

woman liable to serve on a jury unless she writes to the authority specified and claims exemption. If the Bill be agreed to in its present form, thousands of applications will be received from women desirous of being exempted from the obligation to sit on juries. Not every woman will desire to undertake that duty. Many, for various reasons, will be unable to assume the responsibility, and it should be left to those who feel that they can render service in this particular field to make application accordingly.

If the Bill should reach the Committee stage, as I trust it will, I hope that an amendment will be moved to restore the Bill to its original form. It is not necessary for me to say much more regarding the measure. I could have dealt with many other phases, but I have stressed the essential point. Shall we place the obligation upon every woman, as the Bill does at present, to serve on juries, unless application for exemption is made, or shall we restore the Bill to its original form and allow a woman to apply for the right to serve on juries? Obviously, the better course would be to restore the Bill to its original form. If an amendment be moved with that object in view, I shall be very pleased to accept it. In the meantime I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. T. Moore, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 3rd November, 1938.

	PAGE
Questions: Agricultural Bank, linking-up of farms ...	1839
Railways, holiday travel stamps ...	1840
Agriculture, phosphatic rock deposits ...	1840
Main Roads Board, Ubini Camp ...	1840
Bills: Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment, 3R.	1840
Workers' Homes Act Amendment, 3R.	1840
Companies Act Amendment, recon.	1840
Financial Emergency Tax, 2R., Com. report ...	1840
Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, W.A. Branch Incorporated (Anzac Club Control), returned ...	1843
Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act Amendment, 2R., Com. report ...	1843
Lights (Navigation Protection), 2R.	1843
Public Works Act Amendment, 2R., defeated ...	1844
Annual Estimates, 1938-39: Votes and items discussed ...	1854
Chief Secretary	1854
Police	1858

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Linking-up of Farms.

Mr. WARNER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has the scheme for the linking-up of farms in the north-east areas been completed? 2, If not, what further period of time does he anticipate will be required to complete the proposed linking-up?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No. 2, 75 per cent. of work completed. Completion of balance delayed owing to staff being fully engaged in connection with drought conditions.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Holiday Travel Stamps.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that in New Zealand a special arrangement has been made whereby those who desire a holiday by train may purchase from any officered railway station, travel stamps—1s., 2s., 2s. 6d, 5s.—to be used for payment of holiday fares and that, pending use, an interest payment of 5 per cent. is allowed? 2, Will he give consideration to the adoption of a similar method in this State?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, The matter was considered two years ago, when it was decided not to introduce the scheme in Western Australia.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURE.*Phosphatic Rock Deposits.*

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has his attention been drawn to a Press statement that there are valuable deposits of phosphatic rock in caves that stretch northward in a string from Yanchep to Dongarra? 2, If not, will he institute inquiries with a view to ascertaining whether these deposits contain such elements as would enable them to be worked commercially, thereby cutting out the importation from Nauru and Christmas Islands of phosphatic rock used for fertilisers?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, In the numerous caves which occur in the coastal limestone hills between Perth and Geraldton there are often deposits of guano resulting from the excrement of birds, bats and beasts which inhabit them. They are often of good quality but are generally scattered and very limited in extent, and are thus only of value locally for fertiliser purposes. It would be impossible to replace the Nauru and Christmas Island importations with these deposits.

QUESTION—MAIN ROADS BOARD.*Ubini Camp.*

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the Main Roads Board a number of men camped at Ubini? 2, How many men are at this camp?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, 30.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.
 - 2, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.
- Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.*Recommittal.*

On motion by Mr. Seward, Bill recommitted for further consideration of Clause 5.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; Mr. Sampson in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—Restrictions on offering of shares for subscription or sale:

Mr. SEWARD: Subclause 2 provides that it shall not be lawful to make an offer in writing to any member of the public of any shares in a company unless the offer is accompanied by a statement in writing containing such particulars as are required by the clause to be inserted therein. The particulars required are set out in Subclause 4 of Clause 5. The conditions to which we have agreed apply to shares that are already offered for sale, but this clause specifically exempts any company whose shares are quoted on the Stock Exchange. That condition should be deleted from the clause. Investors in mining shares, in view of the importance of the mining industry to Western Australia, should be protected against any company that is not being legitimately conducted. It is our duty to do anything we can to protect legitimate mining enterprises and put a stop to those which come into quite another category. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (a) of Subclause (2) be struck out.

Mr. Sampson: I have no objection to the amendment.

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

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 1st November.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [443]: I have gone carefully through this Bill. As the Treasurer indicated, it is similar to that introduced last year, with the exception that it raises the exemption. For a number of years it has been the accepted policy to provide for the exemption of married men on the basic wage, at generally somewhere about 2s. above the basic wage. The proposal is to do the same thing here so far as the metropolitan area is concerned, but the workers in the agricultural areas, whether married or single, and the workers on the goldfields, will be subject to the same tax as before. That has frequently been the case

in the goldfields areas, but has not been the position in the agricultural areas until recently. Since the introduction of the measure last year, a considerable increase has taken place in the basic wage. When the annual adjustment was made that came into force on the 1st July, an increase of 5s. 1d. per week was given, and with the quarterly adjustment, which operated just after that, came another rise of 1s., making a total increase of 6s. 1d. Will the Treasurer tell the House, in his reply, whether he thinks the court took the tax into consideration when it made its annual adjustment?

The Premier: I do not know what the court took into consideration

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Probably it did so, though previously I do not think it took such a matter into account. The increase may be accounted for largely because of the amount of taxation paid by married men. The Minister for Employment shakes his head.

The Minister for Employment: They were not paying the tax then.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think they were paying it on the 1st July. Last year's exemption was £3 17s. and not long before that those people were brought within the range of the tax.

Mr. Styants: You were warned about that last year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I objected last year to the basic wage being taken as a basis, because of the difficulties that would be encountered by employers in country districts, where the wages vary and where it is difficult to determine whether the tax should be paid or not. I do not agree to it now any more than I did last year, and do not object to it any more than I have done before. As the principle has been accepted, and knowing that the Treasurer requires the money, I am prepared to accept the exemption provided in the Bill. It would be of advantage to the Government if everyone in the State paid some form of taxation, no matter how small it might be. If that were done, probably taxpayers might be induced to display greater interest in the conduct of the affairs of the country. There seems to be an idea abroad that the man who is not paying any taxation can compel the Government to expend money because other people are finding it. That is a very dangerous principle. Members from time to time have asked for a good deal more money

to be expended than they know the industry will permit the Government to spend.

The Premier: Oh no!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The man who made some contribution towards taxation would be more careful about what he asked the Government to do, and more watchful of the expenditure by the Government. When a man is not a taxpayer, he becomes irresponsible. He believes he is making the other man pay. All taxpayers on the higher income level make contributions that help the man on the lower income level. He contributes to funds that provide social services that are not available to him. That has been the custom for a long time and I have no argument to raise against it. The State supplies free education, nearly free hospital accommodation, and many other services that are also free. If everyone made some contribution towards the cost of those services, he would see to it that the Government expended its revenue more wisely than it might otherwise do. Such a principle might also prevent individuals from continually running to the Government for everything when they themselves, under existing conditions, would not have to put their hands in their pockets to assist in financing those things they are asking the Government to supply. We have already passed a large proportion of the Estimates. I know the money represented by this taxation is needed for the present Government's commitments, and therefore we have no alternative but to pass the Bill. A peculiar feature is that the more money Parliament finds for this Government, the greater are the commitments. The explanation is that departmental heads continually put up requests for more money to be spent on things which must be considered luxuries to-day, and which certainly are not justified by the state of the finances. I fear that during this year the Government will experience great difficulty in securing the funds it needs. With wool and wheat prices down, with difficulties in marketing our wheat, with increased expenditure due to the higher basic wage, with contributions to National Insurance, with a superannuation scheme towards which the Government will have to make large contributions—

The Premier: Not this year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No? Is that another election bait?

The Premier: No contributor will derive any benefit for six months after he begins to contribute. Benefits are not paid straight away.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In dealing with that aspect, I may expect that you, Mr. Speaker, will say I am anticipating; besides, there is no reference to it on the Orders of the Day. My view is that Federal taxation will increase this year. The Commonwealth Government intends to find money for defence purposes. Again, there is the difficulty of obtaining money by way of loans. I had hoped that on this aspect an announcement would be made by the Minister who represented the Government at Canberra. No doubt we shall obtain the information when the Loan Bill is brought down.

The Minister for Mines: What about the reconstruction of the Federal Cabinet?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does the Minister mean that a reconstructed Federal Government will be able to obtain more money?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Unless the Country Party is well represented in the reconstructed Federal Cabinet, this State will not get much money. There are also the Royal Commissions from time to time appointed by the Government; they will have to be paid for. I learn that another Royal Commission is to be appointed. I do not know how our select committees are to function in view of all these Commissions. The next Commission to be appointed, I understand, is to inquire into a nationalisation of power scheme at Collie.

The Premier: No. That is a departmental committee.

The Minister for Works: An advisory committee.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Evidently some more inquiries are afoot. I venture to say that if there are to be more Royal Commissions, there will be justification for what was said here a few days ago. I sincerely hope that the Government will realise the difficulties ahead, and not leave the incoming Government without the necessary funds for carrying on. A new Government is more than likely to happen. That is why I take a fatherly interest in the present Government. I do so more especially at this juncture, because after the general election it may be necessary for us on this side of the House to accept responsibility for the finances of the State. Undoubtedly the Go-

vernment is putting out plenty of baits for the electors. Whether those baits will be swallowed remains to be seen. The only alteration I have to suggest in the Bill is that the exemption should be increased from £3 17s. to £4 2s., before the higher rate of tax applies. I do not oppose the second reading.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [4.57]: I need not say much on the Bill beyond that it is something which we have no option but to pass. It follows the precedent as to grades of taxation which have been established for five years, subject to one exception, which I shall mention presently. In my opinion no responsible person is entitled to hold out much hope of reduced taxation in Western Australia. I am confident that the people by their exertions, and by that willingness to work which they have shown in the past, will steer the State through what may be rather difficult years in the immediate foreground.

Mr. Marshall: I thought we had reached a period of prosperity!

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. member interjecting may have delusions. I have never been subject to them.

Mr. Marshall: Your party has fought elections for years past on the cry of returning prosperity.

Mr. McDONALD: We put up a good record now, and we also put up a good record during and after the depression. It has been explained here frequently that Western Australia now has to borrow and spend not only for works which are reproductive, but also for expenditure in some avenues which are not reproductive. While that condition obtains, we cannot be greatly pleased about the situation. The public, if they view the matter properly, will not look forward to reduced taxation, but will feel that in contributing taxation to the State they are taking the best means to stabilise the finances in their own interests in the long run. I will ask the Premier to explain the schedule to the Bill. The exemption in the case of persons earning or deriving income is £200. That is the minimum.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That has been the custom. It refers to persons not married.

Mr. McDONALD: The corresponding clause, referring to those who pay tax on salary or wages, has an exemption of £4 2s.

So the small farmer or the proprietor of a small business has to pay tax if he receives more than £200.

The Premier: The Bill contains a provision dealing with that aspect.

Mr. McDONALD: I find that last year the exemption in both cases was the same, namely, £3 17s. for wages, and in the case of income other than wages or salary it was £200. It seems to me that the exemption should be the same whether a man receives his income by way of wages or salary or whether by way of trading or farming.

The Premier: Look at paragraph (i) of Clause 2. That explains it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Rate of tax:

The PREMIER: If the member for West Perth looks at the first proviso, he will see that the people who are earning income between £200 and £213 will have a reduction of 50 per cent. on the tax they pay. That is brought about by the fact that the financial emergency tax is levied on wages for the calendar year, from the 1st January to the 31st December, and on income from the 1st July to the 30th June. Thus the two different periods are brought in. A wages man paying his tax at present gets an exemption of £200. This will be raised after the 1st January to £213. It would be wrong in respect of the financial emergency tax payable on wages or salaries to say the exemption is £4 2s. for the whole of the financial year. The payment will be £3 17s. on the first half of the year. We must try to make an allowance that will bring the income payments into line. This is done by fixing the exemption at £213 for the full year and providing for a refund of half the tax paid by those income earners receiving between £200, which is the equivalent of the wages exemption for the first half of the year, and £213, which is the equivalent for the second half. It is rather a complicated matter to explain.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Some assessments are due on the 30th June, and others are due on the 30th December.

The PREMIER: The man receiving £212 for this year will have to pay tax on it for the first six months, but from the beginning of the new year he will not pay anything.

Mr. McDONALD: I appreciate the Premier's explanation. I think the wrong figure was inserted in the Act of last year.

Clause put and passed.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' IMPERIAL LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA, W.A. BRANCH INCORPORATED (ANZAC CLUB CONTROL).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st November.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.10]: This Bill is complementary to the measure we have just put through Committee, and there is no need for any discussion upon it. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—LIGHTS (NAVIGATION PROTECTION).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [5.12] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has already passed another place. The purpose of it is to deal with a situation that has arisen because of the extensive use being made of Neon and other similar lights in association with advertising. That situation, in some circumstances, constitutes, or may possibly constitute, a danger to navigation. As members know, ships are navigated into ports and harbours by the use of land marks in the day-time and lights at night, and it may possibly arise that some of the

lights will be in such a position as to cause confusion to mariners. Lights may be thrown seaward, and the port authorities fear that sooner or later a light may be in such a position that it may become a danger to navigation. The fears in this connection have been emphasised by an accident that occurred last year in Victoria. An inquiry eventually showed that the mishap was due to the captain of the ship mistaking one of the illuminated advertising signs for a navigation light, and in that way his ship ran aground. That particular vessel was the "Orama," and it went aground on the 2nd June, 1937. Then again, there are certain illuminated signs that are fairly distinct from harbour lights and yet are so powerful that they will overpower and render the latter useless for the purpose for which they were installed. We have no legislation at present that enables a port authority to protect navigation in these circumstances, or to provide against dangers that may arise, such as I have indicated. The Bill aims at remedying that deficiency. Provision is made that when any light is displayed in a manner likely to be dangerous to navigation, the port authority may require the person owning or controlling it either to obviate the danger or, where that is not practicable, to remove the light altogether. Should any person who is served with an appropriate notice fail to comply with the requisition of the port authority, the latter will be competent to carry out the directions contained in the notice at the expense of the owner of the light to which exception has been taken. Non-compliance with a direction of the port authority will also be taken to be a tort in the nature of a nuisance where failure to carry out the requisition results in any vessel being damaged. There is no need to enlarge upon the necessity for legislation dealing with the matters to which I have drawn attention. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Patrick, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC WORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 20th October.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.18]: At first glance the Bill appeared to be somewhat innocuous. When the Title was first called, I

had no idea that it contained such provisions as subsequent examination disclosed. I now regard the measure as a sly attempt to interfere with undoubted, long-established rights of a section of the community. One would scarcely imagine that the closure of railway crossings would be dealt with in a Bill to amend the Public Works Act. Unfortunately the truth is that the Bill is designed to take away the rights of people to cross railway lines unless permitted to do so by the board that is to be established. The board in itself will be so constituted that people concerned will have scarcely any voice in its decisions, seeing that it will comprise four Government officials, and the people themselves will be represented only by the mayor of the municipality or chairman of the road board in the district where the closing of a crossing may be proposed. I cannot imagine what amazing reason there is for the Town Planning Commissioner having a seat on the board, unless it be to make certain that opposition from the people affected will be crushed. Some people who may possibly be penalised if the Bill be agreed to in its present form, were established on their properties long before the railway line near them was constructed. I regard it as extraordinary that in a Bill of this description there should be no mention of compensation for people whose rights may be taken away, and the value of whose properties may, in some instances, be largely destroyed. My electorate furnishes an example of what might happen in other districts similarly affected. In the Canning electorate there are eight railway crossings and, in the opinion of the people, all are necessary. The removal of any one would cause much delay and expense. There is the Welshpool crossing. I do not suppose there would be any attempt to close it. Although that crossing is on what ought to be a main road, the local governing bodies are responsible for its maintenance. Another crossing at the eastern end of the Welshpool railway station provides a short-cut from the Albany-road and is one of the main points of access to Welshpool. Serious objection will be taken to any attempt to close that crossing. In all probability such an attempt will be made. I do not know whether any attempt will be made to close the crossing at Railway-street, Queen's Park. The chances are that if no attempt is so made there will also be an effort to close the next crossing, which is

about a third of a mile away and is also on the main road. Then again there is a crossing at the eastern end of the Cannington railway station. An attempt may be made to close that, for half a mile away in an easterly direction is another crossing that also provides a short-cut back to Albany-road. That crossing is used by a large number of people every day, and if closed would cause much inconvenience.

