

of his property, and if he fails to do so the Crown is justified, as trustee of the public interests, in transferring it to those who will.

During the discussion we have heard from the few opponents of the measure a good deal about the possible injustice of driving persons off the land who are utilising it in the best profitable way. I hope that the administration of this Bill, if it becomes an Act, will not be conducted on those lines. There is surely enough practically unimproved land in this country for the board to get to work upon without harassing bona fide settlers. It is forgotten also that if the Government set out to acquire highly improved properties on a resumption basis they would require the Bank of England behind them. And it seems to be overlooked that the Government have the final say as to whether a property shall be resumed or not. I cannot possibly imagine that any Government could continue or even attempt to resume a property that was being utilised in any way satisfactorily. Such a Government would be condemned by the general community, and their lease of life as a Government would be very brief indeed. According to the report of the South Australian Commission, the practice in the Eastern States, where power is given to resume land compulsorily, is first to exhaust every effort to secure the land by the voluntary process, and no doubt the same course will be followed here. That is the policy of every Government of every State of Australia, and a similar policy will be carried out in Western Australia. I should like to point out before concluding that there are several amendments on the Notice Paper having similar objects in view, and I suggest that some effort be made to consolidate them before the Committee stage is reached. I do not propose to take the Committee stage before Tuesday. That should give members ample time in which to prepare their amendments, or consolidate those that are of similar character. I feel sure that on this occasion the Bill will become law, and I trust that hon. members will not agree to any amendments that would tend to prevent that result.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 8.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 19th October, 1927.

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

QUESTION—TROTTHING, CHARITIES MEETING.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Premier: 1, Were the total gross proceeds of the meeting of the W.A. Trotting Association held on Saturday, 24th April, 1926, for the benefit of certain benevolent institutions paid over without taxation? 2, What amount of tax was payable on the gross proceeds?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, £591 3s. 9d.

QUESTION—STATE LABOUR BUREAUS.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Hon. H. Millington (Honorary Minister): 1, What number of men were picked up at the Perth Labour Bureau during the past two weeks for Government works? 2, What number were picked up at the Fremantle Bureau during the same period? 3, Will he see that the promised quota is picked up from each bureau respectively?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON replied: 1, 86. 2, Eight. 3, Yes.

QUESTION—MOOLA BULLA STATION

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Hon. H. Millington (Honorary Minister): 1, Are tenders for Moola Bulla carting advertised? 2, If so, how? 3, Why are local firms not given an opportunity to tender for saddlery used on Government stations?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON replied: 1 and 2, No tenders have been advertised since 1922 when an agreement was entered into with

the present contractor. This agreement, subject to minor modifications, has since been renewed yearly. 3, So far as native stations are concerned, when saddlery which cannot be made on stations is required, it is purchased through the Government Stores Department in the usual way.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of Mr. North, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. J. H. Smith (Nelson) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. Pantou, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the Minister for Railways (Hon. J. C. Willcor) on the ground of urgent public business.

BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Latham and read a first time.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 13:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move an amendment—

That all words after "by" in line two to the end of the clause, be struck out, and that the words "inserting after the word 'area,' in line seven of paragraph (c) of Subsection 2 thereof, the words 'and the board controlling reserve A 1720 (the King's Park)'" be inserted in lieu thereof.

When I spoke on the second reading I was under a misapprehension as to the exact meaning of the Bill. The amendment will meet the ideas I had in mind, and which the Government are prepared to accept. I understand also that the amendment is quite acceptable to those who have brought down the Bill, for it will achieve their original objective.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The board will share in the money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The position is that up to one-half the fees the Government are entitled to recoup themselves for money expended under the Public Works Act on the maintenance of

certain roads. The residue is divided amongst the local authorities according to the chainage of first and second-class roads within their districts. The idea is that the King's Park Board shall get a share of that distribution, but not on the same basis obtaining outside, since the density of the traffic on the King's Park roads is nothing like so great as on our main roads. However, the King's Park roads will be classed under another grade, and a share of the money will be paid over in respect of them.

Mr. Angelo: Can the Minister say what the minimum amount will be?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, that has to be examined. The distribution of that half the fees is entirely in the hands of the Minister. There were three grades of roads. We reduced them to two, but now there will have to be another grade.

Mr. Angelo: The Minister has no idea of the maximum amount that can be obtained under this?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It depends on the amount of fees collected each year. Already this year we have collected approximately £60,000; that is, since the 1st July. The figures are increasing each year.

Mr. Sampson: Then the board will get a share of the money allocated for specified roads.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, those roads in respect of which the local authorities now get their share on a chainage.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then the board will not get much.

Mr. Davy: They will get a steady little income.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They will certainly get more than they are getting now from the toll on motor cars, and they will know where they stand. I think the board will be satisfied and will have no cause for complaint. The objective they set out after when the Bill was introduced will be achieved by my amendment.

Mr. DAVY: I readily accept the amendment, for I am afraid the Bill as introduced here would not have effected its object at all. The amendment is exactly what was wanted, and is in every way superior to the original.

Mr. LATHAM: Can the Minister tell us whether the King's Park Board propose to abolish the toll imposed on vehicles passing through the park? From the point of view of persons living in the country the charge levied by the board is unreasonable. Farmers are not permitted to drive through the

park on one Sunday in the year without paying 10s. I hope the fee will be withdrawn.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The new fees were imposed under regulations passed by the Governor in Council. It will be necessary, if this Bill becomes law, for the Minister to cancel those regulations. Surely he does not propose that the board should collect the fees as well.

The Minister for Works: The board has no desire to do that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The regulations will have to be cancelled. I am glad to know that the board will get something out of the traffic fees. I want all the people who visit this State to have an opportunity of driving through this beautiful part of the metropolitan area. The imposition of the fee for private motorists has meant a good deal of hardship to people living in the country. It is not right that the park should be closed against any motorist.

Mr. ANGELO: After the reply of the Minister to my interjection, I have to say that I am not in favour of the Bill, although I supported it on the second reading. We are merely handing to the Minister a blank cheque for him to fill up as he desires.

The Minister for Works: The Act gives that power now.

Mr. ANGELO: The position is too uncertain. I want the roads in the park to be maintained and to be available to all comers, but I should like to see every motorist in the metropolitan area provide a small sum towards the maintenance of those roads. I suggested the other night that a surcharge of 5s. should be added to the traffic fees. It is ridiculous for the member for Swan to object to such a small increase. I should like to see the Bill withdrawn and a surcharge of 5s. in the case of private owners and 10s. in the case of taxi owners added to the traffic fees. If a man can run a motor car he can afford to pay this amount towards the upkeep of the park roads. There are 16,000 motor cars in the metropolitan area, and at 5s. per car this would give the board a revenue of about £4,000. Out of that amount they might be able to provide further facilities for motorists in the way of additional tearooms, etc.

The Minister for Works: Do you want the board to establish hotels in the park?

Mr. ANGELO: I appeal to motorists not to object to such a small surcharge as I have suggested, if it means keeping the park roads in good condition.

