

Roads Board takes the whole of the traffic fees. Mr. Kempton suggests that instead of taking portion of the present traffic fees, the Government should introduce legislation to increase the traffic fees by 25 per cent., and that the Main Roads Board should benefit by the increase. That is what I understand him to mean. But, as some member interjected, motor vehicles, of the same type, which used the roads only occasionally, would have to pay just as much as motor vehicles which were constantly damaging the roads. To my mind, it would be a most unfair method of distributing the burden. The position is this: Money must be found to provide interest and sinking fund on the loans raised for road construction. Failure to realise this must mean that the general taxpayer will have to carry the burden in the end.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It seems always to fall upon him.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Sometimes he assists to bring the burden upon himself.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He is doing it now.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Very largely. I hope that members will not press amendments to this Bill. Nearly all that the Government propose has been rendered necessary for one reason or another. There was a public demand for the removal of Section 30 of the principal Act and its substitution by something more desirable. What has been done in that respect has been done with the concurrence of the executive committee of the Country Road Boards Association; except that the association agreed to 25 per cent. of the traffic fees going to the Main Roads Board. A select committee in another place recommended modifications which would have the effect of reducing the revenue of the Main Roads Board, and the Government accepted the recommendations; though it will mean a loss to the Treasury of approximately £10,000 a year, or £100,000 in ten years. There are other amendments necessary owing to the fact that the Main Roads Development Act, which was in operation when the original Act was passed, has lapsed and has been superseded by the Federal Aid Roads Act, necessitating some amendments to the principal Act which are provided in the Bill. There are a few other defects in the Act which require to be remedied. It is not contended that the Act will not stand further amendment. I have already indicated just the reverse. Many amendments are

needed, but they cannot be submitted this session. The Government are anxious to get the Bill through Parliament so that the Main Roads Board may know on what basis to make their assessments for this year. I trust, therefore, that the utmost expedition will be exercised in dealing with the Bill in Committee.

Hon. H. Seddon: Do you say the Government intend to bring down legislation to provide for a Commissioner?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That was one of the subjects down for consideration.

Hon. H. Seddon: Can you give us nothing further than that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. Cabinet has arrived at no decision yet.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 8.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 29th October, 1929.

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

QUESTION—JUNIPER TREES.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH, for Mr. Sampson, asked the Minister for Forests: In view of the good growth of juniper

trees in Perth, and the commercial value of juniper berries for distillation purposes, will he advise whether any attempt has been made by the Forests Department to cultivate these juniper trees, and, if not, whether he will arrange for steps to be taken to establish an experimental plot?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS replied: As the only juniper trees known to be growing in Perth are seedlings a few years old, it would appear premature to draw conclusions concerning commercial possibilities of the species. *Juniperus bermudiana* has been listed among the trees distributed from Hamel Nursery for some years past.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS AND MOTOR COMPETITION.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it intended to endeavour to control the motor-goods traffic to obviate competition with the railways? 2, If so what control will be exercised over motor passenger traffic? 3, If country traffic is to be controlled in the interests of the railways, what control will be exercised over metropolitan competitors?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The whole matter is under consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BRIDGE, FREMANTLE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Premier: Do the Government intend to make a start on the new Fremantle railway bridge during the present year?

The PREMIER replied: Plans and specifications and other necessary preliminaries cannot be completed in time to permit of the work being started during the current financial year.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKS', DISMISSALS.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works. 1, Is he aware that a number of men have been put off recently from the Fremantle Harbour Works, and that a further number are to be put off this week end? 2, If so, in view of the state of the labour

market, is there no way by which these can be kept going, and not be amongst the unemployed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Work will be put in hand to the full limit of the funds available.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BROAD GAUGE, KALGOORLIE-PERTH SURVEY.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: Has it been shown by the exploratory inquiry of the Engineer-in-Chief into the finding of an alternative route for the projected broad gauge railway along the line of the authorised Yarramony railway, and then down Avon Valley to Midland Eastward, that a cheaper and better graded line can be provided than at present running from Merredin to Perth via Northam and Midland Junction?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: A better graded line is possible, but not a cheaper one.

BILL—CREMATION.

Read a third time, on motion by Mr. North, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—MENTAL DEFICIENCY.

Reports of Committee adopted.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1929-30.

Message from the Governor received and read, transmitting the Loan Estimates for the year 1929-30 and recommending appropriation.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates; Mr. Angelo in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £239,598:

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.44]: Although the position regarding the raising of loan moneys is at present obscure, nevertheless there is need to bring forward immediately proposals for the current year's loan expenditure. It will be noticed that

the amount asked for is much smaller than that which was spent last year, the relative figures being—last financial year £4,372,269, the current year £3,773,286. The latter provision, however, includes the expenditure of £94,288 of last year from loan suspense, so that the amount actually asked for this year is £3,678,998. This reduction is brought about by the extremely difficult financial position existing both in Australia and in London. This also affects the loan expenditure for the whole of Australia, Commonwealth and States. I advised members fully on this subject during my Budget statement. For some time past it has been impossible to raise money in London, except at rates unacceptable to Australian borrowers. Various causes are responsible for this, more particularly the export of gold to the Continent and to America, consequent upon the high exchange rates between London and New York. Hopes were entertained that matters would improve; however, there is no sign of that happening in the near future, and it seems probable that an Australian loan may not be floated in London during the present calendar year. Our last loan was raised in April, 1928. In the meantime we have relied on bankers for overdrafts, both here and in London. In this regard all the States are in close touch with the Loan Council, which, in turn, is in touch with the banking institutions. Arrangements were proposed for the floating of a loan on the Australian market a little while ago, but this had to be suspended pending the Federal elections. In place of the proposed loan, short-dated Treasury bills have been issued by the Commonwealth Government to the banks to provide funds for the States pending a loan flotation. As the banks in London were carrying heavy overdraft accounts for almost all the States, the Commonwealth, as I have stated, issued Treasury bills in London for the amount of £5,000,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Covering the overdraft.

The PREMIER: That is so. The discount rate averaged £6 3s. and the currency was for 12 months. Those were the best terms obtainable. That amount, of course, was used, and is being used, to relieve the overdraft position in London. Our portion, as I think I have already informed the House, of that £5,000,000 was £684,967. Prior to that issue, our overdraft at the London and Westminster Bank reached

very substantial proportions, and amounted to £1,295,000 at the 30th June last.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And, naturally, it is much more since then.

The PREMIER: The position has been relieved by our share of the £5,000,000. Members know too, that on the 26th September the overdraft rate was increased from 5½ per cent. to 6½ per cent., which is a very serious increase to States operating on overdrafts. Fears that the rate would increase had been entertained for some time, and unfortunately those fears proved to be well-founded. In addition to our overdraft in London, on the 30th June we were indebted to the Commonwealth to the extent of £400,000 for temporary advances. Of course, those advances will have to be cleared from future loans. That was on the 30th June last, and to that amount has to be added £300,000 advanced since that date, making a total advance in Australia, to be cleared out of the next loan, £700,000. Once we clear our overdrafts in London, we can start again. That is the general method by which we do finance, but in the past it has not been carried to the extent it has been this year in Australia, although on many occasions we have reached the same amount of overdraft in London as we have at present. Our overdrafts there will be covered by the issue of a loan in London as soon as the market is favourable. So the Committee will recognise the extremely difficult position that has arisen in regard to finance generally. But this is not peculiar to Western Australia, as all the States, and indeed the Commonwealth also, are similarly situated. This year's estimated expenditure under the various heads, in comparison with last year's actual expenditure, may be summarised here, and if members will follow the figures they will note the substantial reduction in most of the different divisions, as compared with the actual expenditure of last year:—

	This year.	Last year.
	£	£
Departmental	238,598	211,150
Railways, etc.	950,247	845,647
Harbours and Rivers ..	208,002	255,460
Water Supply	444,009	540,648
Development of Goldfields ..	77,400	78,234
Development of Agriculture	1,369,530	1,791,990
Roads and Bridges, etc. ..	452,000	520,057
Other	33,500	129,083
	£3,773,286	£4,372,269

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is a big reduction under the heading "Development of Agriculture."

The PREMIER: There seems to be a great reduction there, but it is largely made up of a reduced amount required for group settlement. In the aggregate, we have an estimated expenditure this year of £3,773,286 as against the actual expenditure last year of £4,372,269, showing a decrease of £598,983. As I have already stated, this year's estimated expenditure includes £94,288 spent last year from Loan Suspense Account. It will be noticed that there is an increase under the head of Departmental. This is mainly due to the increased operations of the Main Roads Board. Other large works are contemplated by the Water Supply Department and the Public Works Department in the near future, and although they are not actually in hand, much preliminary work is necessary, which entails expenditure. However, the charges under this head are allocated direct where possible, and if the works proposed are not gone on with, the expenditure will be correspondingly reduced. Rather more is required this year under the heading of Railways and Tramways than was actually spent last year. This year's expenditure is estimated at £950,247, as against the actual expenditure of £845,647 last year. It has been necessary to increase the provision under Additions and Improvements to Opened Railways, the amount there being £180,000. The same applies to Rolling Stock, £160,000. But as members will know, much more could have been profitably spent in this direction had the money been available. The railway traffic is steadily growing, and as it becomes greater and more lines are opened up it naturally follows that improvements such as regrading, relaying with heavier rails, etc., must be continually carried on. And from year to year, of course, the rolling stock has to be increased. It is proposed this year to build a further large number of wagons, 10 locomotives and a further number of tarpaulins, and to instal electric headlights on existing locomotives. Railways that were under construction on the 30th June will require money, the Bridgetown-Jarnadup extension, £90,000; the Kulja Eastward extension, £60,000; and the Meekatharra-Wiluna line, £130,000. Smaller amounts are provided for clearing outstanding accounts on several other lines that were completed

last year. In addition to the expenditure on lines under construction, £125,000 is required to meet the cost of rails and fastenings, while £35,000 has been provided for water supplies and surveys of new lines. If funds permit, during the year work will be put in hand on other lines already authorised, but it is impossible to make any definite statement in that regard at the present time. It all depends on whether the financial position will cease as the year advances, or whether it will remain unfavourable, as it has been during the current year. Members will find £30,000 set down for Tramways, to cover the cost of short duplications of existing lines, minor extensions, and additional cars. No new tramway lines are proposed for this year. But the traffic is increasing considerably and a number of new cars are urgently required. I am asking for £50,000 for the extension of the power house. This covers principally extensions and duplications of mains, substations and additions to plant. It is continually being impressed upon me that further heavy expenditure must be incurred in the near future for another unit. We are bound by our contract with the City Council to supply all the electric current they require, and as their demands increase we must look ahead and make provision to cope with them.

Mr. Mann: Are you showing a profit on those figures?

The PREMIER: We are showing a small profit, not on those figures, but on the whole lot. I should hesitate to say we are showing a profit on our contract with the City Council.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are losing on that.

The PREMIER: I have said I should hesitate to say we are showing a profit on it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a very foolish contract to have made.

The PREMIER: I should not say it was a very wise one, or not from the Government point of view at any rate. I do not know how the City Council would view it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: At all events, we took their blessed trams from them, so I suppose they would say we are quits.

The PREMIER: I do not know that the trams have brought us much profit, anyway. But there it is: Looking back upon it, perhaps we are met with the old saying that it is easy to be wise after the event.

Mr. Latham: It would have been all right, but for the war.

The PREMIER: Maybe that is so. But we are free to admit it was a mistake not to make provision for possible eventualities.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: As, for instance, the increase in the price of coal.

The PREMIER: It is not safe to assume that existing conditions will continue without alteration for a period of 40 years. To do so is to take rather a risk. At the time the contract was made, the price of coal and other costs were very low and so the result was that a contract was made in which, as events have since proved, the city council got the better of the deal. I was hoping that the city fathers would see the equity of not holding the Government to the contract.

Hon. G. Taylor: Or that they would vary the agreement.

The PREMIER: Viewing it from the moral aspect—

Mr. Mann: I think they are giving the people the benefit. They are not making a high charge for current.

The Minister for Railways: They are making a profit of £25,000 a year.

The PREMIER: I am under the impression that the city council's charges are sufficient to show a substantial profit.

Mr. Lambert: There is no reason why the rest of the State should pay for the ratepayers of the metropolitan area.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have made a profit out of the water, at any rate.

The PREMIER: Only during the last few years. For a number of years the ratepayers of the metropolitan area were indebted to the taxpayers of the State with regard to the expenditure on the metropolitan water supply.

Hon. G. Taylor: It strikes me they will remain in their debt, too.

The PREMIER: Yes, unless we can take a bit from them to make up for the deficits in years gone by. However, the metropolitan ratepayers would probably argue that there are many other undertakings in the State serving only a section of the people. The people who are served by those undertakings frequently demand that they should be nationalised, and that the expenditure should be spread over the whole of the people of the State, although the work serves only a section of the people. Perhaps the ratepayers of the metropolitan area take that view regarding their water scheme.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: With one thing and another, it just about balances.

The PREMIER: I suppose so. We lose on one undertaking and show a profit on another, and on the whole these undertakings just about balance. Still, there is no question regarding our liability for the future extension of electric power.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is the trouble.

Mr. Latham: We ought to investigate the proposed Collie scheme.

The PREMIER: I think the Collie scheme is hopelessly impracticable at the present time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What has the member for Collie to say to that?

The PREMIER: Perhaps I should not have said that because I intend to go to Collie on Monday next. It was rather a lapse on my part to make that remark, but I hope the Press will be kind, seeing that I am going right down amongst the enemy, so to speak.

Mr. Wilson: Not at all.

The PREMIER: I am merely referring to that particular contention.

Mr. Wilson: A scheme is being built there now.

The PREMIER: That is so, and doubtless it will be extended. We are not able to take the stand of refusing to increase the output of current. As building operations in the metropolitan area continue rapidly to extend, as they are doing, an increase of consumers follows. The demands of the tramways for power are also increasing, because of the extensions and duplications and the greater volume of business being done by that department.

The Minister for Railways: Current is required for irrigation works, too.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are not increasing so much.

The Minister for Railways: There are big demands for power for that purpose.

The PREMIER: Slightly less is allowed this year for harbours and rivers than was spent last year, but the expenditure will be along practically the same lines.

Mr. Latham: Is anything additional to be done at Fremantle?

The PREMIER: Nothing additional to the heavy works that have been in hand for some years past. They will be continued.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: In the Old Country authorities have been building har-

hours for 200 years without ceasing, and our experience will be the same.

The PREMIER: If the State continues to develop, there will not be any cessation of the demand for harbour extensions and improvements.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There never is.

The PREMIER: No, we shall have to continue an annual programme to meet the needs of a developing State.

Mr. Withers: That means all harbours.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is the experience the world over.

The PREMIER: It is, and when we shall have reached a stage that it is no longer necessary to increase harbour accommodation and facilities, we shall have ceased to develop as a State. While we are able to build several hundred miles of railway year by year and open up new country, the volume of trade to our ports must increase, and that in turn entails additional work and expenditure on harbour improvements.

