agree absolutely with the hon. member that more should be done in that direction, but I think he might have expressly admitted that a start has been made. Like him, I wish to give credit to the two teachers at the Salvation Army's Seaforth Home for their magnificent work in that connection, having personally inspected the work of the mentally deficient children there. The Government have recently agreed that when a child believed to be mentally deficient comes before the Children's Court, the school psychologist shall be permitted to examine the child for classification purpose, and that for such examination he shall be allowed a fee of £1 1s., with a yearly maximum of £25, which sum is estimated by

the bench of the Children's Court to be sufficient for the purpose. The chief complaint of the member for Beverley was this driving allowance. The member for Pingelly, too, complained on that score, and also on the score of inadequate school quarters; and he wished to know whether the £12,000 shown by these Estimates was due to the number of new schools being built. New schools are provided out of loan funds; the £12,000 represents increased cost of tuition of children. With regard to school quarters I shall make representations to the Minister for Education. The member for York was rather inconsistent. He first criticised the Government for economising to the extent of £3,000 on the driving allowance, and then condemned them for expending £12,000 additional on this vote as a whole. He did not want to see any increase. Yet immediately a reduction was made he criticised us on it. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) wants a modern school in Fremantle this year. From the information I have, I do not think he has any possible chance. In the first place, there is no money for it, and, in the second place, if there were, the amount is not on the Estimates for the provision of the necessary teaching staff. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) also complained of the reduction of the travelling allowance. But his chief complaint was in respect of the publication of the reports of the medical officer examining school children. The hon. member regarded it as a shocking thing that reports showing that some children had dirty heads should have been published. It appeals to me as being still more shocking that there should be any necessity for such a report. I give credit to the department for publishing the report. Every possible step should be taken to compel parents, even though poor, to send their children to school in clean condition.

Mr. Taylor: But publication of such reports will not make them do it.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The hon. member cannot point to any instances where there has been publication without four or five preliminary warnings to the parents. It is unfair to the parents of clean children that other children should be sent to school in dirty condition.

Mr. Teesdale: Let us have fewer picture shows and more fine tooth combs.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) complained that the caretaker at the Albany High School was not being paid at a satisfactory rate. I will undertake that whatever he is being paid is the rate provided for in the agreement between the Education Department and the Caretakers' Union. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) complained of the want of accommodation at Wiluna, and criticised the waste of money in the recon-

struction of that school. I happen to know something of that reconstruction work. I only wish I knew how to get over the red tape responsible for the cost of that work. The visits of the several inspectors sent up to look at that work cost more than did the reconstruction of the building itself. I do not know who was responsible for it all, but I am glad to say it happened a considerable time ago. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) desires to see the continuation classes at Leonora re-opened this year. I do not know whether he can get that effected this year, but if he is prepared to go to the department and show that, as he told the House, those continuation classes can be re-opened and carried on without cost to the department, I can see no reason why he should not get what he desires. The member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) wants a school at Wembley Park. It is rather a flash name, but I believe that, after all, it is merely West Leederville. I do not know whether the hon. member has made representations to the department for a school out there, but I will bring it under the notice of the Minister. I wish to endorse the compliments paid by the hon. member to the parents' and citizens' associations. I know that in the metropolitan area, and in many other places, those associations are doing wonderfully good work. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) suggested the appointment of an honorary Royal Commission to inquire into our educational system with a view to determining whether or not economies could be effected without impairing the efficiency of the system. The matter is worthy of consideration, and probably some good might accrue if the suggestion were acted upon. I hope the Committee will pass the Estimates as printed.

Item, Furniture, books, sale of stock, £13,000:

Mr. LAMOND: In my view the department ought to set aside a portion of this amount with a view to installing dual desks at Port Hedland. It would be only right if, in so hot a climate, the comfort of the children were studied a little. I hope the Minister will give this sympathetic consideration.

Item, Conveyance of Children to School, £11,000:

Mr. TAYLOR: A number of members have complained of the reduction of this item. The Minister declared that the department had been imposed upon in that parents well able to pay for the conveyance of their children to school had, nevertheless, drawn the allowance. But why should parents unable to pay be made to suffer because a few have imposed on the department? In my view these accounts should be closely scrutinised. Then there would be no need to reduce the amount.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Public Health, Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie in charge of the vote).

Vote — Medical and Public Health, £184,925:

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [8.55]: This year's Estimates show an increase of £3,904 as against those of last year. There is so little done, and so much to be done that, as Minister controlling the department, I scarcely know where to start. We could easily spend at least £20,000 more in this department and reap more than £20,000 benefit thereby. The department includes two main sections, namely that dealing with the maintenance of hospitals, of medical services and of the homes for the aged; and the second dealing with numerous questions of public health and sanitation, including general administration of the Health Act, the setting up and observance of precautions against infectious diseases, the medical inspection of school children, the registration of general trained nurses, the registration and supervision of midwifery nurses, the setting up and observance of regulations for the purity of foods and drugs, and infant welfare work. All will admit that this department should aim at the prevention of disease where possible, and the giving of every facility for preventing children from growing up as defectives when their defects can be cured by proper attention when young. On the Education Vote the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) raised the question of dental clinics. In some of the big schools in America a form is set aside especially for examination and treatment by dentistry. In this State the Education Department has not been billed with any of that expense. Rather has it fallen on the Medical and Health Department. So far we have not succeeded in getting any amount placed on the Estimates for the establishment of dental clinics. At present we are conducting dental clinics at the Public Health Department. An enormous amount of work is being done there in attending to children's teeth. All the dental work there is free. I am in accord with the department in the desire to establish dental clinics wherever possible, and where there is a sufficient number of children; but we cannot establish dental clinics without the necessary funds. I asked for the appointment of a full-time dentist. The Dentists' Association in Perth are doing this work free at the department. When the question of establishing a dental clinic at Fremantle was brought under my notice, I inquired whether we could get the work done there in the same way as was being done in Perth. I was, however, informed that this was almost impossible, as there were so few members of the association resident in Fremantle that it would be hard upon them if they had to carry out the same duties there