Mr. DAVY: The board have no funds with which to maintain the park roads. The toll which was objected to brought in practically no revenue. The proposal now is to make motorists in the metropolitan area pay all the costs.

Mr. Angelo: What are you going to get out of the Bill?

Mr. DAVY: I do not know, because the Minister will not tell me. If the board receive only a small amount they will be better off.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It will also mean robbing the other roads.

Mr. DAVY: If the revenue from traffic fees is insufficient, the fees will have to be increased. The Minister does not apply the Act in an arbitrary manner, but apportions the fees according to the chainage and the class of roads. He proposes that the roads in the park should rank with those of any other local authority, and be graded in the same way. The board work hard to keep the park roads in order on limited means, and we might therefore give the power now sought.

Mr. Angelo: I want the board to receive a definite amount.

The Minister for Works: No one receives any definite amount.

Mr. DAVY: The board ask that they should be treated like any other local authority, controlling and maintaining their own roads.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I support the amendment because I know it is acceptable to the board, but if I could choose between it and the suggestion of the member for Gascoyne, I would take the latter. We have no power, however, to do what the hon. member desires.

Mr. Griffiths: But the board have been making surcharges.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Bill meets the board's requirements, and we shall not go far wrong in granting that body what is desired. I support the amendment.

Mr. BROWN: Country motorists come down once or twice a year with their families, and naturally they like to have a look at the park.

Mr. Davy: The Bill is designed to eliminate that difficulty.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Where is that stated?

Mr. Davy: It is not stated.

Mr. BROWN: Country motorists would not object to paying a small fee towards the upkeep of the park, say half-a-crown to go through the park for a week, a fortnight

or three weeks. The park is one of the most beautiful in Australia; but it is unjust to demand of country motorists a fee of 10s. for going through it perhaps once a year, whereas city motorists and taxi drivers go through it, or may go through it, daily.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not object to the board's getting a share of the traffic fees, seeing that their roads must carry a proportion of the public traffic; but in that case their gates should be open to the general public and the regulation imposing the fee of 10s. should be rescinded. I do not think the Minister has definitely stated that to be an understood condition.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is understood. The chairman of the board has said it.

The Minister for Works: I give the necessary assurance.

Mr. Davy: In fact, the charging of the fee is *ultra vires*.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is a growing tendency in this House to say that because some outside body is satisfied with a legislative proposal, that proposal must be all right. Thus we lean towards accepting dictation from outside bodies. Our roads administration, for instance, is really directed or dictated by the Federal Government.

Mr. Davy: Is the hon. member in order in making this speech in Committee on the amendment?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member is going rather far.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am really alarmed, and am voicing my alarm, that old and experienced members like the member for Mt. Margaret should declare that the proposal must be all right because the board agree to it.

Hon. G. Taylor: I did not say "must be." I said the board were satisfied.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I came to the conclusion that the hon. member thought everything was all right because an outside body approved of the proposal. There is a danger of leading the public to think that outside bodies influence us in disposing of State funds. In the metropolitan area much anxiety exists regarding the assistance to be given the road boards, and also regarding the actual position of road boards in that area to-day, and, further, as to how those boards are to fare under the Federal Government's dictation.

Mr. North: The position is absolutely intolerable.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. We have to appreciate that traffic fees play an important part in road maintenance. The Minister for Works has distributed those fees very fairly. According to the Opposition Leader, it is deplorable that the gates of King's Park have been closed; but roads in the metropolitan area have at times been closed because they were utterly out of repair owing to the financial inability of metropolitan road boards to maintain them, those boards being practically confined to assistance from traffic fees. Our views regarding the number of roads to be assisted must be extended. At present assistance is almost restricted to main roads, and metropolitan boards are unable to cope with the heavy traffic on what are called second and third class roads.

The CHAIRMAN: The subject being dealt with is the King's Park, and I would like the hon. member to adhere to that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If we give fees to the King's Park Board, we shall be taking them from others.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should have made that speech on the second reading, and not on this amendment. I ask him to keep to the amendment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I understand that what the amendment proposes was not included in the Bill as submitted for second reading. In our desire to help the King's Park Board we must bear in mind that we shall be adding an impost to metropolitan road boards, because there will be so much less money for division among them in the shape of traffic fees. From a local government point of view the question has assumed considerable proportions.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: From an interjection made by the previous speaker earlier in the sitting, I gathered that he was unwilling to contribute anything towards the upkeep of King's Park. The King's Park Board should be pleased with the speech the member for Guildford has just made.

Mr. NORTH: Can the Minister, in the light of his knowledge of the increase in traffic fees, state whether the proposed allotment to the King's Park Board will affect present participants in the fees? Is not the yearly increase in traffic fees sufficient to allow of the proposed allotment to the King's Park Board without affecting the amounts now paid to road boards?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot give any assurance; I can only state my

opinion, which is that the amount of the increase in traffic fees would certainly cover the proposed allotment. It all depends on how much the road boards will require for main roads, which amount will come out of the pool first. I do not know yet what programme the Main Roads Board have set out.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL

- 1, Stamp Act Amendment.
 - 2, Forests Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1927-28.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £1,667:

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.18]: I had hoped that the Leader of the Country Party would have returned from the country in order to speak on behalf of the members sitting on the Opposition cross-benches, but as I asked for the adjournment of the debate last night, I will contribute a few remarks on points with which I wish to deal but regarding which I wish that I had had more time for consideration. Hon. members will remember that when the test matches were being played here and in Great Britain, the captain of the Australian Eleven was recognised as being "Lucky Collins," because he was always winning the toss.

The Minister for Mines: He has donned a bag on the racecourse now, and is trying his luck there.

MR. GRIFFITHS: Remembering that, when I was listening to the Premier's statement I decided to analyse the Estimates that have been placed before us. I am satisfied that the Premier may be regarded in the same category as the captain of the last Australian Eleven in that he too is a

lucky man and should be known as "Lucky Collier." As I have said on former occasions, good luck to him. It is a fine thing to know that the luck has turned at last and that it is coming our way in Western Australia. When I interjected recently that the contribution from the Commonwealth Government represented a windfall, a member sitting on the Government side of the House retorted that it was good management. I do not know whether that is the position, but at any rate the money has been forthcoming and it is pleasing to note that we have received £1,153,132 by way of contributions. I understand the Premier said the other evening that £530,000 was being held in suspense. It is also worthy of note that as the result of the Abrahams episode it is anticipated that during the coming year an additional sum of £44,473 will be paid into the coffers of the Treasury. That must be a very welcome addition in the eyes of the Premier.

Mr. Angelo: Fancy going back to Abraham for our funds!

