

would be made available for the training of boys and girls for employment. This amount was whittled down later to less than £1,000,000, but I hope that some money will be available from the Federal Government to finance the training of youths for employment, so that they can be absorbed in the industries. At the Fremantle Technical School there is an attendance of 550 individual students. This school meets the needs of the district in commercial, domestic and general subjects. There is very little demand for trade instruction. The Midland Junction Technical School has an average attendance of 450 individual students, of whom 220 are railway apprentices. The balance consists of students taking commercial, domestic and general subjects. The Eastern Goldfields Technical School at Boulder has 230 individual students, this being a slight falling off on the previous year's figures. This covers the ground of the administration of the department and gives an indication of what is proposed for the coming year. Most members are anxious to know what facilities will be provided and also whether the facilities will be increased where the needs render that necessary.

Mr. McLarty: The Parents and Citizens' Associations have helped a good deal in that direction.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They have helped very considerably. They have done wonderful work throughout the State. I might mention the Nedlands and Thomas Street schools where the associations have done excellent work, not only for the school grounds but in providing many desired facilities. It is my desire to reciprocate, and do something for those who have done so much for us. We wish to show some appreciation from the departmental standpoint of the good work that has been done at Nedlands and Thomas-street. In fact, I can say the same thing in connection with all our elementary schools. Some good work has been done by all the Parents and Citizens' Associations. I am indeed grateful to the hon. member for reminding me of it. Every member of Parliament is aware of the valuable work that is being done. Almost everywhere is to be found a band of people who seek to give this kind of service. They are improving the facilities at the schools, they are bettering the condition of tennis courts and sports

equipment, providing material for the use of the children, maps, books for libraries, and innumerable other things that go to make up the amenities of school life, things that it has been found impossible in the past for the Government to provide. In fact; these associations have filled an important role. I commend the Estimates to members, and shall be pleased to afford any further information that may be desired.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th October, 1934.

	PAGE
Bills : Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 3), 1R. ...	827
Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 2), 3R. ...	827
Timber Workers, report ...	827
Western Australian Aged Sailors and Soldiers' Relief Fund Amendment, report ...	828
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, message 2R. ...	828
Agricultural Bank, message 2R. ...	828
Annual Estimates : Note, Education ...	840

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Introduced by Mr. Warner, and read a first time.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—TIMBER WORKERS.

Report of Committee adopted.

**BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN AGED
SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' RELIEF
FUND AMENDMENT.**

Report of Committee adopted.

**BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT
CONTINUANCE (No. 2).**

Message.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purpose of the Bill.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.39] in moving the second reading said: The continuance of the principal Act is necessary if the Government are to continue to provide sustenance for settlers for whom the adverse conditions of the depression years have closed other avenues of credit. It is hardly necessary to remind hon. members—though possibly it may be news to some—that the prospects for the coming harvest are not by any means satisfactory. In some districts there are complaints of the wheat having ripened off early, with the result that the yield is likely to be small. In other districts there are complaints of rust, which is bound to affect production and consequently the settler. As an emergency measure the Industries Assistance Act contains machinery for the provision and control of credit, which machinery does not exist in the Agricultural Bank statutes. There is no intention of resuming general operations under the Act: but quite a number of settlers operate under its provisions, and these must be carried on, especially the miners' settlement at Southern Cross. Owing to the absence of commercial credit, and the inability of these settlers to obtain machinery on hire-purchase terms, the Bank is finding it impossible to develop, equip and provide harvest requirements within the limit of £2,000 prescribed by its Act. Therefore the Government are compelled to have recourse to the Industries Assistance Act in order to enable the guarantees demanded by merchants to be given. With regard to the payment of sustenance, there is no provision in the Agricultural Bank statutes to grant loans for that purpose. These advances are made under the Finance and Development Act, and the

Trustees are able to exercise their powers under the Industries Assistance Act for that purpose. Money so advanced automatically becomes a first charge on the land and crops of the farmer. As both the Acts are administered by the same authority, namely, the Trustees of the Agricultural Bank, all the machinery necessary is at disposal. It is not necessary for the borrower to register any securities, as he would have to do if advances were made by the Agricultural Bank. The number of accounts under the Industries Assistance Board at the 30th June, 1934, was 1,393, including 69 operative accounts for the miners' settlement at Southern Cross. The liabilities under the ordinary section of the Act amount to £645,896, and the interest outstanding amounts to £147,149, making a total of £793,045. The accounts which are funded amount to £909,882, and the interest outstanding is £201,996, making a total of £1,111,878. Advances for the year, including refunds from proceeds, amount to £30,525, and collections to £38,489. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purpose of the Bill.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.43] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill now submitted to the House is to reconstruct the Agricultural Bank under the directorship of three Commissioners, one of whom is to be the Under Treasurer or his deputy, and the other two Commissioners shall be persons having a sound knowledge of the rural industries of the State and suited, by reason of their personal qualifications, to administer the business of the Commissioners. These two Commissioners shall hold office for seven years; and one of the Commissioners shall be appointed chairman, who will have a deliberative as well as a casting vote. The

duties of the Commissioners will involve a good deal of reconstruction and consolidation; and as the Treasury will be vitally affected by the purpose of the Bill, it is considered necessary to give the Treasury representation. That, of course, was recommended by the Royal Commission which recently inquired into the affairs of the Bank. The Commissioners shall be paid an adequate salary, and will devote the whole of their time to the business of the Bank. As hon. members will know, the two Trustees outside the General Manager only devote portion of their time to the service of the Bank. But the commissioners appointed under the Bill will devote the whole of their time to the administration of the bank, and, being in that position, will be able to undertake the work of reconstruction and consolidation provided for in this measure. No person shall be appointed as a commissioner who is, or becomes, an officer of any bank, firm, or institution that carries on the business of making advances on the security of any land used in connection with the rural industry of Western Australia. The commissioners may be suspended by the Governor at any time on the grounds of incompetence, misbehaviour, or if they become incapable of carrying out the duties of their office. But it is provided that a statement of the grounds for the suspension shall be laid by the Minister before both Houses of Parliament within 14 days of such suspension, if Parliament shall be then sitting, and, if Parliament be not in session, within 14 days of the commencement of the next session of Parliament. If within 14 days after such statement is laid before each House, each House carries a resolution that the commissioner be dismissed from office, he shall be deemed to have been dismissed from office as from the date of suspension. If the resolution be not carried, the suspended commissioner shall be restored to office as from the date of his suspension. That will give the commissioners the security of tenure that I think is necessary if Parliament is to expect them impartially to administer the affairs of the Agricultural Bank. A commissioner shall not be deemed to have vacated his office if he (a) becomes bankrupt, (b) absents himself from the business of the commissioners for more than two weeks without the approval

in writing of the Governor—that is to say, of the Executive Council—(c) becomes insane or incapable of managing his affairs, or (d) has direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any agreement with the commissioners, otherwise than as a member of an incorporated company, consisting of not less than 20 members. The last-mentioned provision is the usual one inserted in such cases. The commissioners shall take over and assume responsibility for the business of the Agricultural Bank. They shall consider and determine applications for advances under this measure, and make advances to persons engaged in rural industries, where they deem such advances necessary. They may enforce payment of money or securities for money, including existing securities of the Bank, the Industrial Assistance Board, and the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Board. The commissioners will also take over the administration of the Group Settlers' Advances Act and the Wire and Wire Netting Act, 1926. The latter Act is administered from the Lands Department, but the intention is to bring all these Acts under one control, so that the one authority shall administer all rural and developmental activities. I presume members have had some experience of the unsatisfactory manner in which business may sometimes be done under existing conditions, by virtue of the fact that the Agricultural Bank, when dealing with liabilities or the sale of properties, have frequently no knowledge regarding the wire or wire netting advances on such properties, nor yet of the liabilities to the Lands Department. That applies particularly with regard to repurchased estates. I had thought of including the administration of the Lands Repurchase Act, but I found that circumstances made it impossible, and I had to leave that out. I found that it constitutes a distinct activity of the Lands Department, and I could not bring it within the scope of the functions of the Agricultural Bank Commissioners. But transactions under the Wire and Wire Netting Act can be transferred to the control of the commissioners, and all such transactions will be amalgamated or consolidated into the general accounts, so that clients of the Agricultural Bank will know just what their liabilities and obligations are. An instance was

brought under my notice in which a settler purchased a property from the Bank, and, some three months later, he received a bill from the Lands Department for an amount equal to that for which he had bought the property. He had been under the impression that he had purchased the block outright from the Bank and had no idea that there were liabilities to the Lands Department or under the Wire and Wire Netting Act. That sort of thing has occurred more than once. So far as I can, I have endeavoured to bring all these liabilities under the one authority, who shall be responsible for the collection of all dues in respect of such liabilities. The commissioners will also take over all special activities in connection with rural industries, which the Governor, from time to time, may entrust to them. Members will note, however, that there is an added qualification to that power, namely, that the commissioners shall not take over any special settlements against their wishes. The point has been commented upon not only by the Royal Commission that inquired into the affairs of the Agricultural Bank, but in this House and elsewhere, that the trustees of the Bank have been compelled to make advances in regions to which they were personally opposed and, having being compelled to do so, they should be relieved from all personal responsibility. The Bill provides that the commissioners will not be expected to enter into any such schemes against their wishes. In these difficult times we should not be expected to consider any extension of the agricultural industry. If there must be any such extension in the future, it will be in difficult country, and the commissioners' opinions should be consulted. In the event of Governments desiring to establish special settlements, they must create some separate authority, or give the commissioners of the Agricultural Bank some guarantee against possible losses.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We have had that experience before, of farming areas being established where subsequently the settlers got into difficulties and their affairs were then handed over to the Bank.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Should a Government insist upon pursuing a policy of further land development, the wishes of the commissioners of the Bank must be consulted first. Should they re-

fuse to endorse the policy, and the Government insist upon proceeding with it, the Government must guarantee the commissioners of the Bank against any liability. Under those circumstances, Parliament and also the Government concerned will take their proper respective shares of the responsibility. At the same time, the commissioners will be allowed to act entirely within their rights. Under the Bill, power is given to the commissioners to borrow money, with the consent of the Governor, on the security of the Bank's assets. I may say that at present I do not regard some of the assets as very sound.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Then this provision means that the commissioners will be able to borrow once only.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why once?

Hon. C. G. Latham: They will have to give a mortgage.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are to issue debentures.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We ought to know what you intend.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And members will know; I cannot deal with everything at once. Power is also given to the commissioners to engage and dismiss officers and servants; to inquire into the suitability of any district or land for rural development, and as to the advisability of making advances on such security under the Bill. They are also given power, with the approval of the Treasurer, to suspend or postpone payment, and, with the consent of the Governor, to release payment of the whole or any portion of the indebtedness of any borrower from the Bank or from any of the transferred activities—the Industries Assistance Board, the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Board, or the Wire and Wire Netting Act. The commissioners are empowered to join in, or be bound by, any mutual scheme, arrangement, or composition between any such borrower and his creditors for the adjustment of his affairs. The commissioners will have power to appoint valuers with general or local knowledge, for the purpose of advising them in regard to any application to suspend, postpone or release payment of any advance. Then again, the commissioners will have the customary power to expend money in order to provide suitable premises or quarters for officers. A resumé of the

powers of the commissioners is contained in Clause 6. Members will notice that the clause commences with the words, "subject to this Act, the commissioners have power" to do certain things. The various powers enumerated in Clause 6 will be found elaborated in parts of the Bill that deal more specifically with those particular matters. A reference is made in the marginal notes to assist members to turn up the appropriate division or part of the Bill referring to any particular power conferred on the commissioners, and I hope that will make matters more simple for them in dealing with the measure. The commissioners will have power to re-value all the Bank's securities, and the Governor, on the recommendation of the Treasurer, may grant relief from the liability to the Treasury. This is not intended as a general invitation to a raid on the Treasury, but the commissioners must have this power.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It will be regarded as an invitation and will have to be availed of, too.

The Minister for Justice: Then it will be received sympathetically.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Any such relief must be with the approval of the Treasurer. In such a vital matter, the Treasurer, of course, must be consulted. The Governor may also, on the recommendation of the Treasurer, suspend the liability of the commissioners in respect of any sum or sums forming part of such indebtedness, and grant the commissioners relief from interest payments to the Treasury during such period of suspension. The funds of the commissioners, for the purpose of the administration of this measure, shall be as appropriated by Parliament, and such other money as the commissioners may borrow under the separate provisions of the Bill. After the commencement of this measure, no further money will be borrowed by the Finance and Development Board. Members know that under that board the Government were able to borrow £475,000 from the Commonwealth Bank. As I have stated, no further money is to be borrowed in that respect, and that will give effect to one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. It has been deemed necessary, however, to make special provision in the Bill to safeguard the position of the Commonwealth Bank with regard to the security given to the Bank by the Finance and De-

velopment Board. There are various references in the Bill to this matter, and the commissioners are bound to keep up the contributions to the sinking fund for the liquidation of the old indebtedness of the Finance and Development Board.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And if they cannot?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will be a first charge on the securities. The Bill also distinctly provides that the loan due by the Finance and Development Board to the Commonwealth Bank is to take precedence over all other loans. All borrowings, if any, by the commissioners, shall be guaranteed by the State. The assets of the commissioners shall comprise, broadly speaking, all those assets of the Agricultural Bank, the Industries Assistance Board, and the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Board, which were grouped up at the time of the passing of the Finance and Development Act, and vested in the Finance and Development Board. They also comprise advances made under the Group Settlers' Advances Act, advances due in connection with special settlements, and wire netting advances under the Wire and Wire Netting Act, 1926. It is proposed to give the commissioners full power over their staff. There will be no divided departments, and the commissioners will have absolute power of discipline, which I am afraid has been lacking in some instances; particularly when officers of the bank who are collectors of interest can themselves owe the bank thousands of pounds of interest arrears which they have failed to pay; and when an officer of the bank can engage in transactions by which he revalues land, increasing immensely the area of first-class land in favour of a person in whom he is interested; and when it can happen that an officer's wife comes in as a partner; and when, the trustees refusing to advance more than £300, advances can be made, on the recommendation of officers up to the sum of £1,000 in one year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is not that case sub-judice?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was brought before the Royal Commissioners, and they regarded it as most unsatisfactory that the improvements effected did not correspond with the advances made. The officer concerned remained in the service of the bank for two years afterwards, and was

retired only when the trustees heard of the transactions from the Royal Commissioners. In another case the Royal Commission found that a district inspector was "under the Dog Act," and utterly incapable of carrying out his work. Scarcely necessary to say, they found in that officer's district a very loose condition of affairs, and that in at least one instance all the plant had been stolen from a farm recently vacated. When this was brought to the notice of the officer, he laughed and said it was a common practice. The Royal Commission drew my attention to it and drew the attention of the trustees to the officer's conduct, and in consequence he was immediately dismissed. Quite naturally the trustees are not aware of these things happening in the country, for how can the Managing Trustee with his great responsibilities know of these details? And because of their circumstances, how can the other trustees know of them?