Mr. Barnard: What about Busselton?

The PREMIER: All the work at Bunbury was done years ago. The people there have been very fortunate.

Mr. Barnard: I mean Busselton.

The PREMIER: If we keep on extending the Busselton jetty, I am afraid we shall encroach on the track of ocean-going vessels passing along the coast.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will require a light-house on the end of it.

The PREMIER: Those vessels cannot be expected to keep more than 10 or 15 miles from the land, and the Busselton jetty is stretching out towards that distance now. However, the Busselton jetty will be extended—

Mr. Barnard: Thank you.

The PREMIER: —as requirements make extension necessary.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What about the straight line to Esperance?

The PREMIER: It will be noted—and this will interest the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale)—that, as promised, provision has been made in a special item for the initial work on the Point Phillip jetty, £15,000. The estimated cost of the work is £77,000 exclusive of the road. The road is expected to cost £26,000, making a total of £103,000 for the jetty and road.

Mr. Lambert: That could stand over for a few years.

The PREMIER: The construction of the work is estimated to occupy 2½ years, so the expenditure will be spread over that period. Financial reasons are responsible for a slightly smaller amount being allowed than was spent last year at Geraldton, £75,000 as compared with £91,983. Should the financial position improve, the work will be pushed on vigorously. At Fremantle the present reorganisation of wharves, sheds and roadways is being continued. Further minor works are provided for in the North-West, at Bunbury, and in a general way, while an additional dredge, purchased in Holland last year for the Swan River, is being assembled and will be completed. I have unfortunately been forced to reduce the departments' estimates for water supplies. For the metropolitan area £190,000 is required for extensions of the water supply and £110,000 for sewerage and drainage. The water supply work includes the supply and laying of pipes to the new dam site at Canning and a road and various large arterial mains and extensions, but no provision is made for any actual work on the reservoir itself. The sewerage and drainage work covers an extension of the system in Perth, North Perth, Fremantle and Nedlands, and drainage at Subiaco, Smith's Lake and Fremantle. The country water supply policy carried out during the last few years is being continued so far as funds will permit. A sum of £100,000 is provided for supplies in the agricultural areas, £9,000 for stock routes, £9,000 for country towns' supplies, and £23,000 for the goldfields water supply, which also serves the agricultural area. A very large amount has been spent during the last few years on country water supplies. The reduction in the amount provided under the heading of Development of Agriculture, £3,309,600, is due principally to the curtailment of expenditure on group settlements, while the Agricultural Bank authorities hope to be able to finance a somewhat larger portion of their advances from their own resources. This to a large extent is dependent on the result of the season. There is also a smaller amount required for advances to soldier settlers, £70,000. Those settlers are gradually reaching the total amount of their approved loans, and so the sum required is a decreasing one. The substantial sum of £75,000 is set down for drainage and roads in group areas, to be carried out by the Public Works Department. Practically the same amount is provided for pine planting

as was expended last year, namely £10,000. For roads and bridges I am providing a total amount of £365,000. This represents expenditure by the Main Roads Board almost wholly on works coming under the Federal aid roads scheme. In addition, £40,000 is provided on the Revenue Estimates for the same purpose. A sum of £75,000 is provided for public buildings, this being a reduction of £8,296 as compared with last year's expenditure. The head office of the State Savings Bank will be commenced during the present financial year. It has not been possible to provide this year from our own resources additional capital for the Workers' Homes Board, but funds are being found under the Commonwealth Housing Act that should meet the demand for houses this year. It will provide also for the erection of a greater number of houses than the State has been able to build in the past. As a matter of fact, the amount allowed by the Commonwealth for this year is £100,000. The Commonwealth Government also have been forced by the financial situation seriously to curtail their expenditure on soldier's homes, and this has somewhat embarrassed the Workers' Homes Board. The amount provided for soldiers' homes this year is £137,000 as against £294,795 spent last year. That is a very heavy reduction. I know that the board for some time past have been endeavouring to obtain a larger amount, but the Commonwealth Government like ourselves, have been unable to find the money. Further small provision has been made for the Pardelup prison farm, the aborigines stations, and country hospitals. Small increases of capital for the various trading concerns have also been found necessary. These are really of a minor nature only, and are inseparable from concerns such as these. Last year's expenditure was £4,372,269 as compared with the estimated expenditure of £4,817,200. It will be noted again as a result of last year's operations, the same as in previous years, that whilst complaint is sometimes made as to the Loan Estimates being so very high, invariably the estimated expenditure is not reached. Here we have a saving in expenditure of roughly £450,000 compared with the estimate. I am afraid that with the reduced amount that will be available this year we shall be forced to go right up to the limit of the amount forthcoming for the estimated expenditure this year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you can get the money.

The PREMIER: That is, of course, quite uncertain. If the position should not improve, or should become worse, the estimates of expenditure this year will necessarily be considerably astray. The position depends upon the money being available. A large amount of work was carried out last year, the figures being, under the various headings:—

	£
Departmental	211,150
Railways, etc.	845,647
Harbours and Rivers	255,160
Water Supply and Sewerage ..	540,648
Development of Goldfields ..	78,234
Development of Agriculture ..	1,791,990
Roads and Bridges, etc.	520,057
Other	129,083
	<hr/>
	£4,372,269

The expenditure on railways, £845,647, although substantial, was slightly less than it was in the previous year, namely, £918,308. Several railway lines which were in hand at the commencement of the year were completed, namely, the Albany-Denmark extension; the Ejanding-northward; and the Nalkalling-Bullfinch; whilst the Meekatharra-Wiluna line and Bridgetown-Jarnadup extension were put in hand. Purchases of rails and fastenings have naturally been heavy with so much construction and relaying going on. These amounted to £139,423 last year, and £161,238 in the previous year. It is expected that a further £125,000 will be spent this year. Rolling stock was another large source of expenditure. Under this heading we expended £140,499, a sum slightly less than the previous year. The work turned out consisted mainly of trucks, locomotives, etc., including five locomotives, 213 wagons and 11 coaches. Only a small amount of work was done in connection with tramways, but £47,566 was required for electricity supply, this being slightly less than the sum spent in the previous year. Extensions will be required this year, and in future years as well. Taking things as a whole, it is gratifying to know that there is a small profit after meeting all charges. That is particularly gratifying in view of the low rate for electricity that is paid by the City Council. With regard to harbours and rivers, the expenditure was slightly increased, namely, from £233,357 in the previous year to £255,460. No new works of

any consequence were undertaken, and the Fremantle and Geraldton harbours, where work is going on, accounted for the bulk of the expenditure. On water supplies and sewerage, £540,648 was spent, this being £9,000 below the previous year's total. Of this, country water supplies absorbed £292,877, and metropolitan water supply and sewerage absorbed £247,771. Extensive works were carried out in country districts, such as the Numer Water Supply Scheme, which we opened on Saturday last. The outlay has been £142,883. Other expenditure was, at Elandring £8,171 and Narembreen £9,077. That was one of the big items of expenditure last year on country water supplies. In the Southern Cross district £32,664 was expended besides the expenditure on a large number of less important works.

Mr. Lambert: I hope more will be spent there.

The PREMIER: The metropolitan water supply required £107,158, compared with £199,465 in the previous year; and sewerage and drainage accounted for a further £140,613. The completion of the Churchman's Brook dam and the laying of large arterial mains in the suburbs absorbed the bulk of expenditure on water supplies. The Subiaco sewerage scheme was completed. Further work was put in hand at Nedlands, North Perth, Fremantle and Perth, and the storm water drainage at Fremantle and Subiaco was undertaken. The provision of water supplies and sewerage in the metropolitan area is an annual expenditure, just as is the case with electricity and tramways. As the city and suburbs grow, so shall we be called upon to provide money for these purposes each year. The expenditure on the development of goldfields was practically the same as in the previous year. As usual the development of agriculture has demanded a large proportion of the loan money, namely, £1,791,990 out of the total expenditure of £4,372,269. It must not be thought that this comprises the whole of our outlay on the development of agriculture. There is a large expenditure of money in many other directions which might well come under that heading, particularly water supplies and railways. The sum of £704,445 was expended in providing additional capital for the Agricultural Bank, compared with £221,171 in the previous year, soldier settlement £116,914, and

the Industries Assistance Board £71,038. Soldier settlement, as I have mentioned, is gradually declining. It is interesting to note that the total expenditure in this direction up to the 30th June last was no less than £7,868,620.

Mr. Latham: That is not the amount owing, is it?

The PREMIER: Of course not. That is the expenditure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would cover the purchase of land, etc.

The PREMIER: Yes. Of this sum £5,463,782 was provided by the Commonwealth Government. Apart from that the substantial sum of about £2,400,000 was found by the State.

Mr. Latham: I saw that you were likely to get £2,000,000 to make good the losses.

The PREMIER: I wish it were true. The matter was investigated by a Federal judge some time ago.

Mr. Latham: It looks as if you were entitled to it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have had 1½ millions.

The PREMIER: He reported that the position in Western Australia in the matter of losses was better than in any other State. Particularly heavy losses were incurred by Victoria and New South Wales. On the whole, our soldier settlement scheme has worked out better, with fewer losses and more success, than any similar scheme undertaken anywhere else in Australia.

Mr. Latham: I wonder how those losses were made up?

The PREMIER: The number of soldier settlers to the 30th June last was 3,611. That is a very substantial number. The group settlement expenditure last year totalled £739,971, as against £1,090,349 in the previous year. That is a very substantial reduction. A further reduction is expected to be disclosed this year. The total expenditure on the groups has been very heavy, namely, £7,107,182. Unfortunately we know that a considerable proportion of this must be written off.

Mr. Latham: It is nearly as successful as the soldier settlement scheme.

The PREMIER: Against this we have reserves built up amounting to £711,505. There are at present 1,700 group settlers. On roads we have spent £334,752 in addition to £222,028 provided by the Commonwealth under the Federal Aid Roads Act,

£83,296 on buildings, and £36,666 on various trading concerns. An advance of £92,417 was made to the metropolitan market trust for the establishment of markets. Further small advances for the same purpose will be required from time to time as minor additional buildings become necessary. Members will be glad to know, seeing that this is a new venture, that the markets will pay all expenses from the opening, and will not be a burden, I think, upon the State finances to the extent of one shilling. I think I can claim that the expenditure for the year was thoroughly justified. The great bulk of it was on the development of our primary industries, and the portion that was spent in the metropolitan area was on essential services to which I have referred, and which are all paying their way. Care will have to be exercised with regard to expenditure during the present year because of the financial stringency which has already been alluded to in this House and out of it. If the position does not improve, especially on the London money market, we shall find very great difficulty in obtaining sufficient money to carry on the programme of works we have in hand, and which I think is allowed by all sections of the House to be necessary. Certainly the reduction in the amount this year as against what has been available for some years past has been considerable, and will entail a reduced programme of expenditure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: These are the first fruits of being linked up with the gentlemen of the East.

The PREMIER: That may be so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is.

The PREMIER: It may not do any harm to this State to have a little enforced economy in the expenditure of loan money. It will no doubt be a difficult period for ourselves and the people of the State, but it should bring an advantage to posterity in the way of reduced interest charges.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why not make it a bit lower then, if it is a good thing?

The PREMIER: I do not desire to make it lower, unless we are forced to do so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is no excuse for this blessed thing.

The PREMIER: It is a bit late now to discuss that phase.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes.

The PREMIER: We know that with regard to the Financial Agreement, the Leader

of the Opposition is like the mother who said that the regiment was out of step with Patsy!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There were 60,000 with me against the agreement, and 80,000 for it.

The PREMIER: I thought the difference was much more than that.

Hon. G. Taylor: At any rate the 60,000 wise people were with us.

The PREMIER: History may prove what would have been in the best interests of the State.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We had 60,000 workers with us.

The PREMIER: The hon. member would not suggest that the 80,000 with me were all loafers! If they were, I do not know how we could get ahead with our production. It may be that time will prove the minority to have been right and the majority wrong.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is proved now.

The PREMIER: No, it is too early yet. It would be impossible to say at this stage, after the agreement has been in operation for one year.

Mr. Teesdale: London does not agree with my chief!

The PREMIER: If the majority prove to be wrong, it will not be the first time in history that such a position has arisen. When I sat in Opposition, I considered on many occasions that the majority were wrong.

Mr. Lindsay: That is certainly the position now.

The PREMIER: Not at all. I have indicated the position we have to deal with at present, and our latest advices from London show that the market has not improved. About three months ago we were told that by the end of this month the market would probably be in a favourable condition, but the position now has not altered from what it was then. I do not know that the outlook will be at all good for the immediate future.

Mr. Teesdale: England got a bit back from America during the recent slump.

The PREMIER: Perhaps so. The position at the moment is more difficult in Australia than in London, because the Treasury bonds for £5,000,000 enabled the States to reduce their overdrafts and to continue for some months. We cannot bring money from the Old Country at present, and so the position is rather difficult in Australia just now. It was the intention of the Commonwealth Government on the eve of the Federal elections to raise a loan in Australia, but

that has been delayed because of the elections. No doubt the new Federal Government will deal with that proposal, and the decision of their predecessors in office to go on the money market in Australia will no doubt be followed up. We can hope only for the best and carry on as we have been doing, in the expectation of an improvement in the near future. We shall be obliged to exercise the strictest economy in connection with expenditure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have heard that before.

Progress reported.

BILL—TREASURY BILLS.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 24th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.35]: The Bill merely makes the amount of the mortgage the limit of the overdraft in future. The Act provides that the possessions of a man who secures an advance become the security for that advance, but some of the settlers have capitalised their accounts. I do not know what advantage they gained from that, because they owed the same amount to the same people in just the same way. Settlers urged that they should be allowed to capitalise their accounts, and that was agreed to. Having done that, they had finished with the Industries Assistance Board, but the seasons had not finished with them, and it became necessary for those settlers to receive further assistance. Change does not always make for improvement, and this change did not make for improvement in connection with the Industries Assistance Board. To get over that difficulty, the Minister now asks Parliament to agree that the amount mentioned in the mortgage shall be the limit. A settler may have repaid portion of the money he secured, and if it is below the amount of the mortgage, because of the repayment, the Bill will permit the trustees to make further advances to that settler. I have no objection to offer to that. I know it is necessary, and I believe the trustees will exercise proper care. It would have

been better if the settlers could have been replaced under the Industries Assistance Board as they were before they made the change over to a fixed mortgage. I am aware that such a course would be difficult now. I do not oppose the second reading of the Bill, because I know it will be necessary to help the settlers in some instances and the Minister believes this is the best means by which that can be done.