MR. GRIFFITHS: I suppose it is a case of any port in a storm. Another point of interest is that upwards of 35,000,000 bushels of wheat are ripening and getting ready for our trucks to rail to the seaboard. That harvest is expected to bring in an additional £315,731 as increased railway earnings. While the Premier was speaking I looked through the railway returns to work out what has taken place up to June of this year. I was particularly interested with regard to the carriage of wheat, wool and fertilisers. I wished to find out how the railway earnings to the 30th June, 1927, compared with the returns for the previous financial year. I was astonished to find that the additional earnings in respect of wheat amounted to £102,651. towards which three of the electorates—Toodyay, Avon and York—contributed £54,272. Then there were additional increases of £10,893 on the carriage of fertilisers and of £21,410 in respect of wool. Those items represent a total increase of £134,954 to the 30th June last. That makes fine reading and gives great hope for the coming year. It largely explains the buoyant condition of the State. In discussing the financial statement as presented by the Premier it is hard to dissociate from it the Federal Financial Agreement. I do not want to say too much about the Federal scheme, but there is one point I would like

to mention if I will not be unduly transgressing in anticipating what the Premier may say. I may be able to suggest a thought to the Premier, although he may have made the necessary provision already. Looking through the draft we have received from the Eastern States and also the reports of the conferences, I was gratified to note the prominent part our own Premier took in the discussions. He more than held his own with the other State Premiers. I would like to emphasise the question of the sinking fund. Last night I asked whether the sum of £8,600,000, which is mentioned in the report, was the sinking fund we were supposed to have accumulated up to the 30th June last. I found that that was approximately correct. I had in mind certain statements that were made in another place regarding a total of £11,000,000 for the sinking fund. I find that £2,500,000 of the sinking fund was paid in respect of the Coolgardie water scheme, while provision had also been made regarding the inscribed stock that we have been discussing recently and for the maturing of a loan in 1932. Those items really account for the difference in the figures. A point that has struck me, and no doubt has appealed to the Premier too, is that while Western Australia has undoubtedly done better with the present Federal Government than with previous Ministries that have held office in the Federal arena, at the same time there is one aspect of the financial scheme that, whatever may be at the back of the mind of the Federal Prime Minister and his Treasurer, deals somewhat dubiously regarding Western Australia's position. When we realise that we have a sinking fund of nearly £9,000,000, with a debt of only £63,164,000, it is interesting to note that New South Wales, with an accumulated debt of £234,200,000, has a sinking fund of only £900,000. In comparing Western Australia with New South Wales, I compare the State with the biggest debt and the smallest sinking fund with our position in Western Australia. New South Wales is like the prodigal son who spent his subsistence in riotous living, and yet will receive the fatted calf inasmuch as the provision for Western Australia at the end of 58 years is for a total of £32,712,000, whereas New South Wales will receive £201,214,000. That includes the equivalent of the per capita payments and, in addition, a fixed contribution towards interest and charges. Under the

States' Grants Act, New South Wales was to get £2,978,000, whereas now she will get £3,283,000, or an increase of £305,000 per annum. That will give her a considerably increased advantage. New South Wales will receive an increase of £17,690,000, whilst Western Australia, with an increased payment of £80,000 per annum, will benefit to the extent of £4,640,000 in the period of 58 years. In Western Australia we could put three States of the size of New South Wales and 33 of the size of Tasmania. At my home this afternoon I made a little diagram and found that Western Australia would accommodate $2\frac{1}{2}$ States of the size of South Australia, $3\frac{1}{3}$ of the size of New South Wales, 11 of the size of Victoria, and 33 of the size of Tasmania. The point that strikes me forcibly is that while the provident State of Western Australia has been earnestly striving to pay its debts, New South Wales, which has made no provision, will get the biggest pull of any of the States. New South Wales has a shorter coast line than has Western Australia and has nothing like the area of territory that we have. The area of Western Australia is 975,920 square miles, South Australia 380,070, New South Wales, including the 940 square miles of Federal territory, 310,372, Victoria 87,884, and Tasmania 26,215 square miles. The total area of those States is 804,541 square miles, the whole of which could be comfortably accommodated inside Western Australia and still leave room for the addition of two more States the size of Victoria. South Australia has 13 per cent. of the land of the continent, New South Wales 10 per cent., Victoria 3 per cent. and Tasmania 1 per cent., a total of 27 per cent. as against Western Australia's 33 per cent. Of coastline Western Australia has about 4,350 miles, which is equal to that of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria combined, or of that of Queensland and the Northern Territory. It stretches from the temperate to the tropical zone and presents all the problems peculiar to the States on the opposite side of the continent. Consequently when we consider the proposed financial agreement we should bear in mind the big area of Western Australia, the huge problems it presents, its enormous coastline, the fact that it has the biggest sinking fund of any of the States and the lowest debt of any except Tasmania. is the biggest

gold producer, has immense iron deposits at Yampi Sound and, according to the member for Coolgardie the largest deposit of manganese in Australia, if not in the world, and expects to become the biggest producer of wheat and wool. As the Premier has indicated, we are in a sort of cleft stick, but before adopting the agreement we should carefully consider whether it will not be possible to obtain better terms after the first ten years. The figures show that the agreement would be a good one for the present. To that extent the Commonwealth propose to treat us passably well. Still it should be remembered how we came to enter Federation and the promise then made that we should receive a fair share of the surplus revenue. I do not say that the Commonwealth intend to avoid giving us a fair share, but this State on account of its enormous area, small population, big sinking fund, small debt and big problems should receive special consideration, somewhat on the lines of the consideration to be given to New South Wales. The summary of revenue collected by the State, published in the "Statistical Register," makes interesting reading. In 1917 taxation amounted to £449,456, compared with £1,214,343 in 1926-27; mining, lands and timber increased from £315,907 to £550,911; railways from £1,970,333 to £3,869,300; other business concerns from £800,924 to £1,268,666, and revenue from other sources from £480,677 to £1,697,481. The Commonwealth figures have remained practically stationary, with the exception that this year we seem to have got a double dose amounting in all to £1,153,132. In that period the total revenue of the State increased from £4,622,536 to £9,750,833, the increase having been general and steady throughout. State expenditure per head of population in 1917-18 amounted to £17,387 compared with £25,635 in 1926-27. Throughout the period revenue fell about £2 behind expenditure until recently, when we seem to have overtaken expenditure and got the ledger balanced. The other evening the Premier told us that the increase of indebtedness per head of population for the past 12 months had been only £2. That is quite correct, but the increase during the last 10 years has been fairly heavy. Probably that, in conjunction with the increase in the other States, has shown the necessity for steps

