

shown, not only as regards railway construction, which is the most outstanding feature of our public works, but in connection with public buildings and public works generally, good expedition has been shown during the last twelve months.

This concluded the general debate on the Estimates for the Minister for Works ; items were discussed as follows :—

Item, Fremantle Road Bridge—lighting and maintenance, £350 :

Mr. NANSON : It was his desire to direct attention to this item.

The Minister for Works : I do not propose to go into the question of roads and bridges to-night.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.2 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Friday, 22nd November, 1912.*

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTION—SEWERAGE CONSTRUCTION, FREMANTLE.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Works : What was the estimated and the actual cost of construction of sewers in Fremantle in areas 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied :

Area No.	Estimated Cost.	Actual Cost to date.
	£	£
1	3,960	3,734
2	3,680	3,269
3	4,100	3,528
4	6,500	4,857
5	6,000	3,440

\* All accounts in connection with No. 5 area are not yet to hand.

### BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

*Report Stage.*

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) moved—

*That the report of the Committee be adopted.*

It would be remembered that on the previous day some confusion occurred owing to the amendment as submitted by the Attorney General not being found in the principal Act. The fault was due to the fact that instructions had been issued to the Crown Law Department for the compilation of the Electoral Bill in order to embody amendments made previously. They had not been embodied in the Acts that were here, and which were produced by the leader of the Opposition and others, but they had been embodied in the Acts distributed for public use. Therefore, the amendments which were made were in order.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : We all viewed with some concern any amendment to the Electoral Act, and it was because of that that members on the previous day were somewhat anxious to understand exactly what was happening.

Question put and passed ; the report adopted.

### BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath) in moving the second reading said : This Bill is primarily for the pur-

pose of making provision for the necessary amount of capital to carry us on at least until the assembling of Parliament for the next session. During the past 12 months the Agricultural Bank has had an extension of its career of usefulness in Western Australia, and a very large number of people during the recent serious difficulty in many of our agricultural areas were able to take advantage of the liberalised provisions of the bank to secure assistance which was of such a nature as to carry them over their difficulties. I might point out for the information of hon. members that the power given to the trustees to lend on the security of the holding enabled the Agricultural Bank to transfer the liabilities, as between the settlers upon the land and commercial firms to the Agricultural Bank: at the same time, of course, reasonable precautions were taken to see that the margin of security was sufficient to cover the advance, and as a result of that consideration it meant that firms who for their own protection might have been compelled to take extreme action against the settlers by reason of the payment of portion of their claims, were ready and willing then to extend consideration to the settlers, and so enable them to tide over a difficult situation. The position on the 30th June last was that the total amount advanced by the Bank was £1,946,184, of which sum £665,453 has been repaid, leaving a balance of £1,280,731 outstanding on that date. The instalments paid during the year amounted to £405,942 of which £43,267 represented liabilities taken over, £31,004 for stock, £3,013 machinery advances, and the amount expended in further development was £328,658 for which the following improvements were effected:—Clearing, 161,787 acres; ring-barking, 240,210 acres; fencing 195,135 chains; blackboy and poison grubbing 12,929 acres; water conservation and draining costing £25,110. The new accounts opened during the year numbered 1,334 and there were closed 461, leaving 7,101 on the books. In addition to the amendment which provides for an increase of capital to the extent of £500,000,

a further amendment is made providing that the interest chargeable on advances made for other than improvements shall be increased to 6 per cent. This has been rendered necessary by reason of the fact that it is possible that during the present time of financial stringency we may have to pay a higher rate of interest for our money.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is only a temporary trouble.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: At least we must make provision that in lending money the State is not involved in any loss in the transaction, and to that extent we are making provision in the case of advances for other than improvements, that the interest shall be six per cent., and also that advances made for this purpose shall be paid by the borrower in instalments as determined by the trustees of the bank at the time the loan is negotiated. It is in my opinion an altogether different proposition to secure an advance for improvements of a permanent character, from securing an advance for the purpose of dealing with temporary difficulties or for any temporary purpose, and I think this provision is absolutely necessary not only in order to protect the Agricultural Bank but also to provide for the repayment of this money at an earlier date than is specified by the Act, so that we may again utilise this money in extending the beneficial work of the bank. Of course if in the future we find that money can be secured at a lower rate of interest it will not be a difficult matter for us to again amend this provision. I might point out that owing to the many demands upon the Savings Bank funds and, owing to the increase in the work of institutions like the Agricultural Bank and the provision of water supply, which in the past has largely been provided out of Savings Bank funds, it is practically certain that with increased work and increased demand for money, other means of financing these proposals will have to be provided. And I do not think that any means can be found which will be so convenient as financing from the Savings Bank, because it means the money is made available to the trustees of the Agricultural

Bank just when they require it. If, on the other hand, we have to do as suggested by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell), namely, go on the market in London for a loan, it will mean that the interest will have to be paid on that loan from the time of flotation, although all the money will not be required in the Agricultural Bank at one time. In that respect, the plan will be in no sense so convenient as the system under which we are borrowing at the present time. Owing to the growth of our demands, it is practically certain that other channels will have to be found to provide the capital for the bank. I beg to move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. Frank Wilson debate adjourned.

#### BILL—VICTORIA PARK TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *Second Reading.*

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) in moving the second reading said: This Bill was introduced as the privilege Bill at the beginning of the session. Its object is to repeal Clause 19 of the provisional order set out in the schedule of the Victoria Park Tramways Act, 1904. The clause to be repealed reads as follows:—

The promoter shall pay to the Minister for Works an annual rent of one hundred and twenty pounds commencing from the time the promoter begins the construction of the tramways on Albany-road at the east of the causeway, being interest on the cost of strengthening and widening the causeway, such rent to be paid by equal half-yearly instalments on the first day of April and on the first day of October in every year. If at any time default is made by the promoter in payment of such instalment of rent, and such default continues for two weeks after such instalment becomes due the promoter shall be liable, without further notice, to a penalty of five

pounds for every week or part of a week such instalment remains unpaid. The Victoria Park municipality were the promoters under the Act, and they have ever since been paying this rental of £120 per annum towards the upkeep of the causeway. This sum is just about the whole amount they have received per annum from the operations of the trams in the municipality, notwithstanding that they had borrowed a little over £5,000 for the construction of the tramway track operated for them by the Perth Tramway Company, and for this £5,000 they have been paying 5 per cent. It will thus be seen that they were receiving nothing at all from the operations of the trams. They consider this £120 per annum an unfair charge, and the present Minister for Works, like his predecessor, also considers it unfair; consequently we have introduced a measure to repeal Clause 19 of the provisional order. Although the Bill was introduced at the very outset of the session, we have purposely refrained from advancing it any further for the reason that we were in negotiation with the tramway company with a view to acquiring their rights. As hon. members know, those negotiations have since been completed, and among the rights we have thus acquired is the option of purchase of the Victoria Park Tramways, an option which expires in February next. We propose to exercise that option, which will involve the refunding of the £5,000 which the municipality borrowed for the purpose of constructing the track. When in Committee I propose to insert a new clause in the Bill as follows:—

On the exercise by the Governor, pursuant to Section 7 of the Tramways Purchase Act, 1912, of the option to purchase the Victoria Park tramways under the agreement referred to in paragraph (24) of the provisional order, the purchase money may, subject as hereinafter provided, be applied by the council of the municipality of Victoria Park in any works and undertakings specified in Section 438 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1906, and in the dis-

charge of any obligations<sup>r</sup> incurred by the said council in respect of any such works or undertakings.

Then follows a proviso to the effect that the council shall, before applying this purchase money in any direction, give notice of its intention, with particulars of the proposed expenditure; and in the event of twenty owners of rateable land within the district objecting to the expenditure, and demanding a poll on the question such poll shall be taken by the municipality. I may say it is against the wish of the municipality that we propose to make that provision, but the position is that when they obtained the consent of the ratepayers to the raising of that £5,000, it was with a different object, namely, to put down a tramway. Since then they have asked permission to raise a further loan of £5,000 for the making of streets, etcetera, but on a poll being taken the proposal was defeated. Had it not been for this I would have asked Parliament to approve of the money being expended by the municipality as deemed fit, but in view of the objection on the part of the ratepayers to the raising of a further loan of £5,000, I consider it is only right that we should protect the ratepayers and treat this £5,000 as a new loan. The ratepayers knew that the Tramway Company intended to take up the option in February next and in effect they said "We object to the loan being raised, because when the Tramway Company exercise the option they will be paying £5,000 which the municipality will then have to spend."

Mr. S. Stubbs: Can they expend on other works the money which will be paid for the tramways?

The PREMIER: When the Bill is passed they can. That is the object of the Bill. I have made provision in the Bill that they shall accept this £5,000 as if it were a new loan, and will require to go through the prescribed procedure to secure the consent of ratepayers to its expenditure. That is the safeguard we provide.

Mr. Taylor: You are really dealing with the ratepayers.

The PREMIER: Yes. If the ratepayers refused to allow the council to spend the money in this direction, they would have the £5,000 locked up until the loan reached maturity, and the £5,000 would probably be utilised by the Treasurer, invested in local stock earning 4 per cent., for them, while on the other hand they would have to provide 5 per cent., with the result that they would be losing one per cent. and the money would be doing no good whatever. So we think it better to allow them to expend the money as if it were the proceeds of a new loan, but we hold that it is only proper that they should first get the consent of the ratepayers to its expenditure. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex): I am glad to see the Premier and his colleagues have decided to exercise their right to purchase the Victoria Park Tramways. They have, I think, taken the proper course. Now that we have decided to nationalise the tramway system, it would be a great pity to exclude any outlying portion of the system. I hope the same course will be taken in regard to the Nedlands tramway. The Premier has taken the right action in respect to the repayment of this money and its future utilisation. He has safeguarded the interests of the ratepayers in Victoria Park by the proposed new clause, providing that a referendum may be taken on the question of whether the ratepayers approve of this money being utilised for public works within the municipality. I have not the slightest doubt that the necessary permission will be forthcoming. I fancy the rejection of the previous loan of £5,000 was due to the fact that the ratepayers knew they had this indebtedness and therefore they were not prepared to unduly increase it, especially in view of the fact that they would be getting a refund of the £5,000 next February. I think the Premier has taken the right course, and I support the second reading.

Mr. S. STUBBS (Wagin): I desire to compliment the Government upon

their decision to purchase the Victoria Park tramways. The point I would raise is this: Suppose I had loaned to the council £5,000 with which to put down tramways, and subsequently the municipality decided to sell right, title, and interest in those tramways; would the municipality be legally entitled to put the purchase money to some other use without the consent of the bondholders? The money was borrowed for a specific purpose, which, of course passed when they disposed of the tramways. Suppose they decided to invest the purchase money in a town hall, or in some other invest of which I, as a bondholder did not approve. Will the Bill that the Premier has introduced give them that power, seeing that the municipality borrowed the money for a specific purpose?

The Premier: We do that in connection with our loans. We frequently reappropriate money that we borrowed for the specific purpose and do not consult the bond holder.

Mr. S. STUBBS: The Government are in a different position from a municipal council.

The Premier: The money was lent on the distinct understanding that the council would sell in February next.

Mr. S. STUBBS: I know that the old Municipal Act of 1896 said that when a corporation desired to borrow money it must advertise the specific work on which the money was to be expended, and it could not be expended on any other work. It seems to me that the point I have raised is worth looking into, but if the Premier thinks that the municipality has the same right to expend this money as the Government have in connection with their loans, well and good.

The PREMIER (in reply): The point raised by the hon. member is one that perhaps might be considered when dealing with the Municipalities Act, as to whether a local body should be permitted to raise money for a specific object, and spend it in some other direction. But in this case the bond holders were fully aware of the object of the loan, and they were also aware that the council was making provision for the Perth

Tramway Company to purchase at the end of seven years, and if they were desirous of protecting their interests they would have made provision that when the money was repaid the bonds should be redeemed. I would point out, however, that even if the council held the money the bonds could not be redeemed until a certain time, and under the amendment I will propose, if the vote is against the council spending the money in the direction it desires, the purchase money shall be applied to the redemption of the loan, but it will be only earning three per cent. in the meantime whereas the council is paying five per cent., and there would thus be a loss of two per cent. The bond holders' security is the municipal rates.

Mr. Hudson: The revenue of the trams was not earmarked for the loan?

The PREMIER: No. As a matter of fact the revenue of the trams was earmarked for the upkeep of the causeway.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. McDowall in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

New clause—Application of proceeds on exercise of option to purchase:

The PREMIER moved—

*That the following be added to stand as Clause 3:—“(1.) On the exercise by the Governor, pursuant to section seven of ‘The Tramways Purchase Act, 1912,’ of the option to purchase the Victoria Park tramways, under the agreement referred to in paragraph twenty-four of the Provisional Order, the purchase money may, subject as hereinafter provided, be applied by the council of the municipality of Victoria Park in any works and undertakings specified in section four hundred and thirty-eight of ‘The Municipal Corporations Act, 1906,’ and in the discharge of any obligations incurred by the said council in respect of any such works or undertakings. Provided that the said council shall, before so applying the purchase money or any part thereof,*

*publish notice of its intention, with particulars of the proposed expenditure, in the 'Government Gazette' and in a newspaper; and within one month after such publication any twenty owners of rateable land situated within the municipal district may, in writing delivered to the town clerk, require the question whether or not the purchase money should be so applied to be submitted to the owners of such rateable land. (2.) If such requisition is made the votes of such owners shall be taken and the provisions of section four hundred and forty-seven of 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1906,' shall apply: Provided that the voting paper shall be in the form of the schedule to this Act. (3.) If no such requisition is made, or if on a poll being taken a majority of the votes polled is in the affirmative on the question submitted, the council may apply the purchase money accordingly; but if a majority of votes polled is in the negative, the purchase money shall be applied by the council to the redemption of the loan raised by the council for the construction of the said tramways."*

Mr. WISDOM: Would the new clause permit the municipalities to expend that money on new works? Section 438 of the Municipalities Act required that the Governor's consent should be obtained before loan money could be expended in connection with certain works mentioned in Subsections 5, 6, and 7. Was it intended that such work could be carried out under the new clause without the Governor's consent?

The PREMIER: The expenditure of this money was different from the expenditure of a new loan. As the Government had to guarantee the municipal council loans there was some need for the Governor to consider how such loan money was to be expended, but this was an old loan and did not in any way increase the indebtedness of the municipality.

Mr. WISDOM: The question was whether, if the referendum provided for by the new clause was passed, the municipality would be permitted to spend money on the works usually reserved for

the Governor's consent, without such consent being obtained.

The PREMIER: The works for which the Governor's consent had to be obtained were waterworks, lighting schemes, and tramcars. In this case there seemed to be no reason why that restriction should be maintained. If there was any intention to include any one of those works he would take action to see that the consent of the Governor in Council was obtained, but there was no such intention.

Mr. WISDOM: The clause omitted the provision in Section 444 for the preparation of plans and specifications of any work to be submitted for the consent of the ratepayers. The owners of property should have the fullest information with regard to proposed works, and it was extremely necessary that plans and specifications should be provided before the referendum was taken.

The PREMIER: The safeguard mentioned was necessary in the case of a new loan, but in this case it did not apply. All necessary safeguard was contained in the permission given to the ratepayers to say whether the money should be applied to works in the municipality or to the redemption of the loan. This was only a small amount, and it was not desirable to compel the council to obtain plans and specifications at some cost, when the schedule should be sufficient to satisfy the ratepayers as to whether the money was being wisely expended.

Mr. WISDOM: The expense hardly entered into the question; whatever works were to be undertaken would require plans and specifications. The fact that this was an old loan did not matter, because the works to be undertaken were new and the ratepayers were to be asked to agree to expenditure in the same way as if it was expenditure from a new loan. If those safeguards were necessary in connection with a loan they were equally necessary when this money was to be expended on works quite different from that for which the money was first raised.

Mr. S. STUBBS: To safeguard everybody the amendment suggested by the member for Claremont might be desirable. Supposing a council embarked on

a scheme for £5,000, would they be on safe ground?

The PREMIER: There would be no objection on his part but the proviso was sufficient. Although it did not stipulate that plans and specifications should be drawn up and an estimate of the work given, the schedule would contain the plan and an estimate of the cost. If the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) moved an amendment to make Section 444 of the Municipalities Act of 1906 apply he would accept it.

Mr. WISDOM: Then he would move an amendment—

*That the words "provided also that the provisions of Section 444 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1906, shall apply" be added at the end of Subclause 1 of the proposed new clause.*

Amendment passed; the new clause as amended agreed to.