Mr. Wilson: Who is the member for this electoral district?

Mr. CROSS: That will be well known if any attempt is made to close the crossings I mention. The next is not so important because it serves about two dozen houses only. I refer to the Ladywell-street crossing. On the other hand, if that is closed an expenditure of several thousand pounds will be necessary for the construction of roads to provide for the people residing in that area, access to the main thoroughfares. There is no road on either side of the line at present; and if the crossing is closed, at least a mile of road construction will have to be undertaken. I know that the Commissioner of Railways would like that crossing closed, but there is no suggestion in the Bill for reimbursing the local governing body, or even to participate in the cost that would be involved in the construction of roads. Even if such provision were made, the people affected would not be compensated for being shut off in a dead-end. Some of those residents have lived in that area for 20 years before the railway was constructed. The construction of the proposed board will be such that the people whose interests will be adversely affected will not have even a—

Mr. Sampson: Fighting chance.

Mr. CROSS: No, not even if they can put up a good case for the retention of the crossing. The Government representation as against that of the local people will be four to one. What has the Town Planning Commissioner to do with railway crossings, particularly as some may be affected hundreds of miles away from Perth? I shall oppose the second reading of the Bill most strenuously, and I appeal to the House to see to it that the people in the outer suburban areas are not penalised at the whim of a board, the members of which will have little interest in the activities of the people affected.

Mr. Sampson: Vote the Bill out!

Mr. CROSS: If railway crossings are dangerous—and the Welshpool crossing is dangerous to a certain extent—the Commissioner of Railways should bestir himself and erect warning lights, as he has done at the Rivervale crossing and elsewhere. Since those warning lights have been placed at crossings, no accidents have occurred there. To me it seems remarkable that the Commissioner of Railways should seek to close crossings that are a convenience to the people, whereas it should be his duty to protect those people by erecting warning lights so that trains cannot sneak down upon the public. The installation of the automatic lighting system has been a great improvement, and at all railway crossings warning lights should be provided similar to those erected at the Rivervale crossing. With the advantage of such a protective measure, the people are able to use the crossing and go across the lines at their own risk, without much cause for worry. I shall oppose this attempt to take away the rights of the people, and I shall ask members to assist in defeating the Bill at the second reading stage.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.26]: I oppose the Bill. There is no necessity for it because under the Government Railways Act the Commissioner of Railways controls the land over which the lines run. The Bill appeals to me as a subterfuge to deceive the local authorities and to create a body with statutory powers dominated by representatives of the Government so as to outweigh any decision of a local authority.

The Minister for Railways: The Commissioner has not that control.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Not over the land across which railways are constructed?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: And where his railways cross a road, the land there is under his absolute control.

Mr. Marshall: Can you cross a railway line without the permission of the Commissioner of Railways?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No.

Mr. Marshall: Are you sure of that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, of course, except at public crossings.

Mr. Marshall: Could you put a crossing over the railway line?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Certainly not.

Mr. Marshall: Then the Commissioner must have control over that land.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Certainly. More than that, one is not allowed to go within a certain distance of the railways.

Mr. Patrick: Not even a local authority can put in a crossing.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I object to the constitution of the proposed board, which will be over-burdened by Government representatives to such an extent that local authorities whose interests will be affected will not have a chance adequately to defend them.

Mr. Cross: Not a dog's chance.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The board will be able to close crossings and thereby necessitate the expenditure of thousands of pounds upon roads that the local authorities will have to construct. If the board is to have authority to decide whether a crossing should be closed, provision should be made for the protection of the rights of the public. No authority for that purpose is embodied in the Bill.

The Minister for Railways: The board will consist of experts.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Who are the experts? First, there is the Commissioner of Main Roads, who is a very admirable and responsible official; then there is the Commissioner of Railways. I believe the Town Planning Commissioner is also to be a member. He is the officer that advises members of Parliament on certain questions, but I have my doubts as to whether he knows much about anything, because he poses as an authority on everything about which he opens his mouth. I do not think very much of his views. There is someone else suggested for the board. I cannot remember who. The local authority, of course, will have one representative.

Mr. Doney: The chairman of the Transport Board is to be a member.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. I do not know what he knows about railway crossings and the necessity or otherwise for them. Undoubtedly the board is overloaded in favour of the Government. I have previously pointed out that no provision is made for the expenditure that might have to be incurred by local authorities. To close a public highway on which is situated a number of business houses might result in a good deal of loss to individuals. We are living in a new age but the Commissioner does not seem prepared to attempt to do any-

thing in the way of providing security at railway crossings. Little has been done in this State to make crossings safe. I am not blaming the Minister, or the Government, or the present Commissioner, but certainly they do not seem to move with the times. In the last year or two a few signs and warning bells have been established at some crossings, but the Government was reluctant to undertake that work.

The Minister for Railways: They cost £300.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is nothing compared with the cost of human lives. For the loss of life that has occurred at some of the crossings, there can be no adequate compensation.

The Minister for Railways: The number of crossings has been reduced.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, by the construction of bridges.

The Minister for Railways: And subways.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: One subway was constructed between Perth and Northam when members on this side of the House were in office, and a bridge was built by the present Government. A road has been constructed on one side of the line, thus obviating the necessity for the line to be crossed twice. A safe highway has thus been provided, but there are still two crossings, one at Guildford and one at Midland Junction. I am reminded that there are two crossings over the railway at Midland Junction itself. Admittedly there are difficulties involved in providing subways and overhead bridges at those places; but for a long time Commissioners have been reluctant to accept responsibility in respect to crossings. I remember that for many years application has been made for some provision of this kind at the Maddington crossing, at which many casualties have occurred. Commissioners have been reluctant to establish warning devices at the crossing because they anticipated additional responsibility should the devices fail.

I believe that the Commissioner already has power to close railway crossings in consultation with local authorities. Let him negotiate with the local authorities and, if additional expense is involved, it should be met by the Government or the Commissioner. The Government should incur the expenditure rather than throw the responsibility on the local authorities, who already have in-

sufficient revenue to meet the demands made on them. There is no necessity for the Bill because the Government already has all the power it requires. It has closed crossings time after time. The crossing at Narrogin was closed against the wishes of the people.

Mr. Doney: They were promised a subway, but did not get it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That crossing was closed because of the extension of the station yard. The Government has that power, but the Bill proposes to establish a board that will have no responsibility to anybody, and will be over-weighted in the Government's favour. I hope the House will not agree to the Bill. Much opposition has been raised against it by local authorities and, in opposing the measure, I am voicing their opinion.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.35]: Both the Claremont and Cottesloe Councils oppose this measure. The desire in Cottesloe is to have subways and bridges constructed in the district in the place of crossings. So long as no substitute exists, Cottesloe prefers to retain the crossings.

The Minister for Works: Does Cottesloe want the Napier-street crossing kept open?

Mr. NORTH: Yes; it favours the New Zealand system. According to information in the Press, the New Zealand Government is closing every crossing in the Dominion and replacing it with a subway or a bridge. The Public Works policy of that country, however, is so different from ours that we can scarcely make any comparison. A great desire exists in my electorate for the closure of crossings, but not unless some substitute is provided. There is a good deal of traffic through the district and people resent the fact that thousands of pounds will have been needlessly spent on roads if the crossings are closed.

Mr. Raphael: People object to taxation but they have to pay it just the same.

Mr. NORTH: I support the opposition to the measure.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.37]: I desire to support the Bill because of the number of accidents that have taken place and the lack of action by local authorities designed to provide protection for people using crossings in the various districts.

Mr. Doney: The local authorities offered to assist the Railway Commissioner to provide facilities.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The remark of the Leader of the Opposition that the local authorities have no control leads one to believe that they do not appreciate the effect of having crossings about every hundred yards. The crossings originally came under the Railways Act and there was no power to close any of the by-pass roads. That was all right 25 years ago, when a man sat on a donkey or travelled in a cart behind a horse and an hour or so was required to cover a couple of miles, but times have changed since then, and in this mechanical age we can reach our destination in about a tenth of the period required when the Act was passed.

Mr. Cross: But everybody has not got a motor car.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Even if crossings are closed, rights-of-way for pedestrians could easily be provided.

Mr. Cross: Why close railway crossings if you are going to provide paths for pedestrians?

Mr. Marshall: Who is making this speech?

Mr. RAPHAEL: At the Pier-street and Lord-street crossings the gates are open at different times of the day to enable vehicular traffic to pass over the line and small gates are provided through which pedestrians and cyclists can pass. I am not favourably impressed by the manner in which the gates at the Pier-street crossing are operated. If the Department did its job properly and had those gates open more often, much of the congested traffic over the Beaufort-street bridge would be relieved.

Mr. Sampson: The same applies to the Melbourne-road crossing.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Where there is a crossing not less than half a mile between two roads a by-pass road could be provided for bicycles and pedestrians. But to have, as in the Cottesloe district, several crossings within 100 yards of each other is to go from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Mr. North: A bridge was removed from Forrest-street.

Mr. RAPHAEL: As it was not put into my electorate, the hon. member cannot blame me for the removal. The time is long overdue for the Railway Department to provide at every railway crossing some means of warning road traffic of the approach of

trains and Diesel cars and also the triecycles on which the railwaymen ride to work. Not very long ago an accident nearly occurred at one of those crossings because the weight of a triecyle was not sufficient to operate the warning signal. The methods adopted in the Eastern States are considerably more up-to-date than are ours. That applies particularly to South Australia. I am not suggesting that our Commissioner should be given *carte blanche* as was Mr. Webb, the South Australian Commissioner, who spent between £14,000,000 and £15,000,000 of the public money and thus hung a millstone around the neck of the people which they will have to carry for many years. Nevertheless, the Government in this State should take action to ensure that better warning signals are provided at all railway crossings than is the case at present. Signals have been established at Rivervale, Maddington, East Perth and Guildford crossings but they are not the best procurable. I believe cheapness was the main consideration that actuated the Government when it provided the signals at the Rivervale crossing. The South Australian crossings have not only warning lights but also bells and this provision is made not merely close to but miles from the city.

Mr. STYANTS: What about a man with a red flag?

Mr. RAPHAEL: We used to have a man with a red flag walking in front of motor cars in days gone by, but I believe he was killed.

The Minister for Agriculture: He would have had to run if he had been in front of you.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I will say he would! I give my support to the measure.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.44]: I oppose the Bill. Not only do I consider it unfair to local authorities, but I am also of the opinion that it takes away some of the rights enjoyed by citizens of this country in relation to their passing over railway crossings. I am aware that under the Railways Act the Commissioner of Railways may temporarily close a crossing for repairs or in the interests of public safety; but unless either of those two excuses is availed of I believe he is obliged to leave it open under the provisions of the Public Works Act. The Bill proposes to make Sections 100 and 102 of the Public Works Act subject to the provisions of the proposed new section

102A. Section 100 of the Public Works Act reads—

(1) Where any part of a road or street, except where it crosses a railway on a level, is used or occupied for a railway under the powers conferred by the last preceding section, such part of the road or street shall thereafter cease to be a highway.

(2) Where a road, street or thoroughfare crosses a railway on a level, the public right of way at such crossing shall cease whenever any engine or carriage on the railway is approaching and within a distance of a quarter of a mile from such crossing; and shall at all other times extend only to the right of crossing the line of railway with all convenient speed, but not stopping or continuing thereon.

Thus, wherever there is a railway crossing, so long as the citizen crosses without delay and there is no engine approaching within a quarter of a mile, he has the right of way as expressed in the subsection I have quoted. In the Bill I do not find any regard being paid to what appears to be the right conferred upon the public under those conditions to cross a railway line without the provisions of the Railway Act in regard to public safety, which must be taken to apply in general terms. The proposed board has been described as overweighted, with which sentiment I agree, and it will be asked to consider only whether the crossing should be closed in the interests of public safety. If we make that the only consideration and simply regard a crossing as a place where accidents do take place, a large number of crossings will be closed, and the closing of them will inflict considerable hardship on the citizens of various townships. I know one place in my own electorate where, if the crossing were closed solely on the ground that accidents had occurred there during the past few years, all access from one side of the town to the other would practically be stopped. The situation would arise that a board consisting of four Government officials and giving practically no representation to the local authority would consider that a crossing ought to be closed simply in the interests of public safety, which from their point of view, might be sufficient. The present situation is quite satisfactory. The Commissioner of Railways has some authority which he has exercised, usually, I think, in a reasonable manner, though there may be exceptions, and I am prepared to allow him to continue in future as in the past. I am certainly not prepared to support a Bill proposing the

appointment of a board with complete power to deal with the matter when the board is to consist of the Commissioner of Railways, the Chairman of the Transport Board, the Town Planning Commissioner, the Commissioner of Main Roads and one member of the local authority. While the present position cannot be thoroughly satisfactory, it is considerably better than that proposed by the Bill. In the interests of the citizens and of the local authorities in particular, I shall oppose the second reading.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.49]: I am not prepared to support the Bill.

Mr. Sampson: It has not a friend.

Mr. TONKIN: There seems to be no need to say very much in opposition to it. Unfortunately the Bill shows a total disregard for the people of the district where the crossing is to be closed.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And the people mostly concerned.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes. If there is to be a board to deal with the closing of crossings, greater representation of the local body should be provided. In my district two crossings would be affected. It is proposed to close one of them and, in my opinion, that crossing should certainly not be closed. I do not think that an accident has occurred there, and the crossing has been used considerably in the past and will be used to an even greater extent in future. The local authority is the best judge of the element of danger and of the need for the existence of a crossing and should be given more say in the matter. I am inclined to agree with the member for Katanning that the present position, taken all round, is far better than that which would be created under this measure. Members of a local authority make it their business to become an fait with the conditions in their districts, and they are more alive to the requirements of the people than the members of the proposed board would be. For these reasons I am not prepared to support the Bill in its present form and shall vote against the second reading.

MR. SHEARN (Maylands) [5.52]: I did not intend to address myself to the question, but as a member of a local authority with some experience of the matters involved in the Bill, I feel that I ought to relate my experience instead of casting a silent vote.