The Minister for Lands: I am guided by the trustees, but I think this is the best means, for many reasons.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, I do not propose to object to it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 24th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.42]: In one sense the Bill proposes to do what was done under the Industries Assistance Bill. It provides for a limitation to be fixed in certain circumstances. Under the Agricultural Bank Act advances are made for work to be done, and the payments can only be made if the work is done or some purchase is made of stock or machinery. Under the amendment embodied in the Bill we now propose to fix a limit, but to allow the board to exercise greater powers than in the past. It means that the bank can make advances to the extent of repayments. That is really what we agreed to under the Bill that has just been disposed of. The mortgage there represented the limit and in this Bill repayments made may be further advanced under such conditions as the Agricultural Bank trustees may impose. I do not know that we need oppose that amendment. In my opinion, it would have been better if we had retained the Agricultural Bank as an institution for long-term advances for improvements. Repayments under the Act are spread over 30 years. The advances are for improvements,

many of which do not yield a quick return. The Industries Assistance Board was really a cropping bank, and it was supposed to be in the position of a bank making short-term advances, with repayments to be made each year. For some time no new accounts have been accepted by the Industries Assistance Board, and I presume the trustees think that, with the amendment to the Agricultural Bank Act, they may be able to render the financial assistance that is necessary in some circumstances, thus doing away with the need for the Industries Assistance Act from that point of view. I shall not object to that. There is one point that requires some consideration. One clause of the Bill is framed for the purpose of increasing the fees payable to the trustees from three guineas per sitting to four guineas. The trustees control a tremendous amount of money and the fees they receive are not large. The total fees for the year that the trustees may receive are fixed at 250 guineas. If the Minister looks into it, he will see that even with the increased fees per sitting, the total amount the trustees could receive would be £210. We fix the limit at 250 guineas and then, in stating the fees payable per sitting, make it impossible for them to receive that amount. Either we should alter the limit to the fees payable, or else increase the fees per sitting so that the limit may be payable. Obviously it is not right to say to the trustees that they can receive 250 guineas for the work they do, and then fix the sitting fees at a figure that makes it impossible for them to receive that amount.

The Minister for Lands: I realise the position. This was their own suggestion. Personally, I do not think the trustees are paid enough.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the Minister will agree to increasing the amount to five guineas, and to allow the maximum of 250 guineas to remain. I think 250 guineas is the least that ought to be paid. If we say 250 guineas, it does not sound much, but if we say five guineas it sounds a lot. The trustees will continue to do good work; of that there is no doubt, even if they have to sit a day or two more. But the Minister knows it is hardly likely they will be needed for more than one day a week, because the sittings of the trustees interfere with the work of the bank. I cannot move an amendment but I hope the Minister will do so. I support the second reading of the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet—in reply) [5.47]: I am agreeable to carrying out the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition. On making comparisons with work carried out by other institutions, I know that the payment made to the trustees of the Agricultural Bank is small. I know also that the gentlemen who carry out these duties are not able to follow any other occupation, and it is work that cannot be carried out by gentlemen who have other duties to attend to because it would interfere with those duties. There is a great amount of detail work to be done. When the Bill is in Committee, I shall move to amend the Bill in the direction suggested.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendments of Sections 2 and 10 of No. 15 of 1906:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 "four" be struck out, and "five" inserted in lieu.

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

Clause 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1929-30.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from 24th October; Mr. Angelo in the Chair.

Votes—Agriculture £90,522, College of Agriculture £10,330—agreed to.

Department of the Minister for Police (Hon. H. Millington. Minister).

Votes—Police, £251,110

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I should like to know from the Minister whether contributions are still being paid towards the cost of the police who are in charge of gold stealing on the goldfields

The Minister for Police: Yes; I replied the other day to a question that was asked on that subject.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What I desire to know is whether the amount will be paid for this year.

The Minister for Police: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Is it the intention of the Government to bring down a Bill to amend the Police Act this year.

The Minister for Police: No.

Mr. MANN: Since the Point Heathcote home has been opened, mentally afflicted people who are brought to the city from the country are taken to the Roe-street lock-up and detained there for periods from one night to four or five days. There is no reasonable accommodation at the lock-up for cases of that kind. I understand that the Point Heathcote institution is full and as there is no longer any accommodation at the Perth Hospital, the patients are detained at the Perth lock-up.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is where they were taken before the ward was opened at the hospital.

Mr. MANN: The position is worse now. Previously they were taken to the lock-up, where they were detained for a few hours before being removed to the ward at the hospital. There being no room at Point Heathcote, the patients are kept at the lock-up.

Mr. Latham: What happens to them afterwards?

Mr. MANN: After being examined, probably they are sent to Claremont, but the trouble is that that takes days. Is it the intention of the department to keep the mental patients at the lock-up? If so, proper cells should be provided. At the present time there is no such accommodation and a tragedy will occur sooner or later if the present system is continued.

Hon. G. Taylor: I thought that Point Heathcote was to take the place of the ward at the hospital.

Mr. MANN: Point Heathcote is a considerable distance from the city, and, moreover, I understand the place is full. There is no accommodation there for patients coming to the city under escort and so they are lodged in the lock-up.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What was done before?

Mr. MANN: They were taken to the Perth Hospital and, although the ward there did not provide the best possible accommodation for such patients, that accommodation was better than that existing at the lock-up. I do not know whether the Minister is aware that this condition of affairs prevails, and so I take this opportunity to tell him that if the system is to be continued he should make provision for the mentally afflicted at Roe-street. There should be properly equipped cells so that the patients could receive the care to which they were entitled. The officials are doing their best and they have not the means to do more.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I understood that the institution referred to by the member for Perth was to take place of certain wards at the Perth Hospital; that, in fact, the institution would be a reception hospital. Apparently, however, instead of Point Heathcote being of greater assistance to a most unfortunate section of the community, it affords worse accommodation than that previously furnished. Originally, Ward 12 of the Perth Hospital was set apart to receive mental patients, instead of the Perth lock-up being used for that purpose. That after the heavy expenditure at Point Heathcote we again find ourselves in the position that obtained 15 or 16 years ago is deplorable—I am assuming that the information of the member for Perth is correct. If the Minister is not aware of the position, he should be aware of it. That a large sum of money should have been spent at Point Heathcote fruitlessly is most unsatisfactory. Unfortunate patients are being placed in the lock-up under the supervision of a police constable—a most unhappy state of affairs.

Mr. LATHAM: Many of these patients are brought down from the country, and the Government should see that they receive proper medical attention, which cannot be given them at the Perth lock-up. There is something seriously wrong with the reception home built by the State if it is overcrowded.

The Minister for Police: This refers to persons who have not been certified.

Mr. LATHAM: Such persons should not be kept for days at the lock-up. I hope the Minister will do something more than merely promise to inquire into the matter. The Committee should receive his assurance that he will prevent such things taking place. If additional accommodation is needed at

the reception home, it should be built. The Perth Hospital is not the place for such patients.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The matter is not one that this Chamber can adjust. It must be left to the Minister to attend to. If Point Heathcote is already filled and we are back to a position worse than that which existed prior to the building of that institution, it is most unfortunate. If the number of patients has so increased as to produce the present position, we will not blame the Minister; but we shall blame him if he does not take steps to remedy the evil.

The PREMIER: The Government should not be called upon to spend any more money for patients of this kind. I do not feel inclined to approve of any expenditure for creating further accommodation at the lock-up. A very large sum of money has been spent at Point Heathcote, and the maintenance of the institution costs a good deal every year. Prior to the building of the Point Heathcote hospital, patients had to stay at the Perth hospital, which had accommodation for only six or seven of them. After a few days such patients mostly went to Claremont. At Point Heathcote there is accommodation for 40 patients. If the institution does not provide accommodation for these patients, something is seriously wrong.

Hon. G. Taylor: Point Heathcote has become something more than just a reception home.

The PREMIER: Yes, and that aspect will have to be investigated. I understand patients are kept at Point Heathcote for as long as six months. It is a question whether they should not be certified earlier, so as to make room for other cases. Another question is whether the Point Heathcote institution is being used for the purpose for which it was built. There will be no more expenditure in this connection so far as I am concerned.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Premier has laid his finger on the fault; patients are kept too long at Point Heathcote. Apparently the matter is one of administration. There is a desire on the part of the authorities not to sign up patients, but rather to keep them under observation as long as possible.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Does the Minister propose to deal with the betting laws during this session? It is time that members of Parliament realised the existing position and

were brave enough to express their opinions on the subject. If it is right to bet on a racecourse, betting in other places should be right. I fail to see why the Government should not legalise betting in towns.

The Premier: This has nothing to do with the Police Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the member for Nelson is now trenching on suggested legislation. He cannot do that on the Estimates.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister for Police administers the betting laws. Is it right to harass people betting in shops or in the street, while other people are allowed to bet freely elsewhere? Will the Government license betting in shops, or give the people the right to bet in the streets? Do the Government intend to impose a betting tax such as exists in other countries?

The Premier: No.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is time this Chamber did something in the matter. We frequently read accounts of police raids on betting shops, and of people being arrested for obstructing the traffic.

The Premier: The Minister for Police does not instruct the police in their duties.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But surely he controls the police. Why should some people be allowed to do illegal acts? Men who have been harassed by the police continue, after having been caught, to bet, being allowed a run of perhaps a few months, when the police think it time to raid them again. Betting shops should be licensed, and betting in them should be permitted as it is permitted on the racecourse.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The only explanation I have to offer is that the Minister is endeavouring to ensure that the law is observed.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The police are not ensuring observance of the law. In some places people can bet to their hearts' content, the police either not seeing them or not wanting to see them. In other cases the police are sharp and quick to detect gambling. The law should be applied to both sets of persons. As to the doings of racing clubs and trotting clubs, the police shut their eyes. If the collection of a betting tax makes betting legal, I am not aware of it. The totalisator is legal. A racing club can issue licenses to bookmakers to carry on their business, while the promoter of a cycling, pedestrian or whippet meeting can-

not permit bookmakers to ply their calling. I suggest that the police enforce the law without respect of persons. If betting is wrong, the police should stop it in all places. The man who is not prepared to sacrifice half a day's work in order to visit a racecourse, should be permitted to have a couple of shillings on his fancy. But in his case the police show great activity.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Before tea I was saying it is remarkable how the police administer some of our laws. While a big man, who can afford to go in his motor car to the races and lose half a day or a day, is allowed to bet unchallenged, it is a horse of another colour if a working man, who cannot afford to lose time in going to the races, wants to bet at a cycling or a pedestrian meeting. We have the authorities behind the proprietary racehorses putting their heads together to prevent the people outside obtaining any information, and on the other hand we have the police apparently doubling their efforts to prevent those outside having a bet. On the one hand, there are the race clubs trying to suppress information so that people cannot bet unless they go to the racecourse, and on the other we have the police prosecuting the people outside for doing something which the people inside the racecourse are permitted to do.

Mr. Davy: It is said that a man cannot leave the racecourse to go to a telephone.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We have the racing clubs withholding information from those outside, and the police prosecuting those outside who want to bet. If we pick up the newspaper on a Monday or a Tuesday we see broadcast something to this effect: "We are pleased to announce that, owing to the efforts of the police last Saturday in suppressing street betting, and to the efforts of the club to prevent information getting out, 2,000 additional people attended the races." That is driving the people to the racecourses. If a man wants a bet of a couple of shillings, he has to go to the racecourse, or alternatively take the chance of being imprisoned for betting outside the course. The time has arrived when some fairer method should be

adopted. If we are to penalise the man outside—I do not care which way it is nor who is penalised, so long as it is fair to both those outside and those inside the racecourse—certainly if we penalise the man outside, we ought also to prevent those within the enclosure from betting. The Stamp Act allows the Government to collect penny tickets from the bookmakers. But that does not legalise bookmaking, and more than Tattersalls has been legalised by the imposition of a duty on prizes. It is more legal now than it was before. If the police are going to allow bookmakers to operate on a racecourse, they should allow them also to operate at cycle or pedestrian meetings.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is the position any worse now than it has been for years past?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, during the last couple of years the police have doubled their efforts outside the racecourse, but have closed their eyes to what is going on within the enclosure. I attended a sports meeting and saw a man with notebook and pencil in his hand. I did not actually know that he was taking bets, but I surmised that he was doing so. The police approached him and told him to put away the book if he did not want trouble. In certain parts of the State there are heli-whippet meetings, where bookmakers are allowed to operate, but in other parts of the State it would be a crime. Of course the Minister cannot direct the police, but it is within his power to call for a report from the Commissioner showing why the law is being administered in so lopsided fashion. I hope this will be done.

Mr. NORTH: I want to raise the question of the Dillon case. The Minister promised he would look into it with a view to preventing a similar happening in future. It will be remembered that Mrs. Dillon was detained for two weeks in the mental observation ward on the unsworn testimony of a police officer. It is a matter of great importance to the community, because it might happen again unless steps are taken to prevent it. It would be satisfactory if we could have from the Minister a statement as to whether he has any information showing that inquiries have been made with a view to preventing a repetition. If this thing should happen a few times there would be a crop of claims against the

Government for compensation. Of course we do not want that. It is altogether wrong that the police should be able to arrest a person and put him or her in a mental ward for observation, thereby impugning the mental capacity of the suspect and damaging his reputation for life. Ever since the Dillon case I have had letters week after week through the post showing the plight that Mr. and Mrs. Dillon are in. They cannot get work of any sort, and in every way they are blackballed; all because Mrs. Dillon was held in the mental observation for two weeks, and despite the fact that the Royal Commission cleared her name as far as it could be cleared. Steps should be taken to make sure that nothing of this sort can ever happen again.

[Mr. Lambert took the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Regarding the suggestion that the police and the racecourse proprietaries have similar interests in common and that the police are unduly hard on street bettors, all I wish to say is that the police are performing a very difficult task. Because of the facility with which information can be broadcast in these modern times, street betting is considerably on the increase. It is because of that rather than because of police activity that so many cases have come before the court. The police are only administering the law.

Mr. Latham: And in this respect administering it harshly.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I presume they take their instructions from the Commissioner. They are endeavouring to suppress street betting.

Mr. Davy: You do not suggest that betting on a racecourse is legal, do you?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I suggest the Commissioner has instructed the police to endeavour to stop street betting. If any mistakes have been made, they cannot be laid as a charge against the police, who are only doing their duty; rather have the mistakes been a consequence of the law as it stands. Undoubtedly the law presents anomalies, but the fact remains that street betting is illegal, and it is the business of the police to try to suppress it.

Mr. Davy: Betting on the racecourse also is illegal.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: There is no justification for suggesting collusion between the police and the racecourse proprietaries.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the word "collusion" used.

Mr. Sleeman: On a point of order. I did not say there had been collusion between them. I ask that the word be withdrawn.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I withdraw the word. But there was a suggestion that the law was not being administered impartially by the police. I resent that, because the members of the force are doing this work and doing it under instructions from the Commissioner. There has been a considerable increase in the number of convictions reported, but it is still the business of the police to suppress street betting, and in this regard they are doing their best.

Mr. Latham: When will they start on the racecourses?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I do not know that there is any widespread desire that they should.

Mr. Latham: Of course not!