New schedule:

The PREMIER moved—

*That the following be inserted as the schedule to the Bill:—"The Schedule. Municipality of Victoria Park. Voting Paper. On the proposal of the Council to expend the proceeds of sale of the Victoria Park Tramways in Municipal works. Yes.—No.—Instructions—If you approve of the purchase money being expended by the Council as proposed, strike out the word 'No.' If you do not approve of the purchase money being expended by the Council as proposed, and desire such purchase money to be applied to the redemption of the loan raised by the Council for the construction of the tramways, strike out the word 'Yes.'"*

New schedule passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1912-13.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day, Mr. McDowall in the Chair.

Department of Public Works (Hon. W. D. Johnson, Minister).

*Vote—Public Works and Buildings, £301,158:*

Item, Wyndham Jetty repairs, £1,500:

Mr. MALE: Would the Minister say whether the work had been started at this port and what progress had been made.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The jetty was in a very bad state, but it was impossible to do work up there in summer at a reasonable cost, and it was proposed to take a team now working at one of the other ports to Wyndham about March or April next and carry out the improvements and repairs to the jetty and hospital.

Mr. MALE: It was pleasing to hear the Minister's candid admission that it was not profitable to work up there in summer.

The Minister for Works: I said economically.

Mr. MALE: The Federal Government intended to try to develop the Northern territory, which was in the same latitude, with white labour.

The Premier: But the men in the territory will be working there continuously, while these men will be sent to Wyndham.

Mr. MALE: It was rather a candid admission after all that had been said about the possibilities of working the North with white labour. He agreed with the Minister that it was not possible to work there in summer.

The Minister for Works: You are viewing it from a different point of view.

Mr. MALE: It was satisfactory to know that the work would be started as soon as possible.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was not right that the hon. member's interpretation of his words should be put on record without pointing out that it was incorrect. The work could not be done this summer without sending up a special team. It was difficult to get a team to go to Wyndham and the proposal was to take the gang now at Point Sampson to Wyndham. Those men would finish at Point Sampson before Christmas and would come to Perth for the holidays and then go to Wyndham.

Item, New works, school buildings, £25,000:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was disappointing that provision had not been made for school quarters at Southern Brook.

Mr. MALE: It was his desire to refer to a previous item.

The CHAIRMAN: It was not possible to go back.

Mr. MALE: Might he ask a question?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could do that so long as he did not ask to go back.

Mr. MALE: Would the Minister give some information as to what was being done at the Boya quarry?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The quarry was established and equipped to quarry stone for the Fremantle Dock. Members knew what had happened with regard to the dock. It was then decided to utilise the machinery to quarry stone for the local bodies in the metropolitan area. Consequently the quarry was now a trading concern. It had been separated from the dock and it was proposed to transfer the capital to repay to the dock account the amount represented by machinery in the quarry. He was hopeful of getting a contract to supply stone for the naval base.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Are you working it now?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; about 14 men were employed.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Regarding the Boya quarry—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It was distinctly stated that we could not go back, and the hon. member was merely allowed to ask a question.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It had been his hope that provision would be made for school quarters at Southern Brook. The residents had asked for such provision and he had written to the Minister who had promised to put an amount on the Estimates. Southern Brook was an important agricultural settlement with a good number of residents.

The Minister for Works: The teacher is not married is he?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, he was married now. It was impossible for a single

teacher to get a comfortable place to board at and a resident teacher was necessary. The Minister had treated the district with scant consideration by omitting this provision.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member had made representations but it had been found necessary to curtail the expenditure. There had been an enormous increase, and Southern Brook could do without quarters for the teacher for the present year. Accommodation could be provided, but he was under the impression that it was a single teacher and that quarters were not urgently required. There were scores of places where quarters should be provided, but in order to keep the schools going it was necessary to keep the quarters down to a minimum to make the money go further in the erection of schools.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is not possible to send a teacher there in the circumstances.

Item, Dalkeith and Crawley Estates, Maintenance and wages of labourers, etcetera, £1,000:

Mr. MALE: Was the garden at Dalkeith being maintained and was the fruit being disposed of to advantage, because it seemed a lot of money to spend unless we got some return from it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Gallop's garden at Dalkeith was being maintained, and a fair amount of fruit was disposed of, mainly to the mail boats, the revenue derived being under the heading "Sundry." Tenders had been received for leasing the garden, but they were not satisfactory and were being called afresh. The garden at Crawley was being maintained, and the fruit was distributed chiefly among the hospitals and such like institutions. The terms for leasing the Dalkeith garden were drawn up by the Fruit Commissioner. It was anticipated satisfactory arrangements for the next five years could be made. The State itself could not run the garden satisfactorily.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Was any arrangement made for carrying the river-side road through the garden as was originally contemplated?



The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, the survey was completed, and it was proposed to carry the riverside road right through, and eventually he hoped to see the trams go through. It was a necessary work, but it was not an urgent one.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Water Supply Department*, £224,085:

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It would be wise to delete from this portion of the Estimates the sum of £75,870 revenue expenditure in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, because the Premier was in an illegal position, notwithstanding it was proposed to introduce legislation to include the metropolitan undertakings under the general Water Supply Department.

The Minister for Works: The second reading is on now.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But the Bill had not passed Parliament, and already there was an Act in existence by which the metropolitan undertaking was a citizens' undertaking absolutely controlled by the Minister, and there was no right to include in the Consolidated Revenue and Expenditure Estimates any expenditure in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department. The Premier was in error, when speaking in reply to the general debate on the Financial Statement, in saying that the £46,680 interest and sinking fund contributions were exclusive of interest and sinking fund contributions provided under Special Acts. The latest report of the department for the 30th June, 1911, showed that the interest on the debentures issued in connection with the Perth district undertakings amounted to £18,325, in addition to which there was the sum of £4,940 for the redemption of debentures in connection with the same undertaking. Therefore, at that time a sum of £23,265 represented the interest on debentures and the sinking fund or, in other words, redemption in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department outside the construction carried on by the Public Works Department. Of course in

addition there was expenditure being carried out by the Public Works Department upon which interest, if not sinking fund, was being paid out of Consolidated Revenue. It was clearly pointed out at the time the 1909 Bill was before Parliament, that this expenditure would go on until the works were completed, when they would be handed over to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, from which time onwards that department would become responsible for the payment of interest and sinking fund, but that up till that time, until the works were revenue producing, the interest was a fair charge towards the cost of construction.

The Premier: It was intended to add it to the capital cost.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes.

The Premier: Then the longer it is left the more the capital cost will be.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes.

The Premier: It is revenue-producing in sections.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: According to the Minister for Works there were 2,000 houses connected and there were 12,000 to be connected, so about a seventh of the system was revenue-producing so far as the sewerage works were concerned. Storm water drains were immediately revenue-producing when the Minister struck a rate as had been done, and we were entitled to transfer the storm water drains to the department, but we were only entitled to debit the department with the proportion of interest and sinking fund on the amount of the sewerage works that was revenue-producing. That, however, was beside the question. Taking the Premier's figures and the report of the department, we could not but come to the conclusion that there was some error, and that the Premier had been wrongly advised with regard to the interest and sinking fund charge. According to the report of the department it was £23,265 for the year ending 30th June, 1911. The Premier gave as the expenditure from General Loan Funds on sewerage and drainage works the sum of £526,000 whereas the Minister for Works had mentioned

£350,000. The Premier was probably correct. The figures probably included the Fremantle and Claremont undertakings. Very likely sinking fund had not commenced on all the money borrowed for the carrying out of these works, but that again was beside the question. He was quite prepared to assume the position that sinking fund was payable on the whole of the money expended. One per cent. was certainly not payable on the whole of the money, because for the last two or three years we had adopted a sinking fund of a half per cent.

The Premier: Does not the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act provide for one per cent?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No. It provided for interest not exceeding 4 per cent. and a contribution to the sinking fund not exceeding one per cent. The reason for that was obvious. It was intended that we should just charge the actual rate of interest the State was paying on loans raised from time to time and utilised by appropriation for these works, and in addition the actual sinking fund those loans carried. If we took the expenditure during his (Mr. Wilson's) term of office, the cost would be £3 16s. per cent., and even if we took the full one per cent. for sinking fund, which he contended we were not entitled to take, then there would be  $4\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. as the rate necessary to cover interest and sinking fund on the amount expended from loan funds on these undertakings. That would give an amount of something like £24,000. If we added to that the £23,000 which he had already referred to, we would get a sum of about £48,000. He admitted, of course, that the figures could not be absolutely perfect, but they were near enough to show that the £46,680 shown in these Estimates did in reality cover the whole of the interest and sinking fund chargeable on the total expenditure of this department, including what was spent by the Minister for Works from time to time out of loan funds.

The Premier: I hope that pans out to be correct.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Take it any way the hon. member likes. We had here

debenture capital account, £498,000 re-deemed £41,724. Then we had the Fremantle water supply £56,000, less sinking fund £1,254, Claremont water supply, £38,000, less a small sinking fund contribution, bringing it down to £37,000; a total of £552,000 for debentures issued, and on the contra side of the account under assets, we had a total asset value of £549,000. That was the public accounts balance issued in connection with that department. The Premier gave us the expenditure under loan funds at £526,000, so that if we added the two together we had something like £1,076,000. It was easily figured what the interest and sinking fund would amount to. It certainly could not amount to £46,000 plus £28,000 as the Premier indicated. There must be some mistake in connection with this matter and the Premier must have been misled with regard to the amount he had to find for expenditure on these works.

The Premier: The figures were supplied by the under-secretary of the department.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There must be something wrong with them, at any rate he would like to see them. The Premier could see that on a million and a half of money the interest at 4 per cent. would be £40,000, and with the addition of provision for sinking fund, it would come in round figures to £50,000. His contention therefore was that the item on the Estimates covered the whole of the interest and sinking fund. The position then was simply this: that if the amount which was payable under our loan statutes for interest and sinking fund was legally chargeable at the present time to the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Department, then the Premier in framing his Estimates had charged the amount twice. The amount had first of all been provided for under statutory obligation which the Premier could not get away from and then it had been included in this £46,860.

The Premier: It will reduce my deficit then.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: What he was doing was to indicate the position

clearly to the Premier. He figured the position out as follows:—There was interest and sinking fund on the Fremantle and Claremont water supplies which had been transferred, approximating £5,000; and there was interest and sinking fund on the sewerage works carried out by the Works Department according to the Minister for Works' interview in the newspapers of about £16,000, so that there was roughly £21,000 provided under statutes for interest and sinking fund that might be fairly chargeable if the works were all completed and revenue producing, to the department. That showed that this amount, if his (Mr. Wilson's) contention was correct, had been twice charged. The estimated deficit would be reduced if the hon. member struck out £21,000 from the estimated expenditure and said "I have already provided it under statutory obligations." But he would increase the profit he showed between the estimated revenue and the expenditure, making it appear that the citizens of Perth were in round figures contributing to the general revenue to the tune of about £45,000. Supposing we left that aspect of the question alone, the position would be that the estimated deficit would be reduced by the £21,000, but after deducting the profit which he contended had been wrongfully taken by the Treasurer, there would then be something like £45,000 added to that deficit.

The Premier: That cannot be.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If the Premier maintained it was only £24,000, even then it would make the actual deficit £169,000. But he (Mr. Wilson) was not there to bandy words with the Premier as to what the deficit would be. It would be substantial enough whatever happened, and it was more likely to be bigger than the figures the Premier put before the Committee.

The Premier: Yet you are asking us to increase the expenditure in every direction.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That was the duty of the Opposition, and the Premier had to bear in mind that he too had battled in the same direction, notwithstanding that the Liberal Government were struggling to their utmost to wipe

out the deficit, but the point he wanted to force home was that undoubtedly the Estimates showed that we were taking for the purpose of the State an estimated profit that belonged to the citizens of the metropolitan area. The Act provided very clearly what had to be done with these funds. Section 127 read—

All revenue received by the Minister from rates, charges, rents, or otherwise under this Act, shall be collected and received by him or his authorised officers and paid to the Colonial Treasurer, and shall be applied in the manner following, that is to say:—(a.) In defraying the expense incurred in the maintenance and management of the works, and in the conduct of the business of the Minister; (b.) In payment of the interest and contributions to the sinking fund of any loan, the liability in respect of which is transferred to the Minister or of any loan raised by the Minister; (c.) In the payment of any interest or instalment of principal or contributions to the sinking fund due in respect of any liability of the Minister to the Colonial Treasurer; (d.) In the construction, extension, and improvement of works.

It was purely the citizens' undertaking and he maintained at once that it was obviously unfair to put any Treasurer in the position of being able to effect a balance in connection with the consolidated revenue and expenditure by utilising the water rates or the sewerage rates or the storm water rates of the residents of the metropolitan area. One might just imagine the position. Suppose members opposite got themselves so entangled financially next year or perhaps in two years that they threw up the sponge and the Opposition had to take the Treasury benches and straighten up the finances as was done seven years ago, the Treasurer would then look around to see where he could raise revenue, but he would find that the avenues were all pretty well closed. He would find that the land tax had been doubled and that he could not load the land with further taxation; he would find that the income tax had been doubled and trebled in many cases

and that he could not squeeze any more taxation out of the incomes without endangering them; then he would turn his attention to the water and sewerage department and say "Here is the opportunity to raise the water rates to 2s. as it was in previous years, and so get £25,000 or £30,000.

The Minister for Works : That is a miserable attitude to take up.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : That was the attitude the hon. member was taking up to-day. He was putting £76,000 into this undertaking and he was going to extract £100,000 from the citizens.

The Premier : You should make certain that you are correct before you make accusations.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : It was all in plain figures and he had taken those of the Premier and the Minister for Works; there were no other figures to take.

The Minister for Works : You have got them mixed up.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : We could not get away from the figures which had been given to the House. The Premier said we had to pay £28,000 on interest and sinking fund outside the £46,000, but that could not be. And he said that the consolidated revenue would pay £4,000. The Act of Parliament declared that they should carry their own liability, and even if the Premier were right he was not entitled to make the whole of the citizens of Western Australia contribute even £4,000 towards an undertaking confined to the metropolitan area. However, the Premier was wrong, and knew that he was wrong. This thing was being carried on under an Act of Parliament, and until that Act was repealed the Premier had no right to alter its provisions in any respect. The Premier had twitted him with having once included in the Revenue Estimates the anticipated returns from a land tax not at that time authorised by Parliament. But on that occasion there was justification for the action. There was no Act of Parliament, but he announced his intention of bringing down a Bill, and in the meantime he had expected to get a

sum of money from it. However, the Bill did not go through, and so the revenue was lost; but no expenditure had been projected on the other side as against that item, and so everything was in order. It might justly be argued that the Premier had no right to estimate profits on his steamship undertakings, his butchers' shops, and his quarry at Boya, profits which had not been earned. These were not going concerns for they were merely in their inception. The Premier had over £40,000 put down in connection with certain undertakings. For instance he had inserted as estimated profits from State hotels the sum of £11,000.

The Minister for Works : On a point of order, the question before the Chair is the Works Estimates, and not State steamers and State hotels.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Here was a great principle at stake.

The Minister for Works : Stick to this other principle.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Here was a great principle at stake which the Premier had to do with as Treasurer.

The Minister for Works : Stick to the point.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : It was his intention to stick to the point he wished to stick to. The Premier had taken paper profits into his Estimates and had estimated £11,000 from State hotels, but already the Premier had occasion to estimate that he would get only one half that amount from State hotels. Also the Premier had estimated £12,000 profits on his steamers, while his butchers' stalls were to bring him in £3,000 profit. The ferries, the Premier estimated, would bring in £1,900 profit, and the Fremantle Work-shops £1,250.

The CHAIRMAN : This seemed very like a general discussion on the whole of the Estimates. Of course if the hon. member was merely using it as an illustration it could not be disallowed, but it appeared to be a very wide illustration.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : It was by way of illustration, in reply to the Premier's charge that he (Hon. Frank Wilson) had done something similar. None of these undertakings were on a par with

the Metropolitan Water Supply at all. If the Premier would boost up his estimated revenue by estimated profits of course he was at liberty to do so, but it was necessary to protest if we were going to take over a department from the citizens of the metropolitan area which was their business alone, and which existed under an Act of Parliament. These other undertakings had no Act of Parliament. If there were Acts of Parliament controlling them we could protest against them, as he was protesting in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply. We had no right to take the citizens' money if it was a profit, as shown in the Premier's Estimates.