Mr. Stubbs: But what are the district officers doing?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some of the district officers require to be disciplined, for no doubt there is a great looseness in the country administration. I have never gone into the country but I have had such instances placed before me by local people; and when I have made personal inquiries at the bank, I have found that the trustees were quite unaware of the conditions the subject of the complaint. I found an extraordinary position in one country district. A man was regarded by the bank as of very good type, but in the light of certain transactions of which I heard I could not regard him as a good client. I asked for a precis of that man's file, and I found it as different from the general conception of him as black is from white. He was not of good type any longer. When I showed the facts to the trustees they said they had no knowledge of them. Nor had they, for how could they get such knowledge? But I had heard reports of this settler, and so I wanted to know what sort of man he was. A number of members knew of him and, regarding him as a good client, were surprised when it was proved to them that he was a very poor client and a poor example in the district. I am convinced that the bank commissioners must be able to travel around the country and inquire into the administration. They will then have a grip of the

position and the administration will be more satisfactory. At present it is not possible for the trustees to get a proper grasp of what is happening in the country, because they have little personal contact. In my own office, when I am embarrassed by sections of the farming industry, I have not time to give personal attention to some aspects of settlement, and so I am likely to make blunders because for the time I am lacking the personal touch. That is why I want the commissioners and bank officials to have personal contact with the country administration. One of the bank's inspectors owes a large sum of money in interest arrears, and in addition he has made advances for work that was not done.

Mr. Stubbs: Is he still in the service of the bank?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

The Minister for Justice: Is he still there?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, he is still there.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Why was he not dismissed when he made advances for improvements that had not been carried out?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is your duty to inquire.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I got this information when the Royal Commission started their investigations. The trustees should know all about it. It is their job. He is their officer, not mine. Again, I have no power to dismiss any officer of the bank, not even an office boy, nor have I power to appoint one. The previous Government appointed an officer to an important position in the bank, and personally I do not think he is capable of filling that position. Yet I have no power to remove him.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And the Bill is to get rid of him.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, he cannot be got rid of.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I say this piece of legislation is for that purpose.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is for a lot of things.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No doubt.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But it is not for that purpose, and the hon. member is not showing much fairness in suggesting it. Does he think the Bill has been introduced merely to dispose of a minor offi-

cer? That must be for the new commissioners. The Bill provides that if a transferred officer at any time ceases to be employed by the commissioners by reason of the abolition of his office by the commissioners, he shall be eligible for and shall be appointed to any vacancy in the Public Service, not lower in classification and salary than that which he held as an officer of the commissioners. One object of the Bill is that the staff shall be removed from the control of the Public Service Commissioner and placed under the direct control of the bank commissioners, but the officers' existing rights shall be preserved to them under the Public Service Act. I hope the Leader of the Opposition will not view the Bill from the aspect he indicated, because I am not out to do an injury to any man or his family. I may have my own opinions about certain appointments which may appear to me as a waste of money, but I am not out to injure any man or his family. As much scandal has resulted from the fact that officers and their wives have been able to borrow from the bank, and that the interest on money advanced to these officers is some thousands of pounds in arrears, it is provided that in future no member of the staff or wife of any officer shall be eligible to obtain any advances under this Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is perfectly right.

Mr. Marshall: Why is it right; why should they not obtain advances?

Mr. Stubbs: It is open to suspicion.

Mr. Marshall: Members of Parliament can get advances, so why should not the officers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Members of Parliament should pay their interest. I find that some officers in the past have had power to recommend advances to their own wives, and have done so, and have failed to collect the interest from their wives. Members of Parliament cannot do that. Moreover, the relationship of the officers to the bank is not the relationship of members of Parliament to the bank.

Mr. Marshall: But there were other men over those officers to see that they did their job, or got out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In view of the experience the trustees have had, I think this provision is very desirable. As I have already stated, the commissioners will take over the administration of the In-

dustries Assistance Act, 1915 and 1931, the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act and its amendments, the Group Settlement Act, 1925, the Group Settlers' Advances Act, 1925, and the Wire and Wire Netting Act, 1926. Advances may be made by the commissioners to persons engaged in rural industry on the security of such land, to enable the settler to effect improvements, to purchase plant and machinery, to erect a dwelling house, to enable the farmer to put his land to better use or advantage, or for any purpose for which in the opinion of the commissioners it is necessary or desirable to make an advance to conserve the security of the commissioners. The maximum that may be loaned is £2,000, but where the advance is required for improvements, not more than 70 per cent. of the cost is to be advanced. The fact that the bank has been advancing up to 100 per cent. for improvements has resulted in much speculation with bank funds, and in my opinion has been responsible for much of the weakness in settlement occasioned during the last ten years.

Mr. Doney: Do you mean 70 per cent. of the value of the improvements or of the security?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Where an advance is required for improvements, 70 per cent. of the value will be provided by the Bank, and the settler, by his own efforts, will be expected to supply 30 per cent. Thus there will not be a repetition of the speculation in Bank funds which happened in the good years and which was responsible for the abandonment of many farms immediately the assistance ceased. When a man puts his own labour or money into a proposition, he will take greater interest in it. That is more likely to make for sound and permanent settlement. Where advances are required for stock and plant, the commissioners will be empowered to advance up to the full value of the stock and plant. I regard that as fair in the circumstances.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Without any limit?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Up to £2,000—the maximum that the Bank may advance for all purposes. The only departure from existing conditions made by the Bill is that 70 per cent. will be advanced for improvements and the settler will be expected to provide the other 30 per cent.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Is that the maximum percentage that they will be allowed to advance?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The maximum advance will be £2,000, the same amount as at present.

Mr. Stubbs: That amount has been exceeded in many instances.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And it may be exceeded under this measure. An exception has been provided with regard to the maximum limit of £2,000 that the commissioners will be empowered to advance. Arising out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, it may be necessary to advance moneys to a settler to enable him to change over from wheat to sheep farming, or to undertake mixed farming; or it may be necessary to amalgamate holdings. In those cases it is conceivable that it would be absolutely necessary to exceed the £2,000 limit, because many of the farmers affected are already indebted to the full extent. A safeguard has been inserted, namely, that Executive Council approval will be necessary before the limit of £2,000 may be exceeded.

Mr. Stubbs: That is a wise provision.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Loans must be applied for the purpose for which they are approved. If the loans are not so applied, the commissioners may refuse to pay any further instalments of the advance and may at once call up the whole of the money already advanced. Repayments shall be made half-yearly, or by such instalments as may be prescribed by the commissioners, provided that the principal instalments shall commence not later than 10 years after the date of the advance, and that the period over which the advance shall be repayable shall not exceed 20 years, but nothing shall prevent the borrower, if he so desires, from paying off the amount advanced at any time.

Mr. Stubbs: How can the commissioners expect to collect any money from farmers in the middle of the year? It is ridiculous.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Interest must be paid half-yearly. Where any interest is due by a borrower, or where any instalment or principal or interest has been refunded to a borrower, or where any advance has been made by the commissioners other than to effect permanent improvements or to purchase plant and stock, a

statutory charge shall be taken in priority to all other encumbrances upon what may be termed the major produce of the farm, but only for one year's interest. It is also provided that the commissioners may, at any time, agree in writing with any borrower, or with any creditor of any borrower, to waive such statutory charge, wholly or in part, in any case where, in their opinion, it is desirable to do so. If a farmer can obtain credit elsewhere and the commissioners think it is desirable that he should do so, they may waive their right to the statutory charge.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Does that mean that the commissioners' lien would be the automatic one operating under the existing Act?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Regarding the enforcement of securities, the House will find that there is very little difference between the clauses in the Bill and the provisions of the existing law. One of the most important features of the Bill is that providing for the suspension of instalment payments, the writing down of over-capitalised properties, and the consolidation of securities. Where the commissioners are satisfied that the borrower is unable to meet his indebtedness and any interest with respect thereto, they may, subject to the consent of the Treasurer and if they are satisfied that the borrower is deserving of assistance, taking into consideration the personal equation, suspend or postpone payment of the whole or any portion of the indebtedness of the borrower, as they think fit. During the period of such suspension, the commissioners may relieve the borrower from payment of all interest on the suspended amount, but the suspension shall be reviewed by the commissioners from time to time and at least once in every two years. The commissioners may require all other creditors to enter into agreement for the suspension or postponement of their claims. Previous to making any suspension of the liabilities, the commissioners may require all other creditors of the borrower, secured or unsecured, to enter into a mutually binding arrangement for the suspension or postponement of their claims on such terms and conditions as the commissioners may consider reasonable. Clients of the Agricultural Bank have many other creditors. Private banks hold second mortgages over 1,500 of the Agricultural Bank's securities. I not-

iced that the chairman of the Associated Banks in Victoria, Mr. O'Sullivan, made a public statement during the Federal elections about the great loss sustained by the Agricultural Bank of Western Australia owing to political influence, but he did not make any reference to the fact that, bad as some of our securities were, those of the Associated Banks must be worse, inasmuch as 1,500 of our securities are under second mortgage to private banks.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I wonder whether the private banks will dispense with the services of some of their managers in this State?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why should they?

Mr. Patrick: For bad business.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They may have dispensed with some of them. Many of our unfortunate farmers were chased by the banks and urged to accept credit that they did not really need. Many farmers and others are in difficulties because bank managers induced them to accept loans which, but for persuasion, they would not have accepted.

Mr. Seward: Some of the banks.

Mr. Stubbs: And then they put the gun into the farmers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the depression came, the banks wanted their cash.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They have only second mortgages instead of first mortgages.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All the same, they wanted their cash.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They cannot get it very easily.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In some instances, where they held first mortgages, they wanted their cash. On the other hand, I know many cases that have come before the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Board in which the chief creditor is a private bank and is instrumental in carrying the farmer on. In many instances the banks are still carrying the farmers on. I regard this power proposed to be given to the commissioners as the first step to rehabilitate the industry. But the Bill goes further. It provides that where the commissioners are satisfied that the value of any security or securities vested in them under this measure is insufficient to cover the aggregate amount due by any borrower, and there is no reasonable likelihood of the securities

appreciating in value so as to cover the liabilities, and the borrower is deserving of assistance, the commissioners may, subject to the consent of the Treasurer and with the approval of the Governor, write off and reduce the aggregate indebtedness of the farmer to such sum as the commissioners consider the security may reasonably be expected to carry. I believe that the Leader of the Opposition, when discussing the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank, stated that no property was over-capitalised.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member should look up "Hansard." I have no desire to be unfair, but he spoke about the average capitalisation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are not dealing with average capitalisation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I was not dealing with individuals.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some individuals have a very low capitalisation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I quoted the figures for each district.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I intend to quote figures also, figures relating to the hon. member's district.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Quote some of the good ones as well.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no need to quote the good accounts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You would not say anything about them?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The good accounts would not be over-capitalised properties. The hon. member has a good property.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Thank goodness I am not under the Bank.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is regrettable because the hon. member would be a good client.

Mr. Marshall: Then the Bank trustees did show some discretion.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You do not suggest I am unaware that there are bad accounts under the Agricultural Bank that will never be paid.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member stated that the average liability was not very great, that the trustees had encountered great difficulties, and that much of the criticism levelled at the trustees by the Royal Commission was not fair.

Mr. Sampson: Losses are inevitable.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Speaker will not permit me to quote "Hansard"; otherwise I would do so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: References to settlers' liabilities will be quite pertinent because we are dealing with the question of over-capitalisation, and into that the personal equation enters. If the Bruce Rock district, the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition, one property has a liability with the Bank of £4,684, and the estimated value is much less than the Bank capitalisation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That amount was not advanced; that is the present liability.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: With interest and accrued interest.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes, the liability, not the advance.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Another has a liability of £4,200. According to the file, the settler is a fair worker but lacks method, with the result that his farming operations are not carried out in their seasonal periods. That settler will never make good and in any case the capitalisation makes his prospects hopeless. Another settler who has a capitalisation much in excess of the value has been operating under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. He owes a lot of money to the department, and in addition to other liabilities, there is an amount of approximately £1,000 owing to the Bank of New South Wales. As to the personal equation, the settler lacks sting and has no desire to make good. Here is another case: The liability of the settler is £5,700 and the property is valued at £3,500. As to the personal equation, the settler is a good worker and a good farmer. He took over the property five years ago. It was then over-capitalised, and now the proposition is hopeless.

Mr. Stubbs: What action did the trustees take when these reports came in?

Hon. C. G. Latham: What could they do?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I asked for these reports, and do not know that the trustees saw them. Here is another case: the settler purchased the property six years ago. He took over an Industries Assistance Board debt as well as the bank mortgage. The indebtedness on the property was very heavy. With the slump in wheat prices he dropped still further behind, and appears to be in a hopeless posi-

tion. The liability on the property is £4,000, and the value of his crop last year was £250. I should regard that as an absolutely hopeless case. The whole of his crop last year was insufficient to pay the interest.

Mr. Mann: The previous man would probably have done well if prices had kept up.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The property was too highly capitalised when he took it over. He came here with a few thousand pounds, the slump got him, and that was the end of him. Here is another case: The settler has a wife and two children. He is a fair worker, but what with heavy capitalisation and other difficulties his chances of winning out are remote. Here is another property which is overloaded with a second mortgage of £2,000 with the Bank of New South Wales, plus arrears of interest. The settler is now thoroughly disheartened and only cropped 250 acres last year. Here is a case of another whose liabilities are £5,467: In addition to being a poor farmer he is thoroughly disheartened, and repossession must eventuate. I have ten instances from every district, comprising group settlers, soldier settlers and other settlers. The same tale is told at every place. Here and there the liability on a property is as high as £8,000. In many cases the settlers are good men, but are in a hopeless position through over-capitalisation. In other cases the personal equation is poor. There are instances of properties that are known to be incapable of producing crops. During the last 20 years quite a lot has become known about Western Australia. We have tried out most of the wheat-growing lands, and much of the South-West. A lot of the country suffers from physical soil weaknesses, or some element that makes payable crops impossible. I know of one property in a remote district on which the liability is nearly £7,000. I should regard the position of the settler as hopeless, because he does not get more than four or five bushels to the acre.

Mr. Stubbs: What is the area of such places?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: From about 1,000 to 1,500 acres. It has been the policy of the State and the bank to carry on people from year to year, advancing money and helping them in the hope that

they will eventually make good, if not the following year, perhaps the year after. And so things have gone on for many years, and now we have to face the position. The Leader of the Opposition appears to be in a hostile frame of mind regarding this legislation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am annoyed that you should charge me with things I have not done.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Then I apologise to the hon. member. Members of this House have had a lot of experience of various parts of the State. They move amongst the settlers, and they know the position is as I have set it out. The commissioners may adjust the payment of such indebtedness over such period as they think fit, and where there are several securities carrying varying rates of interest they may fix a uniform rate of interest to be paid by the borrower. Prior to doing this, and as a condition to making any reduction or adjustment, the commissioners may require the other creditors of the borrowers, whether secured or unsecured, to enter into a mutually binding scheme for the reduction and adjustment of their claims on such terms and conditions as the commissioners consider reasonable. That puts the onus and responsibility on the other fellow. There are creditors who think that some day they may get all their money. Unless they face the position, there may come a day when they will lose all their money. It is hoped that the other creditors will be induced to come into the scheme, and that they will be able to make some arrangement by which their claims will be reduced also, in order that the settler may be put upon a sound basis.