As the Minister indicated when moving the second reading, there has existed some need for reviewing this important matter. I agree with his statement that when the crossings were created in the early days, settlement was more or less scattered, transport was less dense and certainly was much slower. I cannot speak of the position in the country, but I do understand what happens in the metropolitan area. These crossings have become very important as a means of giving access to settlement on both sides of a railway line, particularly in the vicinity of the crossings. In my district an effort was made by the Commissioner of Railways to close an important crossing, and so concerned were the members of the local authority that they sought an interview with him. Thus the board had an opportunity, by way of deputation, to meet the chief executive officer and the engineer in charge and discuss the matter. This is the point on which I wish to base my observations. The Bill proposes to set up a board. Much has been said of the personnel of the board, which appears to me somewhat extraneous to the debate. Without knowing what is in the mind of the Minister, I consider that members of the board may have a very important part to play. The important aspect from the public point of view is that the local authority would have only one representative. A suggestion has been made that there should be a more balanced personnel. Assuming that the local authority were given equal voting power, where would that lead? We should bear in mind the difficulties that arise when a difference of opinion exists and there is no balance of power one way or the other. When the local authority with which I am associated protested by way of deputation to the department, the whole matter was discussed freely and the closing of that crossing was averted. The local authority showed eagerness to adopt any reasonable suggestion that the department could submit. Had this measure been law, the local authority would have had no voice in the matter and the crossing would have been closed. That would have meant a considerable loss to the business people, as well as to the local authority, as it had constructed on either side of the line, a road leading to the crossing. The Bill apparently provides no compensation for work of that kind. If the Commissioner approached this matter in a

more decided manner, namely, by conferring with the local authority in whose district he contemplated closing a crossing, I am satisfied that in the great majority of instances he would be met fairly and squarely, and provided he adopted a similar attitude to the local authority, a satisfactory solution could be found. No member will dispute that in the metropolitan area and possibly in the country, there are crossings that ought to be closed, but I cannot agree with the process specified in the Bill. I believe that the time has arrived when some method of review should be devised, but with the method proposed in the Bill I must disagree. Therefore, I shall be reluctantly compelled to oppose the second reading.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.58]: I commend the Government for having introduced the Bill, because it indicates a desire to secure between the parties affected a more amicable arrangement for the closing of crossings, but I have to agree with members who contend that the personnel of the board is overweighted. The circumstances warrant action more along the lines of arbitration. Interested bodies must be expected to view such a proposition from a parochial angle and vigorously to maintain their stand. When that situation arises, it would be better to have an independent person or tribunal to decide the matter. I cannot see that the question of the number of accidents should enter into consideration. Regardless of the number of crossings we have, there will still be accidents. Let me quote the Murchison: we have 118 miles of railway between Meekatharra and the Wiluna mine. I think there are four crossings over that length of railway. Only three passenger trains, some goods trains and special trains run over the railway each week; yet with that small amount of traffic, we have had a fatal accident. Whether the number of trains be many or few, accidents will occur. It may be argued, and rightly so, that where traffic is heavy, accidents will be more numerous. I concede that; but, in my opinion, accidents do not enter into the question. We must regard the matter from the viewpoint of efficiency for road and rail transport. That is the first consideration. The second consideration is the beautification of our city and suburbs.

Mr. Doney: The Bill itself lays down that the safety of the public is the first consideration.

Mr. MARSHALL: If we introduce measures of this kind solely with the desire of preventing accidents, we shall be considering this Bill for many years.

Mr. Watts: That is what the clause says.

Mr. Doney: The clause reads "in the interests or for the safety of the public."

Mr. MARSHALL: I differ. We can travel 10, 12 or even 15 times faster than we could 30 years ago. Yet, with that high speed at our disposal, when the delay of a few minutes would mean nothing, people seem more than ever desirous of saving a minute or two. In their keen desire to save so short a period of time, many people meet with accidents. They cannot avoid doing so. Recklessness on the part of drivers is mainly responsible for accidents. Later in the evening we shall have an opportunity of discussing the Police Department, and members will be given figures showing that of the total number of accidents recorded, about 80 per cent. have occurred with vehicles driven by internal combustion engines.

Mr. Seward: The truncating of the corners of roads has had a lot to do with the number of accidents.

Mr. MARSHALL: That may be so. The report of the Commissioner of Police indicates that the greater percentage of the accidents are due to negligent driving or carelessness. How, in the name of goodness, can we legislate against that? True, we might police the traffic better and so lessen the risk of accident. But people themselves are reckless. A few evenings ago, a member asked whether it was right for people to get out of the way of a railway engine. I certainly would. I would give a railway engine the right of way at any time; I would not dispute its right to the road. A board consisting of a representative of the Railway Department and a representative of the local authorities, with an independent chairman, would be a more reasonable proposition than the board which the Bill proposes should be created. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) recently complained about the Melbourne-road crossing. He mentioned the congestion of traffic at that crossing and complained of the delay occasioned to people desiring to travel north and south. His statement is correct, but it is remarkable that 99 per cent. of the people held up at that crossing know that the railway traffic is intense. They therefore know the gates must be closed for considerable periods. Although those people

are in a vehicle that could take them to the next crossing without trouble and at very little expense, they prefer to waste petrol while waiting for the gates to open. The hon. member also said that the signalman in the box at the crossing seemed to be asleep. Any person with the slightest knowledge of railway working knows how impossible it is for a man controlling signals to fall asleep in a signal box, especially in a box like that at Melbourne-road. In addition to the heavy traffic at that crossing—the scheduled traffic that runs between Perth and Fremantle, special trains and goods trains—the authorities have to cope with shunting in the running yard and with the marshalling of trains and empties.

Mr. Lambert: The member for Claremont said that at Jarrad-street the gates are closed when the train leaves Mosman Park.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know nothing about Jarrad-street. I am speaking about the crossing of which the hon. member complained. He said he blew his horn for a considerable time, but got no response. What would the hon. member have said, however, had the signalman responded and opened the gate and the hon. member had got mixed up with a train?

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: He would not have had anything to say; he would not have had time to say it.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I were wealthy enough to own a car, I would not attempt to make use of a crossing where I knew that railway traffic was congested. I would not waste time in going to such a crossing on the off-chance of getting a clear passage. I would be prepared to take even the Minister for Railways to task about the Melbourne-road crossing if there were sufficient railway land available to improve it. Unfortunately, that crossing was put there when the State was in a small way industrially. We have since progressed by leaps and bounds, and consequently the railway at that point is, so to speak, hotted up. The area available is limited. Unfortunately, we cannot make provision for traffic to proceed underground, so we are confronted with the inconvenience about which the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie complained. I suggest to him, however, that the signalman is in no way to blame. He dare not break the regulations under which he works. The hon. member should know, too, that if he pro-

ceeds over the intersection as a train is about to leave Perth he is liable to a fine.

Mr. Lambert: The railways do a lot of shunting with horses. The horses pull the trucks along.

Mr. MARSHALL: Whether that is so or not is immaterial. It is possible for the traffic to proceed only one way at a time. If horses are taking the place of a steam engine for shunting purposes, they must have the right-of-way as well. I do not know why the hon. member, having elected to go to that congested spot, should complain of being delayed. I would not raise my voice in protest if I went to that intersection in the hope of passing through speedily and was delayed. My desire is to assist the Government in this matter. I think the suggested procedure is right; but, if the Bill cannot be put right in Committee, I hope the Minister will make a further attempt to overcome the difficulty. I cannot agree to the board proposed by the Bill, but I certainly desire to give my support to the measure. I think it right that the local authorities concerned and the Commissioner of Railways should decide whether or not a crossings should be closed. Better still, let a magistrate sit and take evidence.

Mr. Lambert: Do not you think it would be better for the Railway Department to use some of its second-hand 65-lb. rails for the purpose of building a bridge over the line?

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member makes suggestions that I cannot answer immediately.

The Premier: That would depend upon whether the Treasurer had the necessary money.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even if the money were available, I doubt whether such an engineering problem is capable of solution.

The Premier: It would be silly to attempt it.

Mr. Lambert: The department sells the rails at about £1 per ton. The rails could be used for overhead bridges.

Mr. MARSHALL: Perhaps the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie can solve the engineering problem. He may know all about it. I am somewhat doubtful, however; I suppose either a subway or an overhead bridge would have to be constructed. If our fast transport is to be a blessing at all, it should result in fewer crossings, because the great number we have now were provided to cope with slower traffic.

The Premier: Bullock wagons!

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. Our crossings were built to cope with much slower traffic. To-day, a truck can travel 30 to 40 miles an hour, while a motor car can proceed at 60 to 70 miles an hour.

Hon. N. Keenan: In the city?

Mr. MARSHALL: Certainly. The member for Victoria Park will give the hon. member a trip in his car at that pace any time he feels inclined. As I say, with the advantage we have in our fast traffic, fewer crossings should be necessary. It is astounding that people will use the great speed which they can develop in the modern car to the danger of every one around them.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: If drivers of motor vehicles were only a little less selfish and gave more consideration to the welfare of others, the congestion that is noticeable at railway crossings and on thoroughfares generally would not be so apparent. Numbers of people who use motors could well avoid the congested areas, and crossings that are continually being opened and closed, but it seems they are not willing to inconvenience themselves to that extent. If there is any obstacle in the way of their progress, they desire to pass through it and will accept no responsibility.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Pedestrians must cross the line at the nearest possible places.

Mr. MARSHALL: They do not complain much.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You would not expect them to walk a mile out of their way.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not suggest it. We can cope with pedestrians, but at certain places we cannot get vehicular traffic either over or under the railways. Motorists are so selfish they imagine that everyone should get out of their way. Other people are entitled to consideration, and those who use the railways should first be considered. Apparently the railways should be relegated to the Milky Way or be undergrounded so that free passage may be afforded to the motorists. Owners of motor vehicles think they have a complete right to the road, and that everything else should be put aside.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That applies to some of them.

Mr. MARSHALL: Some are considerate drivers.

The Minister for Employment: I offered you a ride one day but you would not accept it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not want transport by motor.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not with the Minister for Employment?

Mr. MARSHALL: I would rather walk, because when I am afoot I can go where I like. Motorists have taken unto themselves so much freedom that they have come to imagine they alone are entitled to consideration. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but will not vote for the third reading unless some better formula for the administration of the law is embodied in it. I want an impartial tribunal appointed. I care not whether it be arranged on the lines of the Arbitration Court or any other lines so long as it is impartial.

Mr. Lambert: Why not get Mr. Cahill to serve on the board?

Mr. MARSHALL: We do not require his assistance, and he has enough to do to look after his own job. I want to see this legislation put on the statute book, but the Government is going the wrong way about achieving its object. I cannot subscribe to the Bill as a whole owing to the lop-sided nature of the tribunal it is proposed to create.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS
(Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [7.36]: I have already noted the "vote" recorded against this Bill. Apparently local authorities have circularised members.

Mr. Cross: There was no need for them to do that.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They are an influence in the community, and I feel they have rallied a good deal of support to their objections. I cannot understand the opposition to this measure. It contains nothing to provide for the closing of level crossings. Any fears members may have on the subject can only arise from their knowledge that a crossing they may have in mind is redundant. Any tribunal, however it might be constituted, would, when dealing with it, decide to close it. Members will recollect the speech of the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert).

Mr. Watts: I am afraid I cannot.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: He brings to the debates the benefit of a long experience and wide knowledge.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It is not always a benefit.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I trust that in a political sense we shall for many years have the benefit of that hon. member's experience and range of knowledge.

Mr. Lambert: You ought to profit by both.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: He was the only member, speaking against the Bill, who advanced any alternative suggestion. He thought it would be preferable to amend the Government Railways Act, and give the Commissioner sole power to close level crossings.

Mr. Doney: Does he not already possess that power?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I agree that the Commissioner of Railways, with the knowledge he possesses of railways generally and of civil engineering, would be a very competent person to make decisions on this subject. In any case, it is competence we want to bring to bear upon the question of the closing of unnecessary level crossings. That question should be decided not by some local interest, but by men competent to form a right opinion. That is why the Bill provides for a board of men who are experts in that particular line, and can bring expert knowledge to bear upon the problems with which they would be faced when considering the closing of a particular level crossing referred to them by the Commissioner of Railways. Almost every member who has spoken against the Bill has admitted that there are too many level crossings. If there are, obviously we should find some means of closing them.

Mr. Doney: You have had a perfectly satisfactory means in the past.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We know that some years ago, owing to accidents at level crossings, a good deal of agitation was caused. People agitated for something to be done to close some level crossings and make the remainder safe for the traffic passing over them. At that time a committee was appointed representing the local authorities and the Railway Department. It went into the question of all level crossings within the metropolitan area and

some outside it, and as the result of its investigations made certain recommendations. But that committee was not vested with any authority. Even if it made decisions as a committee, it had no right to close level crossings, because the rights in connection with level crossings are contained in the Public Works Act, which the Bill seeks to amend. At that time there were two schools of thought amongst local authorities. One school, in the vicinity of the Claremont electorate, declared that it would be satisfied if all level crossings were closed, provided the Railway Department built subways or bridges in their place. The other school of thought said, "We know that some crossings in the territory over which we have jurisdiction are redundant, but we do not wish to accept the responsibility of closing them, for fear of offending some local interests." And that is the position existing to-day. Local authorities are not likely to act in the matter. After all, they have only such power as has been vested in them by Parliament. In this particular matter they have no power.

Mr. Lambert: The Commissioner of Railways has.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Commissioner has not any power either, except as regards temporary closing of crossings for the making of repairs, or in the interests of public safety.

Mr. Doney: Who has been doing it in the past?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The whole of the power in connection with level crossings is in the Act sought to be amended. The Bill proposes to set up a board to deal with the question of closing level crossings which members opposing the measure have admitted are not required. Therefore a board of experts is needed, people competent to make decisions and free from any petty local interests.

Mr. Doney: Local interests are not necessarily petty.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Very often they are petty. Some of the opposition to the closing of crossings has been petty. In the city of Perth there has been opposition to the alteration of a crosswalk, opposition from some local business interest which thought that if people used the crosswalk, they would cross the street right into its shop, whereas if the crosswalk was removed to another place people would cross

the street into somebody else's shop. That gives an idea of how petty local interests can affect the question of a crossing.

Mr. Sampson: The representation does appear to be unfairly weighted.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The crossings have only one purpose—that people may cross the railway line: not that trade may be brought to some public house or some other kind of business; not that one hotel rather than another hotel shall get the business obtainable from people crossing the railway. Crossings are not put there for the purpose of developing some particular business interest. As a result of their being placed in certain situations, certain business interests do develop; and from those sources we get the kind of opposition that has been raised to the Bill. Not an alternative suggestion has been put up except by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert). All members who have spoken on the motion recognise that we have a problem, and that a solution of it is long overdue. As the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) pointed out, crossings were constructed when traffic on the roads was much slower than it is to-day.