The Minister for Works: We are contributing it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If they were contributing it they had no right to take revenue to relieve the ratepayers in this connection. They were not justified in anticipating that any legislation which would make this a revenue producing department would receive the sanction of Parliament. It was obviously wrong and unfair that we should take any of the citizens' water rates in order to increase the Consolidated Revenue and help balance the Treasurer's figures. On the other hand it was obviously unfair that we should take any portion of Consolidated Revenue to decrease the citizens' liability for services specially rendered to them. We were embarking on a serious procedure which was obviously illegal. Hon. members could inquire into it for themselves. The Premier ought to take out from the figures the item of £75,870 until he had his repealing legislation through.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member had taken up an altogether wrong attitude. It was true we had to pass a Bill to put these Estimates in order. If the Bill was passed the Estimates were right; if the Bill was not passed the Estimates could not operate. The hon. member had said it was wrong to take into Consolidated Revenue the revenue from the Metropolitan Water Supply, and that it was equally wrong to take from Consolidated Revenue expenditure in connection with water supply.

This was only a matter of opinion, and the Government took up the attitude that they were running a water supply department and running it on business lines, and that consequently it was advisable to keep all the water supplies in the one department and run them in an economical manner. Why should we keep the Metropolitan Water Supply separate, any more than any other water supply?

Hon. Frank Wilson: Because by Act of Parliament you must.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was being kept separate in the book-keeping. The hon. member was misleading the country when he stated that the Government were taking credit to Consolidated Revenue out of the profits of the Metropolitan Water Supply. That was not so. If we were to continue the existing practice as far as the State was concerned it was "heads I win, tails you lose," for the reason that the water supply was paying interest on the debentures, but the general taxpayer was responsible for the interest on the sewerage. To-day that responsibility was being carried by the general taxpayer. The Government were prepared to recognise it as a proper business concern, that they should take the burden for the sewerage, drainage, and water supply, and run it all in conjunction as one concern, for the reason that to-day we were paying from the State funds, from the general taxpayer, £28,000 towards the interest on capital expenditure on sewerage and storm water drainage. That £28,000 came out of the pockets of the general taxpayer. The hon. member said it was all right to take that from the taxpayer.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yet the hon. member had introduced a Bill for that purpose, and that was the position to-day. The Government were simply going to put it on a proper basis.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You are not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member had desired to know how the £46,680 was made up. Metropolitan Water Supply debentures for original purchase, and subsequent capital expenditure amounted to £595,000, and the interest on that to £23,807. The interest on

capital expenditure, estimated this year, for extensions of mains, etcetera, was put down at £2,000, making a total of £25,807. Then we had house connections, which were also financed under debentures carrying 15 per cent. sinking fund. The expenditure on that was estimated at £90,000.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You have not spent anything like that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course the hon. member had no idea of running this concern. The hon. member had been going along splashing up loan expenditure with no desire to get revenue from the people being served. The present Government had reversed that policy, stopped the capital expenditure other than that on house connections, and were concentrating their energies on house connections, so that they might get the revenue on capital expenditure which the hon. member had wasted for so many years. It was all right so far as the hon. member was concerned to go on with capital expenditure so long as the general taxpayer paid the interest. It was because the present Government had altered this that the hon. member now began to sing out. The hon. member did not like the light of day to fall upon his bad administration. The present Government had stopped that wasteful expenditure to a large extent, and were concentrating their energies on house connections estimated to cost £90,000, and the interest and sinking fund on that made up the difference between £37,405 and £46,680. The interest amounted to £25,807 and the sinking fund and water supply debentures run into, roughly, £11,600.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No. Take your report; there are the figures.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Although not having a copy of the report he was prepared to take the figures supplied to him by the accountant and secretary of the Water Supply Department. Mr. Trethowan had supplied those figures, but Mr. Trethowan had not been responsible for the report referred to. The position was that the total liability in regard to water supply was £27,405. Then we had a liability in regard to debentures for house connections, representing the

difference between £37,405 and £46,680, or, roughly speaking, the interest was £2,672 and the sinking fund, which of course was large on the house connections, this being a five or six years' proposition, ran into £6,473, making a total of £46,680.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Do not your clients pay it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course they would pay it, and when they paid it the Government would cancel the debentures, but in the meantime it was being financed by debentures, and that was the reason why this sum was provided on the Estimates, but the sewerage proper was financed from General Loan Fund and the interest on the capital expenditure on the sewerage proper was charged to general revenue and amounted to £28,000, as has been outlined by the Treasurer.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Minister with his usual characteristics had descended into a personal attack rather than a reply to the criticism to which his figures had been subjected.

The Minister for Works: Yours was a miserable attitude, accusing us of desiring to increase the water rates in order to wipe off the deficit. I never heard a more miserable accusation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: All that had been said was merely to illustrate what might happen if he or anybody else had to take possession of the Treasury bench and make good the deficit, but the Minister in his remarks was not honest enough, straightforward enough, or truthful enough to stick to facts.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. member is in order in making that remark. He must withdraw the statement that the Minister for Works is not truthful.

Hon. FRANK WILSON withdrew the remark. The Minister was wilfully inaccurate in his statement. The hon. member had said that he had been charged with utilising the water rate for the purpose of covering up his deficit. The charge against the Minister was that the Government had utilised that revenue in trying to balance their finances.

The Premier : Wrong.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The figures were there and he who ran might read what they meant. They showed an expenditure of £26,000, and a revenue of £100,000 and the difference went to decrease the deficit. He had simply used the argument as an illustration, and in order not to hurt the Minister's feelings, had said that if the Opposition got back into power and had to look round for revenue they might adopt that attitude. The Minister knew that he had made a cowardly insinuation and a dirty attack. The hon. member had gone further and said that he (Mr. Wilson) had jumbled up the finances and wrongly charged various amounts.

The Minister for Works : So you have.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The Minister for Works was always going to do wonders, and everybody before him had done wrong and badly administered the department. It was time the Minister tried to do something other than this sort of thing, which was going to put a burden on people who were not entitled to carry it; and it was just about time he knocked off telling the country what he was going to do, and waited till he had done something.

The Premier : Keep to the point and give us less personalities.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The Minister for Works had accused him of muddling up the finances and of omitting to charge what was justly chargeable to this account. When the Bill was introduced in 1909 he had explained fully how this matter would operate, and the Minister could see those remarks in *Hansard* if he would take the trouble to turn them up. He had pointed out that these works would be constructed by the Works Department under the Minister for Works, that the department would have a staff of experts with the knowledge necessary to carry out the works expeditiously and well, but it would be folly to expect the Board, which the Government suggested at that time, to engage an expert staff simply to carry out storm water drains and deep sewerage according to the designs already pre-

pared. Ultimately Parliament decided not to have a board, and that the control of the Water Works and Sewerage Department should be part of the duty of the Minister for Works. The clauses relating to the board were deleted and the Minister for Works took charge, but he took charge under the Act just the same as if there had been a board appointed and he had no power to go outside the Act. At that time he had explained very clearly that the works would be carried out by the Works Department, and that until they were completed and handed over to the Metropolitan Water Works and Sewerage Department the interest and sinking fund, whatever it might be, would be payable from Consolidated Revenue and debited up to the capital cost of the undertaking, so that ultimately the citizens who were to derive benefits from the works would carry the burdens not only of the moneys raised for the purpose of their construction, but also the interest and sinking fund contributions that had been paid during that period.

The Premier : It is a pretty big Bill.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : That did not matter; that was the proper course, and the House at that time realised that it was fair. If we carried on a big undertaking which required two or three years to complete and we had to borrow money for it by instalments and pay interest on that money, we charged that interest to the capital cost of the undertaking.

The Premier : We would have to write off thousands and thousands of pounds, and it would never pay.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : We would have to do nothing of the sort.

The Minister for Works : Why did not you do it?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The works had never been transferred in his time, and that was the reason it was not done.

The Minister for Works : You were not game to tackle the rating.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : The Minister's interjection was childish. The works were not completed. The houses were not connected and the Government could not ask the people to pay rates until they got the service.

The Premier: The main portion, the tanks and filter beds, had been in operation for months.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But the whole system was not in operation for months.

The Premier: The whole system will never be completed.

Mr. Monger: I want to know if there was any protest—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order in speaking without rising to address the Chair.

Mr. Monger: I want to ask, was there ever an occasion when the leader of the Opposition occupied a seat upon the Ministerial benches that he was afraid to go fully—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: These works had been carried out by the Public Works Department and evidently now, so the Minister thought, the time was ripe to transfer them to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage Department. It might be right to do so, but even to-day it would not be right to charge the whole of the interest and sinking fund to the revenue that he could collect from those houses which were connected up with the system. On the Minister's own showing only one-seventh of the houses to be ultimately connected with the system were connected.

The Premier: Ultimately? There will always be fresh connections.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Would the Premier allow him to make his remarks without so much interruption? He was not reading from a draft by the Under Secretary, but was drawing upon his memory of the facts. The Minister for Works the other night had stated distinctly, and had repeated it in an interview in the Press, that 2,000 premises had been connected, and that there were still 12,000 to be connected.

The Minister for Works: That is roughly the position.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That meant that about one-seventh of the number was already connected. From the 12,000 still to be connected the department could not raise any revenue. The Minister could

not strike a sewerage rate until the premises had the convenience of the system, and therefore, so far as six-sevenths of the interest and sinking fund bill in connection with the cost of the original works was concerned, that was a charge against the capital cost of the works at the present time. The 2,000 householders who had been connected could not be made to pay all the interest and sinking fund for the whole of the system. That would not be fair. His own house was connected, and he was paying a sewerage rate, but why should he be asked to contribute in that rate a sufficient sum of money to pay the proportion of those hon. members whose premises were not connected?

The Minister for Works: We declare an area, and as it is connected the householders pay.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: As soon as the Minister was in a position to order a man to couple up his house, he could rate him, but even then he must allow a reasonable time for the house to be connected. If the Minister could not couple up a house for two or three years, he was not going to rate the property, surely! He must not administer the system in a Shylockian manner. Therefore, he held that there was a certain proportion of the interest bill which the Minister was not justified in saddling the revenue with. That interest must be charged up and adjusted. The Minister had reeled off a lot of figures with regard to the interest. It was impossible to remember them, but one could take the published report of the department for the year ended 30th June, 1911, in which the figures were set down most explicitly and there was no getting away from them.

The Premier: Is there anything down for house connections?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No.

The Premier: That makes all the difference.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It did not. The Minister was calculating on the total of the house connections. The hon. member could not tell the Committee that 1,200 connections had cost ninety thousand pounds on the deferred payment system.



The Minister for Works: It is mostly all done on deferred payments.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Most of the big hotels in the City had paid for their connections, and a number of private houses had done the same.

The Premier: That would not affect the ultimate position.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It did, because there was a balance of revenue coming from this department into Consolidated Revenue.

The Premier: We have brought to account all payments for house connections.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But there was a balance of £24,000.

The Premier: To meet the charges under a special Act.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The department had no right to meet those charges. The great proportion of the charges must go to capital expenditure. The department had no right to saddle the present householder with all the interest and sinking fund.

The Premier: You are shifting your ground.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: All along he had been pointing out the unfairness of saddling the householder, who at present had the advantage of the scheme, with the whole of the interest and sinking fund for the whole of the houses to be connected.

The Minister for Works: The rate has been struck.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The trouble was that the Estimates had been drafted and amounts put in, and the Minister had to make some explanation as to why they were there.

The Minister for Works: The rate was struck immediately the Government took office.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The rate had always been struck.

The Minister for Works: You should have tackled it before the election.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There were very few house connections then.

The Minister for Works: There were 90.

The Premier: It was time you had a rate struck.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why did not the Premier strike it last year?

The Premier: We did.

The Minister for Works: I struck it when the Government took office.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Minister struck it when the responsible officers said certain areas should be rated.

The Premier: You dodged it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That was not so. The departmental officers brought it along each year.

The Premier: They brought it to you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Never. The Premier was making a misstatement.

The Premier: It was brought before your Minister then.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No; perhaps it was just before the previous Government went out of office. These things were not done when the Government and their hands full fighting an election. The Premier would not do so when it came to his turn. All these things were left until after the election, and if the Government were defeated their successors had to do it. It was an understood thing that nothing of vital importance to policy was transacted until after an impending election. It was idle to labour the question, notwithstanding that the Minister might juggle his figures, and the Premier might bring a statement to substantiate the interest and sinking-fund charge, notwithstanding that he might say he was going to put the whole of the liability on the shoulders of the few citizens whose premises were coupled up with the system, he was going to carry the Estimates through, though there was an Act of Parliament which he was defying in carrying them through. It was not right to carry the Estimates, and the Minister could as easily concentrate his management, whether he worked under the Act or under the amending Bill, which would enable him to treat it purely and simply as a Government department. The several sub-departments of the different water supplies could be controlled and run in the interests of the section of the community they belonged to just the same under existing legislation without mud-

dling up the finances with the finances of the State.

The Premier: If it is just the same, why quarrel with the method?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: When would the Premier get sense and understanding. The Minister for Works had said they must bring all these departments under one head; it was an amalgamation scheme that would be economical, and that was the reason the amount appeared in the Estimates. The Minister admitted it was illegal, and so did the Premier, and the Committee were told that the Government would bring in legislation, and that a Government department would be formed. The Premier said he believed that was necessary for the economical running of the amalgamated department. The department could be run as economically under the Act as under any repealing measure. The Government could have amalgamated these branches and still run them under separate Acts and under separate accounts. When the Bill was introduced in 1909, members would recollect that the great exception taken was that they feared the Government intended to make the metropolitan water supply area one area, and strike a uniform rate. The Fremantle members protested because they had only a 6d. rate; the Claremont members protested because they had only a 9d. rate, whereas in Perth the rate was 1s. or 1s. 6d. They asked whether it was the intention of the Government to amalgamate these schemes and make a uniform rate, and his reply was, "No, the provisions are in the Bill to keep them separate, and until we get a uniform water supply and system of sewerage we cannot think of striking a uniform rate." Therefore they were kept separate. It was provided that the metropolitan area should be divided into districts, the Fremantle district, the Claremont district, and Perth district, and ultimately, though it had not yet been achieved, the Guildford and Midland Junction district, so that each stood on its own bottom and its accounts could be kept separate, and so that each should only pay for the services it received for its rates. That was the arrangement. It was a Government depart-

ment so far as the management was concerned, but each had to keep its own accounts.

The Minister for Works: As far as the book-keeping is concerned it will be to-day.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It could not be if it was to figure in the Estimates, because provision was made for the whole expenditure, and provision was made for the revenue to go into consolidated revenue. Supposing £100,000 of revenue was estimated and £120,000 was received, it would go into revenue. Under the Estimates it would not be possible to do otherwise. The Premier should delete this item, and let the department stand under the existing statute until Parliament authorised the Government by a new Bill to do otherwise.

The PREMIER: It was not necessary to continue the debate as it would all have to be gone over again when the Bill, the second reading of which he anticipated would be moved on Tuesday next, was before the House. He believed he had adopted the correct course. In view of the fact that the Government had decided to definitely amalgamate the water supply, sewerage and drainage of the metropolitan area, provision should be made in accordance with the Government policy on the current Estimates. If that was not done, the leader of the Opposition, merely out of opposition to the Government more than anything else, would, when the Bill came down, take the Government to task for having decided to do this without making provision on the Estimates for it. The House had been told that the Government had decided to amalgamate the water supplies in accordance with their policy, which had been emphatically endorsed by the people at the last elections. Members of the Opposition had said it would be in the interests of the State and of the water supplies that they should be amalgamated. It would be possible to get more expert advice when the supplies were concentrated than by having different branches in different departments. That having been accepted, the Government did what they considered was the correct thing. When bringing

down the finances, the Government tried to show members exactly where it was anticipated revenue would be received, and how much and in what direction it was intended to expend it. Surely there was more wisdom in that method than in continually expending money without members having a complete knowledge of it. It was true that, after all the same result was obtained without altering the law as it existed, but was it not better to have a law which would cause operations to be carried on as desired by Parliament rather than later on to have a mix up with separate officers claiming to be put under one Act and others under another until there was chaos? All the Government were doing was to legalise the carrying on of the water supplies by one department under the new Bill, and the books in the meantime would be kept as under the existing law. There was no change in the operations of the Department, and all the books had been kept separate. He had explained previously that, when the new law was operating and the Estimates were passed, the Government would still produce a proper balance sheet and profit and loss account for every undertaking in the Water Supply Department. Whilst the supplies were amalgamated and brought under one set of offices, the books would be kept separate, and at the end of the year a proper balance sheet and profit and loss account would be submitted for the information of members. When he made that statement members applauded him, and said it was what was desired. That opinion had been expressed for years, but for some reason there had been a difficulty in obtaining complete information.