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister is at under any cross-examination; he is replying to the debate.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am assured by the member for Fremantle that I cannot instruct the Commissioner of Police. I have not attempted to do so. The Commissioner is carrying out his duty in administering the law. I am not going into the Dillon case.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then we shall hang up the House for a week.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: You had better do so. It was a police magistrate who committed Mrs. Dillon to the mental observation ward.

Mr. North: I asked that steps be taken to prevent its happening again.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I do not know what steps can be taken. The police took up the case, and the magistrate committed the woman to the mental observation ward. I do not know how I can interfere with the Crown Law Department, so the hon. member will have to make his request to somebody else. It was a very regrettable incident, but it did not affect the Police Department, for the hon. member's grievance arises from the decision of the magistrate who committed Mrs. Dillon to the mental

ward. Certainly the police were not to blame, for it was their business merely to put up the case. As to the question raised by the member for Perth, I have spoken to the Chief Secretary, who administers the Lunacy Department, including Point Heathcote reception home, and I will have a statement ready when the Chief Secretary's Estimates come on. But on the information which the Chief Secretary has, the position is entirely different from that suggested by the member for Perth. I will have an official report here when we are dealing with the Chief Secretary's Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, £116,931:

Item, Outdoor relief including services incidental thereto, etc., £15,000:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Last year we spent £35,709 and this year £15,000 is provided. What is the reason for the reduction?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Outdoor relief reached rather alarming figures last year, owing to the amount of unemployment. It became necessary to meet cases of distress but the utmost care was exercised. We are hopeful that the circumstances which were responsible for the position will not continue, and consequently the amount on the Estimates should be sufficient. Certainly this amount is greatly in excess of the item for any previous year, excepting last year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The need is so much the greater. That is the unfortunate part of it.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The expenditure last year was equal to that of several years previously, and we hope the state of affairs that occasioned it will not continue.

Mr. Davy: What reason have you for hoping that?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Previously we were able to place the married men who would have been receiving sustenance. Owing to the difficulties last year arising from the policy of the Main Roads Boards we were unable to place many men in work. A large amount of work that would have been provided by the State for married men was not available, and they remained on the department for sustenance.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister expressed the hope that there would not be so much unemployment next year. If the £35,000 covers all the unemployed for last year, it is a very small amount. Many of the men, however, walked about the country and begged food. I hope that will not recur this year. If this is the item from which all relief was paid, it was a mighty small amount considering all the circumstances.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think so too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the circumstances will not recur. If they do, it is our duty to see that men are not sent to walk around the country almost barefooted and begging food practically from door to door.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I take it that the expenditure on public works will do something to relieve unemployment this year. Therefore I can see why the Minister has estimated a lower amount for outdoor relief this year. Something of the kind must have been in his mind when this big cut was made. The Leader of the Opposition said the amount was small, but to me it seems fairly large.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Small in comparison with the number of unemployed.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No doubt there was a great deal of unemployment, and many people were wandering about the country and were helped from door to door. In my electorate that was the experience. Men worked their way from place to place, and if they could not get work, they drifted back to Perth.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Last year we voted £10,230 for outdoor relief and spent £35,709, an excess of over £25,000. The Minister, to justify the increased expenditure, referred to the number of unemployed. If that is the true explanation, the statement made by the member for Fremantle is exploded. The hon. member pointed out that there was not so much unemployment as during the regime of the Mitchell Government. Yet the item whence sustenance is drawn to support the unemployed has never been so large in the history of the State. I am not complaining at the action of the Government in granting relief. Probably many people who deserved sustenance did not get it. I suppose as much assistance was given by individuals outside the metropolitan area to men travelling around and looking for

work. I hope wisdom will prevail and that this difficulty will not be experienced again. With the amount of money we have been expending during the last four or five years, it ought to be possible to provide work for our people. The Government are spending much more money than was ever spent before, and yet unemployment is increasing. Many reasons have been offered to account for the increase of unemployment. Some members say it is due to the influx of Southern Europeans. That argument is not sound, because in the ranks of the unemployed we find large numbers of clerical men, not general labourers, patrolling the streets of Perth and also the country districts, but Southern Europeans are not occupying their jobs. Consequently there is argument against the statement of the member for Fremantle that unemployment was largely due to the Federal Government having permitted so many foreigners to enter the State. The work being done by Southern Europeans is mostly clearing work in the agricultural areas and it would be useless for men deprived of jobs in the metropolitan area to tackle such laborious work because they are not accustomed to it.

Mr. MANN: I think the item was enlarged by the manner in which the men were compelled to attend every day at the Labour Bureau. If a man missed a call at the Labour Bureau, he was struck off the list of those entitled to receive sustenance. While there may have been some men who were quite content to hang around the bureau waiting to be picked up, others would have been glad enough to move about and seek work for themselves. However, if they happened to be away when their names were called for a pick-up, they were struck off the list of those entitled to sustenance.

The Minister for Agriculture: Are you sure?

Mr. MANN: Yes.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is on a par with the other story.

Mr. MANN: I have a greater knowledge of what I am speaking about than the Minister has of his Estimates.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, you know nothing about it.

Mr. MANN: There were several cases—

The Minister for Agriculture: I investigated them.

Mr. MANN: If your investigation was on a par—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair and not the Minister.

Mr. MANN: Several men were looking for work and, because they failed to answer the roll-call, they were struck off the sustenance list. That had the effect of encouraging men to hang around the Labour Bureau in order not to lose their sustenance. If they were not there to answer the roll-call, their names were dropped to the bottom of the list. That rule prevails to-day, and it has the effect of encouraging the men to wait at the Labour Bureau and remain on sustenance rather than seek work for themselves. The Minister might well investigate that phase and, if he does so, he will find a way to keep the cost of outdoor relief somewhat lower.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not consider the amount to be very high. The member for Mt. Margaret said he was satisfied that Southern Europeans had had nothing to do with the amount of unemployment. Just as much as he is satisfied that they have not, I am satisfied that they have. Thousands of them came into the country and very few of them are out of work. Therefore their coming must have caused Britishers to be thrown out of work. My experience is that the department have not been very extravagant, but have kept the expenditure down as low as possible. At the same time they have given the men as fair deal as they could. I am thankful to say that, unlike a previous Government who, when people were out of work, left them to starve, the present Government have given the unemployed at least a little consideration, and I hope that similar consideration will be given again whenever the necessity arises. Undoubtedly there has been a lot of unemployment, and it is something for the Government to be proud of that they have provided the wherewithal for the unemployed to live.

Mr. LATHAM: I must protest against such a large sum of money being spent in a country where there is so much work to be done. If the £35,000 had been expended on reproductive work, the people who received it would have retained their self-respect. Any man who has to go to a Government department for assistance of this kind loses his self-respect. The £35,000 might have been spent on reproductive work

such as planting pines, clearing timber, or any other work the men were capable of doing, and the men would have earned an honest living and kept their self-respect. The sum of £35,000 would have been sufficient to finance the clearing of over 20,000 acres of agricultural land, allowing 30s. per acre, and that would have meant much in the development of the country. We have a perfect right to use our revenue and loan funds to provide work for the unemployed, but I hope that in future the Minister will give serious consideration to this aspect.

The Minister for Agriculture: We did so.

The Premier: You worked it out at 30s. per acre?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes.

The Premier: Where we did provide work for the unemployed, it cost £2 10s. an acre.

Mr. LATHAM: The Premier knows very well that when the Government did that work—

The Premier: It was done by piece-work; it was not a matter of the Government doing it at all.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister knows that the advances made by the Minister for Lands are on the basis of 25s. per acre.

The Premier: The hon. member has merely calculated the number of acres at 30s. per acre.

Mr. LATHAM: If the advances had been made to settlers, the work would have been done for that amount.

The Minister for Lands interjected.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not allowed to discuss that matter. We could have had 20,000 acres of land cleared for that money.

The Premier: In theory, but not in practice.

Mr. LATHAM: It would have been better to spend the money on reproductive work. Many men out of employment are not able to do this class of work, but it is well within the scope of others. When we have money available we should spend it on something useful. It is strange that this year we should have over a million pounds to spend on roads, whereas last year we had nothing. That would not have happened if there had been proper organisation in the office of the Main Roads Board. If money was available last year, why was it not used?

The Minister for Works: You have been told often enough. You should blame your friends of the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. LATHAM: No doubt plenty of rush work will be put through this year, if the money is to be spent.

The Minister for Lands: Why not give the authorities some advice on the subject?

Mr. LATHAM: I know the Minister does not want any advice from me. We shall know when the next Estimates come down how the money has been spent. I protest against the expenditure of a large sum of money without giving people the opportunity to earn it.

The Premier: It is very easy to talk that way, but you do not know them.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for York and his colleagues can help to keep this item down by patronising the goods that are manufactured within the State. All the unemployed in Fremantle could be absorbed at the State Implement Works if our farmers would loyally support that concern.

Mr. Latham: And they would be kept there forever effecting repairs to machinery.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is a nice way for members to advertise the State. They think the Government should help the man on the land, but that he should display no responsibility towards our secondary industries.

Mr. LATHAM: They pay for every penny they get. It is sickening to hear this sort of thing.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Nothing is done by the farming community to build up our secondary industries. The member for York could assist very much in this respect.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting wide of the mark.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am showing how the item could be kept down. Outdoor relief is rendered necessary because people are out of work. I want to see our citizens support secondary industries instead of sending their money to the United States and other parts of the Commonwealth. In 1909 the Leader of the Opposition said that £104,000 had gone to the Eastern States for agricultural machinery that should have been made here. How much patronage do our secondary industries get? It is said that our implements are no good. Instead of members opposite criticising people for getting relief, they should put their shoulders to the wheel and keep the money in the State.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No one has said that these unfortunate men should not get relief. We say they should get it, but we also say there should be no unemployed. This vote-catching discussion on

the part of the member for Fremantle is highly discreditable to him. I had no trouble with him when I was in office. If men were out of work he soon let me know. We put right every trouble of that sort when we were in office.

Mr. Sleeman: I know I went to you once or twice.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When the hon. member did come to me the situation was relieved in five minutes. The clearing of land would never relieve all the men requiring work. They have their homes here and are on a daily allowance. If we had put to this work all those who are unemployed, they would have earned many times more than the amount in question. I object to the statement that we are protesting against the expenditure.

Mr. Sleeman: It was the member for York who protested against it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister has said, if there was less unemployment this year, we would spend less. That is satisfactory. I hope he is not unduly optimistic. We do not want a large number of men coming to Perth. People have the right to work. If there is none for them, it is proper that they should get relief from the Government.

Mr. Sleeman: They are all prepared to work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course they are. I prefer to see this item used, to having men going about the country begging. For months people have had to get relief from the Government. It is possible we may be able to find more work and thus need more men. No one wants charity, particularly such as they would get from the department. That is enough only to keep body and soul together. The Government cannot be expected to pay wages to men who are not working. Very few men I know of would be content to take the weekly dole in preference to work. The unfortunate people at Fremantle should not be made the occasion for political propaganda. I do not suggest the Government have put too much on the Estimates. Of course the hon. member could not discuss the vote without referring to the past. Never have I allowed anyone to starve, or neglected to find employment for anyone.

Mr. LATHAM: There is plenty of misrepresentation outside the House concerning what is said inside it, without the member

for Fremantle misrepresenting what members say here.

Mr. Sleeman: I ask the hon. member to withdraw the word "misrepresentation."

Mr. LATHAM: I will explain what misrepresentation is.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to speak to the vote. We do not want a discussion on the ethics of misrepresentation.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member said I objected to this money being put on the Estimates.

Mr. Sleeman: You protested against it. On a point of order, I did not use the word "object." I said the hon. member had protested against the item.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Mr. LATHAM: I said it would be better to use the £35,000 to provide work for the unemployed. We do not want misrepresentation within the House. We get enough of it outside. The hon. member talks about secondary industries.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow a discussion on secondary industries.

Mr. Sleeman: I ask that the "Hansard" notes be produced to show what the member for York said. He used the words "I protest against the item." I want to know what he said, whether he protested or not.

Vote put and passed.

Notes—Public Utilities: Aborigines Native Stations, £7,127:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is a new station being established in the Kimberleys, and what is the expenditure upon it? Does the Minister know the meaning of "Moola Bulla"?

Mr. TEESDALE: I would draw attention to an extraordinary paragraph which has been circulating in the Australian Press with regard to the intelligence of the black man. I am prepared to make allowances for any black man to whom an injustice has been done. He has many failings and I have paid one or two fines on his behalf, but he should have fair treatment. I object to this sort of thing—

Dr. Warner, of the Rockefeller Foundation, who has already spent a year in South Australia studying the life and manners of the aborigines, says, "I think the Australian aborigine every bit as intelligent as the white man. His mental endowment at birth equals that of the white, and the reason he has not correspondingly advanced is due to centuries of isolation."

I should be very sorry to think that our Government had spent money in support of a man like that. I have never heard such bosh. If I thought we had contributed to such a person I would move the adjournment of the House. Imagine anyone suggesting that an Australian aboriginal was every bit as intelligent as you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not desire the hon. member to indulge in any such personalities.

Mr. TEESDALE: The newspaper continues—

While the native life is perfect, the community existence in large cities in which whites dwell, peopled by disintegrated human entities, is lacking in the cohesion of a common purpose.

We do not want to identify ourselves in any way with such an individual. We have had extraordinary professors inquiring into whether our sponges bleed or not. I very much fear that we must have contributed towards the expense of those professors. I am afraid the Great Barrier Reef has nothing to do with the Aborigines Department, but we know that an expedition from the Carnegie Institute has been investigating matters there. We have been dealing with turtles for many years, and these people found turtles on the Great Barrier Reef and have given us the weighty information that there is a big industry awaiting development in connection with turtles, if the matter is properly tackled! To get back to the aborigines, this American professor tells us that the blackfellow is as intelligent as the white man. In fact, had it not been for a little bit of bad luck, the aborigines would have beaten us!

Mr. COVERLEY: The Minister should take a serious view of this professor's remarks. They are certainly not complimentary to the Aborigines Department, particularly when we remember the references to the effect of isolation upon the intelligence of the natives. We have had an Act on the statute book for the last 24 years, its object being to assist in the education of the aborigines. I hope the Minister will see that due attention is paid to the statement referred to by the member for Roebourne. The Estimates show that the manager of the Munja native station is to be paid a salary of £336 a year. That is the lowest salary paid to any station manager in the Kimberley district. If the Government desire to keep a good man in that position, they should

pay at least what a private company would pay.

Mr. TEESDALE: And you have a good man there.

Mr. COVERLEY: Yes, he is one of the most capable station managers in the whole of the Kimberleys.

Mr. TEESDALE: That is a fact.

Mr. COVERLEY: I hope the Minister will be able to tell us that it is the intention of the Government to increase the salary paid to that station manager to at least £350.

Mr. LATHAM: Will the Minister tell us if there is any possibility of the receipts balancing the expenditure. Last year the expenditure amounted to £6,791 and the actual revenue was £4,554, while the estimated revenue for this year is £3,600, exclusive of payments for cattle killed for indigent natives.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We feed a good many of them.