as were being carried out by the dentists in Perth. I tried to secure the employment of a full-time dentist, as well as an extra medical man, but I have not yet succeeded. If the Legislative Council pass the Lotteries Bill I hope to have sufficient money to pay a full-time dentist and doctor. The first money that is made available from the proceeds of the lottery will be used in the employment of a full-time dentist, and another doctor to examine the school children.

Mr. Sampson: Will the dentist travel round the country?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. We do not want him in Perth at present. The bigger centres in the country will first have his services. We have only one doctor carrying on medical inspections of schools, namely Dr. Roberta Jull. She, however, is desirous of going on to half-time. I congratulate her on the splendid work she has done. Too small a percentage of the notifications that are sent to the homes are observed by the parents. In many cases the parents have not sufficient funds to carry out the suggestions, and are not in the position to get the money. We hope, however, to overcome that very shortly. During the last financial year the total vote of the department was exceeded to the extent of £5,486, the major portion being expenditure on medical and hospital services at new centres. Five new hospitals were opened during the last financial year.

Mr. Teesdale: That ought to bring in some votes.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I do not know.

Mr. Sampson: They were all agreed to by the previous Government.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I have opened three since I took office.

Mr. Sampson: We laid the foundation stones.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The late Government certainly did build hospitals. Unfortunately the hospital erected at Northcliffe was only half the size it ought to have been, and we have to spend as much money again in order to double the size of the institution.

The Minister for Lands: Northcliffe is 20 miles from Pemberton.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The place is already overcrowded. The doctor applied recently for some tents in which to accommodate the overflow of patients.

Mr. Taylor: Tents would not be of much use in winter.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: He was prepared to put up with them for the time being. Approval has been given for the expenditure of the money necessary to double the size of the hospital. The new hospitals I have referred to were begun in the latter portion of 1923-24. In each case only a few months' expenditure was brought in to last year's figures. The increase in the vote of £3,904 is chiefly due to the necessity for keeping these hospitals going and

in paying the salaries involved, etc. The Department of Public Health directly manages 27 hospitals, as well as the Woorloo Sanatorium, the Old Men's Home at Claremont, and the Women's Home at Fremantle. In addition to these departmentally managed hospitals, the Perth Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and the Fremantle Hospital come under the department. There are also 39 smaller hospitals managed by local committees in various parts of the State. All the subsidised institutions look to the department for some measure of financial help, and advice and assistance in other directions. The total average number of beds occupied in these departmentally controlled and subsidised hospitals is slowly increasing, and aggregates about 940 beds occupied on the average throughout the year. Members will thus realise that it costs a lot of money to keep these institutions going. I made inquiries from the board of management of the Perth Public Hospital and from the R.M.O. as to what their estimate was of the cost of bringing that institution up to the standard to which, in their opinion, it should be raised, for the treatment of every patient who applies for admission. I am told that this would cost, without any extravagance, no less than £50,000.

Mr. Taylor: That is, to erect another wing.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, and in providing plant and essential appliances that are now lacking.

Mr. Taylor: A new wing would be required for another 100 beds, and the nurses' quarters would have to be increased.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is not possible for the Government to reduce the hours for the nurses, as has been agreed upon, until we have increased accommodation for them. It is proposed to reduce the hours to 52 per week, for day and night shifts. A conference of representatives of the Medical Department, the three big hospitals in the metropolitan area, and the A.T.N.A. recommended that the hours should be reduced to 34 in the day and 60 at night. The committee of the Perth Public Hospital, however, came to the conclusion that this reduction would not be sufficient in the case of that institution, and decided to make the hours 52 for day work and the same for night, when sufficient accommodation had been provided for the nurses. This will mean the employment of 32 extra nurses. At present we have not a spare room for one of them. It will also mean the employment of two extra house doctors, and a general increase of one in each of the professions outside on the honorary staff. This will involve an expenditure of £5,000. I hope the nurses' quarters will be completed early in the new year, so that the nurses may get the benefit of the reduced hours. For some years past medical men