to consolidate the credit of the Commonwealth and get back to something like sane finance. In 1918 the State indebtedness was £119,318 per head; five years later it had jumped to £142,781; in the following year it was £149,174; a year later £148,109; in 1926 it jumped to £158,217, while last year it reached £160,698. The total increase during the ten years was £41 per head. Evidently it was time something was done to check the continued augmentation of State indebtedness. During recent years it seems to have become accepted as a matter of course that each year should witness an increase. I hope the advance in the State indebtedness has been checked and that it will be possible in future to reduce the amount. Generally speaking the financial outlook is good. I had hoped to hear from the Premier that something in the way of reducing taxation would be proposed, but he has told us "not yet." There is a matter I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister for Works. I was going to say it is not a complaint, and yet in a way it is a complaint. However, it is not a parochial matter, seeing that it affects all electorates. I have a letter from Mr. McLellan, a man of wide experience of shire and road board matters in Victoria, New South Wales, and for the last 14 or 15 years in this State, and some of the suggestions it contains might well be adopted by the Minister. He mentions a road running from the south of Kellerberrin, but cites it merely as an example. Something like £1,000 was spent on $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of road and, according to the writer of the letter, only 30 chains of it needed attention and £50 would have been ample to pay for the job. Including possible crossings, £100 per mile would have constructed a 44ft. graded road of a length of 10 miles as against $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of 12ft. road. Mr. McLellan is a man on whose opinion, so far as road making and practical outside knowledge is concerned, I would stake my life. I would take his opinion before that of some of the so-called road experts about whom we hear a great deal. He states that the cost of doing up this road and keeping it in repair would amount to about 1s. 6d. a chain. Answering my query respecting the maintenance of the 44ft. formation of the main arterial road, Kellerberrin South, he supplied me with this information: The road is regraded every two years at a cost of 2s. 6d. a chain for regrading and rolling, with

possibly an extra regrade if the year should happen to be very wet as was the case in 1917. Therefore, 1s. 6d. per chain per annum should be a liberal estimate. That road has carried thousands of tons of chaff, grain, fertilisers, etc., during the last 12 years. The road was formed about 12 years ago at a cost of 15s. per chain, and has been kept in first-class order at a cost of 1s. 6d. per chain per annum since its construction. The Minister for Health, I noticed, when reading "Hansard" the other day, stated that the Government were not getting the road money easily. But there is no doubt that in this instance it has been spent scandalously easily and uselessly. I went over that particular road with Mr. Grace, the then inspecting engineer, and I suppose because of the small amount of traffic that passed over it, it was placed last upon the Kellerberrin list. Last year, just after the then Chairman returned from one of his visits to Perth, without any warning to the board, men were put on Tighe's road and the money was absolutely wasted. We could have made a better road with a gravel surface for half the money. Indeed, two-thirds of the road that was gravelled was a splendid natural road, and what cost the country £7 10s. per chain could have been transformed into a splendid earth formation capable of handling all the traffic over it for the next 20 years, with slight repairs, for 20s. per chain. Just outside the town southwards, near Hammond's land there is a 44ft. formation carrying five times the traffic that passes over the road to which I have been referring. When I was speaking a little while ago about the small area of Victoria, and comparing it with our large area, I could not help thinking about what this same man wrote to me regarding our road construction outlook. He said that what the Federal Government had entirely overlooked was that we were 30 years behind Victoria in development. Victoria has approximately 2,000,000 people on 87,884 square miles of territory, whilst Western Australia has barely 400,000 people on a territory of 975,920 square miles. Therefore, what we want is not chains of expensively made roads, but miles upon miles of fairly good pioneer roads, particularly in our eastern wheat belt. Every £1,000 spent should show 10 miles of roads good enough for our needs for the next 30 years. Now what shall we get for our £2,000? Only two miles of a ribless road, merely 12ft. wide, and in respect of which after the first two years

the annual maintenance cost will be greater than that of keeping a 44ft. earth formation in good order. A 12ft. road must be expensive to keep in order, because the traffic is too closely confined. Let me instance the experience of the Kellerberrin Road Board. That body has already found that the 12ft. roads built by the department in that district are more expensive to maintain than their own 16½ft. roads. Just as an earth road on a 20ft. formation is a poor road, a 33ft. road is a fair road, whilst a 44ft. formation is an excellent road and will outlive the 20ft. road five times over if properly looked after. To demonstrate to the House that there is good ground for quoting the experience of Kellerberrin, I may mention that every engineer the road board has had who has visited the district has complimented the board upon the excellent state of the roads. Mr. McLellan is pleased at the expressions of approval that have been heard regarding the roads, as he was responsible for the construction of both the 33ft. and 44ft. formations. I remember the first occasion when he mentioned the proposals, he had the board fairly gasping at the idea of the construction of such wide roads in those parts. When he suggested that within five miles of the town the roads should be 44ft. wide, he knocked them all speechless.

Hon. G. Taylor: Have they recovered since?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I intend to place this information before the Minister for Works, but I could not resist the temptation to refer to it in the House for the reason that there is so much sound sense in what this man has said. As he has pointed out, we cannot be guided by what Victoria has done, because that State is so small in comparison with Western Australia. We have in our State an area into which we could put eleven States the size of Victoria. As Mr. McLellan points out, it is not the small stretches of road that are of service, but the good pioneer roads that are required for the development of the country. I secured a copy of the plans and specifications for the construction of the roads, and if those are to be adhered to it will mean that very few of the road boards will tender for the work. If they do tender, the price will be so high that the Minister will gasp. I went through the plans and specifications with a friend of mine who knows something of the subject, and one of the first things that he pointed out to me was the cumbersome nature of the specifications and the very high cost that will be involved in carrying them out. Indeed, he

said that the cost would be so high that contractors would have to tender at such big figures that the cost of building the roads would be prohibitive. I am tempted to call them "fool specifications." In the first place the contractor must send a sample of gravel to Perth to be tested, and all gravel must be of the same grade. How absurd this becomes at once apparent when we are informed that there are no two beds of gravel in the Kellerberrin district that are alike. The quarreling and confusion that is sure to result can readily be imagined. The plans and specifications have been designed for wasting money in this large and sparsely populated State of ours. The great need is not for a few chains of first class road, but for miles of decent pioneer roads. Kellerberrin with the £2,000 allocated to it will, under these specifications, construct two miles of road, whereas by following the system that has been adopted by the local body it would be possible to form, grade and roll from 15 to 20 miles of road that would last 20 or 30 years. It must not be forgotten that the day of big horse teams and loads of 7 and 8 tons is gone. The teams have been replaced by the speedy motor truck that carries from one to three tons. A well made, wide, earth-formed road is ideal. Drivers can speed up to 20 miles an hour upon such roads and the wear on tyres is not half what it is on gravel. I can instance one young farmer who, for the past two years, has been doing four trips a day—16 miles each way—over earth roads. Mrs. McLellan, of North Kellerberrin, has her wheat carted over roads that have cost less than 20s. per chain to construct. Just imagine wasting £20 to obtain similar results. I am sorry the Minister has just left the Chamber. Anyhow, I shall supply him with a copy of my speech so that he may read what I have to say about road construction methods. There is another matter to which I wish to allude. I read in a *Wagin* paper the other day a statement attributed to Mr. Stileman, to the effect that motor traction could be done at 6d. per ton mile. Seeing that the railways charge 1s. 11d. I am wondering whether it would not be wise to pull up all our railways and to stop constructing new ones. If Mr. Stileman has made such a statement, I can only say he was ill advised, because we know very well—those of us who have had anything to do with the carting of wheat or fertilisers in the country—that it is not possible to cart for 6d. per ton per mile, or a shilling either.