Mr. Sampson: An increase in price would save some of the farmers.

Mr. Stubbs: Some creditors have been waiting for 20 years. They got nothing out of the Industries Assistance Board and have not much hope of ever getting anything at all.

Mr. Patrick: Have there not been cases in which the Bank has disposed of properties, and the creditors have got nothing?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but if a person takes a second or a third mortgage he is aware of the risk.

Mr. Patrick: I am referring to outside creditors.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The outside creditors have also taken the risk. If a creditor gives credit to a person, and knows that some other person has a prior claim upon the individual's assets, he knows the risk he is taking, and he takes that risk with his eyes open.

Mr. Patrick: There is a temptation for the bank to accept a tender that will only cover its own indebtedness.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It may be necessary for the commissioners, in determining whether or not there shall be a writing down or suspension, to employ expert assistance. They may appoint valuers with local knowledge of the country.

Mr. Stubbs: That is very sound.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The commissioners will have power to examine witnesses on oath. This is a very necessary power, if proper information is to be obtained on which to base a valuation. They will be able, by taking evidence on oath, to ascertain those statements which are reliable and arrive at the facts that are necessary in investigations of this kind. I remember a statement being made to a Royal Commission some three years ago that wheat could not be grown at less than 5s. a bushel. Now it is said that 3s. 4d. would be all right. Statements are often exaggerated. If the commissioners take evidence on oath concerning the value of properties and the possible production they will be in a position to make a thorough investigation. One of the recommendations of the Royal Commission was that the security should be consolidated. This position has been gone into. Whilst it is easy to make such a suggestion, it is very difficult to accomplish it in practice.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The legal mind ought to have known that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I suppose he did know.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think he knew a lot more than he said.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is impossible of accomplishment, because of second mortgages.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But wherever it is possible it will be done. The commissioners should be able to consolidate many securities. At all events, the commissioners will consolidate the accounts in the books, where convenient and practicable, and

steps will be taken to establish one security for all the indebtedness.

Mr. Stubbs: That will do away with a lot of clerical work.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. The provisions in regard to accounts and audit are similar to those found in the existing legislation. Some essential differences, however, are made in the Bill. It has been specifically provided that in the furnishing of the balance sheet the commissioners shall show all contingent liabilities, and make due allowance for all debts or depreciated securities. This will obviate the evil which has grown up over a number of years, and which invited the strong criticism of the Royal Commission. I refer to the carrying forward of large accumulations of arrears of interest that were unrecoverable. A new provision in the Bill provides for the furnishing of an analysed cash account. A cash account is regarded as a good barometer of business operations. This account will enable Parliament to see exactly what cash in each year the commissioners have had, and how that cash has been disposed of. I regard such an account as the only reliable barometer. It is the practice in accountancy to take into revenue debts and interest that are never collected, and to produce a statement showing this money as having been received. I understand that is the proper practice, but if we all followed it, I am sure we would never know where we stood. As ordinary men in Parliament we must know just what are the receipts and expenditure from year to year. If the bank makes a loss, Parliament must provide the money, as it should know all about the circumstances. A new provision with regard to the audit is inserted, and this provides that the Bank may have continuously employed internal auditors.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That used to be the case.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, during the term of office of the hon. member, and is now the practice. It will be the law for the future. Following on the recommendation of the Royal Commission it is provided that a definite officer from the staff of the Auditor General shall be assigned to audit the commissioners' operations. That officer will be bound to make reports to his superior, the Auditor General, and in turn the Auditor General is bound to forward accounts and any com-

ments he thinks necessary to the Minister before they are tabled. With regard to offences and penalties, these will be those that are usually provided. I commend the Bill to the House, because I think its provisions will meet existing circumstances to a great extent. It is the first step towards rehabilitation. Under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment Bill that will shortly be introduced, I hope to secure the consent of Cabinet to a provision that the Director shall make some proposition to the creditors with regard to debts that are not due by clients of the Agricultural Bank, that is, debts due by settlers to other institutions. If the State enters upon this work of liquidation and consolidation, other institutions should also play their part. This legislation provides the machinery for the purpose. The State has its limitations. It is not a rich State, and our difficulties are great because the State has carried the bulk of the developmental expenditure. And here is where the Commonwealth Government can come in; the machinery is provided by which help can be given. If the Commonwealth Government are sincere with respect to the promise they made just prior to the last Federal elections, it will be possible to get substantial relief for the farmer, and we are providing the machinery by which the Federal Government can come in immediately.

Mr. Stubbs: Did not the Federal Government promise help in connection with the 3,500 farms scheme?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They did, and that matter is now being taken up with them. I have put on record my impression of the interview which took place in the Premier's room with Mr. Gunn and Sir Charles Nathan. Referring to the agricultural industry in this State the position of many settlers is hopeless, as indicated by our reports, and without admitting that the State is responsible for their liabilities, we know we have to face the position if an attempt is to be made to put the industry on a sound basis. The Government admit that the need of relief is genuine, and submit this legislation to the House in the hope that it will be favourably received by all members. Before I conclude, I wish to say a few words about the possibilities of reconstruction. In the process of that reconstruction this legislation will be of very great value. I turn first to the group set-

lements in the south. It is very difficult for any administration to carry on a definite policy, and it becomes more difficult as some settlers make progress whilst others make none. The Government have provided land, stock and equipment, and we are still giving a fair measure of assistance which is not charged to the bank at all. This comes out of the funds provided by this House under the Agricultural Development Vote. Since the revaluation of the groups, no less a sum than £270,000 has been advanced to the settlers. Hon. members are aware that the rate of interest paid by group settlers is infinitesimal. The position has to be faced, because this year we have made further advances for the purchase of superphosphate. These advances will be a further charge upon the security of the land and the plant. Frankly, however, it is only a charge because it does not appear that the securities have sufficient value to meet the advances. In the group settlements we are in danger of creating a privileged section. The Bank does not provide for any other client in the same way as it does the groups, and now our difficulties are greater because other clients complain of unfair treatment. They write and state, "Those people get this consideration and that, and we get nothing."

Hon. C. G. Latham: And they can sell their goods cheaper than the man who is paying his way.

Mr. J. H. Smith: In buying superphosphate, they are endeavouring to an extent to maintain their security.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That will not bring in any interest. It means expenditure all the time. I know there are many settlers in the group areas who, despite their present pessimistic outlook, would make good if it were not for the feeling that the properties may never be their own. In some cases they pay a portion of the interest, but they find the arrears accruing year after year. In the proposed legislation, the Commission will have power to give to those people a hope. To the man who wants to make good, they can say, "We can suspend interest or re-value the security; now the future is in your own hands." The settler who does not respond must not be further maintained. I have no doubt there are many good settlers who will take advantage of the opportunity that will thus be afforded them. I shall always resist any

attempt to exploit the State and the taxpayer, but there are difficulties which must be recognised, and those difficulties are an aspect of settlement which the Commission will have to face. At the Royal Show recently, I met a settler from the Busselton area, a man who has always paid his interest, and an admirable and fine type of settler. Though he has always paid his interest, he is getting disheartened. He said to me, "Is there any hope of our ever owning our properties?" That man ought to be helped, and in the Bill I am submitting the Government are giving him that expectation. Coming now to the Esperance district: there will have to be considerable reconstruction in that part of the State. Members are aware that we have experienced considerable difficulty in the Esperance areas. It has been discovered that excess alkali in the soil is to a great extent responsible for the condition existing there. Their soils are totally different from the soils in the wheat belt. The Lands Department has taken the first step towards reclassifying those areas. Dr. Teakle and his officers have been engaged on this work for 12 months, and they have been collaborating with the Agricultural Bank. The Bank has advanced in those areas no less a sum than £502,900, and the interest outstanding amounts to £175,000; so there is a total liability against the settlement of £678,677. Last year the interest due was, as I have said, £175,000, and only £2,262 was collected, equal to 1.28 per cent. The whole position down there must be faced, and when the reconstruction takes place there, it must be on a cropping and grazing basis. The Lands Department has taken steps to convert the areas into grazing farms, and already in that respect a considerable area has been classified. Dr. Tenkle informed me, in respect of the classification already completed, extending from Beete to Circle Valley, that about 100 amalgamations had been designed, and that fairly complete information was available for about 75 of these units. He also stated that the information respecting the area cleared and the areas of the various grades of soils included, were being checked by the Department of Lands and Surveys. I am speaking now of the northern section, not the southern section, of the district, which is not badly affected. In the northern section it is apparent, to ensure a reasonable chance of

success, the settler must have a clearing of at least 800 acres of first-class land, with an additional area of grazing land. There must be fencing to permit of the handling of stock.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about water supplies?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The intention is to provide for new clearing and reconditioning, fencing, water supplies, sheep, horses, etc. All this work will be taken in hand by the commissioners. There is also reconstruction to be undertaken in the Lake Brown area and similar country. The Royal Commission reported, and it was also reported to me, that the clearing of morrel country with funds provided by the Bank largely contributed to the failure of many farmers and consequent abandonment of the farms, this state of affairs being particularly noticeable in the Kununoppin Agricultural Bank district, where officers tendered evidence. District manager Cook stated—

Lake Brown was settled in 1912 and abandoned. This area was re-opened for settlement, and again 20 farms are abandoned. The area is only suitable for grazing, being morrel country—30 per cent. of my country is morrel country.

Field inspector Eddy said—

I have always been scared of morrel country. The settlers have no chance of succeeding The average yield in my district is eight bushels. Some farmers grow an average of four bushels.

Field officer Austin stated—

The Bank has 50 morrel farms in this district. The Bank is still advancing money to keep the men farming there. The holding of stock would help the position.

There is a big work of reconstruction ahead for the commissioners in this country. In the interests of the State I commend the Bill to Parliament. I hope no member who has the interests of the country at heart will oppose the measure merely for the sake of opposing it. I do not suggest that that will happen. Hon. members might well grasp the opportunity here provided by the Bill. The Government have given most serious consideration to the whole matter. I as Minister have for some considerable time regarded the position of farming in Western Australia as serious. In order to face that position, the Government have pro-

vided the machinery in the Bill. If the Commonwealth Government come in, we are ready for them. I believe in this legislation we can do much towards the reconstruction of the farming industry in Western Australia, and at the same time advance the well-being and prosperity of the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [6.3]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Tuesday, the 30th October.

The Minister for Lands: Oh dear!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Well, you have had all these months.

Motion (adjournment) put and passed.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1934-35.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Vote—Education, £614,000 (partly considered):

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [6.5]: I was struck with the moderate tone in which the Minister, when introducing this Vote, spoke of the department under his control. During the year the usual smooth working of the department has been somewhat upset, as the result of the friction that has arisen between the teachers and the department. I thought that possibly the Minister might take advantage of this opportunity to try to put the teachers in their place because of their having taken upon themselves to make a protest. The Minister did not do that, and I congratulate him upon his attitude. The gesture which he has made is one which the teachers might well reciprocate by forgetting all about their protest and getting on with the normal work of the department. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that the teachers had some justification for making a protest. They were suffering under disabilities which were not common to other Government servants. They believed that there was considerable inequality of treatment. Take, for example, the matter of long service leave. When the salaries of

the teachers were fixed, the Classification Board took into consideration the fact that the teachers enjoyed long service leave. In effect the board treated long service leave as a cash equivalent, and the salaries fixed were considerably lower than they would have been in the absence of any long service leave. There is no doubt about that. In fact, it was distinctly stated by the Classification Board.

Mr. Marshall: So the teachers paid for their own long service leave!

Mr. TONKIN: Under the Financial Emergency Act the teachers have had to suffer a 20 per cent. reduction of salaries, in the same way as other Government servants, and in addition they have had their long service leave suspended. This, in the light of what I have just stated, is equivalent to inflicting on them a second reduction in salary. That is unfair, and so the teachers were not without justification for making a protest. And that is not the only trouble. Teachers are expected, outside their ordinary duties, to take groups of boys and girls away to sports. I have done it myself in past years. This involves the payment of travelling expenses. In most departments a public servant sent away on Government business is reimbursed his travelling expenses. Whenever a teacher is expected to take a class of boys away to cricket or football—

Mr. Marshall: Or swimming.

Mr. TONKIN: —he incurs travelling expenses. Sometimes these expenses amount to two or three shillings in one week. The department refuse to acknowledge any indebtedness in that respect, and will not reimburse the expenses.

Mr. Patrick: Is this done in school hours?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, but it often goes beyond school hours. I have taken boys to play cricket, leaving the school at about two o'clock, and the match has not concluded until five o'clock. I never objected to remaining there till five; in fact, I enjoyed the matches; but the enjoyment did not pay my fares. I did not complain on that score, but I hold that as it is the practice to pay the fares of other public servants when travelling on departmental work, similar treatment should be extended to the teachers.

The Minister for Education: It is pretty easy work to watch a cricket match.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, but there is the expense involved in taking the team out. Although, as the Minister says, it is easy work, the hours extend beyond the school hours. It could easily happen, and I dare say it does happen, that a teacher would desire to get away right on time on a sports day, and that it would not be possible for him to do so. To the department the amount involved is so small as not to be worth arguing the point about; but to the individual teacher, on top of other expenses he has to meet, it is an appreciable amount.

Mr. Wilson: How long has that been in operation?

Mr. TONKIN: Ever since the teachers have been taking sport. There must always be a breaking point, and a protest was made. The fact that the teachers have not protested before shows that they are a long-suffering body. They used every constitutional method to get the grievance redressed, and only when those methods failed did they make a protest. I will give the exact wording of that protest—

No member shall undertake or carry out activities in connection with the schools which do not come within the immediate terms of his employment.

The teachers have not refused to carry out their ordinary duties in a thoroughly competent manner. In any case, their work is subject to inspection. They still do what they are expected by the department to do. Previously they did a considerable amount of gratuitous work. Indeed, the amount of that gratuitous work must have been very considerable, in view of the storm of protest which arose when the gratuitous work stopped.

The Minister for Education: Who protested? I do not think anybody.

Mr. TONKIN: Hon. members should know that that suggestion is not correct. Not much has been heard of the matter in this Chamber, but in another place some hon. members whipped themselves into a condition of fury over it. One hon. member elsewhere talked about sacking the teachers wholesale, and putting other people in the places of the teachers who were to be dismissed. Undoubtedly the cessation of the gratuitous work of the teachers has caused a great deal of dissatisfaction among the people. The Parents and Citizens' As-

sociations have done wonderful work. They have been the means of providing the schools with a number of things which the schools would never have had otherwise.

Mr. Patrick: The associations have built schools in country districts.