Mr. Lambert: Not slower than present-day trains.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Rivervale crossing could be dealt with very easily.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Road traffic was often slower than railway traffic, which in the imagination of the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, who is so fast himself, is slow. In those days traffic was slow and unwieldy. When we seen tons of stone and loads of bricks going down the street at 15 or 20 miles an hour, we realise that there is not now a need for the numerous crossings that were constructed when goods were carted by horse-drawn vehicles, or conveyed by other classes of animals even slower than horses. I have been disappointed at the opposition directed against the Bill.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We all get cross when our Bills are objected to.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If exception is taken to the constitution of the board, why not pass the second reading of the Bill and move appropriate amendments in Committee? That can be done if members think the proposed board is not representative enough. The object was to establish a board, the members of which would be competent to arrive at deci-

sions in such matters. I think the board proposed would be competent to do so and to take a broad view, because railway crossings are not matters of mere local interest but concern the public generally. Representations may be made to the board by the Commissioner of Railways for the closing of this or that crossing, and even though members may think the crossings concerned are not required, the board may decide that they are. The Bill contains no provision effectively to close a level crossing, but merely sets up the machinery whereby proposals to close crossings may be referred to a board of competent experts for consideration. I trust the second reading of the Bill will be agreed to.

Question put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	14
Noes	25
Majority against				11

AYES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Doust	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hegney	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wise
Mr. Needham	Mr. Lambert

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cross	Mr. Seward
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Fox	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Hill	Mr. Styants
Miss Holman	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Latham	Mr. Warner
Mr. Mann	Mr. Watts
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Welsh
Mr. North	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Doney
Mr. Patrick	

(Teller.)

PAIR.

AYE.	No.
Mr. Troy	Mr. Stubbs

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1938-39.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 1st November: Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Vote—Chief Secretary, £17,663:

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [7.56]: My intention is not to allow the Estimates of the Chief Secretary's Department to be agreed to without taking advantage of the

opportunity to comment upon the situation regarding native affairs. When the Native Administration Act was before Parliament approximately two years ago, considerably more opposition to its provisions was displayed in this House than was subsequently raised in another place. I suggest that some of the premonitions of members of this Chamber regarding the passage of certain portions of that legislation in the form finally adopted, were very near the mark and, in fact, have since proved to have been correct. One phase in particular that I trust the Minister and those associated with the functioning of the Department of Native Affairs will consider, is the necessity, suggested in this House two years ago, of having separate departmental administration, at least to some degree, with regard to the northern and southern portions of the State. That course was recommended by the Royal Commission, and had the Commission's report in that and in other respects been more closely followed, I suggest that the present-day position regarding the department and the natives would be considerably better. Increasingly is it becoming apparent that the one method of control that is sought to be made applicable to natives throughout the State, is not successful, nor is it likely to be. When it is remembered that the greater proportion of the natives in the south-western parts are half-castes or with less aboriginal blood than that, members must realise that a different set of circumstances ought to be applied there than in the northern areas. I propose briefly to comment on one or two aspects of the administration of the department that have occurred to me during the past few months in relation to the Great Southern areas in particular, which form a part of the South-Western Division. I suggest that the enforcement of the provisions of the Act in relation to obtaining permits for all classes of employment, such as are now in force and are at times, I believe, not strictly in accordance with the Act, has resulted in a decrease in the employment of natives, including, as the Act does, half-castes in those districts, and an undesirable increase in the number of natives in receipt of departmental sustenance. I regret that the report of the Commissioner for the 12 months ended 30th June last has not yet been laid on the Table of the House; but from

information I have, there is no doubt whatever that the number of natives on rations is increasing in the Great Southern districts, although there has been no increase in the number of natives. There are several reasons for this, one being that part of the Act which prescribes certain conditions relating to hospital attention and so forth for natives. The case I am about to mention is one that I am sure would never have occurred to the framers of this legislation, which is definitely having a restrictive effect upon the employment of natives in my electorate, particularly as domestic servants. The circumstances of the case are as follows: A citizen of Katanning employed a coloured girl as a domestic servant previous to the passing of the Native Administration Act. After the passing of the Act, he was advised to inquire from her whether she was a half-caste or a quadroon, and was informed by her that she was a quadroon. He therefore thought that she was not subject to the Act. Her appearance gave every indication that she was a quadroon. Subsequently, she was taken ill and removed to hospital by her employer, from motives of humanity, if for no other motive. He took her to the best hospital he could. I desire to make it quite clear that the illness did not come under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act. The girl had had a similar illness previously before she went into that particular household. She remained in hospital for many weeks and underwent three or four operations. When she left hospital, she had to refuse employment because of her continued ill-health, and she went to some other part of the district. Judge the employer's consternation when he received a request from the department to pay approximately the sum of £40 for the hospital expenses of this girl. He was told she was a half-caste and that he ought to have taken out a permit to employ her and contributed to the medical fund; and, as he had not done so, he was liable. There may be conflict of opinion as to whether or not he is liable. Although the occurrence took place more than five or six months ago, the matter has not yet been settled, because no official reply has been received by the employer from the department as to whether the department intends to enforce payment. No matter what the law may be, I cannot think the framers of this legislation ever dreamt of a

case of this kind. As a matter of fact, some doubt exists as to whether or not the girl is a quadroon; if it can be proved she is, that would settle the matter completely. If it cannot be proved, then the question of the employer's liability will have to be settled. That story, of course, has been published abroad in the district and I venture to suggest that, until the position is cleared up, very few coloured girls will be employed as domestics in that part of the State.

I will quote another instance of the peculiarity of this legislation. Half-castes are classed as natives. In my opinion, steps should be taken at once to alter the legislation in order to provide that half-castes—at least in the southern portion of the State, where the half-castes are civilised—should not be classed as natives, unless for good and sufficient reason they are to be so classed by order of a magistrate or some other competent authority. In his 1937 report, the Chief Protector stated every reasonable effort should be made to absorb the half-caste population into a state of usefulness in our community. The present administration of the Act is not likely to achieve that result. I shall quote another instance to show members exactly what I mean.

In my electorate there is a half-caste who served for three years and 294 days in the Australian Imperial Forces during the war. He received an honourable discharge and was granted a war pension. He has lived in the neighbourhood ever since the war ended. I have what I am willing to say is the privilege of personal acquaintance with this ex-soldier, and he is a very decent man indeed, well-behaved and reasonably dressed. He lives with his widowed mother. After the passing of the Act, he was informed that the privilege he had hitherto enjoyed of being regarded more or less as a white man and being able, in company with his friends, to visit hotels, would be ended.

Mr. Thorn: He can fight Neville now, instead of Fritz.

Mr. WATTS: Exactly. That man came to me and asked for advice. I told him to apply for a permit. He absolutely refused to do so. He said to me, "If I was good enough to fight for three years and 294 days for this country, I am good enough to enjoy the privileges of a white man to-day." I

agree with him. Administration of that kind will not achieve what the Act was intended to do, namely, bring about the absorption, in a reasonable manner, of the coloured people in our community. It will have the effect of irritating reasonable people and causing them to doubt whether those in charge of the department are competent to control it.

I have before me a letter that is an example of other complaints which have reached me about the administration of the department. Before I read it, I wish to mention that there is a native mission at Gnowangerup in my district. I believe that mission has been responsible, on account of the way the missionary has conducted it, for saving the State a very considerable sum of money. The missionary, in my view, is definitely worthy of being given considerable responsibility. In the mission reserve there are approximately 200 natives. The missionary has been successful in obtaining employment for some of them; they are looked after on the reserve that is attached to the mission; and they are to a certain extent taught useful trades. A mission school is conducted by the missionary, and, were he given greater liberty, I have no doubt he could do much more useful work. Yet, from what I can gather from him—and I have no reason to doubt his word—instead of his efforts being supported and encouraged by the persons administering the Act, the very opposite is the case. He is full of complaints, which I find him very unwilling to make public, because he maintains that all he wishes to do is not to make trouble, but to assist in the administration of native affairs in that part of our State. I hope that the department, in dealing with that particular mission in the future, will not adopt the rather obstructive attitude I have reason to believe it has adopted in the past.

To return to the letter, which is from a missionary of the United Aborigines Mission and in which reference is made to a desire to establish a half-caste school at Kellerberrin the writer says—

Early this year I went to Kellerberrin at the request of the local Ministers' Fraternal to see what could be done for the half-caste children especially who were not allowed to go to the white school and were growing up in ignorance. I found 43 half-caste children of the second generation, 30 of whom were of school age. The natives themselves were very anxious for a teacher and told me they had

approached Mr. Neville about it, who told them he was sorry he could not send them a teacher, but they could get one for themselves if they liked.

The Fraternal approached Mr. Neville for permission to start work there. He at first proposed postponement as he was contemplating starting a Government station in the district which would take in all the natives from there right up to Southern Cross. Having been in the work among the natives for the past eight years, I urged the Fraternal to press for permission to build school and quarters. After a deal of trouble Mr. Neville at length wrote the Fraternal saying it was "lovely of Miss Jones to be willing to teach the children," but at the same time made it impossible by saying he could not give permission for quarters to be built on the reserve, but they could build a school provided they undertook all the expenses present and future and did not apply to him for assistance. The reserve was six miles out of the town. How were two women to get backwards and forwards and help the people adequately when living six miles away? The position now is that Mr. Maitland Leake has donated land adjoining the reserve so that we can build both school and quarters off the reserve. Would you be so kind as to advise us how we stand in connection with this work? We know that under the new regulations Mr. Neville has power to stop us, but has he the power apart from these regulations for licensing of missionaries if Parliament disallows them? I ask this question because I am informed by one mission that Mr. Neville recently visited them and let them know he intends to oppose their work. They are not on a native reserve but private property. Therefore if he has power to upset them would he not have power to do the same thing at Kellerberrin?

I do not suggest that the complaint in that letter is a serious one, but I do contend that it establishes what I said just now in regard to the Gnowangerup mission, namely, that apparently there is not a desire on the part of the department to co-operate with these people in the very good work they are undoubtedly doing and endeavouring to do. I submit that a greater effort should be made by the department to co-operate with these people for the good of the natives and the betterment of the financial position of the department.

I wish also to make a reference to the proposed re-establishment of the Carrolup settlement. In the past when this matter has been discussed, I have refrained from saying anything, because the place is not strictly in my own district, but now that the ramifications of the Department of Native Affairs are before the House, I wish to subscribe to the opinion of those who say that the re-opening of the settlement would be

entirely unsatisfactory. When the station was closed many years ago everybody agreed, I think, that the main reason for the closure was that Carrolup was not a satisfactory place for the reception of a large number of natives. I doubt the productivity of the property; I am certain that the water supply is unsuitable and it is probably brackish. The people who have settled on the land since the station was closed and have been carrying on as farmers, have proved that productivity is far from good and their financial condition is rather desperate. Considering where it is situated and the experiences of the people that have settled around it since it was closed, on the understanding that it would not again be classed as a native reserve, Carrolup is no place for the establishment of a native institution, Government or otherwise. Though it appears that resumption has taken place and the Crown has made up its mind that a native settlement is to be established, I trust there is yet time for a change of mind and that the Government will find a more suitable locality for the purpose, because I am firmly convinced that a better site can be found.

I have noticed in the Press during the last 24 hours certain observations credited to the Minister in charge of the department in which he claims that figures said to have been quoted by the Leader of the Opposition are incorrect. I have taken the opportunity of looking at the Estimates and I find the figures referred to as having been quoted are in the Estimates. If there is any error, therefore, that error must be in the Estimates themselves, because there has been a substantial increase in the expenditure of the Department of Native Affairs. That increase is not entirely accounted for by the fact that native stations which were previously dealt with under separate headings have now been included in the general Estimates. There has been a substantial increase. No one objects—I least of all—to an increase in expenditure designed to better the conditions of the natives, but the increased expenditure has not resulted in any great improvement in the administration of native affairs. I have already said that there is evidence that the ration list is increasing, but there is no commensurate gain. There is nothing to show for it. All it does is to undermine more and more the morale of the natives which has already been half under-

mined by the system that has been in operation for many years past.

I contend that the natives—and I am referring particularly to the South-West areas—should, so far as possible, be given every opportunity to develop a spirit of self-support. They should be discouraged from securing rations and encouraged to obtain employment in any place where they may be able to obtain it. Restrictions should not be placed on persons wishing to employ them. I dare say I shall be told that the restrictions placed on intending employers are more imaginary than real because all that is necessary is the payment of 5s. to obtain the necessary permit to employ these people. But that is not the position. Most of the work that the young men are capable of performing is done on farms but very often the further the farms are away from the larger areas where protectors and police officers live, the more likely are they not to get work. In the ordinary course of events, if there were no such requirements, a native would go to a farmer and make arrangements to do some clearing or other work—and I know such arrangements have been made—and the work could proceed straight away. At the present time, however, the farmer says, "To employ you, I have to get a permit. I have not a telephone and even if I had a telephone I could not get a permit by phone. I should have to drive anything up to 60 miles to Katanning or some other centre to obtain it. I cannot employ a native without a permit. Therefore, I cannot give you a job." That is what is happening to-day.

Mr. Marshall: Would that apply to full-bloods, half-castes or quadroons?

Mr. WATTS: It is supposed to apply to full-bloods only, but the farmers do not know exactly what the position is, and they do not know whether a particular man is exempt or not. When they have any doubt, from all I can gather, as the result of much inquiry, they turn down the prospective employee because they are not sure of what they can do. As I have said, the difficulty may be more imaginary than real, but the net result is that the natives are not getting employment. The Act definitely seems to be in need of an overhaul in that respect and also in other directions. I do not know whether the complaints that were made as to the Commissioner of Native Affairs not handing over moneys left to natives by rela-

tives or in some other way are correct or not. I notice from the regulations that many provisions are made for the retention of a certain proportion of a native's money and for its safe custody in a trust fund. I am unaware whether that provision would apply to all natives who had any money due to them, or whether it would apply only in certain instances where there was proof that the native could not be entrusted with the money. If the latter is the case, possibly there may be less objection to the provisions, and perhaps no objection at all, although there is no evidence of it that I can see. The information one can get indicates it is intended to apply to all such funds. I do not think the Legislature intended that any sum of money to which a native was entitled should be placed in a trust fund. The native should be in a position to receive it and expend it. For these reasons objection has been taken to the regulations in the past, and will be taken in the future. I trust the Minister in charge will give the matter very careful consideration, and afford an opportunity to the House to consider the regulations. If he does, he will find the majority of members of both Houses are agreeable to considerable alterations being effected.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.21]: It is pleasing to note the Opposition members' change of front. Some years ago an attempt was made to secure favourable consideration on behalf of half-bloods and less, to the end that they might enjoy the franchise accorded to citizens of the State. Some very adverse criticism to that suggestion was passed by members opposite. Apparently they have since changed their point of view and it is high time they did so. When the Native Administration Act was before Parliament about two years ago I expressed the opinion that colour should not be a bar to citizenship. It is wrong that it should be a bar. A coloured person from any country can migrate to this State and immediately enjoy complete freedom. He can go where he likes and work for whom he likes, so long as he complies with the laws that we ourselves have to abide by. In such circumstances, he is left alone, although he is a stranger in the country and is as black as a Western Australian aboriginal. We do not discriminate between the white and the black im-

migrant, but we do discriminate between the white and the Western Australian black. We do not stop there. We are told that an Act has been passed to protect our natives. I doubt whether we could call it protection. I will prove that remark later by reading some of the regulations. I defy anyone to prove that the native of Australia is anything more than a chattel slave. If there were any other intention than to make a chattel slave of the native who is brought under the Act, I have yet to understand the regulations. Whatever may be said of the law that was passed to protect our natives, I contend it is criminal to suggest that those of half-blood and less should be classed as natives. That is going beyond a fair thing. If members only knew the parentage of some of these people they would hesitate to bring them into that category. The point, however, need not be stressed. It is objectionable that children born with white blood in them should be placed on a status so much lower than is the imported black. Why we should have a special Act to interfere with people having white blood in them I do not know, nor do I understand why we should class them as natives. I take strong exception to such a principle, and contend that the Act in that respect is wrong. Instead of forcing a person of half-blood or less to apply for exemption from the Act, the position should be the other way round. Anyone born with a good percentage of the blood of whites in him should be free until the alleged protector under the Act applies to a magistrate and justifies his right to bring the "native" under the Act. In some circumstances we have put the quadroon on a lower plane than the full-blooded black who migrates from another country.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We have not done so by law; it has been done by administration.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even by law we have done it up to the age of 21.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: So long as these people are living under certain conditions, they can be classed as natives. How can we expect anyone, no matter what quantity of the blood of whites he may have, to exert his rights if we continue to harass and persecute him?