Mr. Brown: It could be done at 1s. a mile with a horse dray.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: But Mr. Stileman is reported to have said it can be carted at 6d. per ton mile. If such a thing were possible, we should not need to worry about railways. The charge on our railways is 1s. 11d. per ton per mile. I have a friend who, this year, will be carting 5,000 bags of wheat 17 miles to the siding. Mr. Dumsday, an accountant in the city, has a farm 12 miles from Newcarrie. A little while ago I calculated how much further the man with 5,000 bags at 17 miles would have to cart than he would if he were only 12 miles distant. It worked out at something like 2,308 miles of extra carting. So it will be seen how important it is to be not more than a reasonable distance from a railway. I had intended to move for a return this afternoon, but I could not reach the House in time, and so my motion lapsed. I will have to reinstate it on the Notice Paper. It concerns the soldiers along the Yarramony railway extension. Some of those men are getting very hard pressed, and unless something is done for them quite a number will be unable to remain on their holdings. However, I need not dwell on that to-night. Returning from a trip through the back districts recently, I was struck with the generally fine appearance of the crops, particularly in the newer districts, such as South Burracoppin, Walgoolan, Boddalin, Noongar, Westonia, Campion, and Goomarin where we are going to have a surprisingly big output this year. It was particularly gratifying to me, for many of the people in that area are new settlers to whom a successful season this year means everything. The Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board might well give consideration to the requirements of the settlers out in that country north-east of Westonia. Some of them, I am afraid, are in need of assistance. The department notifies me that everything is all right, but I am sure a lot of those men are having a pretty rotten time, and unless something is done many of the holdings will be abandoned. Prospects generally are good. Even up in the member for Gascoyne's country there is no close season for sharks now. The shark fishing industry at Carnarvon, is causing a good deal of comment in the *Old Country*, as I read in a London paper. It seems novel that sharks should be treated for their skin and their oil. We are told that every part of the fish is

used, except the bite. Several projects put up by the member for Gascoyne, though laughed at to begin with, have proved practical propositions in the end.

Hon. G. Taylo: As, for instance, the bananas.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: When I was in the Eastern States I found they had a slogan exhorting the people of Sydney to eat the bananas grown on the North Coast. However, the cultivation of the bananas in the district of the member for Gascoyne does not appear to have been entirely successful.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Very good bananas are grown there.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes, but not enough of them. I wish to congratulate the Government upon their good fortune in respect of the finances.

Mr. Kenneally: Say nothing about their administration.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Anybody can administer if the funds are there. On the Address-in-reply I declared that the Premier ought to be called Lucky Collier. No doubt luck is coming his way. Still, I say good luck to him, for it is better for the State and for all of us if the tide has really turned.

Mr. Sampson: Tell us something about the Kellerberrin hospital.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have a strong note of protest from the chairman of that hospital board. He is against the Bill we recently had before us, for he thinks it will largely kill voluntary effort and will hit his hospital particularly hard. Kellerberrin has one of the best managed hospitals in the State. It is run entirely upon voluntary effort, plus a lucrative picture show. The people up there have a real hospital sense and are very generous with their contributions.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is the size of the hospital.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It has lately been increased. It is a very fine stone building. The local people object to its being called the Kellerberrin hospital, its proper title being the Eastern Districts Memorial Hospital. It was built as a memorial to the soldiers. The whole place is very well appointed and conducted. It has an X-ray plant, and all the equipment is very satisfactory. We have to thank the Minister for honouring his promise of the X-ray plant.

Member: You must have bounced the department to get it.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That hospital has had less help than nine-tenths of the hospitals in the State.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Before tea some members suggested that I should talk about the Yarramony railway. I have had a somewhat reassuring reply from the Premier upon this matter, and I hope some good will come of it, so I will not stress the point on this occasion. There is one phase of our activities upon which I did not touch, namely that in relation to group settlement. I rather deplore the attitude of some members as to what has taken place in the past. The past is dead and gone. In view of the encouragement that is being given to the dairying industry and to the settlement of our great South-West, we must do the best we can to meet the situation. The visit of Colonel Amery last week must result in good for the State. The visits of people like Lord Burnham and the members of his party, the members of the British Parliamentary Organisations and of the Press Delegations generally have done good to Western Australia, and have had their effect upon debates in the House of Commons. I have already quoted something from the debates in the House of Commons. The latest journal I have received referring to the debates there shows that these visits have had a far-reaching effect upon the benefits to be derived from them by Western Australia. The Right Hon. J. I. McPherson, who was speaking recently on a vote of £29,440,000 for Dominion affairs, referred in eulogistic terms to the South-West of Western Australia, and to our scheme so far as it has been possible to judge it as a result of a hurried trip. We as a House, on whatever side we may sit, are out to see that a success is made of the group settlement scheme. I do not doubt that it will ultimately be a success. Like every new movement that is inaugurated, whether in the matter of State or private affairs, a certain number of mistakes are always made in the early stages. Perhaps mistakes of administration have occurred in this instance, and perhaps the original conception of the idea was not completely understood. Whatever has happened, experience teaches, and those who are now following should be able to profit by the errors of the past. With the wholehearted assistance of the House, the Government should be able to rectify the errors of the past and make good in that part of

the State. I should like to refer to the railway policy. I quoted from memory something that had been said concerning the remarks of the Engineer-in-Chief in regard to the change in railway policy. In a country newspaper I find the following:—

“Change of railway policy,” “railways 40 miles apart instead of 30 miles.” The report of the Committee on Mr. Stileman’s proposal that agricultural railways should in future be built 40 miles apart, owing to the use of the motor, is awaited with great interest. It means a complete change in the policy of building agricultural railways. The settlers of Jilakin, North Lake Grace and Burngup took up their lands and have cleared portions of them in the certain hope of a railway. Under Mr. Stileman’s suggestions they will be left an island without a railway, and forced to use motor tractors to get their wheat in to existing railways. Mr. Stileman says wheat can be carted in motors for 6d. a ton per mile, whereas the railways charge 1s. 11d. per ton per mile. Mr. Stileman’s statement is serious because, if true, there is no need for railways at all, unless they carry wheat at a cheaper rate. But wheat is only one item of haulage. Railways are always needed, and they have made the great progress in agriculture possible. The time for competition with motor traffic is yet to come, and it should have come already in America. But in America motor traction on roads and lands is receding. Any limit to the distance apart of railways is absurd. For the land in Western Australia is patchy. Whereas in some places forty miles apart is quite justified, in others thirty miles apart is too much on account of the good land. Moreover, there are certain objectives such as the ports, and there are certain strips of good land all the way, such as the mining belt from Southern Cross to Ravensthorpe. Other railways serve patches of good land. We are of opinion that thirty miles apart is a fair distance, and should not be altered. Railways thirty miles apart does not mean that all the settlers are fifteen miles from it. Roads are not always straight, and many of them are twenty miles and over from a siding. W. N. Hedges in his “Practical Scheme of Land Settlement,” written in 1922, said all settlers should be within six or seven miles of a railway. We are not aware that Mr. Hedges’ views have changed. But we are prepared to back Mr. Hedges’ views against Mr. Stileman’s of twenty or thirty miles. Wheatgrowers starting in new country are not capitalists and how can they afford motors to cart their crops. The policy of development of our wheat lands has up to the present been a sound one, and we hope any alteration of that policy will not affect settlers already settled along the proposed Lake Grace-Kalgarin railway. The question of distance apart of railways can be safely left to the Railways Advisory Board, who know all the conditions.