Mr. TONKIN: I was not aware of that, but I do know of my own knowledge that the associations provided the schools with many things of great advantage to the children. For example, some schools have been given tennis courts. At least one school has been supplied with a cinematograph, and the teachers are able to increase the value of their lessons by showing films. Members will realise what a great assistance a film is, in, for example, a geography lesson. These things have been made possible as the result of the fine work of the Parents and Citizens' Associations; but that work has depended largely on the co-operation of the teachers, on gratuitous work done by the teachers outside their ordinary hours of duty. The extent to which the associations depended upon the teachers is evidenced by the way in which the work of the associations has fallen off since the teachers withdrew their support. Let me instance what came under my own notice in connection with the excellent work done by the Cottesloe Parents and Teachers' Association. I attended the last fancy dress ball run by that association, and every member of the association to whom I spoke during the evening deplored the loss of the teachers' assistance. Because of that loss, the ball was not nearly so great a success as it had proved in former years. It was further stated that if the trouble was not fixed up, the association would be faced with the possibility of having to abandon their work altogether. And that is not the only instance. I daresay other members have come across the same thing. It is patent, therefore, that in the past the teachers have rendered a large amount of gratuitous service. The full extent of that gratuitous service is realised only now, when it has been discontinued. In view of the fact that attention has been drawn to the teachers' disabilities, and also in view of the moderate tone of the Minister, there seems reason to hope that something will be done to remove those disabilities. The teachers, having drawn attention to their plight, will no doubt be content to leave it

to the Government to do the reasonable thing, which I am sure the Government will do.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: Prior to the tea adjournment, I was referring to the trouble that had arisen between the Education Department and the teachers, and to the fact that a protest had been made. A continuance of the dissatisfaction has certainly deprived the children of something they should get. I refer to such activities as the public speaking classes and the visits to places of interest that were previously possible and which, since the trouble, have been cut out altogether. There is no doubt the children miss those facilities that they looked forward to and enjoyed with profit. On the other hand, the teachers themselves are feeling the position and, in private conversations with a number of them, I ascertained that they were anxious to revert to the work they were doing previously, because they were just as happy as the children in the public speaking classes and the visits to places of interest. The department have fully recognised the value of the teachers' work, and that is evidenced in the annual departmental report. For instance, in the report for 1933 the Director speaks of the efficiency and enthusiasm of the teachers and of time ungrudgingly given. So it is quite evident that the work of the teachers has been thoroughly appreciated. I think the purpose of the protest has been well served; attention has been drawn to the matter, and, in the interests of the teachers themselves, the children and the State, I think the protest should be withdrawn, and we should get back to the smooth running of the department. I hope that end will be achieved. A perusal of the report of the Education Department shows that during the year much good work has been done under difficulties. Mention is made of the over-crowding of schools and the lack of equipment. That is a very serious matter. Take for example, the department of science. No one will deny that the teaching of science is absolutely essential in this age. It is impossible to teach science without adequate equipment. Schools have not been adequately equipped for the teaching of science, therefore that teaching has not been done properly.

It has been done as well as possible with the material available, but that is no good. It must be done adequately and teachers must have the material they require for the subject. The same position arises in connection with the teaching of domestic science to girls. Without hesitation I claim that the taxpayers of this State ought to be able to demand domestic science training for their girls. Unfortunately, some girls to-day do not get any domestic science training at all, because there is no accommodation for them in the science centres.

Mr. Marshall: That is the first thing they should be taught.

Mr. TONKIN: The same applies to manual training for boys. We believe in training the hand and the eye, as well as in providing the children with a theoretical knowledge in other branches. I mentioned last year that a number of boys were not getting any tuition whatever in manual training, although they ought to receive it. The parent of a boy who is not receiving that training has a very real grievance. Let us say that parent Jones sends his boy to school and the lad receives manual training. Parent Brown sends his lad of the same age to another school, but he does not have manual training. The parents pay taxes and should be entitled to similar privileges, but Brown's boy is deprived of the opportunity that is available to Jones's lad. It may be that young Brown is suitable only for that class of work. He may have aptitude in that direction and yet not have the opportunity that is available to young Jones. Every effort should be made to assure adequate science equipment being provided, girls receiving tuition in domestic science, and manual training being available to all boys eligible for it.

Mr. Warner: Throughout the State?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes. It is neither fair nor wise for certain boys and girls to be deprived of such opportunities. I desire to say a few words regarding the scholarship system as it operates in this State. I believe that a system of scholarships should have a definite aim. At present we provide scholarships for boys and girls, by way of competitive examinations, when they reach a certain age. We provide funds with which to carry on the education of the successful students, but we do not worry much about the positions they will occupy after they complete their training. Consider what is done in the realm of

sport. A school will select a number of children who show promise, say, in tennis. They give the children special coaching and, if they display aptitude, some are selected to represent the school and, later, to take part in the Slazenger Cup inter-school competition. People well up in the tennis world are on the lookout for promising juniors, whom they take in hand and provide with special coaching, with the idea that ultimately the young players may represent the State, or even the nation, in due course. There we see a definite aim. There should be some equally definite aim respecting our scholarships. The State requires expert engineers, doctors, chemists and so forth, and we should set ourselves out to discover those boys and girls who will fill those positions in after-life.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Is that not the responsibility of parents?

Mr. TONKIN: No, it is both the responsibility of, and a necessity for, the State.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The State does not pick them for sports.

Mr. TONKIN: We require men who will not waste our money when we place them in executive positions, but men who will spend that money to the best advantage. It would be money well spent by the State if promising boys and girls were selected and trained from the outset.

Mr. Patrick: And then they go abroad and do not come back.

Mr. TONKIN: We can provide against that.

Mr. Patrick: We have not got the jobs for them.

Mr. TONKIN: We could also provide against the death of a boy or girl during the course of training. The State would have an insurable interest in them, and could make the necessary provision accordingly.

Mr. Sampson: The big companies can outbid the State and lure the boys away.

Mr. TONKIN: If the State can be beaten by companies, it is time we shut up business altogether. We should look for these juniors in the primary schools, follow them through the secondary schools, and make our selection. We should let the students know that the State looks upon them as our future doctors, chemists, or State engineers.

Mr. Sampson: And thus promote their modesty.

Mr. TONKIN: In order that those young people shall have their opportunity, the

State should provide sufficient money to educate them, so that they will be fully equipped for positions that are available, and then appoint them to those positions. The State would be well repaid by the efficiency of service that would be rendered. In recent years, because of the continuance of trade depression, there has been considerable propaganda for the reduction of the Education Vote. I am glad that the Minister has not heeded the cry, but has budgeted this year for increased expenditure. The modern world requires an entirely new outlook from that which obtained a few years ago. In reading through this year's report of the University of Western Australia, I was interested and glad to note that the authorities there appreciate the position regarding educational requirements to-day. It is stated in the report that it is not only necessary to equip the child with knowledge, but essential to make the child receptive, if that be possible, of new ideas. That is where much of our present-day trouble arises. Men in important positions have their minds fixed and they are not receptive to changing ideas.

Mr. Thorn: Do you not think we are getting too modern?

Mr. TONKIN: That is a ridiculous interjection.

Miss Holman: He wants to go back a few hundred years.

Mr. TONKIN: We must adapt our training to new ideas, and not continue to educate the children in the old stereotyped fashion, making them merely a replica of past ages calculated to carry on in the same old way, and yet expect a solution of present-day problems. We must give the children an entirely changed outlook and make them receptive of new ideas. They must be trained to use their imagination, which the member opposite who interjected cannot do.

Mr. Needham: Member or members opposite?

Mr. TONKIN: Nowadays children must be trained to exercise judgment and make decisions. Whether the decisions be right or wrong, it is essential that the children should be trained to make them. A good deal of our trouble to-day is due to the fact that we have too many people of indecision. To my way of thinking, that is the new conception of education. We should not follow the lines that have been pursued for many years past, but, as I say, we

should train the children to use their imagination and judgment, and teach them to make decisions. We must stimulate their initiative. It is along those lines that we must look for the solution of present-day problems.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Would that not be regimenting their minds respecting many matters?

Mr. TONKIN: It would not. To achieve these ends, we need adequate staffing and equipment. I realise that the Government, when faced with the necessity to find money for the Education Department, often have to refuse to do things that everyone knows ought to be done. I hope the Minister will not lose sight of the fact that attention must be given to those things, and that when money is available, he will see that sufficient funds are secured by his department so that these objectives may be attained. It is not a question whether the State can afford to do these things; rather is it a question whether it can afford not to do them. The Minister made some reference to what he was pleased to call the frills of education. I must confess I do not know what the frills of education are. It would be most difficult to get any agreement among members of the House as to what are the frills of education. For example, the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) asked a few moments ago if I thought we ought to do the same with music as we do with manual training and domestic science. To some members music would appear to be a frill of education, but obviously not so to the member for Middle Swan. And so it is with almost every educational subject. Some would believe that to teach drawing is to teach a frill, while others would say it was essential in the education of every child. So it is with every subject, and so we find it impossible to get agreement on any of the subjects as being frills. What one man thinks a frill others would regard as essential. To my thinking there are no frills in education. The subjects which are taught are taught to broaden the outlook, improve the mind and enable a person to become a better citizen, to live a decent life and enjoy that life. I think all the subjects taught have some benefit in the education of a pupil. The Minister also mentioned that there was the possibility that we would be creating too many bachelors of arts, masters of arts, and so on. I will

not deny that that possibility exists, but of course that is not the aim of education. There would certainly be nothing wrong in having every person a master of arts. if that were possible.

Mr. Sampson: Would it be helpful?

Mr. TONKIN: It would do no harm.

Mr. Thorn: Could you find fitting employment for them?

Mr. TONKIN: They would have to take employment as they do to-day. They would still be masters of arts, and would be all the better for it, for education is no load to carry.

Mr. Sampson: If the member for Murchison were a master of arts he would lose all his modesty.

Mr. TONKIN: Although there is the possibility that the State might create too many masters of arts, it is not very likely, nor is it very probable, because you could teach some children for 50 years and they would not approach very closely to becoming masters of arts.

Mr. Sampson: Would they still be children?

Mr. TONKIN: Mentally they would be. As I mentioned last year, there was a considerable fault in our curriculum in the post-primary classes inasmuch as we had courses designed for those who would enter the University, whereas we know that only a small percentage of the children will go on to the University.

Mr. Patrick: And many who go to the University do not take a degree.

Mr. TONKIN: That is true. I shall not delay the Committee much longer, but will simply sum up my views on what education ought to be by quoting some remarks made by the late Dr. Chalmers many years ago. We had some wonderful thinkers in the years that have gone, men who had very little education, but a great deal of horse sense. Dr. Chalmers, however, was an educated man and was thus fitted to make a pronouncement on education. He saw the poverty and dire distress existing among the people of the time, towards the end of the 18th century. He pondered deeply as to a possible method whereby those people might lift themselves out of their trouble and enjoy life. Finally he came to the conclusion that they would emancipate themselves by means of their own growing virtue and intelligence, that they would not gain very much from the wordy battles of

political parties, that they would look for the greater gain from their own growing intelligence and virtue. In that I agree with him. Dr. Chalmers went on to say—

I trust the time is coming when humble life will be dignified by leisure and by literature, when the work of the day will be succeeded by the reading and improving conversations of the evening, when many a lettered sage as well as many an enlightened Christian will be met with even in the lowest walks of society; when the elements of science and philanthropy and high scholarships will so refine throughout the general mind of the country as to exalt it prodigiously above the level of its present character and attainments.

With that sentiment I heartily agree. I am pleased indeed that the Minister has not hearkened to the propaganda for the reduction of the Education Vote, but that he has done his best, not only to keep the Vote where it was last year, but to make some slight improvements.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [7.52]: The Minister congratulated himself and the House and the country on the fact that he has been able to bring down Estimates showing an increase over last year of £37,700. In the course of his reminiscences he recalled the fact that if we compare these Estimates with the expenditure in 1930-31 they show an increase of £60,000. And the Minister asked us to come to the conclusion that at any rate his Government were not guilty of what he called niggardliness or being niggardly in the matter of provision for the cost of education. It is very easy to produce a flattering result by comparison between the times we are now passing through and the year 1930-31, which represented the very depths of the financial depression. Since those days the Consolidated Revenue has increased very largely, and in part as the result of some recovery that has been made generally throughout the State. If I may recall some figures to the recollection of the Committee, our total national income in 1931, the year with which the Minister has made a comparison, was £23,400,000 odd. For the last year for which I could get the completed figures, namely 1932-33, our total national income was £26,617,000 odd, showing an increase between the two periods of no less a sum than 3¼ millions. And if the figures for the present year, which are not yet com-

pleted, were available, I am sure they would show an advance on those for 1932-33. But in addition to that, the Consolidated Revenue has been swollen by a very heavy additional burden of taxation. It is sometimes very conveniently and easily forgotten that the average taxpayer, not the well-to-do taxpayer, not the man with a large income, but the average taxpayer, the man with an income of only £316 per annum, will pay for the financial year that closed last June 90 per cent. more than he paid in any previous year—90 per cent.

Mr. Moloney: What about the man right down below?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I think the proper person to concentrate one's thoughts and attention on is the average man. We might as well take the taxpayer with an income of thousands a year and concentrate on him as concentrate upon one on the lowest rung of the ladder for the purpose of comparison. For a comparison we must of course take the average taxpayer, for he is the man who bears the bulk of the burden. The members of that class outnumber all the other classes of taxpayers, and therefore he is the man who contributes most to the Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Moloney: Do not the very poor outnumber them?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I think the hon. member might well outnumber something else at present with greater utility and allow me to say what I wish to say. The average taxpayer is the man who represents the whole mass of the population, and he is called upon to bear a burden of 90 per cent. increase of taxation despite the promises that were made, under which he was induced to vote in a way which led to the return of the present Government, as was recalled in this House the other evening by the Leader of the Opposition.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member is going to connect all this up with the Education Vote.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I certainly will, for I am showing that the comparison between the figures for 1930 and those for the present year is wholly fallacious, and that we ought to have far more revenue than we had in 1930. That is the plain connection between the two. There is also another fact of which I would remind the House, namely

that Consolidated Revenue has been relieved of a very large mass of expenditure which it was called upon to bear in 1930. In that year Consolidated Revenue, by reason of the fact that loan moneys were almost impossible to obtain, was called upon to bear nearly the entire burden of unemployment. But to-day, owing to the very large amount of loan moneys the Loan Council has seen fit to make available to the whole of Australia, only a very small part of the burden of unemployment is borne by Consolidated Revenue. If all these factors be taken into consideration, it will be seen that the position was an entirely different one, that there is no possible comparison whatever between the position then and the position to-day. Therefore, while the increase of £37,700 in our Education Vote is very pleasing, it does not warrant any extravagant or undue praise.

The Minister for Education: Compared with any other Vote in the Estimates it does.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Compared with what you have to spend it does not.

The Minister for Education: It does so. If you will look at page 17 of the Estimates you will see that.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have examined the page the Minister refers to, and I still say that with that money to spend there is no reason for extravagant praise for spending it on education, unless the Minister suggests that expenditure on education should only be made when you have satisfied every other possible want. But of course that is not what the Minister means.