Mr. LATHAM: They have to be fed, but surely they should be expected to do their own work.

The Minister for Agriculture: You do not suggest that the native stations are trading concerns.

Mr. LATHAM: No, but I notice that £1,400 was spent on temporary labour and there is provision for a slightly increased expenditure this year. That applies to Moola Bulla. At Munja £576 was spent for temporary labour last year, and the estimate for this year is £624. Why should not the aborigines be expected to do this work?

Mr. Teesdale: This is some work that the natives cannot do!

Mr. LATHAM: It may be for work done by artisans, but surely these stations should be expected to meet the expenditure involved. I do not know why the revenue cannot do that. I have not had an opportunity of visiting these stations. I had intended visiting them, but I found that the Premier's Office had prevented members from using the State steamers unless they were in with the Minister. If they were not, members were excluded.

Hon. G. Taylor: You must be a member of the Court!

Mr. LATHAM: But members who were not, were permitted to go. When I got in touch with the Premier's Department, I was informed that I would have to

pay my full fare, otherwise I could not go up. In the circumstances, I must apologise for my ignorance regarding these matters.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking, £138,018:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister will remember that some time ago a large sum was written out on account of water supplied to the mines and the people at Kalgoorlie. At that time the State had to pay interest that is no longer paid, seeing that in 1927 the debt of £150,000 in all was wiped out. We have been entirely relieved of that responsibility. On account of the action taken then, £45,000 from the Vote agreed to for the assistance of mining was taken for the payment of interest and that recurring charge was only intended to be taken from that Vote while we had to contribute interest and sinking fund payments in respect of the goldfields water supply scheme. As we paid that off in 1927, I want to know if the annual charge of £45,000 is still debited against loan funds.

The Minister for Water Supplies: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am surprised to hear the Minister say that. It was necessary to follow that course in the past in order to meet interest and sinking fund charges, but now the scheme has been paid for.

The Minister for Water Supplies: It is not paid for yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It has been paid for.

The Minister for Water Supplies: You are referring to the main capital cost of the scheme; there is a supplementary capital cost.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and that will be added to from time to time.

The Minister for Water Supplies: It is gradually growing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. We paid for the original cost of the scheme long ago, and now we are not justified in continuing to debit loan funds with the cost of the reduced price of water. I explained to hon. members in 1923 why the action was taken, and the House agreed with me then. I do not think the £45,000 should come from the vote for mining because it will not leave much for mining purposes.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The Leader of the Opposition is correct in his surmise that the £45,000 is paid from loan. It is paid from the Mines Development Vote. That was laid down by the hon. member when he was Premier. He agreed to a reduction in the price of water supplied to the gold mines at Kalgoorlie, and that the money should be provided out of loan funds.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, while we were paying so much for it.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: That is so. Where does the hon. member desire that the money should be paid from now? The scheme cannot pay it because it does not earn within £10,000 of the operating expenses at present; it cannot pay interest and sinking fund charges on the supplementary loan, and other charges as well. The money referred to can be paid only from loan funds.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Seeing that we have been relieved of considerable payments of interest, I do not agree with the Minister. The payment should be made from revenue.

The Minister for Water Supplies: The scheme does not produce it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not enough to say that the scheme does not pay. We debited the cost against the Mines Development Vote in order to assist mining operations temporarily. The £45,000 should not be taken from loan funds any longer.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Kalgoorlie Abattoirs, £2,481; Metropolitan Abattoirs and Saleyards, £28,871—agreed to.

Vote—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department. £150,461:

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [8.27]: It is usual when dealing with this Vote to give a resume of the operations of the department during the year. It is an important department and spends a good deal of money. The consumption of water for 1928-29 averaged 8,698,000 gallons per day. That showed a slight increase over the consumption during the previous year, but it was below normal because we enjoyed an ample rainfall, which was considerably above the average, and the average maximum temperature for each month was below normal. Everything

was in favour of a reduction in the quantity of water used last year. There was an increase in the number of meters in the service, which also tended to prevent a large increase in the consumption of water. The estimated consumption for the current year under normal conditions is 9,700,000 gallons per day, with a consumption during January of 16½ millions gallons per day, compared with 15 millions gallons per day in January, 1929. With hot weather in January a consumption of 17½ million gallons per day may be expected as the average for the month, and a maximum day's consumption of 21 million gallons. The sources of supply available are capable of meeting these anticipated demands. For the month of January, it is estimated that the Churchman's Brook reservoir will supply five million gallons per day; Victoria, 4 million gallons a day; Mundaring, 8 million gallons; Canning, 2 million gallons, and from the bores we shall have to draw 7.5 million gallons per day, making a total of 17.5 million gallons. To meet the maximum day's consumption, the supply from the bores may be increased to 10 million gallons a day, and a slight increase may be obtained from Churchman's Brook and the Victoria Reservoir. Churchman's reservoir was first drawn on for the city supply on the 4th December, 1928, and during the summer contributed slightly over 600,000,000 gallons—6½ million gallons per day being drawn for several weeks during the high consumption period. If it had not been for Churchman's Brook being able to supply that quantity, we would have been on a restriction during the last summer. The diversion weirs at Wungong and Canning also furnished large supplies. Wungong has actually supplied 1,116,536,000 gallons, and from the Canning there has been drawn 360,000,000 odd gallons. Though there has been no work actually done in the building of reservoirs, we have been able to draw that quantity of water. The quantity of bore water pumped for the year was 409 million gallons, and about 960 million gallons will be required this year. Churchman's Brook and Victoria Reservoir are both full and will prove sufficient, together with the artesian bores, and the smaller supplies available from Mundaring, Canning and Wungong, to ensure the water supply for the coming summer. In consequence of the low rainfall in August and September, the flows

in the Canning and Wungong are very much less than last year, and no great assistance can be expected from these sources during the summer months. The drawbacks are that while they give a lot of water during the winter months, they do not give off very much in the summer, and as we have had a dry spell lately, the flow has decreased earlier this year than it did in the previous year. A considerable amount of work has been done in connection with the reticulation arteries during recent years, and that ensured adequate pressures in all parts without restrictions, during last summer. Improvements made in this direction during the year were a 30-inch main in Vincent-Walcott Street, North Perth; a 24-inch main in Carrington-street, Maylands; a 24-inch main in Armagh-street-Ascot-road, Victoria Park; a 12-inch main in the Fremantle-road, Como; and a 21-inch main in Cambridge-street, Leederville. During the year 26 miles of reticulation mains were laid. The number of services increased from 46,457 to 48,865. A contract was let for 2,000 meters to be supplied. They have just arrived and will be installed immediately, and will give us every check on the consumption of water during the coming summer. We must look ahead because the metropolis is growing and the demands are increasing to such an extent that at the present rate of consumption it will double itself in 14 years, and if the present percentage of services metered is not maintained, it will double itself in less time than that, and for the next few years an increased quantity of bore water will have to be drawn. In January and February, 1931, the artesian sources—including Fremantle—will require to be drawn on to about the full capacity of the existing bores to meet requirements without restrictions. In the months of January and February, 1932, and the succeeding summers until stored water is available from Canning, it will probably be necessary to impose restrictions on the use of water. It is expected that we will have plans and specifications ready for the Canning reservoir within the next few weeks, but it is not thought any actual work will be done on the reservoir, because, as the Premier has explained, no money is being provided during this financial year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then it is no use preparing plans.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Why?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Because you cannot do anything.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is a lot of preliminary work to be done, and the actual work cannot be started until all the necessary preliminaries are completed. Even then it will take at least six months before we can make a start. There is a great deal to be done in the way of preliminaries, and even if we got a start on the reservoir, say, about the middle of the next calendar year, it is still estimated that by 1932 we will be compelled, with our present growth and increased demand, to impose restrictions on the supply. At the present time the water supply to the metropolitan area, exclusive of Victoria Park and South Perth, is dependent on one main over the Causeway to Mt. Eliza. The security of supply urgently requires the construction of an additional main of 24 inches from Queen's Park to Fremantle. It is suggested that a scheme recently designed would take the big mains on the south side of the river and link up with Fremantle there and form a circle. Thus in the event of a breakdown we would be able to supply the city from the Fremantle end.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will not do that for many a day.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is nearly done now; it was approved in the hon. member's time. It is not an exceptionally big work; it goes from Queen's Park to Canning Bridge and links up with the Melville reservoir. It has not yet been decided whether that work will be put in hand this year, but that is the proposal the engineers are pressing forward for the safety of the supply of the city. Under the supervision of the advisory committee established to look after the discolouration of the water, there has been a continual check made, and the department now employ a chemist on full time testing the water. Although the difficulty has not been completely overcome, considerable progress has been made, and there is not now the same amount of discolouration that was present last year. I know it does frequently occur, and will continue to occur so long as we have to draw from the streams direct without having sufficient storage. That will be the case until such time as the big Canning scheme is finished. Even then we shall not altogether overcome it because the pipes have so much rust in them, and for a considerable time that rust will

continue to come out until such time as we have been able to instal pipes lined with cement so as to protect the metal from the water. That will take a good many years to accomplish. The committee, consisting of the Chief Medical Officer, the Government Analyst and the Engineer for Water Supplies, are continually in touch, and the chemist is devoting the whole of his time to investigating the difficulty. The cement-lined pipes will be the solution of the trouble of the discolouration. The new Canning reservoir is designed to impound 12,000,000,000 gallons of water. It will be a very much bigger reservoir than that at Mundaring, and in fact it will be one of the biggest in the world. The site selected is said to be a typical one for a reservoir, and all the engineers are very much impressed with it. When it is completed, it should meet the requirements of the metropolitan area for many years to come. The necessary pipes to extend the existing line from the present pipe head dam to the site of the new reservoir have been ordered, and have just arrived. Thus when the work goes on the water will not be polluted; they will be drawing from the stream higher up than where the work is going on. In connection with the sewerage system the work at Perth, Fremantle and Subiaco has been carried on satisfactorily. Extensions of the reticulated areas were made as follows:—

	Mileage.	No. of Houses.
Perth	5.086	437
Fremantle ..	2.95	66
Subiaco	5.77	751
	<hr/> 13.806	<hr/> 1,254

The total mileage of sewers laid increased from 173.162 to 186.965, and the number of house connections from 18,696 to 20,762. Work is in hand extending the reticulation to the higher parts of Nedlands to connect with the treatment works at Subiaco. As the Burswood filters are approaching the limit of their capacity, and, as the sewerage of further areas in the City of Perth could not be undertaken without an addition to the present filters, consideration has been given to the whole question of the sewerage of the metropolitan area. A report has been made dealing with the sewerage of the metropolitan area lying on both sides of the river from Maylands to North Fre-

mantle and from Belmont to South Fremantle. It is intended ultimately to abolish the filter beds at Burswood, and the whole of the sewage will be taken out into the ocean deep water.

Hon. G. Taylor: That will be a long time ahead.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, but all the work now being put in hand is fitting in with the new scheme. We had to do that or put in additional works at Burswood, and we decided not to go on increasing the filter beds at Burswood. The new work will be built up gradually. I think it will meet with the approbation of the great bulk of the public, as there have been complaints about the Burswood filter beds ever since they were established. As regards stormwater drains under the control of the department, during the winter of 1928 there was a long succession of complaints. The department have not been able to cope with the requirements. They have put up estimates for stormwater drains amounting to a considerable figure. To find all the money required for stormwater drainage throughout the metropolitan area would mean an enormous sum. Many pressing demands have had to be refused, the department taking in hand only the most urgent work. During the year stormwater drains have been extended north of Smith's Lake, along the North Beach Road, and to North Perth; and investigation has been made for another main drain that is urgently required to be constructed, when money can be made available, along Claisebrook Road. Yet another drain is needed out to Smith's Lake. The Subiaco stormwater position, too, is most unsatisfactory. Complaints have been pouring in from that area, and the local authorities are at their wit's end to know how to cope with the question. It is a matter of finding the money to do the work. The Subiaco system involves a huge expenditure, to be followed by a fairly heavy rate. Financial restrictions have prevented the Government from undertaking the work. For 1928-29 the accrued income on water supply account was £254,945, or an increase of £30,435 over the previous year. Of the amount £19,500 approximately represents additional rates, due to the increase of the rate from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. in the pound. Building developments account for the balance of £10,000. Accrued income on sewerage account was £1,232 more than that for the previous year. An

amount of £6,900 represents increased valuations, whilst new areas in Subiaco and surplus on sewerage house connections account for £5,622. The stormwater drainage accrued income increased by £1,653, due mainly to increased operations and building developments. The total accrued income for 1927-28 was £322,292, while for 1928-29 it has been £366,822, an increase of some £44,000. Capital expenditure, excluding sewerage house connections, now totals £4,612,971. The accrued income for this year is estimated at £388,400. Cash revenue, including sewerage house connections interest, is estimated to reach this year £400,000. The amount collected during the year was £368,452, or 96.34 per cent. of the accrued revenue. That must be regarded as most satisfactory; few concerns can show so large a percentage collection of revenue. Still, the department have immense force behind them; the fact of being able to cut off the water supply makes the money rather easy to collect. Nevertheless, I consider that the figures speak well for the vigilance of the department. Arrears outstanding at the 30th June were £25,706, or £2,826 less than the arrears for the previous year. The business results for the year were as follows:—The actual surplus for 1928-29 was £32,286. The estimated surplus for 1929-30 is £14,731, or a decrease of £17,555. On the whole I think it may be said that both the water supply and the sewerage branches of the department are in a good financial position. Neither branch represents any charge on Consolidated Revenue. The whole difficulty has been to find enough money to get on with the work; there is so much to be done, so much clamour for work in all directions. I have requests before me now, submitted by the local authorities as most pressing, the cost of which would total over three quarters of a million sterling for stormwater drainage alone. The City Council, the Subiaco Council, the Fremantle council, the Claremont council and nearly all the other local authorities are pressing for works. To complete the whole sewerage system of the metropolis would run into several millions. The Canning reservoir and the big dam, when completed, will have cost about £1,250,000. Thus big money is required everywhere, and we can only do the work as funds be-

come available. In the majority of instances we have met requirements to a great degree. Restrictions have been taken off the water supply for some years now. But we have to look ahead, and unless we get on with the big reservoir, by 1932 we shall have to re-impose the restrictions; that is, unless the Canning dam is completed and a large supply impounded there.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [8.53]: We sit here and direct what taxation shall be in the city of Perth. There are liabilities in connection with the scheme, which need not be imposed. The Minister points out that the whole metropolitan area pays for the service. We shall find it increasingly difficult to borrow sufficient to meet the legitimate requirements of government. We know that all over the State the local authorities are doing work for their people, and that those people pay for that work. If the people of the metropolitan area were wise, they would undertake the job themselves: then they would have control and could restrict work when considered advisable. No one can have more that he can pay for. The rates of Perth are already high, and the Minister states that they will have to be higher before long. With the increasing demand for water, there must be increasing expenditure on the scheme. We cannot escape that responsibility. We have undertaken to supply light and power, and we must increase the plant when necessary. In common with the rest of the State, Perth will naturally grow in population; and as regards water supply and other works, we shall have to keep a bit ahead of requirements. I had hoped that the local authorities would take over the work of sewerage. The Treasurer is expected to raise money for these works; and that, of course, limits the amount available to him under the new arrangement with the Federal Loan Council. We cannot find tremendous sums for Perth alone. There does not seem to be much chance at present of working costs being decreased. Before undertaking expensive schemes in connection with storm water drainage or any other work associated with the department, we should consult the local authorities. I had something to do with financing the requirements of this city at

a time when those requirements were much less than they are now. However, the cost of materials was so high that it would have ruined the State to face the necessary outlay then. It is better that the people who pay the piper should call the tune. The people will have to pay. I do not know how much each one will have to pay, but the property will have to pay. Since the people live in the area, I do not see why they should not manage it.