Mr. Nanson: Supposing you have a surplus in the metropolitan department?

The PREMIER: That was a matter to be dealt with in the Bill. The time had arrived when we should consider this question from the point of view of the State as a whole, and not from the standpoint of the metropolitan area. The complaint of the people in the country was that taxpayers in the country were pledged to the expenditure of money in the metropolitan area, and that had been

done, and the time had arrived when the interests of the country as a whole should be considered. If the taxpayer in the country districts who was developing the land under adverse conditions was pledged to the expenditure of huge sums in the metropolitan area, it was the duty of the metropolitan area to assist him.

Mr. Nanson: We are doing it.

The PREMIER: If it should be found eventually that we were operating water supplies and sewerage in Perth at such a small price that it would mean practically no payment by the taxpayers, would we make the taxpayer in the country pay all the charges of government? The people in the country would not tolerate that for a moment. The leader of the Opposition said the Government had no right to charge the people who were getting the service until the scheme was completed. The day would never come when the scheme was completed as far as house connections were concerned. Melbourne had a scheme which was supposed to have been completed years ago, and connections were still being made at the rate of 4,000 a year. The main sewers were constructed almost without exception and the septic tanks had been completed for years, while the sewerage beds, and even the new ones that had to be constructed owing to the faulty construction of the previous Government, had been completed for years, yet the general taxpayer was paying the interest and sinking fund charges. Could we tolerate it any further? It was a difficult position the previous Government were not game to face. Already the present Government had been approached to write off thousands and thousands of money expended on the pledge of the general taxpayer in connection with the operation of the scheme, and had it not been written off the people of the metropolitan area could never carry the burden. Yet the leader of the Opposition talked of overcharging the people of the metropolitan area. They would be overcharged now in order to see that they ultimately got the services at a reasonable rate. Prior to the 30th June, 1911, the department had placed before the Ministry of the day the necessity for fixing a

sewerage rate, but that Ministry deliberately refrained from doing it and kept shelving the matter and throwing it into pigeon holes until finally the department had to present this report to Parliament—

No sewerage or drainage rates have yet been levied, and consequently the ratepayers in the areas proclaimed for compulsory connections are using the sewers without charge, the civic authorities declining to rebate any proportion of their sanitary rate until the sewerage rate be struck. It is hoped that the sewerage and drainage rates will be struck for the coming year.

Yet the hon. member tried to make it appear that the previous Government did everything possible in this direction. It was a matter that needed some careful handling, and so that it would not affect the result of the general election it was pigeon-holed. The adjustment came from the present Government, and the hon. member knew the agitation that was likely to arise shortly in connection with the charges on the metropolitan people for sewerage and drainage. The position, as the present Government found it, was that, instead of the people in the metropolitan area carrying the burden and doing something to reduce the deficit, the people in the country were doing it owing to the action of the previous Government. The hon. member talked of continuing the scheme until it was completed and adding the interest and sinking fund charges to the capital cost. That would mean this year adding £28,000 to the £500,000, and eventually the capital charge on the people of the metropolitan area would be two or three millions, and how were they to carry it? It would be impossible. The sooner interest and sinking fund was charged to them the less interest and sinking fund they would have to pay on the whole scheme and the less burden they would have to carry. The action of the Government was not in the interests of the people of the country who were being robbed for the sake of the people in the metropolis, but it was absolutely in the interests of the metropolitan area.

Mr. LEWIS: What had been done to improve the metropolitan water supply,

because to-day in the higher levels it was absolutely impossible to get any water between 5 o'clock and 8 o'clock at night?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The inconvenience caused last year to the people generally on the highest levels would be obviated shortly by the completion, at the cost of £40,000, of a huge storage reservoir on Mount Eliza. The 2in. and 1in. pipes that had originally served scattered outlying districts in the suburbs were being replaced by 3in. and 4in. mains. This year there was a vast improvement on what existed last year.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Colonial Secretary (Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister—Hon. W. C. Angwin, Honorary Minister, in charge of the votes).

*Vote—Office of Colonial Secretary, £15,299:*

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN in introducing the Estimates for the departments controlled by the Colonial Secretary said: In dealing with these Estimates, members will realise that the Minister controlling the department is in another place, and consequently I am not so well versed in the circumstances of the department as other Ministers are in dealing with the Estimates of their departments. I suppose there are more sub-departments under the control of the Colonial Secretary than under the control of any other Minister, not excepting the Treasurer, and the various things to be contended with in this department are matters of administration only, though this year's Estimates provide for one or two trading concerns. If hon. members will look at last year's expenditure they will find that it was £431,717, which was £52,504 more than the expenditure in 1910-11. Last year £208,000 was spent by the department entrusted with the care of the sick and infirm; that is £44,000 more than was spent in the previous year. Unfortunately, during the period when it was necessary to curtail expenditure, these departments were those in which the curtailment was made, consequently it was found necessary, in order that these people should be looked after in a proper manner, that an increase should be made in this direction,

so this year's Estimates provide £20,000 more for this department than was provided in the year 1910-11. The estimates of expenditure this year for the departments controlled by the Colonial Secretary amount to £505,641, an increase on last year's expenditure of £73,927. This large increase has been brought about principally through the introduction of new services such as ferries and steamships, which account for approximately £62,000 out of the £73,000 increase. The other increases are chiefly in Charities £9,160, Lunacy 3,567, Medical and Health £7,522, and Police £3,584, while Aborigines, Gaols, and other small departments showed decreases of approximately £12,000. In accordance with the Public Service Commissioner's classification there has been a change during the year in regard to the Immigration Department, and this has now been placed under the control of the Under Secretary. Previously there was a secretary controlling this department which, in addition to the Tourist and General Information Bureau also controlled the Immigration Labour Bureau. It has been thought advisable that the Government Labour Bureau should deal with all applications and registrations for employment as it had previously. The alteration which had been made was only for a trial, and it was thought advisable, not only in the interests of those coming into the State as immigrants, but also in the interests of those in the State, that every one should have a fair opportunity for any positions open for employment, so that the Immigration Labour Bureau was closed and the work was again taken up by the Government Labour Bureau. The Tourist Department has been transferred to the Treasury.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Who is going to run the Tourist Department in the Treasury?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is under the State Hotels branch. We have been accused of trying to stop immigration. I would like to point out that if stopping immigration brought about the result of the past 12 months, I maintain there are no grounds for the statements that have been made, as during the year the number

who arrived in the State under the assistance of the Government was 9,697, an increase of 1,953 over the previous year. I believe that the step taken to try as far as possible to confine our immigration to nominated passengers is beneficial not only to the immigrants but also to the State, because it has a tendency to bring into the State a large number of persons who have family relatives already settled here.

Hon. Frank Wilson: We do not always get the right class by that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Agent General has been instructed in every instance to turn down applicants if he finds the persons nominated are not suitable to come to Western Australia, and he has carried out this on more than one occasion. It is only right that the Agent General should be in this position. He is in a position to say whether a person is suitable, and he will take care that no one can arrive here who is not suitable. The assisted immigrants for some considerable time consisted principally of farm workers. As a matter of fact, I do not think the Agent General would approve of anyone to come except he was a farm worker, but I admit that for some considerable time previous Agents General were informed that it was not necessary that they should allow only farm workers to come. Consequently we had several coming out, such as a solicitor's clerk and others under the designation of farm labourers. The Government thought it well, and I think rightly so, that during the dry season when work in the country was scarce on account of the failure of the harvest, to ask the Agent General to cease his operations to a large extent in regard to assisted immigrants. That was done last year, and he was asked to endeavour as far as possible to send out the wives and families of those persons who were already settled here. Since that time there has been arriving in the State a larger number of women and children than has ever been the case before. The Agent General, however, has found some difficulty in getting steamers to bring out the nominated passengers, and more particularly is this so when these passengers

are women and children. The shipping companies prefer single men as passengers. Only a few weeks ago I had a complaint lodged that one of the steamers that came here recently with immigrants was not full. I pointed out to the representative of the company that there was no necessity to come out here unless it was with a full ship, and I asked the reason why the vessel came out with some empty berths when there were many immigrants in England waiting the opportunity to come out. I was then asked what class of passengers they were, and I replied that a number were women and children. I was then informed that the vessel had berths only for single men.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There were plenty of single men ready to come out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The matter was in the hands of the Agent General. It will be seen that we are doing everything we can. Up to the end of this year we have 3,129 passengers booked, and we have approximately at the present time in addition 4,000 persons waiting for passages to the State.

Mr. Nanson: Can you mention how they are divided, the adult males, and the adult females?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have not that information with me.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What did the Premier mean when he said that the Government were closing down on immigration?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That was a wrong report in the newspaper, but the Premier can reply to that himself. There was an increase of 1,953 over the previous year. The total declared capital brought to the State by these people was £71,000 as against £43,000 in the previous year. Of the total number who arrived in Western Australia, that is 9,697, the number nominated was 4,617. At the present time there are complaints being made by men who have nominated their families, of the delay which occurs from the date of nomination to the date of arrival. This, however, is a matter that cannot be avoided.

Mr. Turvey: Why not bring them out in the Government steamers?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a matter of impossibility to get additional ships to bring out the nominated immigrants who desire to come to Western Australia. The nominations are keeping up to the standard, and number 150 weekly. It will be seen, therefore, so far as the Government are concerned, everything possible is being done to keep up the tide of immigration. We believe that the future prosperity of this State does not altogether depend upon bringing single men out to Western Australia, but that the State can best be built up by bringing out the wives and families of those who are already here. During the present year an alteration has been made in regard to the passage charges. It was thought advisable that throughout Australia there should be a uniform rate, and conditions of admission of immigrants, and at the last Premiers' conference the matter was taken into consideration, and the rate was fixed that each male passenger should be charged a minimum of £6. This is an increased fare so far as Western Australia is concerned of £3. For females the minimum rate was fixed at £3, this being an increase of £1 over the original fare to this State. The age limit was also fixed and no person is now allowed an assisted passage who is over the age of 45 years if he is married, and single females over the age of 30.

Mr. Nanson: When did this come into force?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On the 1st April last. It has not affected the volume of nominated immigrants at all. The difficulty is to get steamers to bring out these nominated immigrants. During the year a change was made in the immigration receiving home which was transferred from Perth to Fremantle. This change was made owing to the necessity for increased office accommodation for the Water Supply Department. The immigrants' home now is situated at Fremantle, the premises being those which were formerly the old men's home. This transfer has been the means of effecting a saving of £1,000 in rents which were being paid by the Government. During last year 5,035 persons passed through the home,

and the cost of maintaining that home was £1,947 and the amount received from immigrants was £831. As members are aware, during the first three days immigrants are housed free of charge, and after that a small charge is made for maintenance, but it is a rare occurrence as will be seen by the total expenditure, that immigrants remain at the home longer than three days. The cost per head of bringing immigrants to Australia is slightly over £10. That is not all expended on immigrants' fares. A great portion of it is spent in advertising Western Australia in the old World. The total expenditure on immigration last year amounted to £111,000 so that it will be seen we are paying a large amount on our immigration policy. Some comments have been made during the debate on the general Estimates regarding the control of the Aborigines Department. I would like to say that at the present time we have under consideration, and we hope in a few weeks to carry out, the question of taking over by the Medical Department the control of Dorre and Bernier Islands, on which at the present time there are lock hospitals. As hon. members are aware, these islands were under the control of the Aborigines Department, and it was the case of the officer in charge being connected with one department having to go to another department for advice. The Government thought it was advisable that the Medical Department should assume control of all the hospitals in the State, and consequently these lock hospitals will in future be under the control of the Medical Department. At Bezout Island there are at the present time four lepers. It is intended to close this island altogether. Recently the principal medical officer visited Dorre and Bernier Islands for the purpose of ascertaining whether it would be possible to send the lepers to those islands where they could receive proper medical attention. Hon. members are aware that at the present time no one is looking after the lepers at Bezout Island. It is a barren island, and water has to be taken to them, and the comments which were made by Dr. Moloney when he visited that island twelve months ago,

showed that things were a disgrace to Western Australia.

Mr. Underwood: The comments on the state of the island?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The conditions which existed there. These lepers were placed on that island and on many occasions the only water they had to wash themselves in was the sea water. Hon. members will agree with me that so far as the lepers are concerned this was not a desirable state of affairs. We hope within a few weeks that a Public Works Department officer will visit the other islands with a view of erecting compounds to which the lepers can be transferred and properly attended to in the future. Hon. members have also thought that more reserves should be made for the aborigines, and I have to inform the Committee that the Minister for Lands has set aside four million acres in the North-West as a special reserve for aborigines. Thus the criticism which has been levelled against the Government in the past for not reserving sufficient country for the natives will be removed. In regard to the Moola Bulla station which is under the control of the Aborigines Department, there are 380 natives there. Hon. members will know that this is the cattle station which was purchased for the aborigines by the previous Government and it was the first effort that was made to break up the meat ring. While members opposite were condemning us for a considerable time for entering into the cattle trade they forgot to point out that they took the first step in that direction by purchasing that station. On the 1st September, 1910, when the station was taken over, there were 11,357 head of cattle and 282 horses there. From that date to the 30th June last 730 head of cattle were killed for the use of the natives and for station rations, and 1,159 were sold. On the 30th June last the number had increased to 13,095 head of cattle and 370 horses. It will be seen, therefore, that the previous Government have placed in our hands a very nice little station to back up our meat-stall at the Perth markets.

Member: Robbing the niggers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: To feed the niggers as well. During the first 10 months the station showed a loss of £742 but last year there was a profit made of £643. During the year the Government brought down from this station 502 cattle, and the price paid delivered at Wyndham was £3 10s. per head. This was an increased price over what had been received previously for the Wyndham station cattle.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

[*Mr. Holman took the Chair.*]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Continuing on the subject of the Aborigines Department, I may state that the cost of maintaining indigent natives varies from 3d. per head at Eucla to 1s. per head in Kimberley. Altogether 2,500 natives are in receipt of relief, and the general expenditure for maintaining indigent natives last year amounted to £10,259. For the information of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) who pointed out that certain stations in the Roebourne district were practically full of diseased natives, I may say that since the discovery of leprosy amongst the natives the Medical Department has induced the Aborigines Department to make periodical inspection of these stations on which leprosy was found and in August of this year Dr. Mannsall of Roebourne visited these stations for the purpose of inspecting the natives. Under date August 22nd, 1912, the doctor reported as follows:—

I now confirm my wire of even date, in which I stated I had examined on the aborigines thereon, and found no case of leprosy or contagious disease. These stations are west of Roebourne in the Portescue direction. Chirritta, 33 miles out, is owned by Messrs. Withnell Bros., as is Karratha, 36 miles out, and adjoining Chirritta. Balmoral (90 miles) is owned by Mr. James Munro, and adjoins Karratha, and Mardie (102 miles) owned by Messrs. Richardson & Co., adjoins Balmoral. I examined all the aborigines employed on these runs, 47 on Mardie, 3 on Balmoral, 11 on Karratha, and 7 on Chirritta, and

found them all in good health and free from disease.

That is the doctor's report of the last inspections made. It is the intention of the department to continue these periodical inspections with a view of wiping out the diseases which have been located on the stations named. An important department under the control of the Colonial Secretary is that dealing with charities. During the year the charity vote was exceeded by a very large amount, I think somewhere about £7,000 or £8,000 in excess of the amount voted. That was owing to the new regulations brought into force in regard to further assistance to be granted to widows and children. In 1909-10 there were 60 women assisted by monetary grants from the Charities Department. In 1910-11 they numbered 83, and during the year just ended this number increased to 239, of whom 174 were widows. During the year 2,187 persons, of whom 1,418 were children, received assistance. Included in these figures are 239 women on whom 736 children were dependent. When, in the past an application was made to the Charities Department for assistance the custom was, under the State Children's Act, for the mothers to take the children to the State childrens court and thus the children were made wards of the State. In my opinion this practice was entirely wrong. I believe that every child, as far as possible, should be kept away from the court, no matter whether it is a children's court or any other form of court, because the fact of a child being brought before a court of the State leaves a stigma on it ever after. Consequently I discussed the question with the superintendent of charities and suggested that in future we should assist these children without bringing them before the court. My idea was that we could make them similar to State children and assist the mothers in their maintenance without seeking the aid of the court at all. I am pleased to say this course has been followed out, and to-day there are very few children brought before the court. The number of persons receiving monetary assistance during the year was 1,287,



which represents a 96 per cent. increase on the figures of the previous year. The aim of the Government has been, as far as possible, to allow mothers to keep control of their own children. We believe it is much better that a child should be kept with its mother than that it should be sent to any other home.