The Minister for Employment: Who gave it extravagant praise, anyhow?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not think the hon. member was present in the House at the time. In any event, of course he is just as great an authority on what he never heard as on what he has heard. I do not propose to enter into a bargaining match with the Minister. The matter of most importance, the matter we really should discuss, is how the money available can best be spent, and not to conjure up any comparison between years when money was not available and when more fortunately it is available. The important question is how the money can best be spent. We, of course, find ourselves even now—and I suppose it always will be so—without money to meet every want, and the aim therefore must be

to spend the money that is available to discharge the main fundamental duty that lies on the Department of Education. Never will it occur that we shall have more money than we can spend usefully in that department, but the position does arise and will continue to exist when we shall have to select between wants that should be met and fulfilled and wants that, although we admit their merit, we are obliged to postpone. What is the main duty of the department? It might be suggested, I readily admit, that the duty of the department is to make educational facilities available to every pupil who is apt and capable of utilising them so as to enable him to rise to the highest pinnacle of educational training. But there is a higher and greater duty devolving on the department, and that is to make educational facilities, which the Minister described in popular phraseology as the three R's, available to all in this State. Accordingly, when the department, for a period of time, was under my control, a list of works was drawn up—no doubt the same practice is observed to-day—to be carried out as soon as funds were available. The works were drawn up in the order of urgency. All the works on the list were necessary works, but they were placed in the order in which one or another should be carried out with the money available.

Mr. Moloney: Was the gravel at Nedlands included in that list?

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the hon. interrupter will wait, he will hear about the gravel. First and above all on the list was the construction, the building and the opening of schools in the country and backblocks.

Mr. Marshall: Well, it has not happened.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the hon. member will exhibit a little patience, he will hear how we attempted to give effect to that policy. The want of schools in the country is always arising, has always arisen in the past and always will arise in the future. It remains always, in a measure, unsatisfied. It arose, as the interruption of the member for Murchison reminds me, in the case of Wiluna in a marked degree. Despite the fact that we were then experiencing days of great poverty and had very little money indeed to spend, the member for Murchison, I think, will at least do us the justice of admitting that we made every effort to deal with the position that arose at Wiluna. Al-

though we were not anything like as successful as we could have wished to be, nevertheless we produced something in the nature of a workable proposition. Exactly the same position that arose at Wiluna at that time had arisen previously and will arise again at other places. Nothing provides more cogent evidence of the migratory character of our population than the fact that every year schools are closed down in some districts and an equal necessity arises for the opening of schools in other districts. So, if there be money available to-day for the building of schools—and we gather from the Minister that he has reasonable hope of money being available—then may I express on my part, and I think on the part of a great number of members of this Chamber, the hope that before any grandiose scheme is carried out in the metropolitan area, however worthy the scheme may be, the wants and needs of the backblocks be attended to first. It must be borne in mind that education by correspondence, although it has a large measure of success, also possesses distinct limitations. With very meagre population scattered over huge areas of the State, it is impossible to give education in any other form. Still, it is obvious that education by correspondence depends upon two factors. In the first place, the mother or person who attempts to give education to the children must have a considerable amount of leisure in order to do so. That is very rarely the experience. Again, whoever attempts to educate the children, acting as best she may in accordance with the instructions received from the department, must possess to some extent the teaching art. That is all-important, and that accomplishment is even more rare than the possession of leisure. It may well be that in the early future some attempt will be made to supplement the education that we now endeavour to impart by means of correspondence classes by the use of broadcasting to enable classes, or individuals, too few in number to be called a class, to come into direct contact with the teacher over the air. I have no doubt that if it be practicable and possible to give effect to this idea, it would have most beneficial results. There is all the difference in the world between pupils having direct contact with the teacher, and any attempt, however well intentioned, that can be made by correspondence to produce the same results.

Mr. Marshall: I believe your idea is brilliant, but it could not be applied on the gold-fields because there are not facilities for reception.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Every day more and more people are interesting themselves in broadcasting. Nothing has developed more rapidly than the industry of broadcasting. It is not only a marvel; it is something that is absolutely necessary in the home that is distant from the ordinary channels of civilisation. As things are to-day, I think it can truthfully be said that education by means of correspondence classes is only a makeshift, although a necessary makeshift by reason of the circumstances of the State, but if there is any part of the State where sufficient children can be brought together by the provision of reasonable allowances for travelling, it is the plain duty of the department to erect a school and give the children the opportunity to be educated in the only manner that is really and truly efficient. That is a duty which is owing to the children as citizens of the State, and it is especially owing to the children in question because they are members of families who are suffering all the disabilities and all the shortcomings of the bush in order that others might be enabled to live in the cities and towns. It is well for us not to forget that. We could not remain as we are, enjoying all the amenities of life in cities and towns, if others were not willing to accept the disabilities of the bush. A problem subsequent to that in the more primary education of the child is the preparation of boys and girls for the sphere of life in which they wish to cast their lot. No words of mine are required to emphasise the fact that this is an age of specialisation. Everything almost is a matter in respect of which every possible attempt is made to specialise. This becomes more marked every day; every day the expert as distinguished from the ordinary worker is more and more in demand. Of course it is not to be wondered at, because that is the inevitable result of the development of machinery, of the almost entire substitution of the machine for the hand of man, and even of the substitution of the machine, to some extent, for the brain of man. Quite apart from that, there always have been and always will be callings in which only highly trained men and women can possibly hope for success. An

educational scheme which has not for its object the providing of facilities for that training is not a complete educational scheme. Hence it is that an insistent demand has arisen, to which I expected the member for North-East Fremantle to refer, for vocational training, a demand that our system of education should attempt to fit the girl or boy not merely from the academic point of view but a great deal more from the special point of view of the calling in life that he or she is about to enter upon. I agree with what the Minister said when he stated that however necessary and desirable such a policy might be, we are not at present possessed of sufficient funds to address ourselves to a solution of the problem. It must remain unsolved for the moment because of the lack of finance. There is another reason which on second thoughts might suggest itself to the Minister, namely, that it is still a very debatable matter and a question to be determined as to what is the best form in which to carry out that policy of vocational training. So far as it has been attempted it is still purely experimental, and it may be wise to wait and see which experiment produces the most successful results. It was a very easy problem to solve in the days that have gone by when the like father like son principle prevailed, when, generation after generation it was regarded as something inevitable, something not for a moment dreamt of as being likely to be departed from, that the son should follow in the footsteps of the father. That entirely resolved the question of what should be the avocation of the son. In those days we had not the problem of the intervention of the female in the industrial world on the huge scale that exists to-day. Very largely in those days, if not entirely, she confined herself to domestic duties. The problem was easy of solution then. However, we now have a different proposition. Nowadays, even simple craftsmanship is not handed down in any family, nor is any attempt made to hand it down. We do not hear of any craftsman who aspires to pass on his art or his skill to his family. On the other hand we find a regrettable desire that his family should do something different from what he has done, something he hopes will be better, higher, and perhaps better paid than he has achieved. The result is what could only be expected from the ever changing

conditions, the ever altering rules of our social and industrial life. The problem, therefore, is an acute one for us to attempt to deal with. What will be done to-day with the boy and the girl who has passed the school age and is now about to select some avenue in life for the purpose of earning his or her living? The problem is not a local one. It is as acute, indeed more acute, in the United Kingdom than it is here, because at any rate here we have a large world of undeveloped resources provided by Nature, which to some extent is capable of absorbing our youth in employment. At home no such thing exists. Our problem, acute as it may be, is far more acute and difficult in the Old Country. Even here where we have the advantage of these newly developed resources that are given to us gratuitously by a generous Nature, the problem is a very difficult and acute one, particularly because of the strong degree of aversion that exists to leaving the city and the town, and allowing those great natural gifts of Nature to absorb to some extent our unemployed youth. It may be that one of the most glorious tasks to which any one could address himself would be to persuade our youth to-day, as their fathers did before them, to go out, and hew for themselves a home under conditions not of the kind that appertain to the city, but under conditions that our fathers were not afraid to face. There are, for instance, the resources provided by the mining industry and other industries which the State offers to those who are willing to explore them.

Mr. Marshall: What would you suggest for the female?

Hon. N. KEENAN: That interjection requires time, both to consider and answer. It is difficult to say how far the world of woman which has invaded the world of man should be checked.

Mr. Marshall: It cannot be checked.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is difficult to say if woman is not checked, how she can be provided for. To dwell upon that subject would be to delay the Committee for an indefinite period of time, and I do not propose to do that. What I am attempting to point out is something that can be done, and I do not know that it would be useful to enter upon the region of what cannot be done.

Mr. Marshall: It would be very dangerous.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The hon. member is probably right. The Minister has told us

there is some kind of promise on the part of the Prime Minister to make available two millions of money for dealing with the problem of placing our youths who have just left school, including females, in employment. If we receive, as I suppose we shall receive, merely a proportion of that money which is due to us by reason of the proportion of our population to the whole of Australia, we shall receive, I have calculated, about £140,000.

Mr. Moloney: That will not go far.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is not a sum of such magnitude as to warrant the hope of being able to do very much, but if it is wisely and carefully spent, something can be done with it.

The Minister for Education: Every little helps.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If you get a lot of "littles" they make a great deal. If £140,000 were well and carefully and usefully spent it could, at any rate, produce some benefit. The only cure that can be achieved would only become possible when that recovery which is so much spoken about and dreamed of has in effect really arrived. Only when those natural resources which will once more be with us when the real and true recovery has taken place are made available, will our youths be able to employ themselves. With the advent of such times our young men would naturally not only attempt but succeed in having themselves apprenticed to the skilled trades. There is nothing that presents a more woeful picture to-day than the fact that the skilled trades are being starved for apprentices. The Minister recalled that fact in the figures he gave us. There were 57 fewer apprentices this year than last year. That is a most serious thought, because the men who are to-day engaged in these industries, the skilled workers, in common with all other members of the human race, must disappear, and where are we to find their successors unless we have apprentices? The most happy omen of the return to these times would be the fact that some large measure of our young men would once more attach themselves as apprentices in those trades.

Mr. Moloney: They will if they can be absorbed. Many of them are willing enough.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is possible even before the recovery is in sight to develop some new field of employment, some new

avenues of work. I noticed recently in an English paper that, at a conference between the manufacturers of radios and the educational authorities, it was pointed out that there is an immense trade in the manufacture of radio instruments, and a great deal more trade in the maintenance of those instruments. There are practically no people in England capable of doing that work. It was suggested that, to begin with, 10,000 boys should be trained in this avenue of employment. The radio is no longer a toy, a marvel or a plaything, but something that is almost a necessity. It is something that might well be exploited in our schools, namely the training of intelligent boys to take an interest in the subject. I am personally aware of some boys who have built their own radio sets. They are unfortunately few in number, but surely what they can do can be done by others. In the report I read it was stated that it would take only three years to train a boy thoroughly to enable him to become a skilled worker in the manufacture, maintenance and repair of radios. I commend to the Minister the idea that he should put before the authorities at the technical school the suggestion that some attempt should be made in this direction. I now propose to say a few words regarding the Claremont Training College. The Minister spoke of that college having been closed down as a result of the depression. But that is not exactly the fact. If there had never been a depression, that college would have had to be closed down all the same. The very first experience I had as Minister for Education was that a gentleman called on me to state that his daughter had passed out of that college two years before and was still without employment. And I learnt that that was only one of many cases, because for some considerable time the number of teachers who were produced by the college was far in excess of the number required by the department. On examination of the matter at that particular period of time, I found that Mr. Rooney, when he was principal of the college, had warned the Government of that day that the college was training too many teachers for the system to absorb, and that inevitably the day would come when there would be a surplus that could not possibly be given work.

Mr. Tonkin: What year was that?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I think, 1926. However, the fact remains that at that time there was a surplus of trained teachers, and no possibility of giving them work. It must be admitted, of course, that the existence of the depression made that impossibility still more marked, because the depression led, as the Minister has pointed out, to fewer of the female teachers leaving the department to be married, and also had an effect in preventing some of the male teachers, as had been the case in former years, becoming farmers or adopting some other form of activity and so leaving the teaching profession. But the depression only accentuated the difficulty. If the depression had never come, it would still have been necessary to close down, at any rate for some time, the Training College. So I would warn the Minister, if he will allow me to do so, that the position should be carefully watched, so that the number of teachers now trained in that college may not be in excess of what are the average needs of the department, having regard, of course, to the possible extension of its activities in the backblocks and elsewhere. Taking everything into account, it would be only wise on the Minister's part to limit the number of teachers who do go through the Training College, to what the system can absorb.

Mr. Moloney: That would apply to vocational training also.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Vocational training does not apply so much to the teacher as to the pupil.

Mr. Moloney: But it applies to positions.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not desire to monopolise the attention of the Committee, subject to interruptions, at much greater length; but before closing I wish to refer to some remarks made by the Minister dealing with the Parents and Citizens' Association. Of all the branches that have been formed under that association, I think I am fully justified in saying that one of the most hard-working and one of the most self-sacrificing is the Nedlands branch.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is a fact that the Nedlands branch has worked with the most extraordinary energy in the service of the children who are attending the local State school. The branch has collected between

January of 1932 and September of this year no less than £355, and has spent that sum on the wants of the children of that school, spent it in various ways, amongst others in providing even gates for the school grounds, and of course in many ways that are not so permanent, as in giving enjoyment to the children, in providing for their games, in supplying maps to be hung on the walls, and in every single way which was possible, providing for additional aid to be given over and above what the department supply.

Mr. Tonkin: Does the branch have the co-operation of the teachers?

Hon. N. KEENAN: It had the hearty and enthusiastic co-operation of the teachers until a short time ago, when there happened some disagreeable incidents to which I shall perhaps refer. But the important point is—despite all the work they have done, despite the personal efforts they have given unstintingly, and despite the admiration which the Minister has expressed for their work, what return have they received at his hands?

The Minister for Works: Not even a barrel of gravel!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Not even, as the Minister for Works interrupts me, a barrel of gravel. But let me tell Ministers that this is not altogether a laughing matter. The members of the branch spent a great deal of money, produced by their own efforts, in beautifying and making enjoyable and also useful the school; and there is one single little item they asked for, and not an unnecessary item, because in winter time the particular section of the ground they asked to be gravelled is almost impassable—only a mass of mud. They asked for a few barrels of gravel. And did they get them? They have been asking again and again, for the last two years, for that small favour; and as regards the Minister who so admires them, his admiration has not run to granting them even that small amount of assistance. It was not a matter of being refused, when they would have known where they stood; but the gravel was promised again and again, and the promise has never been carried out. To some extent a detail of that kind may appear so insignificant as to be laughable; but it is that kind of thing which tells, it is such treatment which damps human ardour, and it is that kind

of neglect that leads these branches to wonder if it is worth while for them to persevere in the work they are doing to-day. And it does not end there, not at all. The children who live in Nedlands and wish to attend the top class that is made available in the State school system have to go to Claremont. I am told by the president of the Nedlands branch of the Parents and Citizens' Association that that represents, on the average, two miles each way for those children to travel, four miles in all. I do not think any one of us would question that in winter time that is a serious journey for children to face. And all the time there is a Government tram running from Broadway to Claremont. At the time of the morning when the children are going from Nedlands to Claremont, the tram is empty, absolutely empty, for the simple reason that the traffic at that hour of the morning is coming up to Perth from Claremont. Therefore these children would not deprive the Government of any adult fares by being allowed to travel in the tram. Similarly, when they travel back in the afternoon, between 4 and 5 o'clock, the mass of traffic is down from Perth, and again the cars are running empty; so that these children, if allowed to travel on the tram, would not deprive the Government of the fare of a single adult. And yet the children are refused permission to travel. At the same time, children from Leederville and some places beyond Leederville going to Claremont for exactly the same reason—that their local school has not the class which they desire to attend and which, therefore, they have to go to Claremont to attend—travel free in the train; and I thoroughly approve of it. But for the life of me I cannot understand the distinction that is drawn between the train and the tram. What earthly distinction can be made? And why should those children in one instance be carried free and in the other instance be condemned, as they are to-day, to walk?