The Premier: Manage it through the local bodies, through municipalities?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. They will set up the same method of control as in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, where they have their water works boards.

The Premier: In some capital cities, the local authorities have nothing to do with it; there are boards or trusts.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. In a democratic country like this, we should let the people control such concerns themselves.

The Minister for Works: Would you apply that to country water supplies, too?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes.

The Minister for Works: Would you allow them to raise their own funds?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, they could do that.

Mr. Latham: There is already provision in an Act enabling them to do so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I wish principally to point out that we have quite enough to do to raise money necessary for the legitimate work of government, and we could well allow the people concerned to raise the funds necessary for their local schemes. I am certain that if this undertaking were managed by a trust, that trust could raise the funds required in London.

The Premier: That has been the experience of the Eastern States. At the beginning of this year one such board over there raised a loan of £2,000,000.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And I believe our people could raise money just as easily and as cheaply. Perhaps the trouble is that the various authorities will not agree as to who should manage such a scheme, but the Government should take steps to hand over these concerns. I shall not question the Vote. It has been before us for years and I suppose it will come up annually for some time to come. At the same time seeing that we have to accept the amounts allowed to us by the Loan Council,

we shall not be able to spare enough for these activities much longer.

The Premier: We are reaching that stage fast.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and the local authorities should realise that fact.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [9.5]: I listened with interest to the Minister's remarks, and was glad to receive the information that the experts had largely overcome the difficulty regarding the discolouration of water. If that is the position, the experts must have arrived at that result only lately. The discoloured rag I am displaying to hon. members was taken from the tap in the laundry at my home. The discolouration shows that the trouble is far from having been cleaned up, although I must admit conditions are much better than they were some time ago. The discolouration I complain of takes place now periodically only. It is not present all the time. We are now told that the experts have found out the reason for the discolouration! Six or seven years ago the theory was advanced in all sincerity by the Minister in charge of the Water Supply Department that the cause of the discolouration was to be found in the use of bore water from Leederville and Osborne Park. That was the advice tendered to the Minister by his experts. The theory then was that the discolouration arose when the water from the artesian bores reached the surface, and certain chemical action took place. The Medical Department was brought into it and after an examination of the water, we were assured that the discoloured water was not injurious for human consumption, although objectionable to the human eye. I hope the Minister will keep the experts at work at the task of endeavouring to find a means of preventing the discolouration. We are told now that the trouble is caused by rust in the pipes.

The Premier: It is the province of experts to disagree.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Quite so. It is pleasing to know that we shall not be rationed this year with regard to water consumption during the summer months.

The Minister for Works: There has been no rationing for some years.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is so. Some years ago, however, we were rationed, and it was annoying to see gardens wilting through lack of water.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [9.8]: I support the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the transfer of such activities to boards or trusts. Only this afternoon the Premier told us that £440,000 extra was required for this work while last year nearly £500,000 was spent. That represents an expenditure of £1,000,000 in two years, money that could have been spent on developmental works. The operations of the Water Supply and Sewerage Department are profitable, and if they were handed over to a board or a trust and the money necessary for carrying on were raised in Australia, it would not make any difference to the people affected, because they would have to meet interest charges in any event. I hope the Government will seriously consider handing over these activities to a board. Some time ago, at a meeting in my electorate, we were informed by Mr. Dennis that the Government intended to adopt that course.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Other Hydraulic Undertakings Chargeable to Revenue, £33,339:

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.10]: Members have recently had the opportunity of witnessing the formal opening of three big rock catchment water schemes in the wheat belt. At the formal ceremonies, the Minister was acclaimed for his interest and energy and the engineer, Mr. P. V. O'Brien, for the manner in which he arranged and carried out the water supply schemes. I understand that we are paying 1 per cent. on the £260,000 involved in the scheme, and that Great Britain pays 1¾ per cent. and the Commonwealth 2½ per cent. That means that 5¼ per cent. is provided on the interest bill of £13,800, of which Western Australia's share is £2,600. That is very satisfactory from the point of view of providing water for the farmers in the wheat belt. Although we pay 1 per cent. on the money, I understand the Government are charging the settlers 8 per cent. If that is the position, the State is securing a substantial profit.

Mr. Sleeman: That is what is called high finance.

The Minister for Justice: The settlers are not charged anything regarding the head works.

The Premier: We are not charging anything on the rates we will not collect.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The officers of the Water Supply Department usually secure themselves before the Lands Department or the Agricultural Bank get their return.

The Premier: Some have a lot to collect.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The officers of the Water Supply Department are keen on getting their money. I have referred before to the experience of a settler on a holding at Burracoppin. Not 50 gallons had been used on the property that he took over, but he had to pay the back rates. When the man asked the department if they would accept promissory notes for the arrears, he met with a refusal and a demand for the money. This talk about not being able to collect money from the farmers is so much piffle. The authorities have good security. Whilst the Minister and the engineer were praised, I think credit should also be given to the Leader of the Opposition.

The Premier: What about the Treasurer who has to find the money?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Quite so, but much of the credit should go to the Leader of the Opposition who had a good deal to do with it, seeing that he completed the first agreement with the Imperial authorities in connection with money for developmental work.

The Premier: Then we are all in it.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Not a word was said about the part the Leader of the Opposition played. It was his work that made it possible to get assistance for such undertakings and we should acknowledge that fact. So I wanted to draw the attention of the Committee to this. I did not say anything when speaking at Nungarin, because it meant introducing a jarring note.

The Premier: You were not talking much there, but you were writing a lot.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES (Hon. J. Cunningham—Kalgoorlie) [9.16]: The hon. member is very keen about the rate of interest charged on these agricultural water supply works. I might point out—and the hon. member knows it—that there is no charge by way of interest and sinking fund on the expenditure on the head works of that scheme.

Mr. Griffiths: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Well, why did not you say so? To hear the remarks of the hon. member, one would think the Water Supply Department

were out to rob those whom, actually, they are out to serve. In addition to that, the hon. member has repeatedly asked the House that consideration be shown to certain individuals who have been pressed to pay their accounts.

Mr. Griffiths: That was a rotten case, that one I quoted.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The Water Supply Department is run on business lines, and in no case where a settler can justify the withholding of payment as the result of bad seasons has he been unduly pressed.

Mr. Griffiths: Why, they would not wait three months!

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The hon. member refers to a man who took over an abandoned holding upon which a substantial debt was due to the Water Supply Department. When that settler accepted that holding he accepted the financial responsibility relating to that holding. The hon. member did not point that out, yet he said it was a rotten case.

Mr. Griffiths: So it was.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: I am repeatedly receiving communications from the hon. member; for what purpose I do not know, because all those communications have been replied to repeatedly. Notwithstanding that, he will come along making statements that are only half truths.

Mr. Griffiths: What I stated was true enough.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: There is no disguising the fact that the Water Supply Department are keen on securing revenues to which they are entitled; and will continue to be keen. At the same time there has never been a settler in such a position as to be unable, through no fault of his own, to pay up, who has not received consideration from the department. As to the agricultural water supplies recently constructed, the member for Avon contends that the Leader of the Opposition is deserving of a measure of praise for the part he played at an earlier stage. But the hon. member did not point out that the Leader of the Opposition opposed the amendment to the Water Boards Act of 1925, which made it possible to construct those works. Had that Act not been amended by Parliament, those schemes could not have been constructed. Yet the Leader of the Opposi-

tion opposed the Bill when it was before the House.

Mr. Mann: On account of the charges.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: He, with other members, opposed the second reading of the Bill. I quite agree that the Leader of the Opposition should be given every credit that is his due, but when members are discussing these matters it is as well to stick to the truth, and not to put up half truths.

Mr. Griffiths: What half truth did I put up?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The hon. member would have the public believe that the Leader of the Opposition was almost entirely responsible for the construction of those works. As a matter of fact, requests for those works were repeatedly put up to the Mitchell Government, and the Leader of the Opposition, then Premier, not only ignored them, but when the time came used his vote and influence against the legislation that made possible the construction of those works.

Mr. Mann: That was on account of the charges.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The support of the Leader of the Opposition was not forthcoming when the requests were made to him as Premier, and it was left to this Government to construct the works.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you were to tell a quarter of the truth, you would do better.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: I am telling the whole truth. At times it is essential to clear up certain misrepresentations that are afloat in the community.

Mr. Mann: Even if further misrepresentations are made in doing it.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The hon. member cannot point to any misrepresentations I have made to-night.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I opposed the Bill on the score of excessive charges, and I was quite right.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Excessive charges! The rate per acre provided for these works is sufficient only to return the revenue required to meet the annual charges on the capital outlay; and whenever it is found, as the result of

rating over a period of 12 months, that excess revenue is provided, a reduction of the rate is always made.

HON SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [9.20]: Let us give to the Minister all the praise he wants. It is little enough he has done in all these years. Here we have a highly paid Minister for Water Supply, the most highly paid Minister for Water Supply we have ever had, and we expect him to do something for his money, even if he does it badly. His principal function in this House has been to increase taxation. He has seldom brought down a Bill that has not meant an increased burden on the people.

The Minister for Water Supplies: At the request of the farmers.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: From a speech made by the Premier, I find he agrees that the farmer is already overloaded, that his costs must be reduced. But while the Premier says that, his Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies thinks otherwise and attempts by every means in his power to increase the burden on the farmers. If I opposed the amending Bill he speaks of, it was because of the charges. There is no need for a Bill to authorise the construction of works. That Bill was to authorise taxation. The Minister, in his wisdom, submitted to the House a Bill enabling him to charge as much for a thousand acres of sandplain as for the same area of good land.

The Minister for Water Supplies: And it met with the support of both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It was the charges I opposed and, given a chance, I would oppose them again. When the Minister says that Bill was a Bill authorising construction and was approved by a majority of the House, he says what is not true. Yet he talks glibly about the half-truths of the member for Avon.

The Minister for Water Supplies: I did not say that: I said that Bill made it possible to construct the works.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He talks of the half-truths of the member for Avon, but what the member for Avon said was perfectly true. The Minister does not know what he is talking about half his time. He says the head works—I presume he means the dam—are not to be charged for, and that the only thing to be charged for will

be the pipes that will carry the water to the farmers, and, I suppose, the pumping. But that is not the case. We have the Auditor-General's report dealing with the Kondinin works, which were built with migration money.

The Minister for Water Supplies: No, they were built out of State money.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, the Treasurer will be glad to know he has been robbed of that amount. The Kondinin works have shown increasing profits, and I hope the rates will be reduced in consequence.

The Minister for Water Supplies: They have been reduced this year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Narebeem works showed a profit straight away, while the Bridgetown scheme, and that of Collie too, show a considerable profit this year.

Mr. J. H. Smith: And still the people have to pay the full rating.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, in the name of the Minister, I promise you the rate will be reduced. These agricultural water supply schemes are going to show a considerable profit while we get this 1 per cent. money with which they were constructed. During my time as Premier I was asked to put in water supplies, but using dear money it was utterly impossible. The Premier, I am sure, would have taken the same view. That scheme which was laid down for £264,000 will cost us £2,600 per annum in the first five years and a little more in the next five years. So, for 10 years the cost will not be very much at all. At the rating of £30, which is to be charged against each 1,000-acre block—and there are 452 thousand-acre blocks to be rated—there will be an income of £13,600, which will leave £11,000 after paying the interest. It is not going to cost £11,000 to pay for the pumping. So there will be a considerable profit. We will watch this with great interest, and have the rates reduced, taking the Minister's word for it. The collections being £13,600 per annum there will be a profit to the Government of £8,900 next year. If I, as Premier, could have secured such results, I would very willingly have put down a great many schemes. But in my time the reverse was the case, and one had to face considerable prospective losses. It is due to the fact that money is cheap that we can face these works now and can,

if we wish, make a low charge against the farmers which they could well bear. We shall have to pay £2,600 during the first five years. The British Government will pay £4,600, the Federal Government £6,600, and after the expiration of five years the charge against the State revenue will be £4,600 per annum for a second term of five years.

The Minister for Railways: You will have a hard job to put up a similar scheme when you get into power again in 10 years' time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am just replying to the Minister for Agricultural Water Supply, who always provokes me to a discussion. I did not intend to speak at all, but I must point out how these agricultural water supplies were obtained. There is at McPherson's Rock another supply which, I understand, has not been used at all, but on which the Minister spent £60,000.

The Minister for Water Supplies: No, only £22,000. You are exaggerating again.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I was told that the dam cost £60,000. It may be that roads put down leading to that dam were included in the £60,000. I know a considerable amount has been spent there, and I thought it was £60,000. However, we will accept the Minister's word that it cost only £22,000. The dam was put down a year or two ago, and I understand it has not been used and is not wanted at the moment. I wish the Minister luck with these works and all the works in the department, and I hope the results will prove satisfactory.

MR. BROWN, (Pingelly) [9.30]: I am rather interested in the discussion because the first water scheme in my district was inaugurated at Kondinin. Experts were of opinion that the Government would make considerable profit out of the scheme and that they were charging too much for the water. However, the figures of the department and of the experts did not agree. I was surprised to hear from the Leader of the Opposition that the Government have made a profit of £1,200 on the scheme. True they have reduced the price of water from 3s. to 2s. 6d., but that applies only to town users. The people in the town of Kondinin do not use a considerable quantity of water; most of it is used by the farmers. Is it the intention of the Minister

to reduce the price to the rural as well as to the town users? If they have made such a profit in the first year, I should like to know whether it is intended to continue making profits on such undertakings. These schemes should not be inaugurated for the purpose of making profit. So long as they pay interest and sinking fund it should be sufficient.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is a loss on some of them.

Mr. BROWN: But why should a paying scheme have to help to carry the burden of other schemes?

The Minister for Water Supplies: Each scheme stands on its own.

Mr. BROWN: I am glad to hear that. I have the assurance of the Minister that the price has been reduced from 3s. to 2s. 6d. and that if the scheme warrants it a further reduction will be made. I hope the reduction will be applied to rural users. Many farmers in that district have spent considerable sums to provide adequate supplies of water. The pipe line runs alongside of dams sunk at considerable cost by land owners, but every land owner within the scope of the scheme has to pay for water whether he uses it or not.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Perth City Markets, £850:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Perth City Markets are under a trust.