I considered this of sufficient importance to read to the House. The policy is going to have a marked effect upon certain rail-

ways, about which other members will no doubt speak later on. Because a farmer is forced to use motor traction he may have to cart his wheat $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles further than the man who is only $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles from a railway. This would mean an extra trip of nine miles each time he went to and fro. He may be carting a crop representing 5,000 bags of wheat. He would have to cart his wheat over many more miles of road than would the other man. That is a considerable item, and would be even more important if the price of wheat came down. With wheat at its present value, no doubt this could be done. I now wish to refer to the owner’s risk clause in connection with railway freights. I could quote instance after instance to show how settlers have been victimised through this iniquitous clause, whereby the Commissioner disclaims all responsibility. Once a parcel is dropped off at a siding there is no redress for the owner. I will quote one particular case that occurred at New-carnie. A bag of potatoes, three different cases of fruit and a packet of meat belonging to one settler were supposed to have been delivered at the siding. A very destructive chemical was placed upon another package of meat. This is the sort of thing that occurs at some of the unattended sidings. Packages are dumped out, and if they are stolen or lost the owner has no redress. The owner’s risk clause comes into operation, and he is told that the stuff was delivered or signed up as O.K. by the guard, and that is the end of it. I hope this trouble will be rectified. I have been harping on the matter for years, but nothing has yet been done. At the Cunderdin station people get off for refreshments. The lighting is done by six or seven miserable oil lamps. The same thing applies to Kellerberrin. Both are thriving towns. I will give members a few figures showing the amount of produce that comes from that centre as well as from Cunderdin. These two centres are amongst the biggest wheat producers, hay growers and sheep raisers in the State, and yet obsolete conditions are allowed to prevail. I hope something will be done at these stations. The Electoral Department now comes to my mind. I asked some questions a little while ago in regard to enrolments. It was stated in “The Call” that there were 18,000 names on the State roll which are not on the Federal

roll. The paper asks, "Is this roll-stuffing or neglect?" It is all very well for the Minister to reply that the rolls are being kept up to date. They are not being kept up to date. Hundreds of names will have to be put on the roll before the next election. It is not fair that members should be looked upon as honorary electoral agents to see that persons are properly enrolled. I hope that something will be done in the matter, and that the State and Federal rolls, when made uniform, will bring about a rectification of the trouble. Another matter concerning which I questioned the Minister, and to which I should call attention at this juncture, relates to the difference in times of closing as between Federal and State elections, as a result of which numerous people have failed to get their votes recorded. While the rolls are being made uniform, the times for closing the poll should also be made uniform.

Hon. G. Taylor: Also the opening times.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes. Then there will be no excuse for anyone coming too late. Whilst the Minister is engaged upon the matter, he might give serious consideration to the holding of North-West elections on the same day as elections for the remainder of the State.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is highly desirable.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Now that papers can be sent to the North from the South and vice versa in a few hours by aeroplane, there should be no difficulty in the matter. The Minister for Health, who unfortunately is not present to-night, takes a keen interest in anything that makes for betterment or relief of suffering, sickness and poverty. There has been brought under my notice a fine type of stretcher, an adaptable ambulance stretcher, invented by Sister Kenny, or Mrs. Kenny, a widowed lady who went through the war and was constantly travelling between Australia and Britain. She was also on the French battlefields. Thus she gained a wide experience of her subject, and from what she learned she evolved an excellent stretcher.

Hon. G. Taylor: For defeated candidates to come home on?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No. My suggestion relates to the well-being of people injured in the country. The stretcher can be fitted to a railway seat or car seat or motor truck, and it has hot water bottles in case of collapse. So appreciative have the Queensland

and New South Wales people become of that stretcher that Mrs. Kenny has, by request, given demonstrations of its use in both those States, and has been highly commended by leading doctors there. In fact, the Health Departments of both Queensland and New South Wales strongly recommend country centres to procure these ambulance stretchers. Whilst on what may be termed parochial matters, I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister for Police the necessity for police protection at Tammin. It has been promised for some years, and I hope that on the forthcoming Loan Estimates the matter will receive consideration, and that a police station will speedily be built at Tammin.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is done with prisoners now? Are they tied to trees?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In the absence of police protection Tammin, like Doodlakine, receives an overflow from adjoining localities.

Hon. G. Taylor: When an arrest is made, is the prisoner sent away by train?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Presumably he is taken to Kellerberrin or Cunderdin. These remarks apply also to Doodlakine. As regards water supplies, I do not know whether the department, like others, has been spurred on by the Treasurer to gather in as much money as possible by way of rates in view of the Budget speech and so as to swell the revenue, but I can give two concrete cases of hardship—I have heard of many more. I will quote one instance. A settler took over the Agricultural Department's debt on a block, of which £100 was represented by water. That amount of £100 was paid, and the settler was then depending upon his coming crop to be able to pay the next year's water rates and his other liabilities. I understand he had prospects of an excellent crop, a five or six bag crop. Not long ago the Water Supply Department demanded payment of the current rate, amounting to £37. The settler's reply was, "I cannot possibly pay you at once." He informed me privately that he could have got the money from his people, but that he had received so much help from them already that he did not feel justified in approaching them for further pecuniary aid. Surely to goodness consideration might have been extended to this settler, who had already paid £100 for water which neither he nor anyone else—let it not be forgotten—had ever used. The fact is that only 150

gallons had gone through the meter prior to his taking over the abandoned block. However, because he could not come up to the scratch with his current water rate of £37, the department notified that his supply would be cut off.

Hon. G. Taylor: Did he need the water?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes, he did. He asked me to use my influence with the Minister on his behalf. I wrote a letter on the subject to the Honorary Minister controlling water supplies, and received a reply, not from that hon. gentleman, but from the accountant, stating that unless the money was paid the water would be cut off. And the water was cut off. Most unfortunately since then the settler, still a young fellow, has passed away. When I heard of the death it did appeal to me that the department might have strained a point as to the current rate, more especially as this unfortunate man had paid £100 for 150 gallons of water which, I repeat, he had not used. There is one educational matter I desire to bring forward. Once or twice I have heard members of this Chamber assail the calibre of teachers sent into country districts; and I know that such attacks are extremely hurtful to the feelings of the ladies and gentlemen who undertake the duty of teaching country children. I have to point out, further, that the type of teacher now being sent into the country is particularly fine. In the constituency I represent I have come across many of them, and they are distinctly of a much higher type than was the case when I entered this Chamber some 10 years ago. I wish to emphasise that fact strongly. These teachers are sent into the country, not after three months' training as was the case formerly, but after a thorough course, upon the completion of which they are allotted to country schools in order that they may, by results, prove their fitness for higher grade schools. Some time ago I was asked whether it was possible to get Muresk made partly a college for young women, and I commend the suggestion to the Government's notice. There has also been a suggestion that an agricultural college for girls should be established in another locality, and this seems perhaps the more suitable course. The phase of consolidated schools might, I consider, be extended to many districts with excellent effect. In my electorate consolidation might well take place at Merredin and Kellerberrin, cutting out various small schools. I was not aware of the extent to which consolidation had

been carried out until I discovered, as the result of inquiry made at the Education Department, that out of 790 Government schools, including five high schools, 12 are consolidated. These are at Toodyay, Beverley, Donnybrook, Kulin, Dowerin Lakes, Harvey, Wickepin, Mount Barker, Carnup, Bruce Rock, Carnamah and another locality the name of which for the moment has escaped my memory. Recently I came across an open letter published in a newspaper, a letter for all to read, addressed to the Minister for Railways and Tramways and commending him for reducing tram fares for children attending school. An ex-schoolmaster writes to me from the country commenting upon this letter—