and scientists generally, have expressed themselves in favour of the deep therapy X-ray treatment as a cure for cancer. The Government made inquiries as to what it would cost to instal a plant of this description at the Perth Hospital. The Commissioner for Public Health, Dr. Atkinson, told me he would not be justified in recommending the Government to expend money on such a plant until something more definite has been decided as to the beneficial results from such treatment. He also explained that two medical men in Perth had recently installed such plants at their own expense. The R.M.O. of the Perth Public Hospital brought under my notice the case of a man who was suffering from cancer. It was put up to him that this was a case that could well be treated by the deep therapy X-ray plant. It was also stated that the unfortunate individual possessed no money. The doctor asked me if I would use my influence with the Government to see whether some arrangement could not be made with one of the medical men now possessing the plant to treat this man. The resident medical officer interviewed those medical gentlemen, and to their credit be it said they agreed to carry out the proposal that was submitted to them. These two medical gentlemen agreed to treat practically at cost, cases sent to them under certain conditions. I put the matter before the Treasurer, and he approved of what was proposed. Since then two cases have been treated. I am sorry to say that one died, but the other, under the treatment, if he is not showing an improvement, is not getting worse. I would not be doing my duty if I did not say something in connection with the position regarding leprosy in the north-west. Prior to the present Government coming into power, arrangements had been made with the Commonwealth Government to send an expert to Western Australia for the purpose of making a leprosy survey of the north-west. Not long after the present Government assumed office that medical gentleman arrived, and I then discovered that no provision had been made on last year's Estimates for the expenses to be incurred. The Commonwealth Government were prepared to pay the salary, but the State had to pay the expenses. Dr. Cook, the medical officer concerned, has completed his survey of the north-west, and his report regarding the health of the natives reveals a very satisfactory state of affairs in comparison with the reports that had been circulated. No fewer than 2,584 natives were examined, and only 84 were found to be suffering from granuloma. There were five cases of leprosy discovered. We have only just received Dr. Cook's report, and a conference has been held for the purpose of determining what is to be done. I assure members that no time will be lost in arriving at a decision that will be in the interests of the people of the North-West, and of the State generally, as well as the unfortunate natives

themselves. I am not yet in a position to state what that decision is.

Mr. Teesdale: I hope you will not re-awaken the scare that occurred in one place.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Times out of number I have scarcely been able to restrain myself during the period that Dr. Cook and the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) were travelling through the north for the purpose of carrying out that survey. The Department were besieged with letters from people who desired to know what we were doing, and who were offering criticism. These people were saying: "Why don't you let us know what you are doing?" I believe the Department were right in the attitude they adopted, that no publicity should be given respecting Dr. Cook's arrival. The reason for that was that probably the natives would in some way be informed that it was intended to carry out the mission, and they would have made themselves scarce. We know, of course, that the natives do not read the newspapers, but there are scores of white men who can talk the aboriginal language, and that there are many half-castes who learn what appears in the Press. If any disclosure had been made, and it had become generally known throughout the north-west there would have been no natives to examine. All would have disappeared into the bush.

Mr. Taylor: The member for Roebourne would have tracked them up.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I had to sit under severe criticism because I would not disclose what was taking place. In regard to child welfare work the Government have agreed that in centres where it can be carried out under conditions laid down there must be collected in the district a sum of £100, towards which the local authorities must contribute £25. In such cases they shall secure the services of a qualified nurse trained in child welfare work, and having succeeded in doing that the Government will then subsidise the district up to £100 per annum. It is not possible at present to get trained nurses in Western Australia. It may be possible to secure the services of one or two from the Eastern States or New Zealand. We ourselves are not in a position to train nurses in this work for the reason that we have no training school. Recently the matron of the King Edward Maternity Hospital went East in order to undergo a course of study in child welfare work extending over a period of three months so that she may be able on her return to start the training of nurses in this important duty. I can say emphatically and candidly that work of this description, even if it cost £2,000 a year, will be worth the money expended. I cannot see why in Western Australia we cannot get this movement established, seeing that our climatic conditions are even better than those of New Zealand. If we can carry out child welfare work in the thickly populated centres we shall reduce our infantile mortality to perhaps a level

lower than that of New Zealand. By reason of the great work that has been performed in New Zealand that country has the lowest infantile death rate in the world. That is an object lesson that we might well copy. There is no reason why we should not be able to follow the example set by New Zealand, provided we are prepared to train our people in the right direction.

Mr. Taylor: They are a hardier race in New Zealand.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: They are no harder there than our people. Our children are just as healthy and virile, but there are certain conditions under which many children are born which prove a great handicap, and it has been shown that very often mistakes made have been the result of ignorance. Many of the causes responsible for infant mortality are preventable, and I assure the House that they will be prevented when we get the child welfare centre established. I trust the House will accept the estimates of this Department, and pass them without much comment.

Mr. CHESON (Cue) [9.25]: I realise that the Medical Department, with the money at their disposal, are doing all that is possible. The people who live out in the back country have to tax themselves in order to provide medical facilities, and the taxes they are paying are just about as much as they can bear. We are hoping that the Lotteries Bill will be passed so that the people in distant places will be relieved of the load they are carrying at the present time. They are not able to do much more than they are doing in connection with the maintenance of hospitals. There is one matter to which I wish to refer, and on which I would like some information from the Minister. I refer to the case of Constable Hubbard, a police officer who was stationed at Yalgoo for about 18 months, and who was an efficient and popular officer. He was taken bad and the case was diagnosed by a doctor at Yalgoo as appendicitis. There was no hospital at Yalgoo, and it was necessary for him to be sent by train to Geraldton. The unfortunate sufferer was sent to Geraldton, where Dr. Hungerford, district medical officer, was communicated with. The Yalgoo doctor informed Dr. Hungerford that the patient was ready for an operation. Dr. Hungerford received the message and passed it on to the police, and the police were waiting when the train arrived. Prior to the train arriving, however, he communicated with the Geraldton Hospital, and asked whether everything was ready for the admission of the patient. The hospital authorities expressed complete surprise at what had been told them, and declared that they were unaware that they had to receive a serious case. The condition of the sufferer had been aggravated by long train journey, and when he arrived at the hospital he was in a very bad state. The hospital

authorities, realising the urgency of the case, rang up the doctor and ascertained that he was at a place 23 or 24 miles from Geraldton. Not until the following morning, 13 or 14 hours after having been admitted to the hospital, was Hubbard operated on, and he died shortly after the operation. Why was he left in great pain all that time? Was it because the patient was under another doctor, or because he was a police constable for whom the resident medical officer would receive no remuneration outside his allowance? I understand the police are holding an inquiry into the matter. We should have a Government inquiry. When a doctor in charge of a hospital in such a district gets word of a bad case being forwarded, he should be in attendance to receive it. The action of the doctor has been criticised a good deal in Yalgoo. Constable Hubbard was a very efficient officer and respected by the community of Yalgoo. I do not say that if the doctor had been in attendance his life would have been saved, but from a humanitarian point of view the doctor, after having been notified of the case, should have been in attendance.