Mr. Heitmann: You do not always allow as much for them when they remain with their mothers as when they go to a home.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It all depends. In some cases there are in the homes children for whom as much as 10s. is paid, but the great majority of the children in the homes are paid for at the rate of 7s., which is the rate the mothers are allowed for their maintenance.

Mr. Heitmann: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is so. Under the system now in vogue every child placed in a home has been paid for at the rate of 7s. per head per week. The hon. member, no doubt, is alluding to a system which I intend to explain.

Mr. Heitmann: No, not to a system, only to one case.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: For some time I was in a quandary in regard to the system in vogue, and I made inquiries for the purpose of finding out what factors are taken into consideration in allotting assistance to widows who make application. I found that each case was considered on its merits. There are taken into consideration the income of the mother, what rent she has to pay, and whether she had to pay any amount at all. In some instances it is found that while it is necessary to assist every child in a family where the children are of tender age, in other cases it is only necessary to assist certain members of a family. I know of instances of large families of young children in which it was necessary that the mother should remain with her children all the time, and so was unable to go out and earn anything. In such circumstances the whole family have been assisted to the extent of 7s. per head per week, while in other cases, where some of the children were able to look after the younger ones and, perhaps, the mother had been in posses-

sion of a house with no rent to pay, it has only been necessary to assist two or three of the family. Consequently the method adopted is that each case shall be considered on its merits, and the assistance rendered is what the superintendent considers necessary for the maintenance of the family. On the closing day of the year the department was paying £187 per week for the assistance of children. As I have said, owing to the fact that the Immigration Home has been removed to Fremantle, the Old Men's Home has been removed to Claremont, where there are 498 inmates, the daily average being 385 and the cost per capita per annum £25 11s. 7d., an increase of £3 3s. 4d. on the previous year. This is accounted for by the increased cost in the contract for the supply of provisions, etcetera, to the home. The Claremont home at the present time is pretty full, and I am afraid it will be necessary in the near future to enlarge the home. At the Women's Home, Fremantle, the daily average of inmates is 67 and the cost per head per annum £27 4s. 2d., being an increase on the previous year of £1 14s. 11d. One matter which should be referred to here is in reference to the old age pensions. We have only 20 old people in our homes who are in receipt of old age pensions. Any person who is in a home provided by the State is not eligible to receive this pension, and the pension is only received in the case of persons ordered to the home by the magistrate when considering the case. In my opinion, seeing that these old people are unable to look after themselves and find it necessary to go to the home they should be allowed the same privileges as those outside, and be able to claim under the Old Age Pensions Act; but until an amendment of the Act is made it is impossible. The amount allowed to these old persons in our homes under the Act is 7s. 6d. per week. I do not know why an aged person, who, if he was outside would be entitled to 10s. a week, cannot be allowed the full amount when he happens to be an inmate of a Government home. This is a question that for some years has received the consideration of the Superintendent of

Charities, and he is still battling to get those old people in the homes a right I think they are justly entitled to. The total cost per head of population for outdoor and indoor relief is equal to about one shilling. At the old women's home at Fremantle we have a maternity ward. This is the only training school at present in Western Australia for midwives, and during the year 16 pupils were granted certificates of competency as midwives, and there were 43 persons admitted to this maternity ward. This also has increased the cost of upkeep of the home at Fremantle. The number of children under the control of the State on the 30th June was 1,082, comprising 707 in the orphanages, 146 boarded out with foster mothers and 229 placed out on probation. The number of children boarded out increased from 87 to 146. I may say that under the State Children's Act there are 44 mothers who are being paid the same rate as is being paid to foster mothers. These are dealing with children who have been through the court. These children are under the direct supervision of the officers of the department and also of the boarding out committees, which are formed in various parts of the State. The number of foster children supervised during the year was 260. I may add that we have properly trained nurses as inspectors for the express purpose of assisting foster mothers and others in the proper care of children. There is another sub-department which at times comes in for a good deal of criticism, and that is the Government Labour Bureau. During the year 10,802 men registered for work, and the engagements totalled 7,261. There have been 2,358 railway passes granted to persons who wished to go into the country to employment, and I am pleased to be able to say that 70 per cent. of the value of those railway passes has been refunded to the department. During the year there has been a change in the women's branch. Hon. members will realise that the alterations in the building at Pier-street have been beneficial. For some considerable time the entrance to both women's and men's branches

was from Pier-street, and it was found that a lot of girls and also those who wished to employ them did not care to visit the women's branch on account of the number of men who were generally congregated about the men's branch. An alteration was effected whereby an entrance could be made to the women's branch off Hay-street, entirely away from the men's branch. Not only that, but Mrs. Lukin, who for some considerable time had charge of the domestics brought out by the Immigration Department, was transferred to take charge of the women's branch of the Labour bureau, and I wish to say that her work since she has taken charge has been highly successful. More girls go there now to register for work, and more employers go there to obtain suitable girls. The registrations for the year totalled 1,450, and the engagements 1,456, or an excess of 6 engagements over registrations. These figures show that the work of the Labour bureau is beneficial to those seeking employment. In regard to the Fisheries Department, some activity has been shown during the year to see that greater care was taken than previously in connection with the various fishing stations on the coast. The new Chief Inspector appointed by our friends opposite when they were in office is, I believe, giving satisfaction, and is endeavouring to put the Fisheries Department on an up to date basis. Three whaling companies have been granted exclusive licenses having capitals of £82,000, £45,000, and £40,000 respectively. The Australian Whaling company has already started operations on the west coast with a fleet consisting of four steam whalers, each of about 80 tons, and one factory ship of about 3,000 tons. Up to date 350 whales, each having an estimated value of about £80, have been captured and treated. Under the terms of the license land stations must be erected for the treatment of the whole carcase of the whale, and these stations when erected at different parts of the coast are likely to employ a considerable number of men. An exclusive license to take green back turtle has also been granted to a representative of an English syndicate with a

capital of £25,000. The Friendly Societies Department has also had considerable attention paid to it. I am pleased to say that the capital of the Friendly Societies is increasing considerably. The total membership of friendly societies at present is 17,637, and their capital is £181,841, being an increase of 1,200 members and of £18,000 in capital. This I think is fairly satisfactory. The registered unions under the Arbitration Act, the bodies which our friends opposite frequently say should not be taken into consideration, have a membership of 30,442, and a capital of £40,529. Their total income during the year was £56,638, and their expenditure £30,686. It is well known that there are also several unions and industrial societies which are not registered under the Arbitration Act with a considerable membership, of which no details are available. During the year some change has been made in connection with the administration of the gaols. Hon. members are aware that the Comptroller General, Mr. Burt, has been retired, and the Comptroller General to-day is the Under Secretary. Special attention has been given to this department, and everything possible has been done by the new superintendent, another appointee of our friends opposite who is also giving every satisfaction, in regard to the management, principally of the Fremantle prison. Several reforms have been carried out since he has taken office. Amongst these is the abolition of the special cage treatment. Hon. members may know that inside the gaol grounds a round house was built and those who were having separate treatment had a special compartment with iron bars at each end, in which they could walk up and down. They were like beasts in a cage and very often were kept there for some considerable time. This inhumane treatment has been abolished and in future there will be no separate cage for the special treatment cases. A mark system has been introduced into the gaol, and each prisoner can work out his own remission automatically. Industry under the system becomes a necessary complement of good conduct. Every prisoner can obtain six marks per

day. The maximum number of marks he can obtain is eight, and during the time of his incarceration the marks he gains are taken as a guide to the remission of any portion of his sentence. The length of time which the prisoner will be kept in gaol depends entirely on his own actions. The management of the female section of the prison has also been changed. The women inmates are now provided with work in keeping with their sex, and with suitable clothing, and are permitted healthy forms of games during recreation time. For some considerable time before the female prisoners were employed almost entirely as washerwomen, all the heavy washing for the gaol had to be done by the women prisoners, but to-day they only do the light washing and the male prisoners do the heavy part of the work. Lectures are held periodically for well-behaved prisoners and there has also been introduced a new system which has been in vogue for some considerable time in England. This is the system of technical education by correspondence, and Fremantle is the first place in Australia to adopt this experiment. Whilst these reforms have been brought about with a view to, if possible, assist in the reform of the persons sent to the gaol, the Government have been at the same time not unmindful of the staff. For some years the staff have been asking for an appeal board, or board of inquiry, and I am pleased to say that the Colonial Secretary has agreed that so far as the Fremantle staff is concerned—and I think it applies also to the staff of any other prisons of the State—a board of inquiry shall be appointed on which will be a representative of the staff. We have also conceded an eight hours' day in the prison. For years it was said that it was a matter of impossibility to bring about this reform, but the present superintendent on taking office could see no difficulty whatever and he has brought the eight hours' system into existence in the Fremantle prison. I may remark that Western Australia is the first State in the Commonwealth to adopt this system. The salaries and allowances of the staff have been dealt with by a departmental board of advice. The changes recommended in re-

gard to salaries have been very slight, but an increased lodging allowance has been granted to the married men.

Mr. Male: When does the increased lodging allowance come into operation?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a matter of impossibility for us to do everything in a minute, but I believe the additional lodging allowance will take effect from the 1st July last. In connection with the Harbour and Light Department, we have provided for a small increase in expenditure. This is almost solely attributable to the provision of new lighthouses at Flaming Head, and Port Hedland, leading lights at Port Hedland and Mary Anne's passage, and patent acetylene flashing lights on the bunbury Mole and Point King. A lighting apparatus has been imported for a light between Fremantle and Geraldton, and the establishment of a lighthouse at Point King is now under consideration. The jetties on the North-West coast which were previously controlled by this department have now been transferred to the steamship department. In regard to the Lunacy Department, which is also under the Colonial Secretary, I may state that new buildings have been opened during the year, and a large number of the former inmates of Whitby Falls asylum have been transferred to Claremont. On the 31st December, 1911, there were 844 insane persons under the control of this department. At Claremont there were 792, at Whitby Falls 49, and in private hospitals on trial, 3, an increase of 30 males and 25 females, or a total increase of 55. The admissions during the year totalled 215, of whom 99 were discharged. The percentage of insane to the population was 2.85 per thousand. That is a lower percentage than in any State, except South Australia, where it is slightly less than in Western Australia. The percentage of recoveries was 36.27. This proportion, the Inspector General states, is very satisfactory indeed. There is a ward in the Perth Public Hospital where those who need supervision before being sent to the Claremont Asylum are admitted. This ward is used principally for those suffering from the effects of toxicants, and also for others who have to

be kept under strict observation. To this ward 200 persons have been admitted during the year, and 123 have been discharged. Personally, I think it is necessary that wards such as this should be scattered throughout the State. One has been erected at Northam, and I believe there is also one at Kalgoorlie. It would be very unwise if a person was sent direct to the asylum without first being subjected to proper observation. The cost per head for maintenance was £30 16s. 6d., or 14s. 1d. per inmate per week. This is an increase on previous years, and is attributed to the extra cost of provisions. A departmental board was also appointed to go into the question of the conditions of the the staff. An increase in the salaries of the nurses has been recommended, and a proposal for the introduction of an eight hours day for the staff is now under consideration. A board of inquiry to consider the grievances of the staff, though not yet approved, is under the consideration of the Colonial Secretary, and if appointed will be similar to that appointed under the Railway Act whereby the men have proper representation. The Claremont farm showed a profit on the year's work of £997, and that at Whitby Falls, a profit of £233. During the year a dairy farm has been started at Claremont for the purpose of supplying our hospitals and other Government institutions with milk. We have 75 cows, which have been tested and proved to be free from tuberculosis. Since this farm has been opened, 17,000 gallons of milk have been supplied to various hospitals such as the Perth Public Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and the Fremantle Hospital, at 1s. 6d. per gallon. The estimated revenue is £1,300, and the cost of running the farm, £500. Out of the difference interest and sinking fund has to be allowed. If nothing else has warranted the opening up of this farm at Claremont, it would be warranted by the report, not only of the committee, but also of the Medical Officer of the Perth Children's Hospital. It has been pointed out that the milk supplied from the Government dairy has been the means of saving the lives of

many children, and that being so, and we have no reason to doubt it, seeing that it came from the Medical Officer, its establishment has been justified even apart from the financial aspect. Our factories have increased from 858 to 949, which shows that some people still have confidence in the progress of the State.

Mr. Nanson: What is your definition of a factory?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am dealing with the reports of the officers who are inspectors under the Factories Act. These factories are of various classes, and they are based on the term usually understood by factory. Three additional inspectors have been appointed; one at Kalgoorlie, one at Perth, and a lady inspector. It has been found necessary that there should be a lady inspector for the purpose of looking after the factories where numbers of girls and women are employed, and the lady inspector's work has been spoken of very highly. In regard to the Medical Department; the good work which has been going on for years in the matter of inspection of school children has been continued, and there is no doubt this work will prove highly beneficial as the children grow up. Each child is thoroughly examined, and, if anything is found to be wrong, reports are sent, not only to the Medical Department, but to the parents of the child, and hospitals are thrown open and free treatment is given if necessary. In addition, the department provides free spectacles for those who need them and cannot afford to purchase them. The Dental Board are attending to the teeth of the children and if necessary free treatment is given at the medical office in Murray-street. In regard to hospitals generally; I might admit that a good deal of difficulty has been experienced, especially by myself, during the past year. The system in vogue at present is not altogether satisfactory. In some parts of the State there are assisted hospitals. I cannot see any reason why the Government should maintain a hospital in one town and not give the same consideration to another town. Seeing that the question of finance comes into consideration, there

is a good deal of difficulty in altering this at once. At Broome there is a public hospital maintained by the State. At Port Hedland and Marble Bar hospital accommodation is provided by the assistance of the Government. At Bunbury the hospital is maintained by the State, while Busselton has only an assisted institution. At Katanning and Narrogin the hospitals are maintained by the State, but at Wagin and Moora there are only assisted hospitals. The system is not altogether satisfactory. If some towns which are larger than others maintaining their own hospitals, can be granted hospitals maintained solely by the State, the smaller towns should certainly be placed in the same position. The Government will consider this matter in the near future, and see if it is not possible to place all our hospitals on the same footing. As I explained, the finances will have to be taken into consideration, but I am satisfied there is a necessity for an alteration. We have had some difficulty during the year in getting nurses for the Government hospitals. We advertised in the Eastern States, as well as in this State, and there were no nurses available, and we were compelled eventually to send to England for twelve nurses. The departmental board have also taken into consideration the question of salaries paid to nurses, and have made a small increase. Additional Medical Officers have been appointed at Mt. Barker, Wickepin, Kojonup, Marvel Loch, Quairading, Dardanup, Worsley and Youanme. Owing to the increase of population in the agricultural areas consideration is being given to several districts with a view to appointing medical officers there. Last year the Government introduced a Bill for the purpose of utilising a portion of the National Park as a site for a Sanatorium for consumptives. Parliament did not agree to the proposal and since then, the medical officer, accompanied by Dr. Mitchell, who is in charge of the Coolgardie Sanatorium, the Surveyor General, and the Chief Architect (Mr. Beasley) have chosen a site of 3,500 acres at Wooroloo. This site has been set aside for the purpose of erecting a

sanatorium. The land has been cleared for the building, plans are in course of preparation, and we hope within the next month or two to commence the work of building. The Minister for Works has provided £15,000 on his Estimates, with a view to commencing building operations this year. There was a small improved farm adjoining the land at Wooroloo, and this has been purchased so that immediately on opening the institution, produce will be available for the use of the inmates.

Mr. Turvey: Will the doctor be able to take outdoor practice?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is a matter for consideration. The medical officer thinks that more than one doctor will be necessary and in that case one can be appointed district medical officer and be available for the people in the district. During the twelve months the Health department has displayed considerable activity in connection with the new Health Act. The committee on pure foods have drafted new regulations, and in April next the regulations will come into force. They have been advertised in the *Government Gazette* for a considerable time to ascertain if there were any complaints. I have heard of no complaint except one from the distillers of whisky, who complain that the standard is too high. On account of this complaint an alteration in the standard of whisky has been postponed until the 1st July, to allow of further investigation. The whisky distillers not only approached the Agent General, but also the Imperial Government, so we intend to give this matter close investigation before the standard is adopted. During the year the Midwives' Registration board have granted certificates to 633 persons. This is also done under the new Health Act.