How this concession to our industrial centres in the metropolitan area contrasts with the drastic action of cutting down the travelling allowance to cockies' children attending country schools last year by the Minister for Education! What about asking some questions about this? I consider it a glaring act of differential treatment.

The matter was ventilated by me some time ago, when I queried the method of arriving at whether a man's income was sufficiently low to entitle him to the concession. I explained how such a man had to fill in taxation and other forms and go to endless trouble in order to prove to the Government that he was within the concession terms. Frequently it happened that as the children had reached the age of leaving school, the father simply took them away from school. This was bad for the children, who as a consequence did not receive as good an education as they might have got. Recently the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) remarked upon the importance of certain areas. I wish to quote some figures relating to the Dowerin statistical area. Last year that area produced wheat for grain to the extent of 1,671,434 bushels. The Kellerberrin-Merredin area last year produced 1,650,504 bushels of wheat. So that those two areas between them yielded about three and a-half million bushels of wheat. Of hay the Dowerin district produced 10,632 tons, and Kellerberrin-Merredin 16,186. Of oats for hay Dowerin produced 3,736 tons, and Kellerberrin-Merredin 3,115. As for cattle, Dowerin had 1,626, and Kellerberrin-Merredin 1,482. Of sheep Dowerin had 41,732 and Kellerberrin-Merredin 81,918. Dowerin produced wool to the extent of 274,782 lbs., and Kellerberrin-Merredin

529,747 lbs. I think, therefore, that the two districts run pretty close to each other in regard to production, with the Kellerberrin-Merredin areas slightly in front. I do not know that I should continue much longer. I have ventilated one or two small matters that concern my electorate. There is just one other point I would like to make. I refer to agricultural research. Competitions are being held throughout the State at the present time in connection with cropping operations, but those exemptions concern the best of the land in Western Australia. There are large areas of second and third class country where successful results are being obtained. I know of instances where that type of land during the past 11 years has averaged 14 bushels to the acre, which is above the State average. I believe competitions in the second and third class areas would be fruitful of splendid results. I am convinced that there are great possibilities before those vast areas. Such competitions would stimulate interest and cultivate keen rivalry among the producers, just as that condition obtains among the farmers settled on first class country. The proposal to enlarge Muresk College is a healthy sign. I understand the Government intend to double the accommodation available there. I have visited the college on two occasions, and despite some questions that were asked in the Legislative Council regarding cropping methods, I believe the methods adopted there are satisfactory. In my opinion the question raised in the Upper House was reasonably answered by the representative of the Government, although I am not in a position to say whether it was such as a good farmer would have advanced to explain the condition of the crops near the railway line. The training the youths are getting at the college is sound and the lads are coming on well. I speak with some knowledge because I have a son attending there, and I get a little inside information as to how the institution is operating. In conclusion I would like to emphasise the fact that the season is very promising. It was at first anticipated that we would have a 35,000,000 bushel harvest. Now Mr. C. J. Moran, of the Agricultural Bank, predicts an additional 2,000,000 bushels, while I have also heard competent authorities express the opinion that the harvest will total 40,000,000 bushels. Should that prediction prove to be correct, it is obvious that, particularly in view of the present outlook in the Eastern States, Western Australia for this year at least will be the pre-

mier wheat-growing State of the Commonwealth.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.4]: It is very interesting to learn that in other parts of the world progress is being made in respect to methods adopted for marketing produce. In British Columbia recently a Produce Marketing Act was passed. It made provision for the control of the marketing of fruit, vegetables, grain and cereals, including berries, grapes, tomatoes, cucumbers and any variety or grade of those products. The Act refers only to produce grown within the province, but does not include produce canned, preserved or evaporated or otherwise changed from its natural state in the process of manufacture or treatment. It is the marketing of fresh produce that is of special interest to the producers and it is in connection with the marketing of those lines that great difficulty arises. In the course of a letter to me, the Hon. E. D. Barrow, Minister for Agriculture in British Columbia, said—

The operations of the Act have been beneficial so far this season, and the outlook is very hopeful for ultimate success.

Mr. Barrow also informs me that the committee of direction has been a very potent factor in bringing those conditions about. The committee in British Columbia consists of three members, two representing the growers and one the Government. In this instance, as is so in regard to most Acts of Parliament controlling the marketing of produce, the committee does not represent the Crown. I mention that in passing because it is so frequently stated that such measures are introduced in an attempt on the part of a Government to control the marketing of produce. That is not the position at all. The measure in force in British Columbia was enacted during the present year only, and to a considerable extent it follows along the lines of the legislation introduced in Queensland in 1924. The committee of direction is appointed for one year only. The members of that body control and regulate the marketing of the produce, a list of which I have already given. It is interesting to note that before control can be exercised in regard to any product, 75 per cent. of those growing the particular product affected must be present at a meeting of those producers or must be represented by some accredited person or persons. Further-

more, the minimum number of those required to vote in favour of control is fixed at 75 per cent. A particularly interesting feature in connection with the British Columbian measure is the concluding section, which reads—

Nothing in this Act shall apply to the marketing of a product by a grower or producer of that product in a retail store owned, controlled or operated in the province by such grower or producer.