The Minister for Agriculture: These are the old markets.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I understood that the old markets had gone and that the Perth City Markets were the new ones. This should not be a recurring item.

The Minister for Agriculture: We get revenue from them.

The Premier: It is a fish market also.

Mr. MANN: Could not better use be made of the Perth City Market buildings? The greater part is utilised as a second-hand shop. All kinds of second-hand clothing and rubbish are displayed on the footpath, and it is really not a market. How the Minister for Agriculture comes to control a building utilised as a second-hand shop I do not know. The sum of £850 is a large one to spend on a building not utilised for any good purpose.

Hon. G. Taylor: The estimated revenue is £1,570.

Mr. MANN: I am aware that there are two fish stalls and a meat stall, but the building is very insanitary. I doubt whether it has been cleaned out for years, and I cannot understand how the money is spent. If the Minister took a walk through the building, he would be disgusted with its condition. The only way in which it can be allied to agriculture is through the sale of meat.

Hon. G. Taylor: We had a State butcher shop there once.

Mr. MANN: The Railway Department has been hard pressed for accommodation and the site could much better be used for railway purposes. The building is an eyesore and cannot rightly be termed a market.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Minister for Railways, Tramways and Electricity Supply (Hon. J. C. Willcock, Minister).

Vote—Railways, Tramways, and Electricity Supply, £3,812,000:

MR. COWAN (Leonora) [9.36]: Has any provision been made for the construction of sheep yards at Leonora?

The Minister for Railways: That comes under the Loan Estimates.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.37]: It is nearly time, more especially in the metropolitan area, that the two classes on the railways were abolished in favour of one. On trams, and on 'buses, which have taken quite a lot of revenue from the railways, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown can rub shoulders and there is no need to have first and second classes. While this operates on trams, 'buses and other means of transport, it could equally operate on the trains.

Hon. G. Taylor: I heard they were talking of introducing first and second classes on the trams.

The Premier: You mean the Colonel's lady and Mrs. O'Grady are sisters under the skin?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes. There are about three big first-class carriages attached to every metropolitan train, and the average number of first-class passengers is about three.

The Premier: Where is that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Between Midland Junction and Fremantle. It applies particularly between the toney suburbs of Claremont and Perth and Mt. Lawley and Perth. It is almost possible to get a first-class carriage to oneself. We should consider the expense of hauling trains with three large lumbering first-class carriages almost empty. If the first-class were abolished, the trains made lighter and run a little faster, and the fares reduced, it would be possible to regain some of the lost patronage.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is wrong with turning them into third class?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not mind. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. So long as they are all one class, I shall be satisfied. No doubt the fares will have to be reduced in order to regain the traffic.

The Minister for Railways: That would not pay.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The cheaper the fares, the better the railways would pay.

Hon. G. Taylor: I have heard that repeatedly, but it is an exploded theory.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Perhaps the member for Mount Margaret knows more about trains than does anyone else.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not say that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: When running a train 24 miles, it costs no more to run it full than empty.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Not as much.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am glad to have that remark from a member who has had railway experience. It is better to carry 500 passengers at 1s. each than 50 passengers at 2s. 6d. each.

The Premier: How would it be if it cost 13d. to carry the 500 passengers at 1s.? We would be losing on every one.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I repeat that it would be better to carry 500 at 1s. than 50 at 2s. 6d. Where we are getting an average of 50 passengers in each metropolitan train at the present time—

The Minister for Railways: I am getting deputations from Fremantle complaining that the trains are overcrowded.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Only at peak periods, and then only the second class carriages are overcrowded. If we had all one class, there would be no hounding of passengers out of first-class carriages or taking their names for riding in a superior class to that for which they had taken a ticket.

The Minister for Railways: Who has had his name taken for that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: At one stage of my career my name was taken. I was riding from Cottesloe to Perth.

Mr. Teesdale: On the buffers?

Mr. SLEEMAN: It was impossible to find room in the second-class carriages and we got to the stage when we did not look for it.

The Premier: Was it really because the second-class carriages were crowded?

Mr. MANN: The Premier seems to know you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If we had only one class, the Minister would not be receiving deputations with complaints that the carriages were overcrowded. The fact of there being three long first-class carriages on each train accounts for the complaints of the deputations. The second-class carriages are overcrowded and people with second-class tickets dare not travel first-class for fear of having their names taken.

The Minister for Railways: We do not run three long first-class carriages.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have counted them on several occasions and have always found that there were three. Suppose there are only two, if we had one class there would be plenty of room for all the people desirous of travelling, even at peak periods. If the department wish to regain the lost traffic, they must do something of the kind.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You want to make them all first-class.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, I say they ought all be first-class.

The Minister for Railways: At the second-class fare.

Mr. SLEEMAN: At a reasonable fare, a cheaper fare than that at present charged. Some of the second-class carriages are not fit to travel in, and the first-class are not very flash.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I agree; let us turn the Government out.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am afraid we should get a much worse deal from the other side. I prefer to keep to the lesser of two evils.

The Premier: Make the best of a bad lot?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would not go so far as to say they are a bad lot. There is no doubt which is the better party of the two.

Mr. Mann: You find a lot of fault with your Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think much of their supporters if they are all like you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: So long as my electors are satisfied, that is sufficient.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I agree with you that the Government ought to be slated.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am merely trying to show that the Commissioner of Railways is not doing the best for the country by running the trains as at present.

Mr. Latham: Let us reduce his vote and then he will probably give effect to your suggestions.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, if he is worth the job, he is worth the money being paid him.

The Premier: We cannot give the service to the second-class people because we are losing so much on the carriage of super.

Mr. Latham: Would you say that at Bolgart?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Doubtless it would be possible to raise the freight on super. just a little. While on the question of super., if the freight were raised a little and if the through-mill rate were provided on wheat and flour, some of the country mills now idle would resume working.

Mr. Teasdale: Have you got your super. for this year?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Our mills cannot compete with the Eastern States mills because the through-mill rate does not apply here. While farmers are enjoying the benefit—

Mr. Latham: You ought to go out with me and see what benefit some of them are enjoying.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have no desire to go out with the hon. member. If the freight on super. were raised a little and the through-mill rate applied on wheat and flour, our mills could be kept going as are those in the Eastern States. Some of the unemployment is due to the fact that our country mills cannot compete in the flour export trade because Eastern States have adopted the through-mill rate and we have not.

Mr. A. Wansborough: Will a through-mill rate cheapen the cost of flour?

Mr. SLEEMAN: It will enable our mills to compete with the Eastern States. The only mill working full time in this country is that situated on the seaboard.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are mills at Northam and Katanning.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Northam mill is not working full time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not suppose it is working three shifts a day.

The Minister for Railways: The mills never work three shifts at this time of the year.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The mill on the seaboard is working three shifts, and is the only one doing any export trade.

Mr. Latham: What are you complaining about?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not speaking only for Fremantle, but I want to see all the people in employment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is wandering from the vote.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope something will be done to re-arrange the accommodation on the railways. That is the only way to get back the lost trade. If that is not done, the buses and taxis will continue to have full sway on the road.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you think that if all the carriages were second-class, people would patronise the trains to a greater extent?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes. If the workers could get from one place to another cheaper by rail, they would take that means of transport. If they have to walk a quarter of a mile to a railway station and then pay as much as if they travelled by a bus, they will not walk the distance. If the fares were cheaper and one-class accommodation provided, the passenger traffic would increase.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are talking against Henry Ford now.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I believe he would run the railways better than they are now being run. He would be too good a business man to allow this competition to take away his traffic.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [9.47]: Judging from the returns issued this year under the heading of public utilities, the general loss in the last five years has been £207,000 of which the railways have accounted for £105,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Without interest.

Mr. NORTH: Yes. Should we not now criticise our public utilities, including the railways, as we have previously criticised the State trade concerns? From the schedules before us we learn that we have borrowed £21,000,000 in the last five years. If we have borrowed that and the railways have been working for us on a capital of £21,000,000 and have shown a deficit of over £100,000 during that period, despite good seasons, it is time to consider whether we should continue to run this and other public utilities as they are being run to-day. I have looked into the question of railways in other countries. The mileage of railways in the world is about 750,000. Over half of that mileage is managed by companies. The remainder is run as we run our State railways. A new method, that which is called company management, is now being considered by those countries which run their railways as we do. I do not know exactly what is meant by that system of company management, but would like the method to be investigated. It would appear that the Governments stand behind the loan expenditure, and that the railways are run on a company system backed by the Government. The best illustration of this system is the national railways of Canada. In that country there are many thousands of miles of railways, but they are all run under the system of company management. I should like to know whether the Commissioner of Railways could come before the bar of this House and be catechised by members, and whether he would say he is as free as he would like to be. He may feel that he is quite free. On the other hand he might say that he really controlled very little, that he was under the rule of Parliament, was under the Arbitration Court, and in effect had very little to do with the running of the railways.

The Minister for Railways: Do not worry about him.

Mr. NORTH: He might say that if he had complete control, such as he would like to have, he might be able to convert the £100,000 loss during the last five years into a surplus.

The Minister for Railways: We have not lost anything.

Mr. NORTH: The returns show there has been this loss.

The Minister for Railways: Our profit was £35,000 over the last five years. Look at the Commissioner's report.

Mr. NORTH: I am guided by the returns. The figures show that public utilities have lost over £200,000 in the last five years, and that the railways have lost over £100,000. It may be said that this loss is a mere bagatelle in view of the large amount of capital involved. If the railways are costing us even a little at a time when we have had good seasons, a good staff, a good working arrangement, and everything has been satisfactory, the railway problem is not even then solved. I admit that our loss is less than has been suffered in any other State in Australia. The whole question of running railways in Australia as a public utility is fit for review, especially when we are faced with the possibility of economic losses through the fall in the prices of wool and wheat. We may not be able to maintain this rate of loss even if the good seasons continue.

The Minister for Railways: Look at the Commissioner's report. After paying interest we made £50,000 last year.

Mr. NORTH: I cannot ignore the figures that have been given to us.

The Minister for Railways: See Table 6 of the Commissioner's report, Item 9.

Mr. NORTH: It may be argued that the loss is small in view of the capital expenditure. As a fact we have not been able to do more than tread water. The time has arrived when we should review the position. In connection with the national railways of Canada, company management has been adopted with success. The Government are paying the manager the enormous salary of about £20,000 a year. Other parts of the world are now feeling their way towards the adoption of the company principle of management instead of the Government principle. Australia should also look into the matter from that point of view. If it is true that such of our public utilities as are embraced by water supplies, etc., can well be handed over to boards, we should consider the application of the same principle to our railways. The railways in the Eastern States have suffered immense losses in recent years.

The Minister for Railways: They have not had a good season over there for a long time.

Mr. NORTH: They are losing millions there. We are about to face a difficult

time in respect to our big industries. We shall not be able to afford to carry £21,000,000 of capital in a concern which is doing very little more than hold its own. Look at the risk we run. I would draw attention to the satisfactory position of those who lend money to us for the construction of our railways. Millions of money have been lent to this country by Britishers and others. This is nothing else than a mortgage. The lenders sit back with the comforting knowledge that they will get their interest each year, and we are merely gambling on the seasons.

The Minister for Railways: Everyone has to take a risk in the development of the country.

Mr. NORTH: What risk are we taking with the Midland railway? Not only is that line showing a profit, but it has cost the taxpayers nothing. The remarks of Mr. Sleeman show that there is dissatisfaction. If the Commissioner were before us to-night and were to say that he is absolutely as free as he would like to be, there would be nothing more to be said. We cannot accept these public utilities as a blessing, particularly as this year we are depending upon increased revenue to the extent of £300,000 or £400,000 from the railways to carry us through and give us the surplus we all hope for at the end of the year. I trust the Government will consider the advisability of adopting the Canadian system. In India there is a good scheme in force. The State owns the railways and borrows the money and stands behind the loans. Companies manage the lines, and the profits are divided fifty-fifty between them and the State.

The Minister for Railways: The State provides all the capital and the companies take half the profits? It is a good scheme.

Mr. NORTH: It is working well in India.

The Minister for Railways: I should say so.

Mr. NORTH: There is very little risk about it. The management is efficient, and those who are operating the scheme are working with an object in view. There is dissatisfaction in the metropolitan area with regard to passenger traffic.

The Minister for Railways: So there is all over the world.

Mr. NORTH: The member for Fremantle and I are powerless to deal with a highly technical subject like the railways, whose

officers have spent a lifetime in the job. How can we make suggestions that will be adopted? All we can do is to show that, with all the expert management we have, and the good conditions that are enjoyed, there has been a loss over the past five years.

The Minister for Railways: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. NORTH: There has not been an adequate return for the millions of capital invested. If the railways were paying interest and a small amount of revenue they would be conferring some benefit upon the State. To-day they are a burden and we are shivering in our shoes.

The Premier: Is it not something that we have balanced our revenue and expenditure on railways, and that we are running lines into newly settled areas which are not yet developed?

Mr. NORTH: That is true of part of the system. We have some very lucrative lines, but it has been shown to-night that some parts of our system are neglected. It is generally agreed that our railways are run under Parliamentary control, and that because there are some poor lines the better part of the service is being mulcted to counteract them. That, apparently, is the whole difficulty of what are called governmentally-owned railways. Company management seems to be able to separate out the profitable lines, and to feed those which are unprofitable. We have train after train running between Fremantle and Midland Junction to-day practically empty. It is not for me, or for any other member of the Chamber, to say how and why, because we should at once be rapped on the knuckles, "What do you know about running railways? These officers have been twenty years in the service." But we can compare the profits and the initiative and success of other lines, such as the Canadian National Railway, owned by the Government but run under the company system, which shows tremendous enterprise, going in for things we never dream of, such as hotels—

The Minister for Railways: Oh!

Mr. NORTH: I know the Minister for Railways does not view such contentions favourably, but the lines I refer to get a mercantile grip that is foreign to our management. In view of Australia—not this State alone—having encountered difficult seasons, we should face the question of dealing with

public utilities so as to make them better for the community and better for our pockets.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [10.2]: Not being able to follow quite so closely as the member for Fremantle does the argument in favour of one-class railway carriages, I would suggest to the Minister that the accommodation on all lines should be similar. Have the two classes, but give a little more comfort. It is wrong to ask women and children to journey in the carriages used to-day on the Pemberton railway, for instance. The seats are as hard as boards, and the compartments are like dogboxes. The accommodation could be the same, while the two distinct classes were retained. Persons desirous of more privacy would pay for it. It seems to me that the control of refreshment rooms is in the hands of one individual or company, and that the public are not being well served. The individual or company apparently knows what price to put in at. From Perth to Pinjarra the individual or company can lower the price by approximately £1,000 and yet be successful. Thus the person or company has secured a monopoly of all refreshment rooms worth having. The Minister should control the refreshment rooms, and should send an inspector along occasionally to see that the public are receiving value.

The Premier: That would be extending State enterprise.