Mr. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [9.36]: I wish to acknowledge the prompt attention the Minister has given to health matters in the North-West. I hope he will continue the important work of getting the leprosy cases removed farther from the town of Derby, in fact out of the district. It is all very well for the member for Roebourne to interject and say he hopes the Minister will not awaken elsewhere the stir caused in Derby. We can do without the lepers in the Kimberleys.

Mr. Teesdale: You know nothing about the Kimberleys. Confine your remarks to Derby.

Mr. COVERLEY: I know quite as much about the Kimberleys as does the hon. member.

Mr. Teesdale: Confine your remarks to Derby, and respecting that you know only what you have heard.

Mr. COVERLEY: I wish to refer to the inadequate health facilities in the Kimberleys. The people in the isolated parts are entitled to better facilities, but I think we can leave it to the Minister, who has made such a good start, to cater for these wants.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.38]: I wish to congratulate the Minister—

Mr. Taylor: One would think this was a mutual admiration society.

Mr. LAMBERT: There will be no exchange of admiration between the hon. member and myself. It is pleasing to know that the department are alive to the importance of one branch of health to which I have already made reference. I feel keenly the need for improved dental attention in this State—

Mr. Taylor: Every cobbler sticks to his last.

Mr. LAMBERT: And the provision of dental clinics wherever possible. In more than 80 States in America there are over 7,000 dental clinics run by the odontological societies of the United States, who regard the matter of dental attention as of prime importance to the population. In a small State like Western Australia we can at least make a start. We have medical inspection of children and directions are sent to parents, but when there is a big family the parents cannot always incur the expense involved. Members appear to be seized with the importance of the question. There is a dental clinic attached to the Health Department. In the Eastern States there are odontological societies and there is a leisured class that can give greater honorary service than can be expected of the profession here. I hope the Minister will ask the dental profession to meet him in conference in order that a step may be made in the direction of providing proper dental treatment for children, particularly in the more scattered parts of the State. The neglect on the part of Australian parents to care for the teeth of their children is a crying shame. Parents, either through inability to pay or through ignorance, exhibit the most callous indifference to this all-important matter. The early care of the teeth is essential to the preservation of the general health of the community. I hope the Government will extend the usefulness of this branch of the department. Probably 50 per cent. of the children are doomed to suffer from the cradle to the grave through not having received the necessary dental treatment, and to this is due many of the ills that affect the adult population. I congratulate the Minister, and hope that he will not lose any opportunity to remedy the evil by calling in the dental profession. I trust, further, that he will urge the profession to realise their responsibilities to the people of the State in this respect.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.42]: Having been associated with this department for some time, I realise the great importance of hospital service. I recall with appreciation the great assistance rendered by the three principal hospitals which have been mentioned—the Perth, Fremantle, and Children's Hospitals. The Perth Hospital, with its secretary, is, as we all know, making a great effort to secure additional funds for necessary works; and we may very reasonably and properly congratulate Mr. Eagleton on the success already achieved. The organisation established to secure the looked-for return is much to Mr. Eagleton's credit. At Fremantle the committee headed by Mr. Bolton has done great service. Much remains to be done at Fremantle as regards repair of buildings, but it is hoped that in the near future, with the

help of the committee, the necessary funds will be available. For the Children's Hospital, too, good work is being done by various organisations and by the secretary. The chairman of the Perth Hospital, Mr. Hawkins, is another great worker; as was the late Speaker of this House, Mr. Taylor, when for several years he was chairman of the Perth Hospital Board. I was glad to observe recently an assurance that the dreadful observation ward attached to the Perth Hospital will shortly be a thing of the past. For years it has been a scandal of our hospital administration. I look forward with great satisfaction to the erection of a mental reception home at Point Heathcote, and later of a mental convalescent home there. The matter of deep therapy was mentioned by the Minister, who will recollect that last session the House carried a resolution urging the addition of the necessary equipment for deep therapy treatment to the Perth Hospital. It was then, and in some quarters still is, questioned whether deep therapy is reliable; but I am assured that in a fair percentage of cases—I believe at least 30 per cent.—of cancer and other malignant growths the treatment proves effective. From my own knowledge I can speak of the case of a Melbourne lady who suffered from a malignant growth, and who within the last few months has received wonderful benefit from deep therapy treatment; in fact, she is now in good health once more. The case constitutes a strong testimony to the efficacy of the treatment. I hope the Minister, notwithstanding the advice he has received, will press for the addition of the necessary equipment to our chief hospital. I am glad that child welfare centres are being established, and I agree that they will mean a reduction in infant mortality.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And eventually a reduction in the number of patients entering our hospitals. We shall be a healthier people.