Mr. Thorn: And keep on telling him he is black.

Mr. MARSHALL: We treat these people as though they were black.

The Premier: They treat themselves as black.

Mr. MARSHALL: And have no encouragement to do otherwise.

The Premier: They consort with blacks.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Premier knows of a family I have in mind. Why should those people have to apply for exemption? They were quite right not to do so.

The Minister for Justice: It is what Parliament desired.

Mr. MARSHALL: Quite a number of us did not think such people would be brought under the Act, and were surprised to hear that it was so.

The Minister for Justice: That is a reflection on Parliament.

Mr. MARSHALL: Many of us did not understand that these people would be excluded from getting permits. I am not reflecting upon Parliament.

The Minister for Justice: You ought to have known.

Mr. Warner: It has all been done by regulation.

Mr. MARSHALL: Ministers when introducing Bills tell us they contain certain provisions.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But they do not bluff members.

Mr. MARSHALL: They do sometimes, and mislead both themselves and us too. Immediately the Act is tested in court or made the subject of a ruling by the Crown Law Department, it is found to be something quite different. Only recently a Minister promulgated a regulation amending an Act of Parliament. I want to be believed when I say that quite a few of us here did not know that such people were to be affected. I enter an emphatic protest. If education, culture and social status are to count as nothing in the case of these people, if they are still to be treated as natives and to be obliged to apply for exemption from the Act, they are certainly not being encouraged to remain self-reliant. We point the finger of scorn at them and say, "You are aboriginals."

Mr. Warner: We make them feel their position more keenly.

Mr. MARSHALL: In some respects it does not matter what happens, but, who is concerned in the happening? A few months ago I saw a photograph of a jet-black coon, and beside him, most affectionately, was a beautiful white woman. No one attached

any importance to that episode, because the man happened to be an American pugilist. A man may be black, and if he gets to the top of a calling he ceases to be black, becomes white-washed, and there is no harm in a beautiful white woman associating with him. But if an old kangarooer or a poor old bushy does the same thing, that is utterly wrong. We are highly inconsistent. Once a wealthy Asiatic of high social standing escaped to his native shores with three beautiful Australian girls, and no one spoke very adversely of the happening.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The girls were taken from him.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, by the law; but there was no strong criticism.

The Minister for Justice: One Asiatic was given a send-off in Melbourne.

Mr. MARSHALL: Why should we exonerate a black of social standing, and make a criminal of a man without social standing who does the same thing? I protest on behalf of people who live on the same level as white folk. Scores of families living comfortably in nice homes, well behaved, well educated, having every regard for citizenship, are treated as blacks.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We make prisoners of them.

Mr. MARSHALL: We make chattel slaves of them. The proposed regulation amounts to absolute slave-driving.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Their children are torn away from them.

Mr. MARSHALL: Seemingly anything at all can be done to them. The member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) said it was necessary that the law should differ in different parts of the State. I am of opinion that it should differ in other respects. It should differentiate in favour of any person with white blood. The Act should not apply to full-blooded aborigines educated in missions and living as we do, with every regard for morality. Unless blacks live substantially like natives in the aboriginal state, they should not be subject to the Act. Yet they are harassed with laws, by-laws, regulations, and protectors of aborigines. Thus they have no chance of rising above the native status. They should be encouraged to rise, but we are not encouraging them. Again, they have to obey two sets of laws—the set that affects the white, and then a special law with 149 regulations. Those regulations are truly wonderful. Some are trivial, others

are drastic. All of them apply to persons of the half-blood living on the same plane as ourselves.

Mr. Warner: Some of them are working, and earning the basic wage.

Mr. MARSHALL: Regulation 28 applies to institutions and reserves, their conduct and management; and it reads—

Any person charged with insubordination, indecent or unseemly behaviour, disorderly or immoral conduct, or the use of abusive or obscene language within an institution or reserve for natives, or being in possession of firearms or poison, shall be liable to a penalty in accordance with these regulations.

Evidently, all that is needed in order to punish a person is to charge him—not to find him guilty.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Police Offences Act provides for all that. It gives the man a trial.

Mr. MARSHALL: Under this regulation he need only be charged, not found guilty. If he is charged, he has committed a breach of the regulations. Here is another regulation, No. 36, which is appropriate and right up to date. It provides—

Every inmate shall have a separate bed complete with necessary bedding as may be required by the Commissioner.

I suppose twin beds are the order of the day for married couples. Well, we won't complain about that! This goes to show how modern the draftsman of the regulations is. Next we have No. 46—

The discipline enforced within an institution or reserve shall be mild and firm. All degrading and injurious punishments shall be avoided, such as the "boxing" of children's ears. Girls' heads shall not be shorn as a punishment, neither are they to be deprived of their clothes and dressed in such a way as to hold them up to ridicule.

Does not such a regulation hold those responsible up to ridicule? The girls must not be touched, but the boys can have their ears boxed! They can be undressed! Here we find no equality of the sexes. All this is modern, quite up to date. How childish some of these regulations are! Would it not be sufficient to have a regulation to the effect that undue punishment of any sort must be avoided? The remarkable thing about it is that these regulations are to be enforced by individuals in charge of institutions and reserves. Here is another. Regulation 47a reads—

A protector may inflict summary punishment by way of confinement for not exceeding 14

days upon an inmate of an institution within a reserve guilty of serious misconduct, neglect of duty, insubordination or persistent breaches of the regulations, but during such confinement there shall be no reduction in the normal diet scale. Where possible, breaches of the regulations shall be reported to the nearest police officer for such action as he may deem necessary.

That is getting pretty close to chattel slavery. We are giving individuals complete control and the sufferers are to have no redress whatever. Paragraph (b) of the same regulation reads—

Corporal punishment may as a last resort be inflicted in the presence of a witness by the superintendent or manager or by the schoolmaster or schoolmistress by the direction and upon the responsibility of the superintendent or manager, but in no case must be inflicted on inmates 18 years of age or over. Where the punishment of a female is necessary such must be inflicted in the presence of the matron or some responsible female officer of the institution.

These regulations are for the control of children up to 18 years of age. If a girl is 17½ years of age, she can be humiliated by being thrashed in front of other people; and there is to be no redress for her. I can find nothing in the regulations that gives the sufferer the right to protest.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not think the Commissioner has any authority under the Act to make such regulations.

Mr. Watts: What about Regulation 85?

Mr. MARSHALL: I have not had time to go through all of them. I am dealing with the modern ones, and have selected a few to show how the regulations will make chattel slaves of our natives. I thought the days had passed when that sort of thing could prevail. I thought we had finished with that when the slaves were released in America many years ago. So far from having finished with chattel slavery, we find an effort made in Western Australia to re-introduce the system and apply it to the natives of Western Australia. I hope that will not be tolerated.

The Minister for Justice: All institutions must insist on having some authority.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. I would have some regard for regulations of this description if the natives were being put into an institution that was in the nature of a reformatory. On the one hand, we have innocent, uneducated people, ignorant of our laws and customs. On the other hand, we have people

of white blood in control. In the main, I suppose, these institutions will deal with the wild, full-blooded natives that are wholly uneducated. The unfortunate wretches will know nothing about our customs and laws, and what they do will be, in their eyes, quite right. Yet we are to subject people of that description to punishment. I protest against it.

The Premier: The whole object of the department is to treat the natives well.

Mr. MARSHALL: No doubt the departmental view is that that is being done. We heard instances quoted by the Leader of the Opposition regarding action taken with reference to natives' property and money. We have heard other instances indicating that the Commissioner appears to want to fatter the natives, instead of leaving them alone. The most remarkable thing to me is that the Premier, as Treasurer, has a limited amount of money at his disposal, and yet, instead of encouraging the natives to become self-reliant and to maintain themselves, he allows this officer, the Commissioner of Native Affairs, continually to bring them under his control.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Making mendicants of them.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, coercing them and making them a burden on the State.

The Premier: The criticism against the Government has been that it will not find money for the amelioration of their conditions.

Mr. MARSHALL: This sort of thing will not ameliorate their conditions.

The Premier: The criticism has been that no Government has been prepared to spend money on the natives and make their conditions better.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know that it has been.

The Premier: Now there is criticism because we are providing some money.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who criticised the Government for that? I said you were not getting value for the money you were spending and that you were making mendicants of them.

The Minister for Justice: They were born mendicants.

Mr. MARSHALL: The responsibility of the Government is to educate these people as fully as possible, having regard to their mental backwardness. The Government should

provide the education that can be absorbed, and so help to qualify the natives for citizenship. If that is not the object, then, for goodness sake, let us release the natives from control of this description and not force them to apply to some official for a permit before they can secure employment. We have had instances of what some of the natives can do, especially those that are of half blood. They are well educated and can write splendid letters. They marshal their subject-matter well, and live on the same plane as white men. Although they have attained that standard, they are to be humiliated and forced to go to a magistrate or someone else to get a permit of exemption. Under such conditions can it be suggested that we are helping to make them self-reliant and to give them a moral status? We are doing nothing of the kind. We say to them that they are still natives in their own land. It is not reasonable to spend money on educating them, training them to an appreciation of our own outlook and our customs, and then tell them that they are still natives. What is the good of education and culture to them if they are still to be treated as natives? Rather let us encourage them to be self-reliant and broad-minded. Let us instil in them a sense of responsibility. Surely that is preferable to coercing them in Government institutions and reserves. Simply because Mr. Neville—where did he come from?

The Premier: From England, the home of the free.

Mr. MARSHALL: I think this position must have been found for Mr. Neville because he was in the Civil Service and no other position was available.

The Premier: Mr. Neville is a recognised authority regarding the natives, and needs no apologist.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is wonderful! A man of this description can be put into his present position, and we have Ministers championing him and endorsing his actions.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Even writing an article in the Press about him.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is all entirely wrong.

Mr. Warner: He studied the native question for three months.

Mr. MARSHALL: The man at the head of the Department of Native Affairs should be experienced for the task.

Mr. Thorn: He is very polite; he raises his hat to gins.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know. The people in the North-West had a good time when he was visiting that part of the State.

Mr. Warner: The niggers speak well of him.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know whether the niggers think well of him or not, but I know he is adversely criticised by the people of the North regarding his attitude towards the natives. Instead of giving these full-blooded natives and half-castes some encouragement to face the world with the rest of us, they are coerced and pestered by alleged protectors. Paragraph (c) of Regulation 47 provides—

Corporal punishment may be inflicted for offences against morality, gross impertinence, or for persistent disobedience, but not for trivial breaches of discipline or dullness in learning.

There is one excuse! They must not be punished for dullness in learning.

The Premier: The natives used to be flogged in the old days.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Premier should get that out of his head.

The Premier: There was a lot of flogging at one time.

Mr. MARSHALL: A lot of it goes on now. To give a person complete power to inflict punishment of this kind is wrong. Who is to be the judge of the persistent disobedience or gross impertinence?

The Premier: The man himself.

Mr. MARSHALL: The man who will inflict the punishment! I would not mind if these children could appeal to their parents; but this, of course, they cannot do, as they are living in an institution and do not see their parents. Further, the parents would not have the courage to protest.

Mr. Styants interjected.

Mr. MARSHALL: Who is to say whether crime is committed? The Protector is the accuser and the judge. It is he who says what gross impertinence or persistent disobedience is.

Mr. Styants: Schoolmasters punish children.

Mr. MARSHALL: But children in our schools are not punished severely. As a matter of fact, I think the cane is foreign to our schools.

Mr. Styants: Spare the rod and spoil the child.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not arguing that. Our children have a certain amount of independence; they leave school and return home to their parents, who will protect them if they are unfairly treated. But the native children are in a different position. A young native girl can be subjected to canings until she attains the age of 18 years; so can a native boy. They have no redress. If they escape from the institution they will be found and brought back speedily. Let hon. members put themselves in the position of these natives, and consider how they would like such treatment. The regulations are almost inhuman. Who will be in charge of the reserves? There will be no check on them.

The Premier: Yes, there will.

Mr. MARSHALL: We ourselves have laws to protect us, but those people will be incarcerated in an institution. I fail to see how, under the regulations, a person who is unduly penalised can obtain redress. So far as I can gather, native missions, no matter by what denomination they are controlled, treat the natives fairly. I have not heard of any case of cruelty. The regulations should not be allowed. I do not like the idea of some person being given the power to decide whether a native boy or a native girl is grossly impertinent or persistently disobedient. The child has no defence. He would be afraid to complain because of the likelihood of a repetition of the punishment. I certainly do not think any half-caste or quarter-caste should be classed as a native. In that respect the Act is wrong. With the member for Kataning, I shall welcome an early opportunity of amending the Act.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [8.55]: I agree with the remarks of the member for Murchison. We can discuss this question indefinitely in this way, but can achieve no result. The regulations are part of the Act and I have come to the conclusion that the gentleman in charge of this department is not competent to administer it. No matter where one goes, one hears complaints about him, except from Ministers, and why they have no complaints beats me. Apparently, Mr. Neville has not been successful in his position as Chief Protector. All this talk that we have had is waste of time.

The Premier: It is a very difficult subject.

Mr. MANN: The natives are increasing rapidly in both the North and the South. Half-castes are becoming more numerous. The regulations are reminiscent of the days of slavery; they are wicked and cruel. It is disgusting to think that an intelligent man should ask Parliament to allow them. The Commissioner of Native Affairs has had many years' experience, but apparently he is incapable of controlling this department. The Commissioner must not only be conversant with natives and their ways, but must have a general knowledge of the conditions under which they live. Goodness knows how many half-castes we shall have within the next ten years. There are 300 at Quairading and 150 at Brookton, and half of them are on rations.

Hon. C. G. Latham: More than half now.

Mr. MANN: I desire to quote a case for the information of the Premier. Young couples engaged in farming find it exceedingly difficult to obtain domestic servants. A man I know is employing a half-caste girl as a domestic. He pays the girl 6s. a week, as agreed with Mr. Neville, but has now been instructed to remit 3s. per week to Perth on account of the girl. The employer has refused to remit that money to Perth, as he contends he cannot do so until the girl is properly clothed. She cannot clothe herself on 3s. a week. Mr. Neville said that there is a fund in Perth out of which money is provided to purchase clothes and other necessities for aborigines. Why this centralisation? Why must aborigines buy their requirements in the city and at the direction of the Commissioner? I tell the Premier that farmers refuse to employ aborigines until these restrictions are removed. We are not absorbing our half-castes in useful industries. Many of them are excellent workers, but will revert to their old lazy state under present conditions. Many half-castes are almost as fair as our own Australian girls.