Mr. Heitmann: Without much enquiry.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: With regard to the introduction of registration in a case like this, some consideration has to be shown to those who have been carrying on this work, and I might say have done it fairly well. There is scarcely a Bill passed in which provision is not made

that the rights of those practising shall be preserved to them, but I am afraid the time will not be far distant when, in a country like this, there will be some outcry that we are too particular in regard to midwives. It is proposed to erect a maternity hospital at Subiaco. Plans have been prepared and at an early date a start will be made with the building. When this is erected there will be a proper training place for the nurses. Maternity wards will also be worked in connection with various hospitals. There has been very little change in the Police Department in regard to increase of wages as that was done last year, but the Government have considered and granted long service leave, and any member of the force after ten years' service is entitled to three months leave on full pay. On account of the increasing population new police stations have been erected at Dwellingup, Dumbleyung, Quairading, Marvel Loch, Merredin, Cunderdin, Three Springs, Mullewa, Ngowangerup, Tambellup, and Denmark. The opening of several other stations is now under consideration. Hon. members will notice that there is only six months' provision on the Estimates for the Observatory, but the Government have now decided to keep open the Observatory to the end of the financial year. We made representations to the Commonwealth asking them to take over the Observatory, but, as hon. members are aware, they did not feel inclined to do so. Since then, we have had correspondence with the universities of London and Edinburgh with a view to keeping the Observatory open, and until the matter is thoroughly settled the Government have decided that the Observatory shall be kept open at least until the end of the financial year. The trading concerns I referred to at the commencement of my speech are ferries and steamships. During the year ferries have been purchased, and there are now ferries running to South Perth. The capital expended on the ferries is £4,322 10s. and during the last four months of last year the receipts exceeded the expenditure by £649 13s. This year, for the first three or four months after slight reductions in the fares the receipts ex-

ceeded the expenditure by about £400. The ferries have turned out financially satisfactory, but though the Government have no desire to make profits, we have not had them sufficiently long to give any further concessions, and until we see thoroughly what will be the position of the ferries, no alterations will be made. The State steamships have been dealt with fully by the Premier, and it is not necessary for me to again quote the words he has already used with regard to the cost of the steamships and their working, but the demand for the use of the steamships had been considerable. They are fully booked up for almost all next season. I think that the Premier's estimate of revenue will be exceeded, because during the time the service has been started, the "Kwinana," the "Eucla" and the "Una" have earned as profit something about £4,000, after allowing for working expenses, depreciation and all charges applicable to the running of steamships. I have no doubt the steamers will achieve the object for which they were purchased. I have great pleasure in submitting these Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

Vote.—*Aborigines, £16,374*:

Mr. GARDINER: The Minister had made a puerile attempt to vindicate the action of the Government in refusing to comply with the wishes of Parliament in regard to segregating the natives on certain stations who were undoubtedly contacts with natives for whom the Government had found it necessary to establish a lazarette. A report of the nature that the Minister quoted was expected. But how could the Minister reconcile it with the report of Dr. Moloney, who had considerable experience in dealing with lepers, whom the Government had appointed as an expert to go through the country and report on the prevalence of the disease, and who had reported that leprosy was undoubtedly endemic on the stations mentioned in the Chamber when the subject was previously dealt with? Now the Minister sought to refute Dr. Moloney's report by that of a gentleman who had been in a small town for many

years, and who had been unable to secure any great experience, and yet stated that the natives on these particular stations were absolutely clean. Why, the veriest tyro travelling through these stations could see that the disease was rampant. On these stations native women were used as inducements to bring Asiatics to work for cheap wages, of no wages at all. The whole question of the aborigines was most unsatisfactory. The department was run on unbusinesslike lines, and was costing the Government a considerable amount of money which was spent in catering for cheap labour for the wealthy squatters. In the North-West and in the Kimberleys every able-bodied aboriginal was employed by the squatters until he was unfit to work any longer, when he was immediately handed over to the State to be maintained.

Mr. Moore: What would happen if they were not employed by the squatters?

Mr. GARDINER: Undoubtedly the State could provide for them, as the State was compelled to do immediately they became unfit to work. At the same time it would provide work for white men, it would be an inducement for white men to go to that portion of the State with a reasonable chance of getting work, and thus it would be the means of populating that part of the State. While natives were fit to work the Government were prepared to allow them to be exploited through the incompetency of the protectors and the Chief Protector of Aborigines, and through the mismanagement and maladministration of the whole department, which was run in the interests, not of the protection of the aborigines, nor in the interests of the State, but in the interests of the wealth pastoralists who were desirous of obtaining cheap labour. Unfortunately the Colonial Secretary, to whom this had been pointed out, seemed powerless to deal with the question, and placed all reliance on Mr. Gale, and would not listen to reason, would not realise the disease was rampant, or that there was a system of slavery in existence. So nothing was done, and the Honorary Minister to-

night came forward with a report from Dr. Maunsell, who had been 17 years in one little town, and was practically ignorant of any disease, who was, in fact, essentially a magistrate. This doctor was quoted by prove that Dr. Moloney was incorrect in his diagnosis of the disease, but the big proportion of the people in Western Australia would be prepared to agree that Dr. Moloney was correct. In most of the towns we had honorary protectors of aborigines and others in other capacities empowered to grant permits to employ natives, and the result was that a general permit was granted to many in the smaller towns, so that native men and women were employed in several capacities, though some of them were reeking with disease. There were some acting in the capacity of nurse girls, and yet the department was unwilling to interfere. If the Government dealt with this question as they should, instead of the North-West being the hunting-ground of those desirous of employing slaves, it would be a means of providing employment for a great many white people. Evidently the Colonial Secretary was unwilling to deal with this question. If he had any knowledge of the department, if he realised the possibilities that would exist if he dealt with it, he would make drastic alterations. The present conditions were absolutely no improvement on those existing years ago. Go where one would, he would find pastoralists with power to employ natives. Many hon. members opposite knew stations that would not employ a white man.

Mr. Male: I do not know one.

Mr. GARDINER: The member for Greenough knew that Mardie would not employ more than one white man to sharpen the shears.

Mr. Nanson: When I was there there were several white men.

Mr. GARDINER: Last year the only man employed other than the manager was a man to sharpen shears.

Mr. Male: Absolutely unadulterated rubbish!

Mr. GARDINER: Why should those people, possibly possessed of great wealth, be empowered to employ natives to

give them little else than their food and clothing, and very little clothing at that. When shearing was over, and there was insufficient work for them on the station, without any license being taken out the natives were sent out she'lling, and one was given to understand on reliable information that the amount of shell found by the natives was sufficient to provide the working expenses for the whole station.

Mr. Male: Can you name one instance of that?

Mr. GARDINER: Mardie station, and that was not the only one. At the De Gray station the expenses were almost provided by the operations of the natives on the coast in picking up shell.

Mr. Male: Absolutely wrong.

Mr. GARDINER: At Mardie station he was prepared to say that the natives there provided sufficient shell to pay the working expenses of the station. The natives were also allowed to come into contact with the Asiatics brought from Singapore for the purpose of pearling. The result was that the natives had contracted the disease of leprosy. Although many of them had been segregated, and although medical experts had diagnosed the disease as leprosy, and reported it as such, and recommended that the natives should be segregated, we had the Honorary Minister saying on behalf of the Colonial Secretary that the disease did not exist. The thing was absurd. Any one who went through the district could not help noticing that the disease was rampant amongst the natives of this part of the country, and the Minister quoting from the report of a medical man who should have been removed years ago told the House that the disease did not exist. It was a most undesirable state of affairs to allow medical practitioners or district medical officers to remain in a small town for a long time. What must the result be? Here we found that Dr. Maunsell had been sent to Roebourne 17 years ago. The environment, and the conditions of existence there must necessarily cause him to drift in to a certain groove, and what



was the result? Through being there 17 years and being isolated from civilisation almost, that officer was not now fit to hold his position.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the hon. member dealing with the medical officer in charge of the lock hospitals at the pre-ent time?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes. This officer or any other who was allowed to remain in one town so long naturally became biassed, and being biassed was not fit to hold his position. In the interests of every one a medical officer in these parts should not be allowed to hold his office for more than five years. The Honorary Minister should insist on the wishes of the people being carried out in the direction of segregating the diseased natives who were on the station. This was the wish embodied in the resolution which was carried unanimously in Parliament. But the Minister preferred to shuffle and twist over this question, as was evident by his action after what the expert had stated that the disease was rampant, and was endemic, and that in the interests of the community the natives should be isolated. Whatever the Minister might do in the way of asking an irresponsible and a second rate man to justify the attitude of the Government he (Mr. Gardiner) would not accept it, neither would the people of the North-West, nor of the whole State accept it. He hoped the Honorary Minister would insist on the wishes of Parliament being carried into effect, and that he would refrain from making puerile attempts to shuffle with the question, as he had done this evening.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member had dealt with a report which was given 12 months previously. Dr. Moloney went out with instructions to gather in all those natives suffering from contagious disease, and he managed to get two or three, and he was supposed to have cleared the stations of every person suffering from leprosy.

Mr. Gardiner: Have you read his report?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. If there had been any leprosy at that time

it would have been detrimental to Dr. Moloney and no one else. Twelve months afterwards another doctor was sent up to see whether the disease had taken any further hold and the report which had been read earlier in the evening was the result of the investigation made this year. It was all very well for the hon. member to come to the House and talk a lot of rot.

Mr. Gardiner: You would not have understood me if I had talked anything else.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member said that the aboriginal women were kept on the stations as decoys for cheap Asiatic labour. He had only the hon. member's word for that and he was loth to believe that some of the station owners were so debased as to do what the hon. member had suggested. The hon. member's remarks, it was clear, were due to the prejudice that he had against the medical officer who was sent out to make the investigation. With regard to the statement that we should remove the medical officers in these outback places every five years, the difficulty of that was apparent. It would be impossible for the State to carry out such a suggestion unless it was prepared to find the money with which to pay a medical officer an adequate salary. If this could be done there would be no difficulty about transferring him from place to place, just as any other officer might be transferred. These medical officers in the North-West were only subsidised by the Government and it would be impossible, therefore, to tell any one of them that they would have to clear out of the district. If it was possible to remove medical officers after they had spent a few years in the North-West to a place where the climate was more congenial, it would be of advantage to do so, but we had not got to that stage whereby we could pay every medical officer a full salary.

Mr. Dooley: What does the subsidy amount to?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Dr. Maunsell was an officer of the Crown Law Department and he was also resident magistrate and district medical officer,

and his salary speaking from memory, was £425. Of course he had the right of private practice. Just fancy any professional man going to Roebourne and only being able to earn £425 ! When the member for Roebourne had lived a little bit longer he would be able to give such things as this better consideration. The hon. member might be informed that the Government had reserved 4,000,000 acres in the North-West for the use of the natives. This information had already been given to the Committee but the hon. member was absent.

Mr. Gardiner : Where is it ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : In the North-West, but he could not state exactly where. The hon. member was also absent when the report of the medical officer, who had been sent out this year to investigate the diseases amongst natives, was read to the Committee.

Mr. Gardiner : How many natives did he see ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : He saw 47 at Mardie, three at Balmoral, eleven at Karratha, and seven at Chirritta. Until we got something to the contrary he would not be prepared to take the opinion of the hon. member. He (Mr. Angwin) would not presume as a layman to put his opinion against that of a medical officer. So far as he knew, everything was being done that it was possible to do to keep the State free from leprosy, and to relieve the natives who were suffering from contagious diseases.

Mr. Gardiner : Your actions are not a tribute to your intelligence.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! order !

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : In every case where disease had been found, the natives had been placed in the lock hospitals for medical treatment. He resented the statement of the hon. member when he said that the women were kept on the stations as decoys for Asiatic labour.

Mr. Hudson : You are somewhat unsophisticated.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : In regard to the question of the segregation of natives at Mardie and other stations in the Roebourne electorate, in the face of Dr. Moloney's report he did not feel too secure in taking the word of Dr. Maunsell.

Mr. Male : I would take it before Dr. Maunsell's.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : But the hon. member was in the North-West too long. Dr. Moloney was a proved expert on leprosy, having had 20 years experience with lepers, while Dr. Maunsell was a man of no experience whatever. However he had no desire to enter into a discussion about Dr. Maunsell, but from what he had heard along the coast it would be advisable if the department were to move Dr. Maunsell to some other part of the State and give Roebourne a trial with some other medical officer. When speaking to this question on a previous occasion he had declared it was Dr. Hope's duty to attend to this ; but it was pointed out to him that it was not in the department of the Commissioner of Public Health. Notwithstanding this in his (Mr. Underwood's) opinion anything and everything that affected the health of the people of Western Australia was or should be in Dr. Hope's department. If on receiving a report as to the existence of leprosy in the North-West Dr. Hope had found that the Aborigines Department was not taking proper steps to stamp out the disease it was Dr. Hope's duty to have brought the matter under the notice of the Minister and take every possible action to remedy the evil.

Hon. W. C. Angwin : He sent Dr. Moloney up.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : And had subsequently failed to act on Dr. Moloney's report. However, there would presumably be a discussion on Dr. Hope's department at a later stage of the Estimates, and this question could be deferred until then. The question of aborigines was the most difficult problem the State had to solve. The longer the question was considered the more difficult did it become. We had in the State large numbers of aborigines whom it was impossible to civilise or Christianise. Nor could we absorb them into the white population. We were compelled to look at this thing fairly and squarely, and the only conclusion one could arrive at was the sooner the aborigines in Western Australia died out the better for all concerned. We

could not preserve the aboriginal race, nor could we settle the white race in those parts inhabited by the aborigines. The administration of the Aborigines Department had never been satisfactory, and even to-day it was not as good as it should be, although considerable improvements had been made. The present Chief Protector had not a proper idea of what his duties were, and it seemed likely that there was a considerable amount of money spent in the office in Perth, and by inspectors and protectors, which could be better spent in relieving the condition of the natives or, alternatively, saved to the Treasury chest. In the first four lines of the Estimates, of the department over £3,000 was allocated for salaries. Under the Constitution we were compelled to expend £10,000 per annum on the natives, and in addition to that we were expending this year something like £18,000. Undoubtedly there was room for considerable reduction, if the money was not required for the relief of natives. He complimented the department on the improved method in dealing with the natives afflicted with venereal diseases. The hospitals on the islands Bernier and Dorre were undoubtedly doing a very good work, and to a great extent stamping out the disease. Still, more work could be done than was being done in this regard. There was an enormous area covered by the collectors of the diseased natives, notwithstanding which, there were only one or two men at the work, and it often occurred that these collectors between them did not get over the whole of the area once a year. The disease could not be thoroughly stamped out unless more inspection was given to the condition of natives. He congratulated the department on the improved system of distributing rations to the aborigines. In the past there had been a great waste, if waste it could be called, when money went to those for whom it not been voted, namely, the people who in the past had allegedly supplied the natives at so much per head. This system had been practically abolished, and the food supplied was now supervised by the resident magis-

trate or by a policeman. This new system had undoubtedly saved the Government thousands of pounds, while at the same time it insured more rations to the natives. Recently the Women's Labour Conference had suggested the appointment of women inspectors and protectors of the aborigines in the North-West. It would be found a practical impossibility for women to travel alone through that country. Such a protector would have to travel with grass-fed horses, camp out a great deal of the time, hunt her own horses, and, in some cases, travel for long stages without water. And providing that she could get over the country, what good could she do when she got there? What possible good could she do to the native women?

[*Mr. McDowall took the Chair.*]

Mr. Heitmann: She would want a protector herself.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That was not so, because any women would be perfectly safe in that country; but what good could such a woman render to the native women? As a matter of fact the native women were, a few of them, employed as house girls on the various stations, while a few more were to be found in similar employment in the small towns, the remainder trailing about the bush. It had been suggested that on the grounds of morality we should have women inspectors, but he did not know that so impracticable an appointment could be justified on these grounds. It was only proposed to appoint two women as inspectors, and these would have to go over the whole of the North-West, including Roebourne, Pilbarra and Kimberley, which would necessitate remarkably good travelling if they were to get round once a year. And, after all, the moral effect would be nil, seeing that the policemen got round once a month and yet, with all their powers under the Act, their visits had no moral effect whatever. What, then, could be hoped for from the annual visit of a woman in the capacity of travelling protector? It had been argued that a woman inspector could do just as much

good as a male inspector, and in that he concurred; because in his opinion the good that travelling inspectors did was absolutely nil. Mr. Isdell was inspector for his (Mr. Underwood's) electorate, and for the country south and west in the Roebourne electorate. But Mr. Isdell had not been seen in any of these districts for the last five or five and a half years. The only effect arising from the appointment of these inspectors was to make the management a little more costly, and to delay any transactions one might have with the department. If a complaint came down from the North-West to a member in Perth the member would take that complaint to the office in Perth, from which it would be despatched to Mr. Isdell, then probably at Wyndham, and Mr. Isdell would send a reply. This meant three months for the message to reach Mr. Isdell at, perhaps, Hall's Creek, and three months for it to get back to Mr. Gale in Perth.