Mr. SAMPSON: Undoubtedly attention given during the first three or four years of a child's life will lay the foundation of good health. Later I shall ask the Minister to continue to provide free passes for people wishing to visit patients at the Wooroloo Sanatorium.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.46]: I wish that some of the people who have been preaching and screeching against the State Lotteries Bill had to go around the country districts and observe the widespread lack of hospitals and nurses there. Then perhaps they would not be so ready to talk about direct giving, which we know is in practice a failure. I would like them to visit Westonia, and see there a well-equipped hospital carried on by an enthusiastic committee, who by all sorts of stratagems have been keeping the wolf from the door. They are assisted by a splendid matron, who by the adoption

of the most economical method—makes every pound go to its limit; and they have the aid of a secretary who does his work gratuitously. There is in the Westonia district a crowd of new settlers, migrants, many without means, who because of rough living and changed conditions form a large proportion of the Westonia hospital's patients. When I go to the Minister I am told that the Westonia hospital committee have done well in making expenditure and income very nearly meet, but that they cannot expect much assistance from the department, who have not the requisite cash. Next I would take the opponents of the State Lotteries Bill to Kellerberrin, where the people, on the strength of a promise made by a previous Government and confirmed by the present Government, have ordered an up-to-date X-ray apparatus. The Kellerberrin hospital, too, is practically supported by voluntary contributions. However, the X-ray apparatus is now at Fremantle, and the Kellerberrin hospital committee really do need some assistance. Once more I applied to the department for assistance towards a maternity ward, but received the same reply, "No funds." At Meckering there is a well-equipped hospital supported by earnest people. Here once more an application for assistance brought from the department the reply, "No money." I am indeed pleased to know that the Minister and his department are giving attention to child welfare. There is great need for it in this State. I hope the State Lotteries Bill will be passed.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [9.50]: I would not have risen but for the invitation of the member for Kimberley that my electorate should take over his electorate's lepers. The leprosy business is nothing new—at all events not to me, though it may be to the member for Kimberley. We have had leprosy for 25 years in my electorate, and have never squealed about it. I was indeed surprised to hear a Minister advise the hon. member to "buck in," while I was endeavouring to support the Honorary Minister. My desire was to pay an indirect compliment to the Government. The leper scare is practically confined to Derby, and most of the agitation has been caused by a few newchums there. I wish to congratulate the officials of the department on their work. I have seen the inner workings of the department, and it was a satisfactory experience. Had it not been for the precautions taken by the Principal Medical Officer, the whole trip to the North would have been a farce and a waste of money. Those precautions made the trip a great success, and except as regards two stations the object of the journey was attained. I played a humble part in the matter. I was simply a sort of caretaker of the turnout.

The Minister for Lands: I thought I was to be complimented on having sent up a good man!

Mr. TEESDALE: Well, of course you could not expect anyone on this side to say that. However, I was very pleased with the trip, and I am sure the Premier will not mind my saying that the scheme originated with the ex-Premier, and was thoroughly well carried out.

Mr. Taylor: What about the motor car?

Mr. TEESDALE: Oh that was a dead frost. However, this leprosy is nothing new. The Wyndham people are not exercising their minds about it. There is no revolution either in Broome or at Sampson, and I have not heard of anything doing at Carnarvon. I was surprised to find the splendid precautions taken by the department at Derby. I have never seen a place better cared for. I should like it to go on record that the whole trip was splendidly organised by the chief medical officer and was a great success.

Mr. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.54]: I rise to stress the urgent necessity for the establishment of dental clinics in this State. A couple of months ago I introduced a deputation to the Minister for Health asking for dental clinics, and if the Treasurer had been more lenient to us probably something would have eventuated. It is of no use employing medical officers and nurses to go around the schools telling the children that their teeth are in a bad state if we are not to follow it to its logical conclusion and provide dental clinics for dealing with them. I am disappointed to find there is nothing on the Estimates for this purpose and I hope that, in the near future, something will be done. I would even go so far as to cut out the inspection of school children if, by so doing, we could provide dental clinics. It is unnecessary to tell the children that their teeth require attention if we cannot provide dental clinics.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [9.56]: Let me for the moment confine my remarks to my own electorate, where the population has greatly diminished, but where, nevertheless, it is still necessary that hospitals should be maintained. The cost of hospital maintenance up there is very high, if only on account of the sparsity of the population; and they are not getting sufficient from the Government to enable them to carry on. In one place in my electorate hospital maintenance is costing the workers on the mines something like £6 per annum per man. At Laverton two years ago married men were paying 2s. 3d. weekly for hospital maintenance and I am told the people of Leonora are paying £4 10s. per annum for the same purpose. Of course Leonora has quite a large population as compared with Laverton and Morgans. I hope the Government will not be niggardly in the support of these outside hospitals.

It is difficult for the Government to find the necessary funds, but it is infinitely more difficult for the people up there to have to maintain their own hospitals. The nearest doctor to Morgans or to Laverton is the doctor at Leonora, and so both at Laverton and Morgans the hospital patients have to depend on the skill of the local matron. I listened with interest to the Minister when he was referring to the Perth Hospital. He declared that to bring that hospital up to date would cost £50,000. He expressed regret that he was unable to meet the obligations necessary to enable the hours of the nurses to be shortened. I suggest to him the adoption of a scheme that I, when chairman of the Perth Hospital Board, put up to the secretary. The Minister will know that over the casualty ward some 30 wards-maids and housemaids are being accommodated. There was a two-storey building in Murray-street that the Government could have rented for £5 weekly. It would have accommodated the maids, thus affording additional room for 30 nurses in those quarters. The cost of suitably furnishing those rooms would have been but very low. Speaking from memory I think the total cost of the scheme was £3,000, the major portion of which would have gone in furnishing the rooms, at a cost of about £27 per room. Then when the new quarters were built that furniture could have been utilised. Consequently, the increased cost of maintenance would have been confined virtually to the small salaries of 13 nurses, mostly probationers. This would have made it possible to give the nursing staff the reduced hours of 52 per week. At present the nurses are working 62 hours weekly and it is suggested that those hours be reduced by ten, and that the nurses get a half-holiday per week. To-day their only holidays are three weeks at the end of each year. They have one day off in each week, but that is their Sunday. I will supply the Minister with the full details of the scheme, and, if he will go into it, I am confident that he must regard it with favour. It would give welcome relief to the nursing staff. It is not wise for the Government to wait till they can see their way clear to the expenditure of £50,000 before effecting any reform.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It is not proposed to wait until then. It is estimated that £5,000 will give the nurses ample quarters.