Hon. C. G. Latham: As a matter of fact, our girls try to darken themselves so as to look like half-castes.

Mr. MANN: Half-caste girls could be usefully employed as domestics. The domestic question is deplorable in farming areas. Young mothers with two or three children cannot obtain help. So long as the regulations remain in force, farmers will not employ half-caste girls as domestics. Parliament should act in the matter. We have

taken the land from these unfortunate people and we should do something for them. As to Mr. Neville, get rid of him and obtain a man who is capable of efficiently controlling the department.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.0]: I cannot let this opportunity pass without making a few remarks. I waited patiently for the new regulations, and, while I have not perused them thoroughly, I have read enough of them to make me decide to move for the disallowance of the lot. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) suggested that a certain number should be disallowed, and I am sorry that he did not move for the disallowance of them all, so that new regulations might be framed and the advice of other people sought in addition to that of the present departmental officers who have been compiling the regulations, and who evidently have not much idea about the subject—in fact, probably less than I have.

I have no aborigines in my electorate, with the exception of a few quarter-castes and half-castes in Sister Kate's Home. I have never heard of the Department of Native Affairs seeking to treat those children as white children are treated.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The officers of the department do not want to.

Mr. CROSS: They should.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course they should.

Mr. CROSS: There are three or four orphanages in close proximity to each other at one end of my electorate, and I do not know why the children in Sister Kate's home are expected to be maintained for 3s. or 4s. a week less than are the children in the other homes. I have heard no suggestion from Mr. Neville that an increase should be granted. He and his department know full well that Sister Kate has to obtain from charitable people the means to support the children—apart from what she gets from the department—because she has given all that she herself had. That Sister Kate is expected to keep the children on such a small amount is no credit to the department. I was speaking to a gentleman one day and he said, "Why does not your Government cut out a man like Mr. Neville and employ him at something that he can do? I was once going to the North-West on the 'Koolinda,' and Mr. Neville called me and two or three other men to the side of the boat,—he had a wonderful idea of himself—and pointing to

some fires and smoke along the coast in the distance, said, 'You see that smoke? That is made by aborigines sending a bush telegram warning the niggers up the coast that the Big White Chief is coming up.' They were, of course, only bush fires."

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is that what he said?

Mr. CROSS: On another occasion—

Mr. Raphael: Tell them the one about Connolly and the goat.

Mr. CROSS: I heard another story of a gentleman who went to Moola Bulla Station with two or three other men, one of whom had a camera. He said he would like to take a snap of some of the natives. "I do not think you should take those photographs," said Mr. Neville, "they might not like it." The gentleman persisted, however, and took the photograph. The natives all lined up for the photograph, and afterwards one of the natives said, "I hope you will put that in the 'Sunday Times' so that we can see it." That is reputed to be true. I have related these stories because they are being told outside. Many people have the idea that what Mr. Neville knows about the aborigines in the North-West is no more than he has learned from the porthole of a ship. I do not know whether that is true or not; but I do not agree with the regulations manufactured in his department for the control of aborigines. Therefore I intend to move that they be disallowed. When they are disallowed, I hope the Government, before framing fresh regulations, will take steps to consult other people who have a more intimate knowledge of the problem. I hope also that the Government will pay some heed to what I have said about the small amount allowed to the native children in Sister Kate's home, and increase the sum granted both for those children and for the orphans living in other institutions in the State, because even though they are half-caste or quarter-caste children, they are entitled to be fed on the same scale as are white children.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [9.6]: I wish to add my protest against the suggested regulations. I cannot understand the attitude of the Government in allowing an administrative head to bring before this House a regulation that definitely breaks the law of the land. The House has had before it amendments to the Poisons Act providing that certain drugs must be issued by a pharmaceutical chemist only upon receipt of a certificate by a medical

practitioner. Regulation 83 made under the Native Administration Act is as follows:—

Wherever a general permit to employ natives is held by an employer, such employer shall keep and make available a sufficient supply of first-aid and medical necessities to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, and where the number of natives employed or resident on the premises in any case exceeds six in number, the following equipment, medicine and drugs shall be maintained and supplied free of charge to native employees whenever necessary:—

There follows a list of the equipment, medicines and drugs which must be provided. I object to two things in this regulation. I object to the fact that the Government should become an advertising agent for a particular kind of medicine, and that the Government, or rather not the Government but Mr. Neville—although the Government is in some small degree responsible for bringing down the regulations—

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Government was told by Mr. Neville to do so.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I would not even say the Government was told by Mr. Neville, but I do believe that perhaps the Minister in another place did not study the regulations as he should have done, and did not realise their importance. This regulation provides that, amongst other things, a 4-oz. pot of Golden Eye ointment shall be supplied. It is not for this Government to advertise a particular ointment. The principal complaint from which the natives suffer is venereal disease, and I do not think that a pot of Golden Eye ointment is going to be a cure for that. Then I object to the provision that there shall be supplied "a hypodermic syringe with hypodermic tablets, e.g., morphia, gr. $\frac{1}{4}$." The Government has no right, nor has Mr. Neville any right, to suggest that persons not being medical practitioners should have free access to the drug morphia. The Poisons Act precludes any person other than a medical practitioner from ordering the use of such a drug.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about the drug just in front of it?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member refers to "mercurochrome." That is not a dangerous drug.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is for healing sores, is it not?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Yes, it is more potent than is iodine, but does not induce pain, to which a native always objects. I have been

amongst natives and have seen the conditions under which they exist. Regulation 84 says—

Any goods sold by an employer of native labour to his native employees shall be sold at a rate not exceeding the rate charged in respect to white employees, or at the current market value.

Gins, when walking through the country, frequently pick up nuggets of gold. Is it suggested that some storekeeper will weigh the gold and value it, or must the nugget be forwarded to Mr. Neville in Perth and be weighed and valued by him? Regulation 85 says—

The Commissioner may direct that the wages or part of the wages of any native shall be paid to him in trust for such native, in any manner he may think fit, and the wages shall be paid by the employer accordingly.

That regulation deprives these people of their freedom. Regulation 96 says—

The employer shall furnish the employee with an invoice or detailed record docket covering any deduction made from his wages for purchases from the station or any other store, and the employer shall obtain the receipt of the employee for any stores or other goods whatsoever disposed of by him to the employee.

Very few niggers are able to write their own names, and yet Mr. Neville suggests that when receiving their wages or goods from their employee they shall sign for them. That is ridiculous. The next regulation says—

An employer shall grant an employee paid holidays at convenient periods which shall be equivalent to not less than one day for each month of service, provided that where practicable an employee shall be granted the leave upon the completion of each 12 months of continuous service.

It is absurd to suggest that any native would stay on a station for 12 months, when we know quite well he will go for a "walk-about" two or three times a year. Actually the natives are here to-day and gone to-morrow. The suggestion that they will remain on a station for 12 months at a time is ridiculous. Another regulation states that a female native shall not be engaged as a houseworker at any place where a white woman is not resident. Many of the station hands who are married have to remain at work throughout the year, but great hardship would be created for those who are managing stations if white women were expected to remain on hand for 12 months at a time. The member for Perth (Mr. Need-

ham) wants certain regulations disallowed, but I hope they will all be disallowed. They should be drafted by someone who has more knowledge of the subject than has Mr. Neville.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Some of them are quite good. I have read through them.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member must be very keen to be able to select two or three regulations that are of any use. I hope the Government will give further consideration to them all, and submit them again in another form.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.15]: I protest against the continued expenditure upon what I regard as something foreign to State activities. I refer to the Observatory. Somebody has said, "Arise fair moon, and shut out the envious sun." That is about all the value we can ever get from the expenditure of approximately £1,700 a year. It would be wrong for me to suggest that astronomy, with its corresponding sciences and all that it has led to in the way of development and growth, is futile. It is only futile in the sense of being conducted by our Observatory, which is practically only a peep show, though costing the State nearly £2,000 a year. Daily complaints are made that our Government buildings are overcrowded, that they are not fit for scientific research, and for the accommodation of officers. Notwithstanding this, we have to incur expenditure on the Observatory year after year. Ministers have admitted that the department is one that should be taken over by the Commonwealth authorities. According to the Constitution, that is so, but succeeding Governments have allowed the present state of affairs to continue.

Mr. Marshall: When the member for Boulder was Premier he endeavoured to induce the Federal Government to take over the Observatory.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Federal Government readily took over the State Savings Bank, and that led to Western Australia taking its first step towards bankruptcy. The State Government continues to conduct a department that is divorced from all other State Government activities, when the obligation is one that should have been taken over by the Commonwealth Government many years ago. The money involved could

be expended in many better ways. We do not want peep shows at such a high cost.

Mr. Hegney: What do you mean by a peep show?

Mr. LAMBERT: There is a telescope at the Observatory, through which the hon. member could indulge, if he wished, in a peep at the celestial scenery. I have it in mind to move a reduction of £1 in the amount of this vote, by way of protest. Recently members were opposing, on the score of expense, the establishment of a bureau of industry and economic research. For the annual cost of the Observatory we could have four or five scientific men rendering assistance to agriculture, mining, and all other manufacturing and commercial activities in Western Australia. We permit our Observatory to exist side by side with the Commonwealth Meteorological Branch. The whole of the meteorological work in Western Australia is done by the Commonwealth Government. I know all that can be done by the expenditure of money on scientific research. I heard the late Thomas Walker speaking of the glories of astronomy. About 20 years ago I had occasion to study the history of our Observatory. A world congress of astronomers had agreed that it was essential to the progress of their science to have a catalogue of the stars. After our local astronomer had been engaged on this marvellous research work for 10 or 12 years, it was forcibly pointed out to him by an astronomer of fame that he had been using his telescope in the wrong direction: that he had been cataloguing stars which another astronomer had also been cataloguing for 10 or 12 years. Those facts are recorded in "Hansard." Harvard has a telescope 65 or 70 ft. in length, possibly the most penetrating telescopic instrument that the mind of man can conceive. Wonderful work is being done in the fascinating if abstruse science, which eventually may tell us where we are likely to go. That, however, is not an object to be sought after by a small, comparatively impecunious State like Western Australia. We must live within the four corner-pogs of the revenue we can raise. There are a hundred and one directions in which we can spend money more usefully than in the running of the Observatory. That institution occupies a valuable building on a highly valuable site. The Commonwealth should run the Observatory, and then we could use the building for research work

of an entirely different nature. It is impossible to over-estimate what scientific research may achieve in a young State like this. In Western Australia, divorced as it is from the Eastern States and their commercial enterprises, practically relying upon itself, we need scientific direction. Ordinary people have to climb into positions giving them twelve or fifteen hundreds pounds a year—

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member connecting those statements with the Observatory?

Mr. LAMBERT: A chemist is asked to accept three or four hundred a year for highly useful research work. I recognise the futility of trying to hammer into the heads of Ministers that they should realise their responsibility to Western Australia in this respect. For 20 years they have failed to do so. I have made my last protest against this unnecessary expenditure. The Minister for Agriculture, being scientifically trained, should realise the value to the State of a highly skilled agricultural chemist furnishing guidance to the departmental officers, as against a peep-show that during the last 20 or 30 years has made no contribution whatever to the State's economic life, nor yet to the scientific side of astronomy. Some years ago, when the astronomers of the world went to Wallal to witness the eclipse of the sun, did our Government Astronomer go? No. He merely sent one of his subordinates to Wallal, where were congregated some of the world's greatest scientists and astronomers. I hope the Government, from the Premier downwards, will take notice of my comments. I do not know whether their attitude indicates a certain degree of cowardice, hesitation, or lack of knowledge of comparative values; but how they can consent to continue providing money for a purely Commonwealth function is beyond me.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [9.34]: I do not know where I can find the item to which I may address myself to elicit some information. A few nights ago the Leader of the Opposition drew attention to an incorrect, or unauthorised, payment to Mr. Wolff; and in the Auditor General's report, under the heading of "Incorrect Appropriations," following the mention of the payment to Mr. Wolff, there appears a reference to Division 42, item 2. We have been discuss-

ing matters relating to Division 42, but I see no item 2 in the vote. However, the reference in the Auditor General's report is as follows:—

A grant of £60 to the Carnarvon Parents and Citizen's Association towards the cost of a mill and equipment in connection with irrigation plot proposals. A grant of £50 to the Gascoyne Planters' Association re tropical display at the Royal Show.

I do not object to either of those payments, but I take strong exception to money being appropriated without authority, and then cloaked in a way that prevents members from noting the items in the Estimates. Had we not received the Auditor General's report, we could not have traced these payments.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a reference to "Contingencies," for which £1,465 is provided.

Mr. SEWARD: Apparently the payments are covered by that item. The Minister concerned may be able to give the Committee some information as to why the grants were made. I would like grants of £60 for a number of schools in my electorate, and we have had displays at the Royal Show for which financial assistance would be helpful. Explanation is desirable regarding these grants, for which no proper appropriation was provided.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [9.37]: I think I should have a word to say following upon the very unkind inference drawn by the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) from so-called appropriations without authority. For the two items he mentioned, there has been no appropriation without authority. When I was first appointed a Minister of the Crown, included in the portfolios I took over was that of the North-West, for which there was no vote. After the matter was fully discussed with the Under Treasurer and the then Premier (Mr. Collier), it was decided to add £1,000 to the Agricultural Department's vote to provide for contingencies respecting expenditure in the North-West. In the first year £70 was spent on particular works in the North-West. Last year the amounts mentioned by the Auditor General were also spent from the vote, which was again included in the Agricultural Department's Estimates. In discussing the matter, the

Under Treasurer stated that the Auditor General had mentioned to him that the amounts had not been properly charged. From my point of view, it was on the advice of the Under Treasurer that the vote was placed in the Estimates of the Agricultural Department, and against the money so appropriated the amounts were drawn. Now, with the same authority to spend up to £1,000, it is arranged that any amounts so spent will be charged against the department with which the work is associated, whether it be the Agricultural Department, the Public Works Department, or any other department.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Department of Native Affairs, £39,000; Registry and Friendly Societies, £12,660; Prisons, £29,561; Harbour and Lights and Jetties, £28,400—agreed to.

Vote—Mental Hospitals and Inebriates, £120,088:

Item, Salaries and allowances, etc., £77,238.

Mr. SAMPSON: Has consideration been given to the matter of providing a farm, and has the Minister anything to say about the fig-trees at the Claremont Mental Hospital?