Mr. Male: He is in charge of the food depot in Wyndham.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: One was grateful to the hon. member for having found that officer. So far as practical experience went the real protectors of aborigines were the various magistrates. A good magistrate looked after the natives to some extent and had an influence for a considerable radius round the centre where he resided. That occurred in the case of Warden Riches at Marble Bar and of Mr. Foss at Carnarvon, and it would be infinitely better to appoint more magistrates and wardens with the money now being paid to inspectors. Any person who had to make a complaint in behalf of the natives—of course natives were hardly able to lodge their own complaints—could always find the magistrate or warden and who had charge of the police, and through them was able to deal with the complaints far more effectively than any protector of aborigines. The position of protector was a sinecure and even if the protector had any power he could not possibly do any good. For the protectors to do good it would be necessary to have at least ten where there was now one, be-

cause it would take about two years for one person to cover the whole district that Mr. Isdell had control of, and with the ten each district could be visited five times in a year. Even then the amount of protection that could be given would be very small and certainly not worth the wages which would have to be paid to the inspectors, to say nothing of horse feed. In regard to the general segregation of natives, a good deal of sentiment and not too much actual fact was heard. We had first to consider what we were aiming at in regard to the aborigines. It had been requested that the Government should set aside reserves so that the natives might live their life in their own way. That meant that the whole of the North-West would have to be set aside. Once civilisation got in the conditions must be altered for the aborigines, and to talk of allowing them to live their own lives in their own way was to talk of pulling the whole of the white settlement out of the North-West, and he would like to know whether those advocating this segregation policy intended that. It had been requested that the Government should start cattle or sheep stations to provide food for the natives. It had to be remembered that if we fed the natives we would be building up the race. As a matter of fact, the reason why that country had been so sparsely populated, so far as natives were concerned, was the scarcity of food. The natives had a system of preventing increase in their numbers. It was well known that they operated on many of their boys, and this undoubtedly had been brought about by the fact that there was insufficient food to supply more than were there at present. If the Government undertook to breed cattle for the natives and provide them with food the numbers would increase at a considerable rate. The only time that the natives died out was when they came into contact with civilisation or semi-civilisation, and assuredly by segregating them and feeding them we would be enabling them to increase rapidly. On the DeGrey river there had been very few native children born for a number of years. Then an epidemic of measles

swept off a great many of the natives, and in the following year almost every native woman on the river produced children. Having regard to these facts, it behoved us to give more consideration to this question, and when we talked about segregating them, and allowing them to live their own lives, providing them with food, and keeping the white man away from them, we should ask ourselves whether we were not building up another population for the North-West. If we were to allow them to live their own life, that would involve the pulling out of the present white population of the North-West, and if we fed the natives up we would be assisting to bring about a rapid increase in their numbers. The employment of natives on stations had been characterised as slavery of the worst description, and there was no denying that on a few stations at the present time and on many stations in previous years, that was a fact. Dr. Roth was not far wrong in the report he submitted, but a considerable improvement had taken place on many stations since that report was presented. It had to be recognised that on many stations the natives were well treated. Speaking in the aggregate there were many hundreds of natives fed who did not actually do any work; at the same time station owners employed a considerable number who did work, and there were stations which fed only those who worked and only while they were working, and as soon as the mustering was over sent them back into the country to find their own living. In these circumstances he urged on the Minister the advisability of introducing some system whereby the pastoralists and others who employed natives should pay for their services, and the money so earned could be put into a fund, either to keep the relatives of such natives now and themselves in future, or to be put by entirely. It was absolutely necessary to introduce some system different from the present one of allowing some of the squatters to exploit the labour of the natives and practically pay nothing for it. He refused to look at this question from the point of view of employing more white

men. He had always held that the natives should be fairly well treated by the people who had taken their country. It was no hardship for them to do light work, and it was not his idea that we should keep them entirely out of work so that some other man might be able to earn his own living and their living. It never seemed to him a good policy to keep anybody idle so that somebody else could get work. His ideas rather tended towards allowing the inferior person to do the work and keep him. He hoped the Minister would give attention to the employment of natives, and endeavour to formulate some scheme whereby those employing natives should pay for their services. In conclusion, he congratulated the Minister on having improved things from what they were when the Government came into office even though the improvement was only to a small extent.

Mr. MALE: It was pleasing to hear the Minister in charge of the Department and the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) counteract the rabid and irresponsible remarks of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner). That hon. member had certainly shown his youthfulness and lack of experience in the remarks he had made. It might be mentioned for the information of the member for Pilbara that many of the good things he referred to in connection with the aborigines had been originated before the present Government came into power. In connection with lock hospitals they were only continuing the good work initiated by the previous Administration. The Government had recognised that the work established by their predecessors was good work and were prepared to continue it. The new system of rations to natives was initiated by the previous Government.

Mr. Underwood: I told you how to do it.

Mr. MALE: The late Government understood how to do it, and he regretted that the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) had only just discovered that it was done. He wished to a small extent to defend a person who was

unable to defend himself in that Chamber. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) had shown bad form by referring to the medical officer for Roebourne as he had done. The medical officer was a man of great repute, and to his knowledge extending over many years was skilled in his profession. He would prefer the word of that doctor, who had had 17 years experience in the State, on professional matters, rather than that of the member for Roebourne. If D. Maunsell made a report he would take it as being equally as good as one by Dr. Moloney. Dr. Moloney was the medical officer at Roebourne and Wyndham, but had he any better experience than Dr. Maunsell who had lived in the district for many years, and had watched the natives and the people? Certainly not. If we believed the remarks made by the hon. member we should conclude that leprosy was rampant in the North-West. He (Mr. Male) had lived in Kimberley and been acquainted with the North-West for 20 years, and he could say leprosy was not rampant. A few isolated cases had been found and had been segregated. Only a few weeks ago accounts were telegraphed from Broome all over Australia that there were cases of leprosy in that town, and Dr. Hope was said not to have taken the active part he should have done. The doctor had shown that he was quite capable in the circumstances, for he had specimens sent to Perth and a diagnosis made, and the cases were proved not to be leprosy but another disease which was not as contagious or infectious as leprosy. One or two cases of leprosy had been found in Roebourne. When the member for that district made a rabid statement that the place was rampant with the disease, it made one feel disgusted that a member should so decry his district, as the statement was absolutely incorrect. He congratulated the Government on continuing the good work of the previous Administration in connection with aborigines. The native stations in Kimberley were being continued as was intended when they were initiated. While they perhaps had not done all

that was expected, they had done good work. A great number of natives went to the institution and were supplied with food. The idea was that by supplying them with meat the evil of cattle killing on the neighbouring stations might be counteracted. It had to some extent assisted in that direction, although the natives had gone to the extent of killing cattle on their own station, which showed that they were not yet immune from the experience which was born in them. It was not a question of killing cattle for the sake of food, but for the sake of sport, as the aborigines were born sportsmen. Regarding the question raised by the Labour Women's Federation, the member for Pilbara spoke good common sense. If we endeavoured to isolate natives from the stations, it would mean isolating the whole of the North-West and giving the whole of the country back to them. After many years' experience he had concluded that the natives could be no better off than when cared for on the stations, as they were kept in their country and were well looked after. There might be some cases of ill-treatment, but generally they were well clothed and fed, and their decrepit parents were looked after, and it was undoubtedly the best way of dealing with them. To set aside portions of land and keep the natives on them was impossible. If a site was selected in a certain district it would tend to the good of the natives in that district, but all could not be collected and kept in one spot. Their natural habits caused them to migrate, and if they were taken to another part of the country where the conditions and language were different the natural result was that they would fight. The best thing to do was to keep them on the stations and see that they were properly protected and cared for. And if we did that, we would be doing our duty to the natives and to the country.

Mr. GREEN: It was his desire to dissociate himself from the remarks expressed by the member for Pilbara. He had put forward an amazing doctrine that in order to have a good aboriginal it was necessary to kill him. He pro-

tested against that. The hon. member had dealt with the commercial aspect, and it was surprising to find that a good democrat on many occasions had a mental twist on the aboriginal question and ran in double harness with the member for Kimberley. The member for Kimberley thought the natives should be left on the stations where, presumably, the squatter would get the benefit of their cheap labour as in the past, and that the State should keep police and magistrates in order to ensure that the natives should be well looked after.

Mr. Underwood : How many policemen are there in the North-West ?

Mr. Male : It takes far more police to look after the white men in Kalgoorlie.

Mr. GREEN : The system of special reservations which had been adopted with success with regard to the so-called nomads of America should be adopted here. As the aborigines had been robbed of their country in the first instance, we should have humanitarian instincts and try to do something more for them than had been done in the past. Segregation would be possible the same as in America. It had proved fairly successful at Moola Bulla and could be extended to other parts of the State. If natives would not confine themselves to small tracts of country, the difficulty could be overcome by setting aside larger tracts. There might be only one objection to that method, and that was on the score of expense. It was a valid objection, but against that we had to consider the present system under which station owners were getting the benefit of aboriginal labour and the State was called upon to look after the natives.

Mr. Heitmann : Would you keep them in idleness ?

Mr. GREEN : They could be employed on cattle stations. He protested against the position taken up by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), and regretted that on this question the hon. member was so saturated with the commercial spirit of the North-West that he should find himself in agreement with the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male). Something should be done for

the unfortunate race of aborigines. They could be kept on the islands.

Mr. Male : Ridiculous !

Mr. GREEN : They were restricted pretty closely at Moola Bulla.

Mr. Male : Only the natives belonging to the country, but not outside natives.

Mr. GREEN : Reserves could be secured in different portions of the country to which the natives belonged. There was always some apparently valid objection raised by vested interests to every reform, but for the sake of doing something for these unfortunate natives it was our duty to segregate them and make special reservations, which had proved successful in North America.

Mr. TAYLOR : Having had some experience of Australia for the greater part of his life in the back parts of New South Wales and Queensland and Western Australia, he was firmly convinced that the aborigines could not stand white civilisation. Always they went down before white civilisation. It was not on account of harshness. The natives were an inferior race who acquired all the vices of the white race and none of the virtues. When the whites first encountered the blacks the latter had their tribal existence with their tribal territories clearly marked, but in contact with the whites they could not restrain themselves as the whites could, and they went down. There was no possible chance of preserving the aborigines of Australia by segregation, and no humanitarian action directed in this way would be of any benefit to them. No greater hardship could be placed on the aboriginal than by hemming him in to freedom to travel over a fixed territory. No doubt there were tribal territories in the North-West and North, but the coming of the white people had removed these border lines to some extent, and it might be possible to get two or three different tribes to mingle, but it was hopeless to say we could segregate the natives and preserve them successfully. There was a good deal in what the members for Pilbara and Kimberley had said, that the kindest way to deal with the aborigines was to see that they were not badly treated, that when they were deprived of their hunting grounds

they were supplied with food, and, above all things, that they got necessary medical treatment when they were suffering from contagious diseases. That was his experience of 40 years in Australia, and a great deal of it was spent in the Gulf territory and on the Tableland where there were the wildest and most ferocious tribes in Australia, a different type to the aboriginal of the goldfields or the Murchison. Here the native would sneak on a man asleep to kill him, but there, if the natives realised their forces were in any way equal to the whites, they would fight in open warfare and dispute the possession of the territory with the whites. There was no desire to depreciate in any way the humanitarian utterances of the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green), but one could go down Hay-street and hear footpath politicians talking about how the aboriginal should be treated. It made one who had been in the back country smile. All that could be done for the natives was to give them freedom to roam as much as possible, to see that they were not treated badly, to supply them with food where their hunting grounds were taken from them, and, above all things, to see that they were looked after by the Medical Department if they contracted any disease through the influx of the white population. As to the two medical reports before the Committee, when one of the doctors was a man of 20 years' experience in a special disease should at least be a higher and better authority than one who had little or no experience. If Dr. Mannsell had gone to three stations and had examined nearly 80 natives and failed to find disease, he must be blind. It was idle to be hypocrites in this matter. This doctor must have found disease among 80 natives.

Mr. Heitmann: But not leprosy.

Mr. TAYLOR: The report referred to diseases. Any man with experience in the back country must say the doctor was wrong. He may have been led astray, but one could say he could not have examined these people and give such a report truthfully.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He was paid a special fee.

Mr. Taylor: The report was made as a result of the statement of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner).

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He got instructions before the member for Roebourne spoke.

Mr. TAYLOR: The doctor must have known of the statements made by the member for Roebourne and it was surprising he did not find a loathsome disease. If it were true it was a most pleasing matter. It spoke volumes for the way the aborigines were looked after, but it could not be true, and it was to be hoped the Minister next year would submit a report from someone whom members would accept as an authority, to say whether the contagion so remained or not. Probably there were but few cases of leprosy which were detected and looked after, but the venereal aspect was a totally different question and it was not necessary to go to the North-West to ascertain this. In the first camp of natives a medical man could not give the report this medical man gave and a clean certificate of cleanliness. With reference to the cattle stations, it would be interesting to have some information concerning them; for instance how many aborigines were employed there, and how many white men, what progress the station was making, how many cattle were there, the extent of territory, and something about the general outlook. If the reports he had had from reliable men were to be believed there was room for improvement at this station. A good deal had been done in the way of protecting the native womenfolk in the North-West, but nothing had been done between Perth and Albany and on the goldfields. There was ample work for women protectors to do in these parts in the way of removing the hardships which were inflicted on the women natives. If we could appoint women protectors who knew the temperaments of the natives they would have greater influence over the black women than men could be expected to have. It had been said that if we sent a woman protector to the far North we would be obliged to send someone with her, but he ventured to remark that a



white woman would be as safe in the far Kimberleys as she would be in Hay-street, and he spoke from long experience of the Australian bush. The men of the bush were men of honour, and it would never be found in Australian bush that a man would do anything to a woman that was cowardly. If a woman protector was appointed there would be plenty of scope for her energies, not in the far North, but in the districts closer to Perth.

Mr. FOLEY : Applications had been made to him to support the idea of providing better protection for the natives. So far as his experience went it was fairly considerable in Western Australia. He had travelled where the blacks were numerous, not only in this State but in the other States, and he had had the opportunity of seeing them live in their own style and in a semi-civilised state. In most of the other States the blacks lived a different life from that in Western Australia, and being an Australian and knowing that our forefathers had taken this land from the natives, he admitted that everything we could do for the natives to make their lives happier we should do. He however, was against the idea of having a certain class of protection for the natives ; if we desired to protect them we would have to do something else besides appointing women to look after them. That idea of appointing women protectors was absolute nonsense. Anyone but a King's Park bushman knew what kind of lives the natives led. We might leave out the North-West and the agricultural centres and go straight to the goldfields, not one part of the goldfields, but the whole of them, and we would find in some of the camps from 10 to 100 natives. Was there one hon. member who would like to see his wife, or his mother, or his sisters in the position of protector for the aborigines ? If there was, that member would cease to do his duty as a relative. No matter what doctors told us disease was rampant from one end of the goldfields to the other as far as the aborigines were concerned. The natives could be found in the towns absolutely reeking

with disease, but it was in their camps where a protector would have a chance of ascertaining whether they were suffering from a disease or not. If a woman protector were sent to one of these camps she would have to go in, but she could not say to the niggers, "Gentlemen I must ask you to leave until I examine the ladies." She would be compelled to examine the gins in the presence of the men in order to learn whether they were suffering from disease or not. Mock modesty had to be left out of the question. If a protector had to be appointed the appointment should be given to a man possessed of medical knowledge fitting him for knowing what was wrong with the sufferers and the best means of treating the disease. To a very great extent these diseases were not restricted to the natives themselves, for in the warm seasons of the year these people were to be found covered with flies which subsequently made their way into the houses and on to the very food of the white people on the goldfields. It was better to talk straight out like this and say what one meant than to be mealy-mouthed about the business and pose as a good friend to the blacks, a patriotic Australian, and all the rest of it. In his opinion the best means of reform would be to use the vote with a view to appointing inspectors who knew their business ; have districts set apart for the diseased natives in which they could be treated and, after curative treatment, to take steps with a view to preventing any further attacks of the disease. Under their own conditions, in their own native state, the blacks were not afflicted by this disease. It was civilisation that had brought it upon them, and civilisation too that had made them weak in other respects. In the early days on the goldfields the piccaninnies were of a stronger type than was to be seen to-day. In their natural state the blacks could withstand climatic conditions without any covering whatever, but to-day they required clothes, and if poorly clad they went down under the cold blasts of winter. Civilisation had brought this upon them. In trying to civilise them we had clothed

them, and they could not now exist without clothes. There was scarcely any member of the older tribes on the goldfields who was not more or less afflicted with lung trouble. If we segregated the natives we had to keep them and attempt to civilise them. This was a wrong system altogether. As long as the State did all that could be done to render these natives contented and happy the result would be fairly satisfactory, but if we tried to make them live the lives we led we would fail, and the result would be disastrous to the natives. If the natives were to be employed on the stations they should not be paid personally. If there was anything in the contention that certain of the stations did not pay the natives, but only gave them food, it was a reprehensible practice, because no man who did a day's work failed to earn more than a mere day's living. In his opinion the money earned by a native working on a station should be paid into a Government account to be devoted to the upkeep of other aborigines who could not work. This would at once remove the evil effects arising from paying the niggers in actual cash, assist the efforts of the State in maintaining the old and indigent natives, and remove the stigma cast upon many station owners of not paying for their native labour. He would be very ready to compliment the department on having cleanliness and purity among the natives if such cleanliness and purity existed: but, travelling through the goldfields, one found that men and women of the native tribes were suffering to a very great extent from disease. We should endeavour to make their condition as good as we possibly could. The Government could do a little more than was being done in the matter of feeding the natives. This would serve to relieve the keepers of hotels and boarding houses on the goldfields of what was a very real strain in feeding the local natives, in addition to securing to the natives a better supply of food. If it was a fact that much of the money allocated to various depôts to do this work was being put to other uses it was the duty of the Government

to step in and stop this abuse. If protectors were to be appointed he hoped the Government would not think of appointing a woman to the post, for in addition to the degradation entailed it would be absolutely useless. These appointments should be retained for men with medical qualifications.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Charities*, £56,724—agreed to.