Mr. TAYLOR: You can afford them immediate relief for a very small expenditure. I appeal to the Minister to give consideration to this and to the needs of those hospitals in outback centres.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.2]: I agree with the Minister that he has a very difficult row to hoe, inasmuch as the funds available are so inadequate. I hope his efforts to raise money for charities under the Lotteries Bill will be successful. People who travel in the more remote parts

of the State and see what medical attention is given, and how hard a task it is for the people to maintain their hospitals, will surely not be ready to gamble with the lives of our citizens by desiring to see the defeat of the Lotteries Bill. I endorse the remarks of the member for Cue with regard to the case of Constable Hubbard of Yalgoo. Something should be done to investigate that matter. It seems to have been somewhat inhuman on the part of Dr. Hungerford in going 30 miles away from Geraldton when he knew this patient was in a dangerous condition and was on the train going to him for treatment. It may be that the doctor had just as important a case to deal with elsewhere, but it would be a good thing to ascertain why the unfortunate man was allowed to remain in agony until it was too late to save his life. I agree with the Honorary Minister who said that an effort should be made to reduce infant mortality, and that a good way of doing so was by employing lecturers to instruct mothers and those about to become mothers. He maintained that ignorance was largely responsible for the trouble. There is need for tuition along these lines, and for some one to impart that instruction. Other factors, however, enter into consideration. There is a lack of sympathy towards the proper housing, care, attention and clothing of infants. Women who are about to become mothers are often allowed to live in unhealthy surroundings. What is needed to remedy that difficulty is a Fair Rents Bill. Notwithstanding our alleged civilisation and up-to-date laws, we sometimes find three or four families domiciled in one small humpy, because of the high rents that are charged. That sort of thing is bad for prospective mothers, who are very often ill-fed and ill-clad in addition to being ill-housed. This is just as important a matter as the giving of lectures.

Mr. Taylor: There is no provision on the Estimates for this.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member can say as much from his seat as he can when he is standing up, but I intend to express my opinion in spite of his interjections.

Mr. Taylor: I must consider myself squashed.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not only do people outback contribute directly to the maintenance of their hospitals, but they contribute very largely by indirect means, and by running entertainments and bazaars. I believe that certain institutions are solely maintained by the Government without any local effort being made for their upkeep.

Mr. Sampson: The position is unfair.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes.

Mr. Taylor: They are old-established institutions, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. I must protest against that kind of thing. At Meekatharra there is a hospital, but no other medical conveniences north of it nearer than

Port Hedland. The doctor visits Marble Bar weekly. When a serious accident occurs the patient is run straight into Meekatharra, sometimes as great a distance as 500 miles. Notwithstanding the splendid efforts of the local people to maintain the hospital, when they approach the Government for a slight increase in the subsidy they are turned down, because the money is wanted for the sole maintenance of the other institutions I have mentioned. The Government should change that policy, and ask every institution to make some local effort towards its maintenance. This could be arranged on a per capita basis. A town with a population of 5,000 could readily maintain a small hospital, but as things are very little is done. Evidently they got money from the Treasury in the early days, established themselves, and forced the Government to go on maintaining them to the detriment of other districts. Meekatharra has to supply the needs of people hundreds of miles away, but receives nothing in return. The Government should take into consideration the amount that is raised locally, and, when a little more assistance is asked for, should do their best to give it. I also wish to refer to the ramshackle building called the Wiluna Hospital. Like the school, this was damaged by the cyclone. Instead of reconstructing the female ward, the Government of the day divided the male ward into two wards. I have lately seen the alterations and renovations, and doubt if a health inspector in Perth would pass the building as a fit place to keep prize dogs in. I do not know what conception those responsible for the building have of the likes and dislikes of the outback people. Imagine a small room 20ft. by 12, with a partition three feet by two on top, and ordinary hessian hanging down, being used for patients of both sexes. There is no calomine or paint to be seen, and nothing is done to brighten up the wards. There is a female ward at one end of the room and a male ward at the other. The whole thing is damnable. Imagine any departmental authority thinking it was a fair thing to put female patients into a ward like that divided by a thin partition from the male ward. I cannot think that any official would like to see his mother or sister housed in such a building. I am sure the official who recommended the alteration would hold up his hands in horror if he were invited to send his sister there as a patient. Quite recently the matron gave up her own room to a female patient and slept outside herself, because she had too much womanly decency to ask the patient to put up with such accommodation. The position is scandalous, and is certainly not an inducement to people to remain outback. It is no wonder our citizens are continually coming to Perth, where people can demand so much more consideration, because of the influence they can bring to bear upon the Government. The building is not painted, and generally, patients should

not be asked to put up with such accommodation. With regard to the Wooroloo Sanatorium, I have nothing to say about the medical side of it. This State is fortunate in having so valuable an officer as Dr. Mitchell in charge of it. He is one of the ablest and most competent medical men in the State. I must also speak highly of his assistant. The entire medical staff is to be admired. The sisters work hard and are most efficient. I have, however, something to say about the food supplies. I have asked questions from time to time, concerning the supplies of meat, bread, and fish. I have also approached the Minister personally about the bread. I had his assurance that an investigation had been made and that there would be little doubt that black and sour bread would be abolished.