The Minister for Education: It is a wonder you did not alter that when you were in charge of the Education Department.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It did not exist when I was there.

The Minister for Education: Yes. It has existed for 25 years.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have been told it did not exist. Let me answer the Minister. If that arrangement existed in my time and

I acted in the manner of which I have spoken, I would be thoroughly ashamed of myself, and certainly I would not have the audacity to stand up and say it has not happened before. Is that all the defence the Minister has? Is that all?

The Minister for Education: It existed in your time, but may not have been brought under your notice.

The Minister for Employment: The hon. member is on his defence; not the Minister.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Sometimes the echo in this Chamber is not admirable, especially when it comes from a remote part. Now let me deal with the Minister who says it happened in the days when I was Minister for Education. It did not; but, if it did, I confess without any hesitation that I permitted something which was inexcusable. Therefore it is no answer to suggest that this was done, or could have been done, when I was Minister.

The Minister for Education: It has been so for 20 years. It is useless for the hon. member to bury his head in the sand over that.

Hon. N. KEENAN: When the Minister for Education and the Minister his coadjutor have come to a conclusion of the conversation between them, may I resume? I may once more reiterate that assuming I was guilty of this conduct—which I do not know to be the case, though it may be the case—I stand here not one moment to attempt to defend it. But there is another matter which I am obliged also to mention. It is this: In order to get funds to spend for the benefit of the Education Department, the Nedlands branch of the Parents and Citizens' Association hold little fêtes, and they are actually called upon to pay a tax, an entertainment tax, to the State in respect of the money they receive at those fêtes.

Miss Holman: No.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is told to me by the president of the branch. He sought, on my advice, a rebate from the Treasury in the usual way for allowing the law to be observed in one instance, and in another instance for repayment of the tax because it was purely for the benefit of the State. And what has happened? Nothing at all. The branch has not received back a single penny of the tax. Let me tell the Minister that the state of affairs in Nedlands with regard to the branch is so serious, and the

members are so thoroughly disgusted with the treatment they have received, that they contemplate putting an end to the branch.

Mr. Hegney: Branches which started long before the Nedlands branch have received the same treatment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not think the hon. member understands the position.

Mr. Hegney: I understand it just as well as you do, because I have been to the Taxation Department on the subject.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Perhaps the hon. member, if he understands it, will try to remedy the matter. If there is another branch involved, is that any excuse? What is the use of these interruptions? There is only one other matter that I wish to mention. It also irritates, and very considerably irritates, people as well disposed to the Education Department as the Minister could desire, people who want to work with the department, who want to assist, who want to do everything in their power to enable the department to function successfully. These are the people on whose behalf I am attempting to speak to-night. The third matter to which I refer relates to the infants' school required at Hollywood. It is a rule of the Education Department that no school shall be erected or opened within a mile of an existing school. It was pointed out that some of the infants at Hollywood were within a mile of the Nedlands School in one direction and some were within a mile of the Rosalie Street School in the other direction. Some, of course, are more than a mile away from either school, but if we take the two schools into consideration, the infants I refer to are within the ambit of the mile radius of one or other of the two existing schools. A site was asked for by the department and granted by the local road board. The case was one of special merit because the children who would have to go to the Nedlands School—members should bear in mind that I am speaking of infants, not of older children—would have to cross Stirling Highway, a road that is full of fast, dangerous traffic at the early hour of the morning when they would be required to cross that thoroughfare. On the other hand, those who would go to the Rosalie Street schools would have to cross Hampton Road, another thoroughfare that is full of heavy fast traffic at that time of the morning. In

the latter instance, there is no footpath at all. In each direction these young children are asked to run a colossal risk. In those circumstances, the road board made available to the department a suitable site by surrendering land held by them, so that the Government might erect an infants' school. I know that case is entirely different from the others I have mentioned, because it is defensible, from the department's point of view, in the light of existing rules and regulations. That is, the position is defensible if rules and regulations are to be supreme. One regulation provides that a new school shall not be erected if the site is within one mile of an existing school. I am one who has regard for the carrying out of rules and regulations, for that is right and proper. But I am also one who is prepared to make a departure from such rules and regulations if right demands that there should be such a departure. However, it can be said that the regulation exists, and it stands to-day. The risks to which these infant children are exposed are so great that many mothers, despite the possibility of a prosecution, refuse to send their children to school.

Mr. Lambert: If the road board had constructed the streets properly, there would have been footpaths.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If things had been different, there would not be the grounds for complaint. The facts are as I have stated them. I do not desire to deal any further with matters that arise in my own constituency. Indeed I apologise to the Committee for having intruded such matters. This is not the right place, in my opinion, in which to discuss topics that, after all, are merely details affecting one small part of Western Australia, and not the State as a whole. It is in regard to matters coming within the latter category that I endeavour to confine my remarks. In this instance I have been forced to bring them forward, even though I object to doing so in this Chamber. Now it remains for me to say a few words on a question that was referred to by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin)—the strained relationship that exists, to the regret of each one of us, between the teachers and the department. For my part, and I think I am expressing the view of every member, there is an intense desire

not to say anything that could possibly accentuate the extent of the disagreement, such as it is, that exists to-day. On the contrary, it should be our desire, as it is, only to do something that will heal the disagreement and will assist the Minister and those teachers who at the present time do not entirely agree with him, to come together again. I feel it is incumbent upon me to state that my personal experience of the teachers as a whole and of every individual teacher with whom I came in contact was a most happy one. I recall the fact that I was the Minister who was called upon to inflict on the teachers a most serious reduction of their rights, privileges and pay. I recall with great pride the fact that the teachers themselves came to me as Minister and, of their own free will, agreed to long-service leave being suspended, that being one of the matters under discussion at the present time.

Member: For how long?

Hon. N. KEENAN: It was indefinite. It was not done by the department merely as a departmental action: it was done with the expressed consent and at the wish of the teachers, who were desirous of helping the department in the difficult situation with which we were then confronted. It would be unworthy of me to stand, as I do to-night, as a private member, and not recall the fact that at any rate, as far as my experience went with the teachers as a body, they were considerate in every way. That experience is one I shall always recall with most happy sentiments. I feel sure that the good sense that was then displayed in a desire to help the State in the difficult time that had to be faced, will be shown again if the Minister, as I hope and expect he will do, meets the teachers, at any rate to some extent, and thus allow them an avenue, without hurt to their dignity, to meet the wishes of the department.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [8.52]: I do not propose to weary the Committee with a dissertation on all matters that relate to these Estimates, but there are certain questions to which attention has been drawn by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) to which I desire to refer. One is the anomaly that has existed not only during the life of the present Government, but during those of many past Governments. I refer to the

conveyance of school children on trams. That trouble is not peculiar to Nedlands or Claremont. There are children residing in the metropolitan area at much greater distances from central schools, who are compelled to pay their fares on the trams. The peculiar part about it is that if the children reside near a railway, they are provided with free transit to and from the city. On the other hand, if the children reside near a tramway, even though at a much greater distance than the other children, they have to pay their fares on the trams. The member for Nedlands said he did not know that that anomaly existed during the time he was Minister for Education. If my memory serves me aright, I think I can remind the hon. member of one anomaly that was created when he was Minister. At one point on the South Perth line, a child travelling from that point in the southern suburb to the city has to pay a fare of 2d., but if a child proceeds from the city to the point I refer to on the South Perth line, he is permitted to travel for 1d. That means that special consideration is given to children travelling from the city to South Perth. The Education Department should make some definite arrangement with the Railway and Tramway Department to extend to children residing near a tramway line similar facilities to those granted to children living near a railway line. They should receive free transport when travelling to their schools. The Minister for Education is entitled to be congratulated on the increased Vote for his department this year. In the figures placed before the Committee by the member for Nedlands, he carefully omitted to remind members of the fact that exchange that has to be met by the Government, has increased to such an extent that it must have cost the Government £500,000 more last year than it did, say, five years ago. One other matter concerning the Canning electorate to which I shall draw attention, relates to the Forrest-street State School, which is one of the largest in the State. It comprises ten class rooms and the building was erected, I understand, to accommodate 500 scholars. The average attendance at the school to-day is over 520. The accommodation provided in each class room is for 50 pupils, but at the present time there are over 70 children in one of the class rooms. One class has

to use the cloak room, which is not provided with a door, so that in winter the children are exposed to the weather. The local Parents and Citizens' Association is, with all due deference to the member for Nedlands, and the association he referred to, second to none in the State. The Forrest-street school association very reasonably desire the department to take immediate steps to construct another classroom to accommodate the surplus scholars. In that part of the metropolitan-suburban area, there has been more building during the last two or three years than elsewhere. The need for the extra accommodation is imperative. Internal renovations are required, but the Parents and Citizens' Association agree that the more urgent necessity is the provision of extra accommodation. I appreciate that quite a lot has been done for the schools, and I am sure the Minister must be proud to think he has a very able man in the Director of Education, who takes a very keen interest in the activities of the department. Presumably there will be some local industrial exhibitions and shows this year, as there were last year, and I hope when these exhibitions of local products and manufactures visit each area, the department will make it part of the programme for the children to be taken to see the exhibitions. During the same week special addresses could be given in the school with a view to impressing on the children the need for using local goods. If that is done, it will be for the good of the State. In looking over a factory only this week I noticed that about half the machines were idle, and I was told it was due to the importation of Japanese cotton goods. The manager of the factory said those Japanese cotton goods had got such a grip in Perth that in the central part of the city perhaps 1,000 girls had been displaced as the result of those goods displacing goods previously manufactured here. The figures may be somewhat exaggerated, but there is no doubt a great many have been thrown out of employment as the result of the extensive sale of cheap Japanese goods. Therefore it would be to the benefit of the State if the Education Department took steps to see that periodically the children were given lessons and addresses urging them to purchase locally-manufactured goods.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [9.3]: I had hoped that the Minister, in introducing the Education Estimates, would have given us some specific information regarding the Technical College. A few weeks ago I asked the Minister was it the intention of the Government to make provision for a new site for the Technical College or, alternatively, to undertake such structural alterations in the existing building as were necessary to render that institution much more suitable for the work it is carrying out. The Minister then replied that this matter would be given consideration when the Loan Estimates were being prepared. I do not know whether the preparation of the Loan Estimates is so far advanced as to enable the Minister to give us that information and to say that provision is being made for this very necessary work. I had occasion to refer to this subject when the Estimates for 1933-34 were before us. I then pointed to the very congested condition of the Technical College and to the very unhygienic state of some of the rooms in which the students have to work. The Minister himself is aware of one room in the basement which is known as the Black Hole of Calcutta. I should not like to see animals housed there, let alone human beings engaged in study. There is not sufficient accommodation for the number of students attending the college and, indeed, the accommodation is severely taxed. It is not possible to congregate all the students under the one roof, so they have to go abroad. For instance, a classroom in the Perth Boys' School had to be requisitioned in 1932, and I believe that last year another room had to be requisitioned in order that the tuition might be carried on. The demand for accommodation is increasing, and there is imperative urgency to go into this matter. I might mention that special attention has been paid to unemployed boys at the college in order to give them some assistance during the period between leaving school and procuring employment. We are all aware that the economic trouble in which we have found ourselves has been such as to prevent a vast number of boys from securing employment immediately after leaving school. As we know, thousands leave school each year for whom there is no outlook, no avenue of employment, despite the fact that they have received a very fine education. Parents sacrifice themselves in order to give

their children that education, yet when the children leave their schools and colleges they have to wait, year after year, for employment in which they can be absorbed. So the Technical College, in providing special classes, has helped to save those boys from a feeling of despair. That being so, members will see the necessity for having all our Technical College students under one roof, with plenty of room for the classes, so that education can be carried on in satisfactory conditions. I understand the Economic Council, which is part of the work achieved by the Minister for Employment, have gone into this question of the Technical College, and have suggested that the present building be sold; that is to say, the frontage in St. George's-terrace. But they have gone farther and suggested the building of a new school altogether. That may be all right, but I am afraid it will be difficult to get a site in as good a position as that in St. George's-terrace. It is a fairly central and to my way of thinking, an ideal site. The suggestion has been made to me that the frontage of 198 feet in St. George's-terrace should be sold, or, alternatively, the tower of the building ought to be removed and another storey added to the structure. That would help to cope with the increasing demand for accommodation, and would enable the managerial staff to house all their pupils in one building. Another suggestion is to sell the Terrace frontage of 198 feet and erect a four-storey building on the land fronting on Mounts Bay-road. There we would have plenty of room and an ideal site, and that four-storey building could be erected with the proceeds of the sale of the building on the Terrace frontage. I am advised that the value of land in that vicinity is approximately £80 per foot, and it is thought that the sale could be effected for approximately £40,000. To give an idea of the number of students attending the college, it might be well to quote these figures—

Average attendance of students.

1929	..	..	..	..	2,641
1930	..	..	..	..	2,723
1931	..	..	..	..	2,789
1932	..	..	..	..	2,832
1933	..	..	..	..	3,014

It will be noticed by those figures that the attendance has been consistently increasing and that the years I have quoted exactly correspond with the period

of depression under which we have been labouring. I commend my few remarks to the Minister, and hope that when he is replying to the debate he will be able to advise us whether provision will be made on the Loan Estimates to improve the conditions of the college, either by adding to the existing building or by disposing of it and erecting a new one. Although I realise there is a tightness of money, no matter what request we make for the advancement of the State and the benefit of the people, the eternal cry is "lack of money." I venture to say that money spent on maintaining our system of technical education and keeping abreast of the times is money well spent. I hope the Minister will be able to inform us that provision will be made on the Loan Estimates to make the Technical College worthy of our State.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.15]: I can refer to an instance almost similar to one quoted by the member for Nedlands. In one centre of my electorate application was made for a school. It is a sparsely populated area, the farms being of 1,000 acres. The director replied that there could not be a school unless the whole of the scholars were within three miles.

Mr. Marshall: How many scholars did he require?