The Minister for Justice: I have no information.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Observatory, £1,755; Fisheries, £5,390—agreed to.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

Vote—Police, £255,859:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gaseoyne) [9.41]: The staffing of the Police Department has been increased slightly during the past 12 months, and at the 30th June, 582 men were employed, but since then there have been seven retirements. There has been a re-opening of three police stations in the gold-fields areas. Recently one at Lawlers was re-opened, and a single man has been sent there. Land has been obtained at the northern end of Inglewood, and the necessary station and quarters will be arranged for. Possibly the Highgate station will be transferred to North Inglewood. Rockingham

and Mandurah are centres receiving attention, and it is likely that additions will be made to the police staffing there. The South Perth area has required additional attention; but the staffing increase has been chiefly represented by goldfields additions. Thirteen cadets are employed. One alteration has been made in country centres regarding the facilities available for police. In some instances, patrols that have previously been made by horses or camels have been replaced by allowing constables to use their own motor cars. This has improved the service in the pastoral areas, particularly where police districts are very large, and where the residents rarely see an officer of the police force. A total of 874 inspections of liquor was made, and six convictions were obtained for false trade descriptions and 12 for adulterated liquor. The liquor inspection branch is a very active section of the service. Regarding weights and measures, 24,802 appliances were submitted for verification, of which number 2,244 were rejected. Petrol pumps to the number of 1,579 were examined and tested, and 84 were found to be faulty and were attended to. There was an innovation in that a complete inspection was made on the Murchison for weights and measures verification.

Mr. Marshall: Are you questioning the honesty of commercial people in my district?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but with the growth of the towns we considered it advisable to have an inspection for the protection of the public. Six women police are employed, three in Perth, two in Fremantle and one in Kalgoorlie. They have important work to do, and very satisfactory results have been obtained from their efforts. If I may anticipate legislation, the Firearms and Guns Act will probably be amended to deal with air-rifles. The Bill will be brought down shortly.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You had better bring it down early if you want it passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Leader of the Opposition will have no complaint on that score.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Bills cannot be rushed through, as they were last year.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This Bill will be introduced next week. The officers of the traffic branch have been seriously pressed, but we hope to be able to cope

with the requirements of that branch. The calls made upon it by the municipalities have been heavy, and an endeavour is being made to increase the services of officers who particularly devote their time to that branch. There is nothing new in the vote. All the items are clearly set out, and I commend the Estimates to the Committee.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.47]: I think general satisfaction will be expressed at the service of the police. The quality of the appointees has steadily improved—if such were possible—physically, mentally and from the educational point of view. The traffic officers have a most difficult and irritating task to carry out in policing cross-walks. The provision of cross-walks in a comparatively small city like Perth is, to my mind, of doubtful wisdom. As one travels from the east of Hay street, various cross-streets are passed, and frequently one is held up at the different cross-walks. This extreme and pernickety method of control is not practised elsewhere and, while I am prepared to admit the importance of safety, I doubt whether the provision of cross-walks does make for safety. Rather do they make for the adoption of a meandering and frequently indolent attitude on the part of those who use the cross-walks. I admit it is better to have pedestrians using the cross-walks than indulging in jay-walking, but some people cross the street as if unlimited time were available, and traffic is held up. This is both unwise and unnecessary from the standpoint of safety. When some of our citizens visit the Eastern States, they might easily suffer accident because of unconsciously acting in the same lackadaisical manner as they would here. The word "lackadaisical" does really apply in many cases. Consideration should be given to amending this method, which indicates an ultra-careful policy that will defeat itself. As anyone who has travelled as far as Adelaide will realise, the methods adopted here are far too strict, and the result is bad.

The Minister for Mines: You can cross at any old place in Adelaide.

MR. SAMPSON: And here, too. One can cross not only on the cross-walks, but anywhere else.

The Minister for Mines: In Adelaide the streets are wide enough to enable one to take a day in crossing them.

MR. SAMPSON: Wide streets are not so easy to pass across! One has to be fairly agile when one goes to Adelaide; so I warn the Minister to exercise care. I do not want to see him laid up. Already our regulations have largely exceeded the needs of traffic. Two of our main streets are one-way streets.

MR. WARNER: Four of them.

MR. SAMPSON: I mean two of the main streets.

MR. WARNER: I also mean main streets.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The member for Swan has the floor.

MR. SAMPSON: That must be very bad for those in business in the streets I have mentioned.

The Minister for Mines: One of the busiest streets in Sydney is Pitt-street, and that has one-way traffic.

MR. SAMPSON: That is a short street, and I would say that it is an indication of an unbalanced mind—but perhaps that is offensive, and I should not say it; at any rate, it is an indication of a very remarkable judgment for a man to compare Pitt-street with—

The Minister for Mines: Hay-street.

MR. SAMPSON: With our small cross-streets.

The Minister for Mines: I am talking about Hay-street.

MR. SAMPSON: I am talking about Hay-street and Murray-street and the cross streets. I know that Pitt-street carries a tremendous amount of traffic.

The Premier interjected.

The **CHAIRMAN**: I would ask members to allow the hon. member to make his own speech.

MR. SAMPSON: I am glad to be supported so wholeheartedly, Mr. Chairman. There is no fault to find, though I realise you have your duty to carry out. Let me return to one-way streets. I have attempted twice before to say that on occasion I may desire to go to Murray-street to transact some business. To go down Murray-street I must traverse Wellington-street a fair distance west, past King-street before I can turn into Murray-street. Then if I want to go back, I am not allowed to return the same way, but must return via Hay-street. I appeal for further consideration of the city cross-walks. If we can spare officers to check those who pass and repass over the cross-walks, more officers should be available for the outer

suburbs. No satisfaction is to be gained by young ambitious, capable officers from spending their time holding up traffic on these cross-walks. The regulating of our comparatively light traffic—possibly two or three vehicles at one time—must be very trying work! That is not in the best interests of our people.

Mr. Patrick: Do you not want police at the crosswalks?

Mr. SAMPSON: I think the police could be better employed. Their services are needed in the outer suburbs.

The Minister for Mines: What is wrong with the suburbs? They are very respectable.

Mr. SAMPSON: Police are necessary in the suburbs, but they are wasted on this work. I look forward to a review of the crosswalk system, which is an anachronism. We have anticipated time possibly by 100 years.

MRS. CARDELL - OLIVER (Subiaco) [9.56]: I was rather surprised that the Minister did not make any reference to the most important part of the report of the Commissioner of Police, namely, that regarding starting-price betting shops. In his report the Commissioner reiterated his remarks of last year, which were—

It is hoped that steps will be taken during the present session of Parliament to legislate in regard to this matter. The evil is still rampant, and despite assertions to the contrary the department is doing everything possible with the means at its command to combat same. To obtain convictions in connection with the matter it is necessary to have evidence to support the same, and, while the betting shops throughout the State are known, it will be futile to take action against them en masse without being in a position to prove the complaints.

I think every member of the House is agreed that the officers of the Police Department have sufficient power to close the shops, and enough intelligence to be aware that they can obtain convictions from every betting shop. In the Perth area for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1938, fines were inflicted on starting-price bookmakers in connection with shop and street betting to a total of £15,859. That was an increase over the previous year. The number of prosecutions for the period under review was 459. In the country districts and Fremantle the fines totalled £4,104, and the convictions were 193 making the total amount netted by the

State in fines, £19,963. The great differences in the amounts paid in fines in the various districts is noteworthy; there are great differences although the offence is practically the same. From eight convictions in Geraldton the Government netted in fines £165, whereas in Katanning seven convictions returned only £16.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They must have a good legal representative in Katanning!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: In Coolgardie two convictions brought in £40, and at Kojonup the same number of convictions garnered £10.

Mr. Patrick: They are very reasonable down the Great Southern!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It seems to me that there must be something queer in our Act or in our administration of the law, for fines in one part of the State to be what the starting-price bookmaker might call exorbitant—but we call them very small—and in other parts almost infinitesimal. According to the Commissioner, the per capita cost of the department is 10s. 2d. We have one policeman to every 815 people, including aborigines. Consequently, we have approximately 600 policemen. I suggest to the Minister that one policeman to every 1,000 people should be sufficient.

The Minister for Mines: In a great big State like ours?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Almost half the population is in the metropolitan area, and the population is such that it needs but little police control. One policeman to every thousand persons would certainly be ample if our laws were properly administered, and if we assisted the police. I suggest that at present we are not assisting the police in any way to put down s.p. betting. The Police Department itself has suggested that politicians do not want the law to be enforced. If a policeman in the street is asked why he does not go into an s.p. shop, arrest people there and secure convictions, he will tell you, if you are a politician, that it is your affair. It is a disgrace; something should be done to clear up this unwholesome mess. The fault does not lie with the policeman or the department; the blame rests on the shoulders of the Government. The Commissioner has also reported on broadcasting. Members are aware that, with the advent of broadcasting, s.p. betting has considerably increased.

The Minister for Mines: Is broadcasting the fault of the Government, too?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Yes. I will connect it, Mr. Chairman. Other States have been able to stop broadcasting for s.p. purposes. In this morning's paper appears a report—

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Broadcasting has been dealt with in Queensland and New South Wales. The Commissioner suggests that broadcasting should be dealt with by the Government. If we do not administer the laws already on our statute-book, is it likely that we will administer future laws? I point out that almost every s.p. shop in the State sells lottery tickets. I asked the Minister for Justice the other day whether he was aware of this and, if so, whether he would take steps to prevent it. I was informed that the Lotteries Commission dealt with the matter. Once we form a board, apparently we have no jurisdiction over it. If the Minister will trust himself to my direction—

The Minister for Mines: I do not want another Royal Commission.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: —I will buy a lottery ticket for him—if he will pay for it—in 90 out of every 100 s.p. shops in the city. What is more, I will at the same time show the Minister where the s.p. shops are if he does not already know, and show him that it is possible to obtain convictions.

The Minister for Employment: You are trimming. At first you said every s.p. shop sold lottery tickets, now you say 90 out of every 100.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am not trimming any more than do ordinary politicians and especially Ministers.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They trim their sails very well.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: They sail so close to the wind that one does not know when they will be upset. It has been suggested that legislation will be brought down to deal with s.p. betting. This legislation, it is rumoured, will be modelled on the lines of the Tasmanian legislation. A suggestion has also been made that the names of the s.p. bookmakers who are to run the betting places are already in the Minister's book. I can give him the names, if he so wishes. It is possible to decrease the avenues for this

evil and at the same time increase the evil itself. That has been done in South Australia. However, this matter does not concern me very much. What gives me grave concern is the increasing number of delinquent children. During the year under review many of those children have been stealing and using the stolen money to make bets in s.p. shops. During the year, 2,655 children were convicted, an increase of 1,296 over the number for the previous year. Youths to the number of 765 were convicted for stealing, breaking, or unlawful possession. That is twice the number of delinquent children convicted for similar breaches of the law since 1935.

In conclusion, I wish to quote a particular case that came under my notice a week or two ago. A boy was working in a butcher's shop. His mother, who earned her living as a cook, gave the boy 15s. a week to pay for the meat for the home. The boy did not pay for the meat, nor did he give his mother his wages. He told his mother that the butcher was too hard up to pay his wages: he told the butcher that his mother was too hard up to pay for the meat. It was only at the end of the month that the boy was discovered to have taken his mother's money and utilised it in making bets at an s.p. shop. He was 16 years of age. The mother came to me and another woman. She was in great distress and said she did not so much mind the boy taking her money, but she was afraid he might take customers' money and be convicted. A little while after he was convicted of stealing £11. He is now in the care of an institution until he reaches the age of 18. These things are happening at frequent intervals. How can members sit in this Chamber knowing that young lads are going to the devil? It makes my blood boil to think of it. It is time men realised their responsibilities as fathers, and decided to legislate in some way to prevent such happenings, or to administer the law so that these children might be protected.

MR. MARSHALL (Murehison) [10.10]: I agree with the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver), and if she had agreed with me some years ago the incidents to which she has referred would not have happened. She assumes that by law it is possible to make people morally good. As time goes on, she will realise that by her efforts she will drive the evil underground and the posi-

tion will be aggravated. That is what has happened in South Australia, and should never have happened there.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: It has happened.

Mr. MARSHALL: I speak with a knowledge of the position in that State. It is just like the hon. member to leave the Chamber as soon as her arguments are being replied to. Even when the Bill she fostered had reached the third reading stage, so incensed was she at failing to get 100 per cent. of her requirements that she refused to move for the third reading. The arguments of the hon. member can readily be answered. People who think their ideas are the only ones seldom stand up to criticism.

Mr. McDonald: You are rather like the hon. member yourself.

Mr. MARSHALL: I did not rise to speak about starting-price betting, though I have my views on the subject.

Mr. Styants: We shall have the opportunity later on.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have records and reports from all over the universe, and can speak more intimately on the subject than can the member for Subiaco. Every civilised country has endeavoured to control starting-price betting but without success. I can, however, tell her what we ought to do. We ought to restrict horse-racing or cut it out altogether. I really rose to speak about the number of street accidents and to refer to the comments of the Commissioner of Police, who speaks of lack of finance preventing his department from adequately controlling the situation. Most members imagine that the accidents have occurred in the more congested parts of the city. The member for Swan suggested that.

Mr. Sampson: I said it was unnecessary to protect the cross-walks.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is necessary to have them.

Mr. Sampson: But not to have them guarded by police officers.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I enjoyed the leisure of the hon. member, I would agree that cross-walks were unnecessary. He is able to move around in a motor car, and when he wishes to pay a visit to any part of the city he does so in a car. To such a man cross-walks must be inconvenient.

Mr. Sampson: I am agreeable that you should have all these things.

Mr. MARSHALL: Some pedestrians are very nervous in traffic. All blind and par-

tially blind and aged and infirm people should be protected, while those who wish to look at the city are entitled to do so in safety. Is it suggested that a person who is mid-way between Barrack-street and William-street, and wishes to cross over, should have to go to the nearest intersection and walk all the way back? Without cross-walks in Hay-street a person desiring to cross from Sandovers to Woolworths would have to walk to an intersection and come back again.

Mr. Sampson: Why do people cross the street?

Mr. MARSHALL: To get to the other side. The reports of the Commissioner of Police from year to year indicate that the number of accidents is increasing. That is what worries me more than anything else. The number of fatal accidents is also increasing. We do not blame the careful driver, the person who has some regard for other people, but we cannot help blaming the careless individual who thinks he has a right to the whole road.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Chief Traffic Inspector lost his life in a motor accident.

Mr. MARSHALL: A most unfortunate occurrence. I suppose two midget cars may never again meet as those cars met with such dire results.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The accidents occur mostly in side streets.

Mr. MARSHALL: When reckless people get out of the congested areas they open up their machines.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They become careless at intersections.

Mr. MARSHALL: When they reach the intersections their vehicles are generally out of control, and that is when the accidents occur. The Commissioner of Police has a map of the metropolitan area, and on this map there are marks showing where accidents have occurred. Fatal accidents are marked in red and other accidents in black. It is remarkable how few accidents occur in the congested areas. Out of the total number of 4,727 accidents last year, 3,817 were caused by negligence or careless driving, and about 1,000 were due to other causes. Two-thirds of the accidents were the result of carelessness. Those who lost their lives numbered 140, and 927 were injured. That is an increase of seven fatal accidents and about 320 minor accidents compared with the previous year. In his comments the

Commissioner on page 14 of his report says—

With the increased work that is being cast on the Traffic Branch in regard to the control and regulation of traffic in the metropolitan area, it is most essential that the staff should be increased to cope with this work. At the present time it is not possible to in any way give attention to many matters that require investigation and control. Inconsiderate drivers must be taught to realise their responsibilities, and when it is borne in mind that out of the 4,727 accidents referred to in this report, 3,817 are stated to be accountable to negligence of drivers, or it may be thoughtlessness and inconsideration of same, it will be realised how essential it is that sufficient patrol officers should be available to check such practices. With, however, the present number of men engaged on this work, nothing further can be done than the work performed at present.