Mr. Chesson: The bread is good now.

Mr. MARSHALL: Last Sunday the only change in the bread was that it was not so black, but it was still sour.

Mr. Chesson: I thought the bread was all right.

Mr. MARSHALL: Three patients are buying their bread in Fremantle, because the bread at the institution is unpalatable. I do not know whether the manager or the secretary is responsible for answering questions asked in this House. I asked if the Honorary Minister knew that general dissatisfaction prevailed at the institution, and he replied that very few complaints had been made. General dissatisfaction undoubtedly exists in regard to the food supplies.

Mr. Teesdale: The food generally?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. The fish that reaches there is sometimes putrid.

Mr. Sampson: Have you seen any putrid fish there?

Mr. MARSHALL: I go there more often than the member for Swan, and have a perfect right to say what I see is going on there.

Mr. Taylor: All that militates against the management.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Honorary Minister has been misled and is still being misled in regard to the bread and fish supply at Wooroloo. Then, again, within the last few days the milking machines have been restored at the dairy and now milk is cut off the tables. The position is unfair.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The milking machines are going to remain, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not care whether the Minister puts in 100 milking machines; the only thing I am concerned about is the shortage of milk for the patients.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I was there on Monday last and they told me there was no shortage. The drop in the milk supplies is only five or six gallons a day.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister can get all the information he wants from the inmates.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I got it from a committee appointed by the men when I was up there.

Mr. MARSHALL: Last Sunday when I was at Wooroloo the milk had been taken from the tables. Another matter that the Minister can inquire into is that of the egg supply at the institution. There is an abundance of eggs at certain periods of the year and a smaller supply at others. This, of course, is hearsay, but the Minister may make inquiries as to the truth of what I am about to say. Fresh eggs come in daily, but they are not served out to the patients; pickled eggs are given to the patients and the fresh eggs are put in pickle.

Mr. Taylor: What is the advantage gained?

Mr. MARSHALL: That is what I want to know.

Mr. Sampson: Are you sure that is the position?

Mr. MARSHALL: I have been told it is so by more than one patient. I understand also that a big supply of fresh eggs is being sent from Wooroloo to other institutions.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Not one.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister, of course, will know whether what I am stating is correct. I am not prepared to back up that statement, but I do know that the bread, meat, and fish are not what they should be.

Mr. Taylor: They tender for the best meat.

Mr. MARSHALL: I asked the Minister to ascertain whether frozen meat was being supplied there.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The contract provides for a certain quantity of frozen meat being supplied.

Mr. MARSHALL: The reply to my question was that the price paid for meat was 8½d. Was that for frozen beef?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No, fresh meat.

Mr. MARSHALL: My object in obtaining all the information possible was for the purpose of getting at the possibility of slaughtering at the institution.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is not possible unless £2,500 is found.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not prepared to accept that as being absolutely correct. We are paying 8½d. for beef, and what are we getting for it. Not fresh beef. The Minister should have said that a certain quantity of beef was going in at a reduced price.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is not so.

Mr. MARSHALL: Certain patients are compelled to take the roughest part of the beast. No choice meat is going into the institution, but if the cattle were slaughtered there, the whole of the beast would be utilised, and the meat that cannot now be obtained would be available. There is plenty of land around the institution, and I should like to have expert advice as to whether or not it would be cheaper to collect stock from the Wooroloo side of Nor-

tham and slaughter it in the vicinity of the institution. In that way the patients would get the best parts of the beast.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They get the best now.

Mr. MARSHALL: Unless a keen eye is kept on the meat that goes into the institution, the contractor will send inferior stuff there. My knowledge of contractors of food supplies leads me to believe that that is not impossible. When we reach Item 17, "Secretary, £348," I shall move to reduce it by £1, as a protest against the class of food that is being supplied to patients. Some of the patients actually buy their own bread because that which is baked at the institution is not eatable. A baker is employed there all the year round and he has very little else to do but to bake bread. Yet bread shown to me when I was there the other day was black and sour. I protest against this treatment of the patients at Wooroloo; I place some of those unfortunate men on the same plane as a returned soldier. They have given their lives to an industry that has been responsible for a great deal of suffering and distress, and the ultimate end stares them in the face. I do not blame the Minister; I know he is sympathetic, and that he is familiar with the disease that compels many unfortunate people to end their days at the sanatorium. The Minister, however, has been misled or misinformed. I find from questions asked in the House that one cannot rely on getting a truthful reply. This is the second occasion on which replies given to me in this House were deliberate lies.

Mr. Teesdale: In this House?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; a reply from a departmental officer, written and signed by him. It is a pretty mess when members, asking for information, get from departmental officers, through the Minister, answers that are totally inaccurate. I am going to move to reduce the Estimates, because I have not had a truthful reply to my questions and the Minister is not getting the assistance that he should.

Mr. LAMOND (Pilbara) [10.30]: I want to draw the Minister's attention to a serious anomaly. For several months, from December of last year until March of this year, the Marble Bar hospital was left in charge of a Chinaman, the matron having gone away. The doctor attending that hospital lives at Hedland, 114 miles distant, and visits the hospital weekly. Because the matron was away, sick people had to go to Port Hedland. I want to draw attention to this in order that, when in future the matron leaves the hospital, somebody shall be told off to take her place.