Mr. LAMBERT: Fifteen. The member for Nedlands told us that the Nedlands Parents and Citizens' Association was the most active organisation of its kind in the State. I cannot subscribe to that statement. Most of those associations are doing excellent work, and I do not think the hon. member would be so ungallant as to suggest that the one in his district was the only efficient one in the State. Many of them are doing unselfish and useful work. The Estimates contain an item for University exhibitions, £1,850. Under special Acts a sum of £24,800 is provided for the University. This institution is one of the most richly endowed in Australia, but richly endowed though it is, the State has to find £24,800 a year towards its maintenance. Amongst the provisions made by the late Sir Winthrop Hackett was endowment for a chair of agriculture at an expense of £18,000. The list of scholarships, which is very illuminating, shows the amounts of endowments and other revenue received by the University. The number of students at the University is distributed

thus:—Faculty of Arts 314, Diploma of Commerce 74, Diploma of Education 53, Diploma of Journalism 26, Faculty of Law 51, Faculty of Science 61, Pure Science 128 and Agricultural Science 14.

The **CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member is not in order in discussing the University under this vote.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am discussing education.

The **CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member is discussing the University and cannot continue to do so.

Mr. LAMBERT: I should not like to compare my observations with some of those made by a previous speaker.

The **CHAIRMAN:** Order! What a previous speaker said is not in question. The hon. member cannot discuss the University under this vote.

Mr. LAMBERT: The fact that the State pays a subsidy to the University has a bearing on the question.

Hon. C. G. Latham: An item is shown for bursaries.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. I shall connect my remarks with the vote. While it is excellent to have a University, it is disgraceful that veterinary science finds no place in it. The institution caters for doctors and lawyers, and provides bursaries for them, and yet there is not a chair of veterinary science. This richly endowed and very expensively run institution would more closely conform with our ideas if primary and secondary education were more closely related to vocational education. The time has arrived to make a stock-taking to determine whether we are getting value for the money being expended on the education system. The member for North-East Fremantle said there were no frills.

Mr. Tonkin: I did not say that; I said there was a difference of opinion as to what constituted frills.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is a sharp difference of opinion on that point, but there is also room for a difference of opinion as to whether we are getting value for the £614,000 we are spending on education.

Mr. Thorn: Recently some frills were hoisted on the flag-staff of the University.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know nothing about that.

Mr. Tonkin: Would you call them frills?

Mr. LAMBERT: Some people would claim originality when they were merely parading in mid-Victorian crinolines. The time has arrived when, as the member for Nedlands suggested, there should be a closer linking up of primary and secondary education with vocational training. The Minister for Health considers that we should have a psychologist to examine people before they engage in vocational training. That may be necessary and useful for some people, but seeing that we have to get to closer grips with the bread-and-butter side of life, greater attention should be given to vocational training. If more of the money were spent in a practical way, better results would be obtained for the children, having regard to their after life, and this could be done without detriment to the mental or physical development of the children.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [9.25]: I am delighted that the vote shows an increase of £37,800. The increase is largely accounted for by salaries, allowances and items of a like kind. Reference has been made to the teachers. I have a great deal of sympathy with the teachers in their trouble. All that they did was to say that they would not work outside the terms of their agreement. No one can deny that the teachers have done a great deal more than was provided in the terms of their agreement, or that they have helped the children marvellously. Members will agree that country children have suffered more seriously as a result of the difference of opinion than have the children of the metropolitan area.

Mr. Patrick: And the country people, too.

Miss HOLMAN: Possibly. I should like the Government to restore to the teachers their long-service leave. Since it was relinquished voluntarily or after consultation with the authorities, the time should not be far distant when long-service leave will be restored to them. I understand that the teachers are the only section of the Government service who do not get long leave. The teaching profession is a very arduous one, and very nerve-racking, and the teachers, both men and women, need the holidays that should accrue to them after ten years' service. I am glad that the Training College has been re-opened. The Minister said he did not know what would happen after the first batch of teachers

had been retained, but I hope that the college will be enlarged and will continue to carry on its work. Education is probably one of the greatest needs of our time. We in Australia are apt to believe that we have an advanced system, but in comparison with other countries we are not so far advanced, and Western Australia suffers by comparison with some of the other States. Reference has been made to the training of girls in domestic science. I have been in a domestic science school in New South Wales that had a thousand pupils, and it was not an isolated instance; there were many of them. When the new school is built at East Perth considerable attention should be given to teaching the girls domestic science. This will benefit the girls of the metropolitan area, but the girls in the country will not enjoy similar opportunities. The member for Nedlands remarked that woman had invaded the world of man, and he advised boys to go on farms and mines and launch out and pioneer the country as our forefathers had done. I wish to touch upon the subject that the hon. member said would take too long to consider and explain. Girls in the country districts have nothing to look forward to after they have turned 14 and left school. There are no industries in which they can engage. Around the timber mills a few girls may be employed as domestics in the boarding houses, but there is nothing else for them to do. It is a problem to know what is to become of them. In the old days girls were educated merely to be married. It was enough if they knew little more than their A.B.C., could cook a joint for their husbands, and knew how to sew. The time has gone by when it was considered the aim and object of a girl to get married as soon as she left school. To-day women are looking for something to do. They want the same education as males and the same opportunities afforded to them. Something must be done to deal with the problem after they have had their school training. This applies to boys as well as girls, especially in the country districts, where they have not the same opportunity for attending technical schools as have city children. Some members have referred to parochial matters. I am going to follow their bad example. I am still waiting anxiously to learn that additions will be made to the Brunswick Junction school. There was such a lack of accommodation there that

the department had to lease the church hall, which is nearly a mile from the school, and to attend which the youngsters had to go over the railway crossing. There was no fireplace there and in winter time it was very cold. I have had many reports about the school. It was near the top of the urgent list. I was informed that plans were being drawn up, but that the work was being delayed by the Public Works Department. Then I was told it would be put in hand at an early date. The last I heard was that the matter had been put before the Premier for approval. I hope the additions will be made very soon, and that I shall not have to worry about them any longer. Reference has been made to the Parents and Citizens' Associations. One has only to look at the report of the department to see how their work is appreciated. There are many active branches in my electorate. The schools would go without a great deal were it not for them, and the children would be without many aids to their studies and recreations. It is greatly to be deplored that the teachers took the action they did in connection with various activities of that sort. It was their own affair, and they took the step they thought would draw attention to their wrongs. I am sorry we have not the co-operation of the teachers in this important work. To my knowledge the withdrawal of the teachers has not in many cases broken up the branches of the association. Some have gone out of existence for the time being. Those were cases in which the teachers did most of the work, and the parents and citizens did not feel capable of carrying it on. In other cases the withdrawal of the teachers has livened up the branches, which are determined to carry on without the teachers, always hoping to get their co-operation in the near future. The Minister has helped these branches in some ways to overcome the lack of assistance from the teachers. The teachers gave valuable assistance in the distribution of notices to the children, to be passed on to their parents, and in assisting parents to get information concerning the activities of the association. A letter of authority has now been given to each branch, permitting an announcement to be made of the activities of the branch at the morning or afternoon assembly. It is a new thing for the branches of the association to be taxed for almost

everything they conduct. At one time they only had to submit a statement showing that their expenditure did not amount to more than 50 per cent. of their receipts. Because the entertainments were conducted in connection with child welfare in the schools, they were allowed freedom from entertainment taxation. During the last couple of years the Taxation Department have refused to grant exemption to the branches except on one condition. I am led to understand this was arrived at as a result of a conversation with the Director of Education. I am informed that exemption will only be given now if manual training material is bought with the proceeds of the entertainment. Anything that the associations do should be considered sympathetically. One branch is building a platform in an assembly hall, but is being charged taxation on every entertainment conducted for that purpose. Another branch was informed that it could not buy sporting material, or anything of the kind, without paying taxation. The provision of manual training material should be made by the department, and the associations should not be forced to see that it is available. We are a little better off than we were a few years ago. We have been passing through bad times, and everything used in the schools has had to be cut down. It may be a shock to members to learn to what extent the material has been cut down. Since 1930 manual training material, cardboard, scissors, etc., have been cut out altogether in Classes 2 to 4, and only those children whose parents could afford to buy their own material had it in those classes. The others had to do something else. Children in Classes 5 and 6 were supposed to attend the manual training centres. There is a lack of room there, and many children cannot attend those centres. It was the custom of the teachers and the associations to organise entertainments for the purchase of material. The provision of manual training material in some classes was cut to the extent of 100 per cent.; in the case of sewing materials almost 50 per cent., and 33½ per cent. in the case of pads, ink, chalks, etc. The readers were decreased in number, and the teachers had their long service leave cut out. The allowance for a teacher was one sheet of blotting paper, one sheet of brown paper and one sheet of cartridge paper. That did not represent very much. Only the sum of 5d. per child per annum is

allowed for sewing materials. Out of this the whole of the curriculum has to be completed. This is insisted upon by the inspectors. This sum will not, however, buy a reel of cotton. In Standard II. from February to May on check print there must be produced one needlecase, one bonnet, one bag or bookcover, and one doll's pinafore. From June to July on unbleached calico there must be produced one doll's towel (abroder to be used) and one doll's feeder. From August to December on coloured linen there must be produced one comb case (wallet type), one wallet, one sachet and one bag. During the year a handkerchief of coloured nainsook with lace topsewn on the edge must be made. This has to be done in Standard II. out of an allowance of 5d. per annum. One of the complaints of the teachers is that the female teachers have been buying the sewing material out of their own money. The children of sustenance workers and people out of work cannot buy these materials, which certainly cannot be bought for 5d. In the case of Standard III. the work must be completed by the end of the year. It provides for a play apron to fit a child, and a flannel model such as bloomers, to show the application of the herringbone stitch. In the case of Standard IV. there must be produced a flannel model showing a blanket stitch and a herringbone stitch, and a sleeveless slip-on petticoat to fit a child. In the case of Standard V. a pair of bloomers to fit a child is required, a d'oyley and a model showing the setting in of gathers. For Standard VI. there must be a garment, either a petticoat, a dress, a jumper or an apron showing the setting in of gathers, buttonholes, and a hand-worked design; as well as a patching model and a worked buttonhole. A child sews on an average 100 hours during the year, and the allowance of the department is 5d. per child per annum. This is one direction in which the activities of the department have been cut down. I hope the Minister will be able before long to increase the amount to what it was originally. I do not think there is anything on the Estimates now before us in that direction. The report of the department refers to the effect of the depression. It says we should have more handwork materials in the schools, and the need for additional rooms to be added to certain

schools for opportunity classes is stressed. I have previously referred to the need for opportunity schools. Children who are sub-normal or abnormal are almost entirely neglected in the schools. We cannot expect the teacher with 50 or more pupils to give the time and the individual attention that are required in such cases. One of these children may attend school year after year, and at the end of his school days may know nothing with which to arm himself against the world for his work in the world. In one State at least there are opportunity schools attended by many hundreds of children who learn things that enable them to make their way through life. In connection with correspondence classes, I deplore the action of the Commonwealth in prohibiting personal letters being sent out from the teachers to the children with the corrected work. I did think that possibly something could be done to alter this. I know that the Government have made representations on the subject.

The Minister for Education: Many representations.

Miss HOLMAN: Yes; and representations have also been made by various Federal members. Unfortunately, however, nothing has resulted so far. I do hope that matters will improve in regard to the education of our children. Education is never wasted. It represents an arming of the child for the rest of its life. It is an assistance to the child even in teaching it how to spend its leisure hours. Whatever the child's after-life may be, whatever work the child may have to do in order to earn its living, the education it receives is not wasted. I consider it quite the proper thing for us to have free education from our primary schools right on to the University. The University was mentioned to-night. It was stated that some students go there to get a special badge on their coats, and that some others go there merely for the social life. However, steps have been taken to rectify those matters. Students cannot go to the University now year after year without getting results. I think the limit is two years. If there are no results in two years, the students must leave the University and not waste his time or the money of the community. There is one matter I forgot to mention in connection with country schools. That is the calf clubs

which were fostered by the schools. Unfortunately those clubs are now going, too. The education they give with reference to farming matters is most important for country children, who may be expected to spend their lives in the country. At the request of the Calf Club and Herd Testing Association of Donnybrook I have asked the Minister for Education to give consideration to the matter. I congratulate the Government on the increases made in this Vote, and I hope further increases will follow. I trust that the differences between the School Teachers' Union and the Government will be settled at the earliest possible moment. We have a good deal to thank the Government for in respect of the increases in the Vote granted this year and last year, but we have also much cause to be thankful to the teachers for the manner in which they carry out their duties.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [9.48]: I also am glad that extra money has been made available for the Education Department. I was especially pleased to hear the Minister's statement that he has additional money for building requirements. I think the hon. gentleman said that already a sum of £10,000 was available. Therefore I hope that the settlers who have long been crying out for school buildings will now be supplied with them. I have personally made representations on behalf of those settlers, and some considerable time ago I was told that the school buildings were on the list of urgent works. That, I thought, meant their construction at an early date; but they are still on the urgent list. I feel sure, nevertheless, that the Minister and his officers, when spending this money, will not be unmindful of the needs of country districts. The Minister said last night that he had recently visited the Fairbridge Farm School. I asked him some little time ago to visit that institution. I am glad he now realises the need of the children there for special attention in regard to domestic science and the rural side of education. The boys go out to follow rural pursuits, and the girls must devote themselves to domestic duties. Therefore it is highly necessary that both boys and girls should be given every chance in those directions respectively. I should like the Minister to inform the Committee how many pupils to-day are being trained in domestic science. One cannot but regret to learn from the re-

port of the Director of Education how small is the number of domestic science classes in country areas. I agree with other members as to the absolute necessity for giving boys and girls the opportunity to learn something of those vocations which they will follow after leaving school. In the farming districts most of the boys intend to follow rural pursuits. I have visited a number of rural schools, and was greatly struck by the good work which the teachers were doing and the great interest the children were taking in their work. I hope the Minister will be able to inform us that more rural schools will be established during the coming year, and that teachers are being specially trained for that work also. I was sorry to see that the Narrogin School of Agriculture had been compelled, by lack of funds, to curtail some of its operations. It is absolutely necessary that that school should not be starved for money. I realise the Minister's difficulties, and know perfectly well that it is not his desire that any of the activities of the school should be diminished. While in the Eastern States I had an opportunity of seeing some schools of agriculture there, and I appreciate the good work they are doing. I trust the time is not far distant when Western Australia will be able to establish more of these schools. Again, I am glad that the Claremont Training College has been re-opened. From the report of the Director of Education it appears that Western Australia is in a different position from some of the other States, one of which—I think it is New South Wales—has several hundred teachers who cannot at present be employed. I trust that amongst the students at our Training College there is a good percentage of young men. I say that because once a young man goes into the Education Department, the State usually has his services for the remainder of his working life, which I regard as highly desirable. I am sorry it has not been possible to appoint additional medical men to visit the schools. Again I know the reason to be the want of funds. Whilst in the East I met the New South Wales Director of Education, and discussed with him, among other things, a proposal to provide milk for school children in the Sydney metropolitan area. A great deal of attention has been given to this matter in Sydney. Expert advice has been obtained there to the effect that it would be helpful to the children—and

not only from a physical point of view—if they were supplied with a certain quantity of fresh, pure milk each day. The subject has also been investigated in other parts of Australia; and I understand that in England this practice, if not already established, is being seriously investigated with a view to its adoption. I do not know whether the Minister has given attention to the matter. Indeed, I do not know whether I am on the right Vote in talking about it. Perhaps it comes under the Health Vote. However, as it affects school children only, I presume I am on safe ground in mentioning it here. Perhaps the Minister, when replying, will say whether anything has been done about the matter.