MR. J. H. SMITH: The Premier will not put me off the track. What I suggest is merely an extension of duties. The railways cannot be called a trading concern. Pinjarra is one of the busiest refreshment rooms in the South-West or perhaps in the State, but one cannot get a decent pie there, or a ham sandwich—only corned-beef sandwiches; and the scones cannot be pulled apart. As regards tea, the service is as rough as well can be. In other refreshment rooms the tea service is cleanliness itself. Future contracts for the letting of refreshment rooms should provide a certain standard of refreshments for the public. A serious occurrence took place not long ago, affecting railways throughout Australia. I asked the Minister some questions about the matter at the time. All lines that have been laid down for a number of years should be re-sleepered. Fortunately there has not been loss of life, but serious accidents have occurred. I believe the Commissioner has

been starving the permanent way with an idea of making profits.

The Minister for Railways: No fear!

MR. J. H. SMITH: I believe it has been done.

The Minister for Railways: I am certain it has not been done.

MR. J. H. SMITH: I made a special examination of the railway on the other side of Newlands, and certainly the sleepers there were in a disgraceful condition—absolutely worn out.

The Minister for Railways: They are being renewed, are they not?

MR. J. H. SMITH: Yes, but the renewal should have taken place before. Now let us turn to the station buildings. I think many of them have not had a coat of paint since their erection.

The Minister for Railways: Oh!

MR. J. H. SMITH: There is no worse advertisement for a State than that visitors should see public buildings unpainted and neglected. Another matter I desire to mention is the lack of accommodation.

The Minister for Railways: It took about 15 years before we got in to attend to these matters.

MR. J. H. SMITH: I am not blaming the present Government. The idea seems to be to practise neglect in order to show profits.

The Minister for Railways: That is an exaggerated statement.

MR. J. H. SMITH: I can take the Minister from here to Bridgetown and show him plenty of station buildings that have not had a coat of paint for 10 or 15 years.

The Minister for Railways: I do not think you can show me one.

MR. J. H. SMITH: If the Minister will come along—

The Minister for Railways: I would not waste my time.

MR. J. H. SMITH: It would be quite easy to obtain the records, and I venture the opinion that they will show me to be quite right. If the Minister asks one of his own supporters, the member for Bunbury, he will be told the same thing. As regards cattle trucks, there have been suggestions for a long time that water stands should be put in to cleanse the trucks. At the last South-Western conference a motion was carried asking South-Western members of Parliament to bring to the attention of the Minister the importance of having cattle trucks cleansed

thoroughly. The Railway Department have had written requests to put in water stands for that purpose.

The Minister for Railways: Did the previous Government do that? It is one of the things that the previous Government should have done.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The conference took place only some two months ago, and this is the first opportunity there has been to make the suggestion. I was not asked to submit it to the Minister by way of deputation. If one asks a question in this Chamber, one is told that "the matter is receiving attention."

The Minister for Railways: The proper way is to go to see the Minister.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am telling the Minister about a motion that was carried at the recent South-Western conference. The member for Bunbury knows this to be correct, and I presume that on the Loan Estimates he will have something to say about it.

The Minister for Railways: That is not the proper place to deal with it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Does the Minister wish to bullyrag members and tell them what they may say and what they may not say? The Chairman of Committees has the right to tell me so if I am out of order. I claim that this is the right place and the right time to say these things.

The Minister for Railways: You will not get anything by going about it like that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The South-Western conference asked us to do this; and the Minister should take notice of the statements of members, and bring the matter before his officers so that they may see that the thing is done. I know that things are not too good in the Railway Department. The South-Western Railway formerly was one of the best-paying lines in Western Australia, though the records are not obtainable. On account of the depression in the timber industry we do not expect so much this year.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [10.10]: During the last few years I have travelled a good deal through Western Australia and the Eastern States. Our railways compare very favourably with those in the East, particularly when we consider that ours is a 3ft. 6in. gauge, whereas in the East there are the 4ft. 8½in. and the 5ft. 3in. gauges. With the broader gauges, larger carriages can be

used, and a greater speed obtained. On the other hand, when we take into consideration the fact that for every mile of railway in Western Australia there are 97 people, whereas in New South Wales there is a mile of railway for every 500 people, or thereabouts, and in Victoria a mile of railway for every 300 people, it will be conceded that the various Commissioners who have had charge of our railways have done good work indeed. Particularly must we concede that when we remember that very seldom have the operations of our railways shown a loss at the end of the year. We have been making profits lately. I do not see eye to eye with some members on this question, and I would refer them to the huge losses made by the Queensland railways.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There have been huge losses made by our railways.

Mr. ANGELO: That is not so.

The Minister for Justice: No, not for the last five years.

Mr. ANGELO: If we compare the results with those of other railways in the Eastern States, it is all in favour of Western Australia.

The Premier: Of course it is. Look at the position we are in.

Mr. ANGELO: Exactly, especially when it is pointed out that we have a mile of railway for less than 100 people.

The Premier: We have the smallest population per mile of railway of any country in the world.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, and we have done well indeed. As to the question of comfort, now that the Government have provided good sleeping cars on the Kalgoorlie line to connect up with the Great Western railway, the position is satisfactory.

The Premier: There is no better 3ft. 6in. gauge railway anywhere in the world.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, but, of course, that gauge involves various limits.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member were to be allowed to address the Chair, we would get on.

The Premier: I think we are helpful to him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will be a bit helpful, too.

Mr. ANGELO: The Railway Department are not always right. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) was correct when he referred to the refreshment rooms.

The Premier: He was a bit right there!

Mr. ANGELO: In the Eastern States, where I made some inquiries, I found that the Governments had reverted to their own control of the refreshment rooms, instead of leasing them as in the past. For once in my life I find myself in agreement with the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) when he complains about the empty trains that are run between Fremantle and Midland Junction. That state of affairs has been brought about by the competition of a splendid motor bus service. I do not agree with the hon. member's suggestion regarding the substitution of one-class trains for the present first and second classes.

Mr. Sleeman: I did not expect you to.

Mr. ANGELO: The complaint regarding the empty trains on the suburban lines reminds me that the same conditions obtained on suburban lines in Sydney. I would mention the service between Sydney and Hurstville. The service was not paying, and a hundred motor buses or so were engaged in conveying passengers in opposition to the railway service. The Government rectified the position by speeding up the trains, which were electrified. That enabled the service to be cut down from 34 minutes to 16 minutes, with the result that in a very brief period the buses disappeared and the people once more patronised the trains.

The Premier: It would be a rather expensive remedy to adopt here.

Mr. ANGELO: It might be, but it is the only remedy that can be suggested. We must speed up the railways and make them more popular. Here the railways are asked to compete with a service that enables buses to leave every three or four minutes. The railways could not possibly do that, unless they were speeded up very considerably. The same thing applies to our trams. I am familiar with the conditions obtaining on the Subiaco route. I have seen trams waiting for eight or nine minutes until they could leave in accordance with the time table, and in the meantime the motor buses collared the passengers.

The Minister for Railways: Don't worry about the trams; they are all right!

Mr. ANGELO: I invited the superintendent of the Tramway Department to go out and see for himself what was happening, but he did not do so. I have seen eight or nine tram cars waiting at various points until they could leave in accordance with the time table.

The Premier: What, eight or nine!

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, I have seen them. I would like the superintendent to spend half a day in investigating the position to see for himself what happens. Perhaps he could suggest some way of speeding up the service and once more attracting passengers.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—State Batteries, 22,694:

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.20]:

I am sorry the Minister for Mines is not here, for I want to draw attention to the importance of giving serious consideration to the erection of a State battery for the Jimblebar goldfields. There we have a belt of auriferous country that promises particularly well, having regard to the development adjacent to the leases not developed at present. For miles around, the country bears great promise. Several geologists have reported on this belt, and in no respect have they spoken disparagingly of its possibilities. But there is little chance of getting prospectors to go out into a district so far removed from crushing facilities, unless some assurance is given that if a discovery is made those facilities will be provided. I have been worrying the Minister for Mines for quite a considerable time in an endeavour to get him to visit the district, and having regard for the several disadvantages that have hindered him from getting along there, I quite excuse him for not having been able to make the trip. But there can be no doubt the Jimblebar district is deserving of a battery. We have the unique position of the already discovered auriferous belts and gold-producing belts of the North-West being peculiar to quartz, and unfortunately for us our quartz deposits, with the exception perhaps of the Great Fingal at Day Dawn, have not gone down at depth and carried values. But here we have on the line of demarcation between the north-west and southern portions of this State a fine area of auriferous country wherein lode channels of gold-bearing qualities have been discovered, and it would be well worth while erecting a battery there, if only for the purpose of testing the lode deposits known to contain values, with a view to investigating their abilities to go down at depth. I have not seen a more promising belt of country in the whole of Western Australia. We cannot compare this deposit with the Golden Mile or even with Wiluna, and probably Youanmi and Lancefield are known belts

that must command respect. But having regard to the unique position in which the prospectors of Jimblebar find themselves, and the favourable reports of the geologists on the district, together with its isolation, I think notwithstanding the expenditure—which would be pretty high—that for the purpose of testing that line of country the Government should favourably consider the erection of a State battery. No member who has not seen the district can have the slightest conception of what it is like. The prospectors there have hung on for years, hoping against hope for crushing facilities. The district has been badly handled, owing to carpet-bag mining vendors getting hold of it in the first place and hawking it around the Commonwealth in the hope of getting a big cash remuneration. But being unable to dispose of it, they have handed it back to the prospectors. I should like the Minister for Mines to expedite his visit to that belt of country. I feel confident that once he sees the deposit for himself and marks the nature of the surrounding country, he will not hesitate to give favourable consideration to the erection of a battery there.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [10.27]: It is very pleasing to hear the hon. member appealing to the Minister for a new State battery. It is a remarkable thing that practically all the State batteries on the Eastern Goldfields have been removed. I am sorry the Minister is not more often appealed to for State batteries, instead of having to dismantle them.

The Minister for Mines: So am I.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If there is any justification for the hon. member's appeal, I feel sure the department and the Minister will be pleased to erect a battery where it is needed. If there is a good property in that district, or a good belt of country, it would be very wise to test it. But we would require to have something more than an auriferous belt to look at.

Mr. Marshall: It has been fairly well tested.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then it should not be long before the State would be repaid the cost of putting up the battery. If there is a prospect of opening up any gold-bearing country we should do it, for there is nothing like the impetus of a goldfield to enhance the State's prosperity.

MR. COWAN (Mt. Leonora) [10.28]: I should like to say a little on this question of State batteries. On the Eastern Goldfields, at Kalgoorlie and Boulder we can claim to have along the Golden Mile the richest mines in the world. Yet when we leave that centre we have not, in workable condition, a State battery farther out than Ora Banda. We have in Menzies at the present time mines giving very good returns, and we have new finds at Jessop's Well. There are prospectors further out, and all those people have no crushing facilities nearer than the Coolgardie State battery. The department, it is true, find a subsidy for carting purposes, but that is of assistance to only the man with high-grade ore. If the money paid out per medium of the carting subsidy were put into the erection of a battery in a more central position, it would be beneficial to all concerned. I am not laying the fault of bad administration to the present Minister for Mines, but for some unknown reason, under a previous administrator of the Mines Department all the batteries on the Eastern Goldfields and further back were closed down at about the one time. The Leonora battery from 56,000 tons of ore has produced 61,000 ozs. of gold, and a district that can produce such a quantity of gold or as much as Menzies and the surrounding districts have produced should be given some consideration in the matter of a State battery. There is no need for more than one battery, provided it is situated in a central position, but if we can have batteries working at Cue, Boogardie and Sandstone, and have State battery managers there, why cannot we have one battery in our district? I have no wish to infer that I should like to see the State batteries on the Murchison closed down. I am only too pleased that the Murchison has State batteries, but I maintain that one should be erected in a central position on the outer part of the Eastern Goldfields.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [10.31]: Regarding the reference of the member for Murchison to Jimblebar, I am sorry I have not been able to agree to the request for a State battery. I have assisted that field to a fairly great extent. For a considerable time I granted for development work £2 for every £1, instead of the pound for pound subsidy, owing to the distance of the field

from civilisation. The Assistant State Mining Engineer has been there since and examined and sampled the whole of the workings, and I have to admit that his report, after the expenditure of £1,000 on development work, did not warrant the expenditure of over £9,000 for the erection of a State battery. I am still subsidising three lots of prospectors in the district to ascertain whether further development will warrant the erection of a battery. I have promised the member for the district that at the earliest opportunity I shall go to Jimblebah to investigate the matter for myself.

Hon. G. Taylor: Take a run up there in March next.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, I shall be busy elsewhere then; I intend to go up before March. If the development following the examination by the Assistant State Mining Engineer warrants the erection of a State battery, I shall not hesitate to provide one, but there must be something to justify the expenditure. Unfortunately the results so far have not justified the expenditure. In many instances the oxidised ore that has been developed has shown fairly good results, but unfortunately it does not go down very deep before it turns to sulphide, and the values in the sulphide to date would not justify the provision of crushing facilities.

Hon. G. Taylor: Have they reached the sulphide zone?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes; it is fairly shallow in some places. If the development warrants it, a battery will be provided, but they must have the goods before I can agree to the expenditure of £9,050, the estimated cost of the battery in that district. With regard to the Eastern Goldfields, I admit that with the exception of Ora Banda, Coolgardie and Norseman, the State batteries have been closed down. A battery subsidised by the Government has been crushing on State battery terms in the Laverton district until recently whenever ore was available to crush. That work has been abandoned because no one will take ore there.

Mr. Cowan: Is there any cyaniding up there?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know, but no subsidy is being paid there now, and the battery is no longer available to the public for crushing. As a matter of fact, it is for sale. Regarding the re-

quest for the erection of a State battery up there, while I admit that one or two small finds have been made and fairly rich crushings have been obtained from Menzies, and though there has been a new discovery out from Jessop's Well, nothing has been found in and no ore has been taken to other batteries from the whole of that district to warrant the erection of a State battery at present. I am quite safe in making that statement. If we had a battery centrally situated it would give an impetus to prospecting, and probably would encourage the working of low-grade shows close to the battery, but they would have to be exceptionally close, or low-grade shows would not pay. The carting kills it. Last year we lost £8,575 on the working of State batteries as a whole. Every economy possible has been effected. The number of battery managers has been reduced, and they now work in circuits, so that one battery manager runs three batteries, going to the different places and treating the ore whenever it is available. Even under that system we lost £8,575 last year. I do not think anyone can criticise the present or past administrations on the score of assistance to prospecting and gold-mining under the State battery system. Wherever it has been shown that a State battery was warranted or necessary, it has been provided. I go so far as to say that in the earlier days some State batteries were erected when they were not justified. I am glad that members have not criticised the State battery Estimates from the financial point of view. Though we lost £8,575 last year the revenue has been considerable, and taken on the whole, the State batteries have been of wonderful assistance to the State.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Cave House, including caves of the South-West, etc., £14,272—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.