Mr. NORTH (Claremont) [10.32]: There is certainly room for improvement in the way the department is handled. I propose to refer to three reforms that should be

brought about in the administration of the department. The first has to do with the question of sewerage. Some £2,000,000 has been spent on sewerage in the metropolitan area, and that applies to only 30,000 people, whereas the rest of the metropolitan area is still under the old pan system. The department are to blame to this extent, that they are permitting householders in the suburbs to instal septic tanks costing anything up to £100 or more. If the Health Department are anxious to have deep sewerage throughout the metropolitan area, they should prevent, or at all events limit, the installation of septic tanks. On the other hand, when a local authority wants to put in septic tanks throughout a suburb the Health Department will not approve of it. This inconsistency requires looking into. The department should decide once for all whether they endorse the pan system, or whether they propose to allow individual householders to set up septic tanks.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The department do not control the sewerage. They can only recommend.

Mr. NORTH: But they are neither condemning nor recommending the septic tanks.

The CHAIRMAN: This question can be more properly dealt with at a later stage.

Mr. NORTH: The second complaint I have to make has to do with ventilation. Air is very cheap, but in many shops and theatres in Perth there is hardly any ventilation at all. It is disgraceful. Under the Health Act the chief medical officer has full power to deal with the question. Occasionally we have epidemics of diseases such as influenza, one of the chief causes of which is bad ventilation; yet both in private houses and in shops ventilation is largely neglected. There the department should use their great powers. The third point concerns the notification and arrest of fatal diseases in their early stages. Probably very few know the symptoms of serious diseases such as cancer and tuberculosis, yet no steps are taken to publish the symptoms of those diseases. The average man, on being attacked, soon reaches a stage at which he has to go to a medical adviser, and so the ailment cannot be arrested, if at all, except at great expense. Thus, we get back to the old position of cure rather than prevention. It may be that these three points are not being dealt with by the department because experts and doctors differ. I do not believe that the department are unanimous as to what is the best and safest system of sewerage, or as to whether ventilation is of vital importance. Then again, there is uncertainty as to the validity of symptoms; unfortunately the symptoms of a bad cold, of influenza, and of typhoid, are practically the same. Perhaps it is because of that the department do not notify the public of the symptoms of dangerous diseases. These three matters could be attended to. Very

little cost would be involved as it would merely be a matter of disseminating the knowledge of our experts instead of keeping to themselves until too late.

Item, District Medical Officers and Physicians, £9,550:

Mr. SAMPSON: I should like an explanation as to why this item has been reduced by £314.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In administering the moneys available under this vote, the first consideration is to make funds available as far as possible in districts where, but for some subsidy, medical practitioners could not settle. To meet the needs of the new districts that are springing up from time to time, it becomes necessary frequently to revise the subsidies paid in some of the older districts, so that as medical practice in the older areas becomes more stable, subsidies can be reduced and the money diverted to the newer areas.

Item, Wooroloo Sanatorium, Chief Resident Medical Officer, £852:

Mr. SAMPSON: I have been informed that it is intended to remove from the sanatorium to the Old Men's Home a large number of the patients who are able to walk. Is that under consideration?

The Minister for Lands: That was done in your time.

Mr. SAMPSON: It was not.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: A week last Monday when I visited the sanatorium, the same question was asked me by at least half a dozen inmates. I do not know how the rumour got about. A week prior to that the secretary to the Health Department put in three days at Wooroloo carrying out his duties, and whether it was gleaned from some hint he dropped that some of the older patients were to be removed, I do not know. While I am administering the Health Department no man will be removed from the sanatorium to the Old Men's Home. If the necessity to remove some of the patients from Wooroloo arises it will be when we have another more suitable home in which to place them.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am glad to hear the Minister's statement. There are all the facilities at Wooroloo to give the patients the special treatment they require and to enable the staff to cope with all the problems.

Item, Wooroloo Sanatorium, secretary, £348:

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not wish to do an injustice to anyone, but I should like to know whether the secretary is the person who put up the answers to my questions recently. If so, I shall move to reduce his salary.

Mr. Wilson: The Minister is responsible.

Mr. MARSHALL: He refers the questions to departmental officers. If I were satisfied this man was responsible for the food supply at the sanatorium, I would move for a reduction of his salary.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The secretary at Wooroloo was not responsible for the answers.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have read the question and I consider the member for Murchison is justified in his objection. The Minister might have elaborated his answer and given it with more candour. The hon. member asked the price paid for meat supplied to the sanatorium, and the Minister replied by giving certain information.

The Premier: Did you put up all the answers to questions asked of you?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we did.

Mr. SAMPSON: I remember one answer that was not quite in order and I heard a little about it from the Premier and the Minister for Works. There was an absence of candour in the Honorary Minister's answer.

The Premier: Not on the part of the Honorary Minister.

Mr. SAMPSON: I refer to the answer to the question. It lacks candour.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: In what way?

The Minister for Lands: What is wrong with the answer?

Mr. SAMPSON: The member for Murchison is entitled to a full reply to his question.

The Premier: You gave some weird answers to questions that were asked of you.

Vote put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 5th November, 1924.

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

QUESTION—LAND. CONDITIONAL PURCHASE.

Hon. A. BURYILL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What is the largest area of first class conditional purchase land that can be held by one person? 2, What is the largest area of second class conditional purchase land that can be held by one person?