The Minister for Education: It comes under the Health Department.

MR. McLARTY: I also wish to express my appreciation of the work of the various branches of the Parents and Citizens' Association throughout the State. In my own electorate the branches have done excellent work. I was glad indeed to hear the Minister refer so appreciatively to that work. With other members, I hope the dispute between the teachers and the department will soon end. My own experience of teachers in the past is that they have always been willing to render good service whenever the opportunity arose. I feel sure that they, with us, will be very pleased indeed when the dispute has been terminated.

MR. WARNER (Mount Marshall [9.58]): I did not intend to speak on the Education Vote. However, the subject has been debated pretty well round the Chamber. A great deal has been heard of the troubles and sufferings of the metropolitan area with regard to education. I was interested to learn that a few thousand pounds spent here and there in the metropolitan district would ease quite a lot of difficulties. Perhaps I am justified in bringing under the Minister's notice one or two requirements in my district, where the expenditure of a small sum of money will give a great deal of satisfaction to the people. I was greatly struck with the eloquent address of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan). It all went very well with me until the hon. member mentioned that the Nedlands branch of the Parents and Citizens' Association had collected an amount of about £350 for the benefit of the Nedlands school children. I

am wondering whether that fact has any bearing on the circumstance that the Minister is not doing too much in my electorate. I wonder whether he is waiting for members of the Parents and Citizens' Association in my electorate to collect funds needed for doing certain work in connection with the local schools. The association has done a great deal of excellent work in the country districts generally, and in my district particularly; but owing to financial stress its members are not able to subscribe anything like the same amount as has been collected at Nedlands. I almost wept with envy when I heard the member for Nedlands talk about the awful predicament of the Nedlands children in having to walk to school along streets with footpaths that are not too good, and in being refused free rides on the trams and trains. In the Mt. Marshall electorate, where the farms are scattered a mile or two apart, the children go to school, some riding on ponies, numbers riding together in carts, and the rest on foot. On various occasions applications have been made to the Education Department for the erection of shelter sheds which would enable the children to eat their lunch in comfort. Owing to a shortage of money, however, the sheds could not be supplied. I shall be modest. I shall not ask for such large amounts as metropolitan members demand to put schools in proper order and to enable school children to travel in conveyances. All I am going to ask is that the Minister will keep in mind my further applications for shelter sheds for the children in my district, and that he will listen to me and provide some money for that work out of the extra funds on the Estimates this year.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.1]: I shall be as brief as possible, bearing in mind the lateness of the hour. I have listened attentively to those who have spoken before me, and, in the main, I agree with their remarks. Nothing can be regarded as too much for the education of our children, and I appreciate the statement by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) to the effect that country schools should receive preference. Probably most members in this House have not had much experience of goldfields towns, particularly in the initial stages. They are ignorant of what people have to put up with and can-

not appreciate the adverse conditions under which children are reared there. Most of the requests advanced by members have been for the expenditure of certain amounts for relief here and there throughout the State. They have referred to the congestion that is apparent in many of the schools, to the necessity for providing reforms, and so forth. Generally speaking, the object has been to do something more for a large section of the people already well provided for by our system of education. That is not what I require. What I want is active consideration extended to a legitimate claim from one centre of my electorate. I want that consideration given when an application is received from an isolated part far removed from the city. I am not too sanguine about the activities of the officers of the Education Department. I charge them directly with apathy and indifference. They are bound too much by red tape. They refuse an offer made by local residents for the provision of school facilities, but stick rigidly to regulations and red tape. In consequence, at least 45 children at one centre have been persecuted through the withholding of educational facilities during the past six months. I submitted a definite proposal six months ago. I wrote to the department placing the position before them and outlining the offer made by the progress association at Reidys, a centre sometimes referred to as "Tripe." The Triton mine there is in the developmental stage, but its future was, even then, practically guaranteed. I confess the delay in presenting the proposal at the outset was caused through the necessary developmental and prospecting work that is so essential in the opening-up of a mining area, but the Education Department, even if the officials had desired to waste much time upon inquiries, could easily have ascertained the position of the district. They could have ascertained that inevitably in the near future a large number of children would be resident there. When I submitted the proposal, I told the then Director of Education that there were already 20 children awaiting educational facilities. I had occasion to leave the city immediately after I received his reply, which was to the effect that he could not agree to the proposal of the mining company, namely, that, as there was no suitable building available, the Education Department should take over

what is known as Bough Shed. The people there did not want an elaborate building; even a bough shed would have been sufficient for a start so that 20-odd children could receive elementary education. The company also guaranteed that a teacher, male or female, would be provided with suitable quarters. But the department would not accept that suggestion. Later on, the progress association made another effort to comply with the red tape regulations of the department. As private enterprise had erected a hall, they suggested that those facilities should be availed of. I have seen the hall and no objection can be taken to it, although I admit it is not very suitable for use in summer months on the goldfields. All the Education Department has done to date is to write to the progress association asking how the lavatories are situated! For the last six months, over 50 children have been waiting to know what chance there is of elementary education being provided for them. I regard this as a just grievance. The Minister may have been ignorant of the facts, but he has them now. I claim that people who are prepared to assist themselves and to make sacrifices should be the first to be considered, not the last. People who are prepared to go out into isolated places and endure the heat and dust, for that is all there is up there at this time of the year, to live in primitive conditions, ill-supplied with water, and in sheds, humpies and tents of all descriptions, are entitled to consideration and to have their appeal to the department for educational facilities sympathetically received. The proposal they made was one the people were willing to accept, but the department would not entertain it. I was at Reidys a few days ago, and I saw there a number of girls between the ages of 12 and 14 years, robust in physique, roaming round the bush, which consists of thick, low scrub. While the great majority of the people there are good, law-abiding citizens, I would like to know how the Director of Education would like his daughter to be roaming about all day under such conditions, without protection and without education. Anything could happen in the bush; any crime could be committed there within a hundred yards of the door of the parents' humpies, and remain undiscovered for a long time. The residents appealed to the Director to accept

their proposal so that the children, in addition to receiving education, would be protected by day and, after school hours, could be looked after by their parents. But the Education Department insists upon quarters that are up to the standard required by the regulations. Of course, I do not suggest that anything sinister will happen to these children, but the fact remains, there are people at that centre from all parts of the Commonwealth and from almost every country in the world. Although the great majority are respectable, law-abiding citizens, unfortunately there are a few who cannot be trusted, and may be tempted in the midst of such an environment. I protest most emphatically and bitterly against the action of the department. We do not ask for any great expenditure. The people themselves are prepared to accept a primitive arrangement that would have been quite adequate in the circumstances. The department say they cannot have what they require because under our red-tape system something better must be put there before the children can be prevented from roaming the bush all day unprotected. I am inclined to move to reduce this vote as a protest, because after these two proposals have been before them for six months, all that the department has done is to negotiate. That is the sort of treatment we get, while we are advised to go out in the bush on to the goldfields pioneering the industry as our forefathers did. We have done that and made sacrifices and have lived there for twenty years in the hope of improving conditions for those who have to follow us, and this is the treatment we have received from the Education Department. I am afraid that until these departments are taken over by Ministers instead of being run by under-secretaries we cannot expect any better treatment. I accuse the Director of Education of being chock-full of apathy and indifference to the welfare of the children, and particularly those children on the goldfields. He was not asked to make any elaborate expenditure. All provisions were made for his teacher, and the people themselves were prepared to accept the proposals submitted. Even if the lavatory arrangements at the hall were deficient, surely the department could have remedied them. But no, there could be no considera-

tion for people other than themselves, and all the sacrifices made by the people must go to the wall. I have entered my protest.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.13]: After having listened to the recital of serious wants made by various members and to the eloquent pleading of the member for Nedlands (Mr. Keenan), I would be lacking in my duty if I did not submit for the consideration of the Minister a few facts touching education in Middle Swan. The speech of the member for Nedlands was inconsistent inasmuch as he pleaded for the distribution of the Education Vote throughout the State so that the three R's could be taught in the far-flung spaces of Western Australia. Then, towards the end of his speech, he made a special plea for increased facilities in Nedlands, where educational facilities already abound, and urged that the Minister should give further consideration to the parents and citizens committee in Nedlands because those people had been doing certain things. Had he not taken that line we might all have subscribed to his contention that there should be no illiteracy whatever in the community. He also dealt with vocational training—a very important question. Educationists in various parts of the world have given special consideration to it, but they are not agreed as to the method that should be adopted to determine what avocation the boy or girl is particularly suited for. The hon. member mentioned trades. As one who has been in the engineering industry for many years, I can say that much criticism is often levelled against limiting the number of apprentices, but the fact is, not only in Australia, but in other parts of the world, that the industries can never absorb the number of men trained for them. So what is the use of training men for a given calling if when they reach manhood they cannot sell their services in that calling? Only the other day I read that the Prince of Wales, when addressing the international congress on commercial education, at which 35 nations were represented, made this statement on the question of teaching in the trades—

The world-wide trade depression and economic disturbance has been largely caused by maladjustment of distribution. The potential output is far greater than ever before. If all employable labour were employed for a reasonable number of hours per week the world

would have at its disposal a volume of commodities and services that would enable the entire population to live on a higher level of comfort and well-being than has ever been contemplated in the rosiest dreams of the social reformer. Our urgent task is to bring consumption and production into a proper relationship—not a simple, but quite a possible task.

He mentioned the fact that machinery has revolutionised the industrial system, and that it will go on revolutionising industry and the social life of the people. Because of that, hours of labour in almost all industries will have to be reduced. As a matter of fact we know of the tremendous efforts now being made in America under President Roosevelt, who is urging that the hours of work should be reduced to 30 per week. The problem that education will have to face in the immediate future is not only the training of our boys and girls for a vocation, but also teaching them to use their leisure time in a commendable way, that they might be fitted to become decent citizens. Those are important phases of education, and I think the Education Vote is amongst the most important in the Revenue Estimates. It is unfortunate that the amount set aside for education is so small, but of course at present that is inevitable. Until we get the rehabilitation of the economic system and of the distribution of goods we must have these difficulties with us. I wish to congratulate the Minister on having done one or two very important jobs in the electorate I represent. I made representations to the previous Government urging that a school be built at Whateley Park. Though that district is situated within five or six miles of Perth, the children of parents engaged in primary production were too far away to attend the Inglewood school and had to avail themselves of the correspondence system. A few months ago the Education Department erected a building and there are now 30 children in attendance, some of whom had not attended a school previously. When the member for Nedlands was Minister for Education, I made representations to him and also to his successors, the late Mr. Davy and Mr. Parker, regarding the Bayswater school, but nothing was done. Eventually the Health Department made a report, and when I brought it under the notice of the Minister, he gave authority for the installation of a septic tank system. There are 500 children attending that school and the

playground is very inadequate. The school is built on the side of a hill, and the department should certainly give consideration to the question of improving the playground. At Wattle Grove the progress hall is used for a school. In winter time that part is little short of a quagmire, and the department should seriously consider the question of building a new school. The children have to travel long distances, some of them as much as three or four miles. The member for Nedlands is not alone in preferring requests for gravel. I have made representations to the department for two or three years for a small quantity of gravel, but unsuccessfully. An open-air concert was held at the school last Christmas and the small area of gravel in front of the school was quite inadequate. The school takes children to the sixth standard, and the department might well extend the gravelled area and improve the surface of the existing portion which is almost worn out. A shelter shed is required at the Helena Valley school near the Boya Quarries. It is a small school, but the position is very exposed and bleak in winter time and a shelter shed is badly needed. I realise that to supply all these wants involves expenditure, but they are matters that should be considered by the department. Doubtless we shall be told that they will be placed on the list in the order of urgency. Reference has been made to the activities of Parents and Citizens' Associations. Through the efforts of the organisation at the Belmont school, a cinematograph has been obtained and much educational work has been done with its aid. The organisation purchased a piano and provided other needs, and over a period of 18 months raised large sums to assist the unemployed in the district. The association at Nedlands is not the only one that is doing good work for the benefit of the children.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton—in reply) [10.25]: I hope members will not expect me to reply to the many questions raised during the course of the debate.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is our only chance of getting a reply.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: A reply will be furnished in due course. If other members had spoken, they could probably have submitted equally effective

pleas for the supply of wants in their districts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They are waiting to see what your reply will be and next time all of them will speak.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We have to confine attention to essential works, and to provide all that are required would mean the expenditure of £100,000 this year. I hope to be able to alleviate the wants of many districts. A couple of years ago we spent £10,000, whereas £20,000 was needed. Last year we spent £60,000. This year I hope to obtain an equal amount, which will bring relief to many country districts. While there are places with legitimate complaints about playgrounds, there are other districts such as that mentioned by the member for Murchison where 30 or 40 children have no educational facilities. Twelve months ago there was practically no one in the district mentioned by the hon. member and now there might be 100 men, some of them married and with children. Some satisfactory provision will be made in the district before long, certainly before the beginning of next year. The member for Nedlands spoke of free travelling facilities provided for children of the metropolitan area on trains but not on trams. I admit it is anomalous that different conditions should apply to two departments operated by the Government. The anomaly, however, has existed for the last 30 years. It existed in prosperous times, but in this year, when we are budgeting for a deficit of nearly three-quarters of a million, it is not opportune to adjust anomalies.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The difference between Claremont and other districts is that trams would be carrying full loads to the city but not to Claremont.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There may be some merit in the argument of the member for Nedlands, but in other districts additional trams would be required and that would mean additional expense to be shouldered by the taxpayers. The anomaly could be rectified by abolishing free travelling on railways, but we do not want to retrogress. I am hopeful that, when times improve, the anomaly will be dealt with. Reference has been made to schools in particular districts. I have told members what the department desire. No matter how much money the Minister for Works could obtain, there would still be some wants that could not be attended to. If he had an inordinate amount of money

we could not expect to overtake the many requests that are made in such a big State as ours, where the population is largely migratory, where schools are being shifted from one place to another, and new schools, shelter sheds, etc., are constantly required. Reference has been made to the teachers' grievances. I did not want to discuss that subject on this Vote. The Government are anxious to restore the position, so far as the actual money received by people who are employed by the Government are concerned, as nearly as possible to what it was two or three years ago, before we start on anything else. The point of first importance is the actual amount of cash the people receive. We hope this session so to adjust the position in the matter of wages that no one on £500 a year or less will suffer any deduction on account of the financial emergency tax, except the adjustment on the cost of living allowance. That is the first and most important thing to see to. I do not want at this stage to say any more on the subject. I am thankful that the Estimates of this department have merited the approval of members. It is, of course, their duty to bring before Ministers matters affecting their electorates and, if the necessity arises, before Parliament. All the requests that have been made will receive consideration, but all of them cannot be complied with. The member for Murchison referred to outback schools. These and other problems of the kind will have to be tackled. They must come first. After the urgent works have been dealt with, if we can obtain money for other things they will be put in hand in their respective order of relative urgency.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.