Vote—*Ferries, Jeties, and Tramways*, £17,458.

Mr. LEWIS: Was it the intention of the Government to institute a Government ferry service to Coode-street and to Como? Again, was it intended to grant concessions on the tramways to apprentices, as was being done on the railways. The Minister had pointed out that a profit had been made on the ferry service. Could not some of this profit be utilised in the direction of completing the nationalisation of the ferries by taking over other existing services and instituting necessary new ones?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In all probability the Government would eventually take over control of all ferries on the Swan river, but it was not intended to do so at the present time. The matter of the cheap fares for apprentices would be brought under the notice of the Minister who, no doubt, would give due consideration to it. In regard to the profits referred to as having been made on the ferries, it should have been stated that interest and sinking fund had yet to be charged against that profit, which would serve in some measure to reduce it.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Fisheries*, £3,728—agreed to.

Vote—*Friendly Societies and Industrial Arbitration*, £4,119:

Mr. GREEN: Had the department considered the advisability of appointing Government auditors to audit the books of friendly societies? It had come under his notice on frequent occasions that different lodges and societies appointed as auditors member of societies who were without any knowledge of actuarial work, and in consequence the door was left open for dishonest secretar-

ies to set up shortages. For the sake of friendly societies Government auditors ought to be appointed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The suggestion of the hon. member would probably require an alteration in the Friendly Societies Act. No doubt when an amendment of that Act was proposed the suggestion would receive consideration.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Gaols, £21,823:

Mr. MALE: The gaol officials had not had a general rise in salaries since 1902, and those salaries compared unfavourably with the salaries of the police in similar grades. A second grade warder of the third class received 7s. 6d. a day for two years, then he was made a first grade warder at £134 a year, which worked out at 7s. 4d. per day. He obtained a rise of £4 a year, and it took him four years to reach his maximum of £150, which was equal to 8s. 2d. a day. Then he remained in that position until a vacancy occurred to allow of his promotion to the position of senior warder. The gaolers occupied very responsible positions and when they reached their maximum they received £175 a year (exclusive of lodging and tropical allowance), which worked out at 9s. 7d. per day, or about the same rate as a first-class constable. He asked the Minister to go into the question and see that the gaol officers were paid an adequate wage in comparison with the police and officers of other departments.

Mr. Heitmann: They get certain allowances.

Mr. MALE: So did the police. The lodging allowance was £20 per annum irrespective of rank, whilst the lowest lodging allowance paid to the police was £29, and it increased according to rank until an inspector received £45 per annum.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is £29 now for gaol officials.

Mr. MALE: The attention of the Minister was drawn to those facts in order that he might have the opportunity of giving information. It was surely not the desire of the Government that men in responsible positions should not receive a fair rate equal to that received by men of corresponding ranks in other

departments. He hoped the Minister would put them on a more or less level footing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A departmental committee had been appointed consisting of the accountant of the Colonial Secretary's department, one of the gaol staff, and the Deputy Public Service Commissioner, to go into the question of salaries with a view to fixing a uniform basis. The recommendations of the committee were now under the consideration of the Minister. The rates at present paid to the warders, were, first class from £175, rising by an annual increase of £5 to £250; and in addition they received a uniform, water, and quarters or, in lieu of quarters, a lodging allowance for married men of £29 per annum and for single men £20. Second-class principal warders received from £150 to £175 and senior warders £140 to £165; Third-class warders, first grade, £135 to £150, and second grade 7s. 6d. per day with the additions already mentioned. This matter had been dealt with by the committee appointed for the express purpose. The committee would make a comparison with the rates in other States and recommend to the Minister accordingly.

Mr. GREEN: Considerable dissatisfaction was felt in Fremantle because Warder Hodges had been turned down and another man appointed chief warder, a position which it was generally thought Warder Hodges should have received. No doubt the Minister could give good reasons for the action that had been taken, but it was contended that Warder Hodges had only one black mark against him after 30 years' service, and it seems strange that he should be turned down in favour of a newer man. In regard to the employment of prisoners in the Fremantle gaol, the trades at present taught were restricted to bootmaking, mat-making, tailoring, and printing, and it seemed that greater scope for the prisoners could be found in clearing forest land. Many people had a considerable objection to utilising the product of prison labour, and he had been told that there was not enough work in the prison to keep the prisoners employed. In

the clearing of forest land the prisoners could be doing good service to the country, and such work would be more congenial and calculated to encourage any tendencies to reform. He understood that that system had already been tried with marked success.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The trades at present followed in the prison were mat-making, blanket and stocking making, carpentering, bootmaking, printing, and tailoring. This work was done only for other Government departments and did not interfere with the outside workers. The Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Lands had under consideration a scheme for using the labour of prisoners in connection with reafforestation and no doubt this would be brought into force at an early date. In regard to Warder Hodges it would not be discreet to discuss this question at present because there was a possibility of that official asking for an inquiry into the matter, but in justification of the action of the Minister it might be said that there was considerably more than one black mark against this officer.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Harbour and Light*. £19,691: *Luacy*, £41,290—agreed to.

Vote—*Medical and Public Health*. £105,709:

Hon. M. F. TROY: It was his desire to make a protest in regard to the inequitable treatment meted out to various hospitals in the country, hospitals in localities where the population was not very great and where the people were making every possible sacrifice to maintain institutions in the best condition for the convenience and comfort of the patients. There were in his electorate several hospitals assisted by the Government and controlled by local committees, and whilst he knew that the local people had made every possible sacrifice to maintain those institutions, he had to complain of the manner in which the institutions had been treated by the Government. He desired to speak particularly in regard to the Sandstone hospital, and to compare the assistance given to it with that given to hospitals in more favourably situated portions of the State.

It was the custom of the department to maintain a number of hospitals at Government expense and the local people were not called upon for any contribution whatever. In other districts it was the custom to put hospitals under the control of local committees, and the local residents were responsible entirely for the upkeep, with the exception that a small subsidy was given by the Government. He found that the hospital at Albany, a very large town in comparison with other towns, was entirely maintained by the Government; the local people were not called upon to make any contribution and the cost to the State per annum was £693, or 5s. 3d. per patient per diem. The hospital at Collie, another important town and the centre of a large district, which could not be called a poor district, was maintained by the State at a cost of 5s. 4d. per patient per diem. The hospital at Cue, which though not so prosperous as formerly, was still a prosperous town, was maintained by the State at a cost of 6s. 5d. per patient per diem. The hospital at Geraldton, a large and prosperous town, in the centre of a rich and growing district, was maintained at a cost of 4s. 10d. per patient per diem. Those towns, every one of which was sufficiently prosperous and populous to maintain its own hospital, were not asked to make the same sacrifices as other localities were making at the present time. The hospital at Kalgoorlie, which was a town of considerable dimensions with a very large population, and could not be called a struggling town, was maintained entirely at the Government expense, and it cost the State 7s. per patient per diem. The State expended on that institution not less than £6,000 per annum. Narrogin, a growing town, the centre of a very large and prosperous district, was maintained at the State expense and the cost is 6s. 5½d. per patient per diem. At Northam, which was also a large and prosperous town, the cost was 6s. 8d. per patient per diem, and York, which was one of the most prosperous towns situated in one of the largest districts was maintained at 6s. 6d. per patient per diem. Perth's was largely a State hospital, but the same could not be said of Fremantle,

which town was in a large and populous and prosperous district, and he doubted whether the people of Fremantle contributed anything to the maintenance of the hospital.

Mr. Heitmann : You are wrong.

Hon. M. F. TROY : These people paid a certain amount in fees but in giving the cost, he had deducted the amount of fees and given the net cost. At Sandstone, which was in his electorate, the cost to the State was 3s. 10d. per patient per diem, or 100 per cent. less than at York, Northam, Narrogin, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, and Albany, and other favoured localities. The people in his electorate in one town, the adult population of which would not exceed 1,000 persons, were compelled to subscribe for the maintenance of their hospital from 100 to 200 per cent. more than the people in more favoured districts where the population was larger and the prosperity greater. He strongly objected to that. The people of Sandstone were prepared to make every sacrifice but the time must come when they would cease and they could not be expected to subscribe any more than the people in other portions of the State. If the State was going to make every locality maintain its own institutions, his district was prepared to do its share, but it was not prepared to make these sacrifices which other people in more favourably situated portions of the State were not making at present. The Principal Medical Officer's Report showed that the two hospitals which were conducted most economically from the standpoint of the State were those of the two goldfields, Mount Leonora and Sandstone. These hospitals cost the State less than any other two in the State ; that was, the people subscribed more than in any other portion of the State and to his mind had received most niggardly treatment.

Mr. Male : What about Broome ?

Hon. M. F. TROY : The cost for Broome was 7s. 1½d. per patient per diem. That was the net cost, which showed that Leonora and Sandstone were costing the State only half as much as Broome. These two hospitals apparently subscribed most, and the popu-

lation was not nearly so numerous as in other portions of the State, and since the population was smaller the taxation for hospitals was very much higher than in Albany, Collie, York, Northam, Narrogin, Kalgoorlie, and Geraldton, not to mention Fremantle. It was time this vote was put on an equitable footing. These rich, growing, and populous localities should bear their share of the burden of expense. It was not fair to make the people in remote portions of the State, people who were living under worse conditions, pay more than a fair share of the upkeep of their hospitals.

Hon. W. C. Angwin : Sandstone has a medical officer.

Hon. M. F. TROY : Sight had not been lost of the fact that there was a vote for the payment of resident medical officers apart from the hospitals in every one of these localities where the people contributed nothing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin : I mean the doctors attending the miners.

Hon. M. F. TROY : The miners paid their doctors likewise. The Government did not subscribe any more to the doctor in Sandstone and Leonora, or very little more than in any other portion of the State. Leonora received £100 more for the doctor and £100 more for the hospital. He was not complaining of that. The Leonora people had borne their share properly and courageously, but the people in Fremantle and other large centres should bear their share in a just and equitable manner. Even compared with the assisted hospitals at Laverton, Meekatharra, Mount Morgans, Wagin, Beverley, and Moora, the hospitals at Sandstone and Leonora were the least charge on the Government and the local residents subscribed the most. He would give some facts in connection with the amount of money subscribed by small populations to prove that they were making considerable sacrifice. In four years the people of Sandstone had subscribed to the hospital no less than £9,000. The adult population was not more than about a thousand people, yet they had subscribed this amount in four

years, equal to nearly £2,250 per annum, which was fairly heavy taxation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The doctor renders assistance.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The doctor gave certain services but beyond the treatment of the people at the hospital, if he had to treat people at their homes, he charged the usual fee. That practice was followed in other portions of the State. The total Government subsidy during that time had been £979 but a portion of it had been for the purposes of building.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You got about £800 last year.

Hon. M. F. TROY: These buildings were entirely the property of the Government and not of the local committee. The people who subscribed nearly half of the cost had no claim on the building as it belonged entirely to the Government, so as a result the Government had subscribed to these hospitals about 5s. in the pound during the last four years, whereas to other hospitals they had subscribed 10s. or 15s. He protested against that as he had protested against it in years past. The cost of the buildings in that district amounted to £2,240. That was one half of the amount of the subsidy given by the Government and the buildings were the property of the Government and not of the people. Regarding last year's performance in this district the people of that locality subscribed in donations £5 15s., in subscriptions £1,611, in hospital fees £106, and in hospital collections £363, making a total collection for last year of £2,098. The Government subsidy amounted to £979 of which £300 was for the purpose of erecting a maternity ward.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You said £900 was for four years.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then he would correct it. The total for the four years was £4,000 and £2,000 in buildings. The maternity ward cost considerably more than £300 and although the people paid for it, it did not belong to them but to the State. Taking it over four years the actual subsidy paid by the Government to the Sandstone hospital

was only 5s. in the pound as against 10s. and 15s. elsewhere. It appeared that the more sacrifices people made the less assistance they got. On one occasion when this hospital at Sandstone showed a slight surplus the Principal Medical Officer, while complimenting the people on the sacrifices made and on the surplus obtained, at the same time reduced the subsidy. The policy of the department was to compel those who made the greatest sacrifices to make more, and those who made no sacrifices to make none. In these mining townships people always had their hands in their pockets to subscribe to the dependants of those who met death or disablement through injuries or through miners' complaint; and if a man died in the hospital, though he might be treated as an indigent patient, he was never buried as a pauper because the local people always subscribed for the burial. It was not fair to ask people in the outback places to make sacrifices when they lived under such conditions in regard to climate and lack of recreation as compared with people in the coastal and agricultural districts where money was spent freely for the pleasure of the people. The Minister should put the charitable institutions on a more equitable footing. Some legislation might be introduced by which a charity tax or a similar tax could be imposed to supplement the revenue expended, on the maintenance of hospitals and charitable institutions generally. It was to be hoped next year the sanatorium would be established. The people on the goldfields were looking forward to it. It was to be hoped, despite the conditions of the finances, an effort would be put forward to have it completed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The finances are provided for that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Every sacrifice should be made to do it, and there should be some scheme drawn up by which, when the breadwinners were in the sanatorium, their wives and families should be provided for in case of need,

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So far as the Sandstone hospital was concerned during the past twelve months the Government had spent £900 on it. He was not in accord with the present system, but he recognised the difficulty which existed at the present time of making the alteration he desired.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.52 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 26th November, 1912.*

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

### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Report of the Department of Agriculture and Industries for the year ended 30th June, 1912.

### OBITUARY — MR. ZEBINA LANE, LETTER IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT: I desire to inform hon. members that I have received the following letter from Mrs. Lane, widow of the late Mr. Zebina Lane:—

Flowerdale, *via* Broadford, 13th November, 1912. The President and members of the Legislative Council.

Dear Sirs, Please accept my very hearty thanks, also the thanks of my sons for your kind letter of sympathy on the 25th ultimo. Faithfully yours, E. Lane.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Pearling, *passed*.

2, District Fire Brigades Act Amendment, *passed*.

### BILL.—TRAFFIC.

*In Committee.*

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—*agreed to*.

Clause 3—*Interpretation*:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

*That the definition of "agricultural machine" be struck out and the following inserted:—"Private agricultural machine" means any machine designed for the purpose of preparing land for sowing, or of sowing or taking off crops or preparing the produce of crops for market, and intended to be used for such purpose exclusively by the owner thereof on land occupied by him."*

The new definition was on the same lines, but contained less verbiage and was clearer.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: An agricultural machine in the hands of the seller could not come under the definition, and the seller would be liable to all the pains and penalties of the law. The definition should be simplified so that the machine could be taken along the roads.

The Colonial Secretary: Clause 7 covers that point.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: With that assurance he was satisfied.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The definition would prevent anyone from entering into contracts for chaffcutting. Much of the chaffcutting in the State was carried on by people who had large plants.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They would take out a license.