Apparently we agree that this number of people ought to be killed annually. Speaking from memory, in Perth 31 pedestrians were killed last year—innocent members of the community having no part in motor traffic. The destruction of life is infinitely too serious to be allowed to continue. The Traffic branch collected in license fees alone a total of £216,000 in the metropolitan area last year. From State-wide licenses it is only fair to expect another £10,000 or £15,000. I am aware that the police do not register vehicles or collect license fees outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. McLarty called attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. MARSHALL: The traffic branch by its collection of license fees pays within about £25,000 the whole annual cost of the police force, £255,000.

Hon C. G. Latham: A large proportion of that revenue goes into roads.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know it does. However, it relieves the financial pressure. The total amount of fines resulting from court proceedings, with the traffic license fees, would easily meet the entire cost of the Police Department. Nevertheless, as a result of the under-staffing of that branch, people are led to drive recklessly vehicles that are speedy and powerful, killing the drivers and other members of the community. The evil is growing. I call attention to lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Government in providing the traffic branch with sufficient

aid and a sufficient staff. Additional cars should be purchased for the branch, and additional men appointed to it. Then an effort could be made to patrol the streets and roads efficiently. Standing at the intersection of streets one sees vehicles with only one light, or with no lights at all. The law is flouted with impunity. If a motorist is caught breaking the traffic laws, he is indeed unlucky. Two policemen to control the congested metropolitan area! No wonder the accident figures increase every year. I have had a bitter experience, and I hope no other member will have such an experience. I am not making these comments because of my experience, but because of the annual increase in the figures of accidents, fatal or otherwise.

Mr. Hughes: Lack of insurance is worse than lack of control—people driving cars without being covered by insurance.

Mr. MARSHALL: Possibly insurance might minimise accidents, though I do not see how it would. Drivers who cause accidents should be taught a severe lesson. Insurance of the third-party risk might induce some drivers to be more reckless.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.28]: Because of the remarks of the member for Swan I wish to offer a few comments. The hon. member advocated the abolition of cross-walks. He quoted his experience of other parts of Australia, saying that they were without cross-walks and that policemen did not regulate traffic, more especially during the peak period. If the hon. member has been in the Eastern States, he knows full well that in Queensland and New South Wales, as well as in other States, policemen are freely used, especially at the peak period, to regulate the flow of pedestrians across street intersections. In Perth cross-walks are the only safeguard the pedestrian has. As one who has had considerable experience of driving a motor car around the city, I contend that the motorist sitting in his vehicle finds himself in a much better position than the pedestrian in the event of accident. Once he is knocked down, even if not injured, the pedestrian is so shaken that his health is affected. The crosswalks in the city have proved of great service in regulating the flow of traffic during the busier periods. The time may come when motor cars will be ordered out of the city altogether and drivers who show a tendency to ride roughshod over everyone will be sent about their business.

I am surprised that the member for Swan, who drives a motor car, should adopt the attitude he indicated this evening. With the increased number of vehicles on the road, the provision of crosswalks, with policemen at busy intersections, tends to slow down traffic and affords pedestrians added protection. The member for Murchison rightly referred to the position of people who have impaired eyesight, are infirm, or elderly, and also of women with perambulators. They are afforded a great measure of protection by the crosswalks, and people of that description become flurried when they see a motor car approaching them at speed. I hope the Minister for Police and his officers will not be affected by arguments that we have heard, and that policemen will be made available for the protection of life and limb. Another matter to which I desire to refer has relation to the annual collection of traffic fees for motor licenses at the Traffic Department's Office. Last year there was some improvement in the counter arrangements.

Mr. Styants: You must have been lucky.

Mr. HEGNEY: There is ample room for the provision of extra facilities. People have to form up in a queue, and often, when the applicant tenders his papers he is told that they are not signed. He has to leave the line and go elsewhere to do the necessary signing. On one occasion when I was at the Traffic Office, only one pen was available for the use of the public, and it took me an hour and a half before I could secure my license.

The Minister for Mines: That has been attended to. There are two pens available now!

Mr. HEGNEY: The department collects a lot of revenue and surely it is not asking too much that ample provision be made for the general public.

Hon. C. G. Latham: One great improvement would be to spread the licenses over the year.

Mr. HEGNEY: Let members consider the facilities that are provided for the public at the Commonwealth Bank.

The Minister for Mines: They have money there, too.

Mr. HEGNEY: It was suggested that pens were made available at the Traffic Office but that people took them away. I do not know whether that is true, but thousands of people use the facilities at the Commonwealth Bank daily, and no trouble is experienced there. The member for Subiaco referred to starting-price betting. As

the Government intends within the next few weeks to introduce legislation dealing with that phase, I shall reserve my observations on that subject till later on.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [10.36]: The Police Department is probably the most efficient Government department, and covers a wide range of activities. In each branch of those activities the control exercised by the police is most efficient and commendable, but there is one exception, reference to which was made by the member for Middle Swan. The accommodation provided for the public at the Traffic Office leaves much to be desired. I had heard about the congestion there when licenses had to be renewed, but when I went along to renew my car and driver's licenses. I was astonished at the inadequate arrangements. I was amazed at the callous indifference shown concerning the convenience of the people, and the absolute lack of facilities to enable licenses to be taken out within a reasonable time. Not only was no pen and ink available for those who succeeded in getting near the counter, but I saw one woman take 45 minutes to get there. When she got there, she was told she would have to sign the papers. The officials were not courteous enough to give her an indelible pencil or hand her pen and ink to enable her to sign the papers straight away, so she had to leave the queue and another 45 minutes elapsed before she received attention again. It took me 55 minutes to move 12 feet in the queue. As a matter of fact, I had to take my place in two queues. First I had to line up to renew the driver's license, and that occupied 25 minutes. Then I had to get into another queue to get my car license. Never before had I seen such inefficiency and callous indifference to the requirements of the public. Another objectionable phase was that no attempt was made to keep order. Some people displayed common courtesy, and took their proper places in the queue, but others, like the gate-crashers, edged their way towards the front of the queue. No attempt was made by the police officers, although there were many about, to see that the people who got there first were attended to first. In addition, the position was aggravated by officials behind the counter taking drivers' licenses from people at the back for signing and thereby holding up the queue, making the people who had had the patience to form in the queue wait much

longer. To travel 12ft. to secure the renewal of my car license took me 55 minutes apart from the 15 or 20 minutes occupied in getting my driver's license. The Commissioner has drawn attention to the lack of accommodation, and suggested that a certain building should be renovated to provide further accommodation for expediting the business of re-issuing licenses for both drivers and cars. I hope the Minister will see that the extra staff and accommodation are provided before the annual licensing occurs next year.

I suggest that licenses should operate here, as they do in most of the other States for 12 months from the date of issue. Instead of having all licenses falling due at one period of the year, those who take out car licenses in August should renew them in the following August. That would overcome much of the crowding and crushing that now occurs. When a man purchases a new car, the system of licensing operating amounts to bare-faced robbery. If he purchases a car in November, he has to pay the license fee retrospectively to July, and thus has to pay a full year's license for the seven months his car is on the road.

Mr. DOUST: Is that so?

Mr. STYANTS: Yes; the full 12 months' license has to be paid. I wish also to touch on a matter dealt with by the member for Murchison, namely, the lack of police patrols in the metropolitan area. The Commissioner each year directs attention to the fact that he cannot supervise the metropolitan area because of the lack of traffic patrols. In the metropolitan area there are four traffic patrols; in Melbourne there are 40. While I admit that Melbourne has a much greater volume of traffic, the area to be covered by the patrols would not be proportionately greater. There are ten times as many patrols in Melbourne with possibly four or five times the area to cover. The patrols in our metropolitan area work shifts of 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 2 a.m., so that, except during a short period, there is not more than one patrol on at the one time. It is ridiculous to expect effective supervision of traffic under those conditions. The Commissioner is continually drawing attention to the shortage of staff. I cannot understand the reason for short-staffing, because if there is one department

that pays its way handsomely, it is the Police Traffic Branch. I know it would not be logical to assert that the revenue of a particular department should be expended exclusively on that department. Some departments produce scarcely any revenue; many do not produce sufficient to carry on their activities and have to be financed from the surplus of other departments.

After the Police Vote had been considered last year, I asked certain questions of the Minister as to the amount of revenue received from all sources by the Traffic Branch of the Police Department for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1937, and the cost of operating the branch for the same period. The answer was that the commission on collection of car licenses amounted to £19,133, and on drivers' licenses throughout the State, £19,329, a total of £38,462. The expenditure, including salaries, telephones, postages, operation and maintenance of motor vehicles and insurance, totalled £12,150, leaving a surplus of £26,312. In addition, an amount of £10,380 was received as fines, penalties, etc., for breaches of the Traffic Act. Admittedly a certain sum would have to be deducted for court fees and expenses, but the department can safely be said to have shown a profit in that year of £35,000 or £35,500.

I have been wondering what would happen if the Chief Inspector of Mines were continually drawing attention to the fact that a great number of fatalities was occurring in the mining industry because sufficient inspectors were not provided. I should think the Minister would immediately issue instructions that more inspectors should be made available to police the mining regulations, and thus endeavour to obviate the occurrence of many of those fatalities. The accidents caused by traffic in the metropolitan area are responsible for the greatest number of deaths from any single cause in this State. Although the Commissioner is continually stressing that a number of those accidents would be avoidable if he had sufficient traffic control, and although the Minister said that the matter of making funds available for more traffic patrols would be considered, not one additional patrol has been placed on the roads in the metropolitan area. It may seem hard, but I say that much of the responsibility for accidents occurring in the metropolitan area must be borne by the Minister and Cabinet.

The Commissioner of Police is in a position to suggest a remedy, and he has urged the provision of additional traffic patrols. Cabinet should see that sufficient money is made available to increase by at least 100 per cent. the number of traffic patrols to operate for at least 12 months. Let us give it a trial for 12 months and see whether the number of accidents is diminished. Although I do not believe that motor patrols should be used for the purpose of raising revenue, I do believe they should be used exclusively for the purpose of protecting the public. If finance is the difficulty, I am sure any expense will be reimbursed from the fines inflicted upon those who flagrantly break the traffic laws day in and day out and every hour of the day and night in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Justice: Traffic patrols have not diminished accidents in Victoria.

Mr. STYANTS: I do not know what has been done in Victoria, but the man who should be in a position to know here is continually recommending this system and we should give it a trial for 12 months. If we find it is not a success then the traffic patrols can be disbanded and we can return to the present state of affairs. We should not, however, ignore the advice of the chief police officer of the State.

Another matter with which I wish to deal is linked up with the control of traffic and the lack of traffic patrols. I refer to glaring headlights. I mentioned this matter last year.

The Minister for Justice interjected.

Mr. STYANTS: It is not so much a question of the strength of the light to my way of thinking but of the focusing of the light. One can safely say that 50 per cent. of the accidents in which motor vehicles come into collision or pedestrians are knocked down are attributed by the driver to the fact that he was blinded by glaring headlights coming from an opposite direction, and I suggest that in 90 per cent. of the cases the truth is being told. Every time one travels between Perth and Fremantle, Midland Junction or Armadale, one is blinded by the lights of oncoming vehicles. The Police Department cannot be blamed because it has not sufficient patrols to supervise the traffic. That is a matter that should be given immediate consideration. The Commissioner says that most of the accidents could have been avoided. He declares that drivers are most unreasonable to each

other and recommends more traffic patrols as the remedy. He also recommends the provision of motor vehicles with loud speakers. That was tried in a section of the town and according to the Commissioner was reasonably successful, but I suppose lack of funds prevented the department persevering along those lines. Vendors of new cars, in my opinion, should be compelled to issue a certificate when they sell the vehicles to the effect that the headlights comply with the regulations. I have seen some new cars on the road and the headlights did not nearly comply with the regulations. In many instances it is difficult for one to make them comply with the regulations unless one is a mechanic and has all the appliances to enable him to make them conform to the requirements. Some cars have dimming devices, and other kinds of remedies have been suggested for overcoming glaring headlights. While the dimming device proves satisfactory in the hands of a thoughtful driver, it is of no use to a thoughtless motorist because he forgets to use it.

The lighting of tram cars, particularly those on a single track, is another matter about which I am concerned. It has been said that tram cars keep on the one course. To an extent that is so, but in places there are loops for the purpose of allowing two trams to pass each other. A motorist is travelling 15 to 20 feet on the left of a tram line when suddenly a tram car looms up in front of him on one of these loops.

The CHAIRMAN: That can be discussed under the division dealing with tramways.

Mr. STYANTS: Can it not be discussed at this stage?

The CHAIRMAN: The matter of colliding with tram cars can be discussed when the division dealing with railways, tramways, ferries and electricity supply is being discussed.

Mr. STYANTS: You would not regard this as being a matter concerning the Traffic Department?

The CHAIRMAN: It has nothing to do with the police in any shape or form.

Mr. STYANTS: Then I will deal with it later on. Regarding cross-walks, I think they have been a success. I would not like to see them abolished. Often they are inconvenient to the motor driver and people make it as awkward as they possibly can

for the driver by sauntering over the cross-walks, thus compelling the motor driver to make sudden stops. What could be taken in hand at an early date is the compelling of people to cross the road at the cross-walks. Far too many are not using the cross-walks and there is a good deal of jay-walking. The police should endeavour to compel as many people as possible to pass over at the cross-walks placed there for their convenience.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.59 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday 8th November, 1938.

	PAGE
Questions: Native Administration Act case of native Munmurrie	1877
Education, parents and citizens' associations, grants	1877
Leave of absence	1877
Bills: Fremantle Gas and Coke Company's Act Amendment, 3R., passed	1877
State Government Insurance Office, reports	1878
Mines Regulation Act Amendment, 2R. Com.	1878
Financial Emergency Tax, 1R.	1887
Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act Amendment, 1R.	1887
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, 2R.	1887
Bureau of Industry and Economic Research, 2R.	1890
Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 1), 2R.	1896

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

QUESTION—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

Case of Native Munmurrie.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: Will he lay on the Table all papers relating to the native Munmurrie?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes. I now lay the papers on the Table.

QUESTION—EDUCATION.

Parents and Citizens' Associations, Grants.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT asked the Chief Secretary: In view of the grant of £60 made to the Carnarvon Parents and Citizens' Association, is it the intention of the Government to make similar grants available to other parents and teachers' associations?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Consideration will be given in similar circumstances.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. W. J. Mann (South-West) on the ground of private business.

BILL—FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [4.39]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [4.40]: I do not wish to oppose the third reading of the Bill but to express regret that opportunity was not taken to amend the Act in other necessary directions. I am rather surprised that that was not done because when a Bill to amend the principal Act was before Parliament last year, attention was drawn to several defects that could have been remedied by the Bill now before the House. I do not desire to deprive the company of business that may be obtained in the extended area, nor do I wish to prevent people from having the advantage of a gas supply. In my opinion, the company should give greater consideration to the requirements of the area within the original radius of five miles. Not only are sections of the area within that radius not supplied with gas, but in portions of areas where the gas mains have been laid down some residents are not able to secure supplies. Only this morning I received a letter embodying a complaint from a resident of one of those areas indicating that the company is not prepared to extend the gas to his premises unless he is prepared to pay about £8 for the installation. The trouble does not arise because he