It is remarkable that that very principle was discussed when the Primary Products Bill was before this House two years ago. I moved an amendment along the lines of the section of the British Columbian Act which I have read, but the Premier, I regret to say, could not see any great virtue in it. It was suggested that the adoption of that principle would do something to limit the usefulness of the Bill. It seems, however, that in British Columbia, which is a thriving province of Canada, no such difficulty has arisen. It is realised there, as it is appreciated in most places, that every encouragement should be given to enable the producer of any particular product to get as near to the consumer as possible. I can only regret that the measure introduced by the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. M. F. Troy) was not approved by Parliament. The measure was agreed to in this House but was defeated in the Legislative Council by one vote. I hope that the Minister will again introduce a similar measure. The difficulties that confront producers to-day are as great as they have always been. The result that followed the taking of a recent ballot of apple and pear exporters throughout the Commonwealth was very illuminating. It showed that while the ballot proved to be unfavourable to the principle of co-operation so far as the Commonwealth as a whole was concerned, in Western Australia there was a favourable vote for this suggested progressive legislation. We know that certain London organisations gave it forth that it was a good thing for the Commonwealth that the proposal had been defeated. I am inclined to think that the comment was not wholly disinterested. I am convinced as, indeed, a great number of people are convinced, that if the producers, particularly the smaller people, are to be successful, they must be given assistance by means of legislation making for compulsory co-operation. In Western Aus-

tralia we have a variety of problems in regard to production. I would instance the neglected marketing of honey. Many people regard honey production as a comparatively small matter. Those who adopt that view have not looked into the question and are certainly not qualified to express an opinion. In Western Australia there are a few only who are producing honey, but some of them have their undertakings on a commercial basis already, and have secured a considerable measure of success. Mr. Cook, of Toodyay, who is a well-known apiculturist, has averaged £3,000 per year from his hives. The same can be said of McNamara Bros. of York. When men can do so well from the industry, and when we realise that the capital involved is comparatively small, members must wonder that a greater number do not devote themselves to this work. In Western Australia the flow of nectar is considerable, and it is stated that nectar to the extent of hundreds of tons, is wasted every year. The reason is that there are far too few engaged in apiculture. I hope, that since honey is recognised as one of the best foods in the world, and such good results have been obtained by the apiculturists I have mentioned, the time is not far distant when advantage will be taken of the great opportunities afforded by this State. Let me refer to the progress made with the voluntary honey pool. To-day Western Australian honey ranks with the best obtainable in the world. Time was when there was an absence of control and when our honey went into consumption without being graded, standardised, blended, or otherwise treated, and it suffered because it was not possible to rely upon evenness of quality on all occasions. That, however, has been altered and the great bulk of the honey now produced in the State goes to the pool and is treated, and when one buys Western Australian honey to-day he buys a commodity that can be relied upon. "Wescobee" is the brand under which it is marketed, and I assure members that when they try it, they will have no doubt as to its quality.

Mr. North: It is all sugary, is it not?

Mr. SAMPSON: No. Another primary product with the marketing of which progress is being made is eggs. The poultry organisation of Western Australia is awaiting the decision of the Minister for Agriculture on the question of establishing a pool. Last year the egg producers of this

State faced a disability in that a large quantity of eggs was introduced from South Australia. There was some misunderstanding or difficulty with the confectioners and cake makers, and instead of the Western Australian article being used, eggs were brought from South Australia. It is urgently necessary that an egg pool should be established. Its absence means lack of control, supervision and order in the sale of eggs. Under pool control the purchaser of eggs knows for certain what he is getting, but in the absence of control anything might happen.

Hon. G. Taylor: Especially at election time!

Mr. SAMPSON: The absence of control means that eggs of doubtful age and doubtful quality are sold to the public. That does not invariably happen, but it is a good thing for the public to know for certain that the eggs available are of first grade. That can be accomplished under control. It is interesting to note that the growers, with very few exceptions, have signed a petition asking for the introduction of legislation to establish an egg pool. We hope the Premier, when the Minister brings the Bill before him, will realise that it is in the interests of producers that the measure should be enacted. I should like to refer to the milk supply, but I hesitate to do so in view of the controversy raging between two well-known gentlemen. This much can be said, that the milk being distributed in Perth by the Pascomi Company is giving great satisfaction to users. I am hopeful that the recommendation of the Royal Commission that sat in 1924 will ere long be given effect to by the Government. Last year the then Honorary Minister in charge of the Health Department (Hon. S. W. Munsie) promised that that would be done. I hope the time is not far distant when the promise will be fulfilled. It is gratifying that the site of the new metropolitan market has been determined. The personnel of the trust has met with approval, but it is important that expedition be shown in erecting the buildings. The people interested in marketing feel the need for proper accommodation. Producers, auctioneers and others engaged in marketing are desirous of securing greater space than is available at present. Their business is growing and it is necessary to have increased accommodation to facilitate it. To make additional accommodation available at the present site would be wasteful, and it is hoped

there will be no loss of time in erecting the new building. I regret that when the Forests Act Amendment Bill was before Parliament no reference was made to the great success which might reasonably be expected to follow the production of wattle bark. In South Australia, Victoria, and possibly New South Wales, a large amount of money has been derived from the sale of wattle bark, but Western Australia, strange to say, has made no progress in that direction. Yet it is a fact that the commercial wattle, or acacia, grows to as great a size in this State as in any part of the world. Fifteen or 20 years ago, when the late T. H. Blake was town clerk of the North Perth Municipal Council, a large number of wattle trees were planted in the streets of North Perth. They grew to an immense size. I personally have tested the growth of wattles in the hills districts. It is wonderful how quickly they grow and what a fine size they attain. The Premier might find it worthy of consideration that some of the money provided for afforestation be devoted to plant in a few acres with wattles. If an experiment were made with only 10 acres, I am convinced the result would prove that the trees would do well here and that the production of bark would be profitable. Another activity to which small producers might direct their efforts is that of tobacco growing. A little time ago I received a letter from the special committee who are investigating the matter. It reached me through Mr. Gregory, a member of the House of Representatives, and contained references to the leaf being produced at Manjimup. I was sorry to note in the letter a suggestion that the Manjimup leaf did not possess the aroma essential to a first grade tobacco. To that I believe there is a full explanation; the aroma is not developed until the manufacture of tobacco has advanced to a certain stage. I am glad the Minister for Works is present. On every occasion when the Estimates are before us and the discussion is general, matters affecting roads are brought up. I regret that the road board subsidies, so far as I can ascertain from the Estimates, have not been restored to their former level. Prior to last year the maximum subsidy to road boards was £300, but last year the maximum was reduced to £140. I had hoped that the Minister would prevail upon the Premier to reinstate the original amount.

The Premier: Next year we may have a big surplus.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then you will reinstate the subsidies.

The Premier: We shall consider the matter.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the Premier does not offer that as a reply. It is the kind of answer one expects when something of questionable taste is asked. This is a matter that should appeal to the Premier and it is one that is certainly very close to the heart of the Minister for Works.

The Premier: Almost thou persuadest me.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am afraid the Minister was easily put off. Although he was, as it were, defeated on that occasion—

The Minister for Works: You are trying to stir up my fighting blood.

Mr. SAMPSON: There was a historic occasion when a certain party was advised to keep a stiff upper lip. If ever such advice was justified, it was when the amounts to be made available to road boards were questioned. The road boards have great difficulties to contend with. I do not wish to indulge in carping criticism; far from it, but I feel that any reduction in the funds provided for the construction and maintenance of roads is economy in the wrong direction. Reverting to the figures for last year, the Premier did provide an amount of £22,000, but the Minister for Works, exercising an economy that the road boards at any rate did not appreciate, expended only £18,922. He had £3,000 to the good which, notwithstanding the inflexibility of the Treasurer, might still have been spent in road work. We may hope that the word spoken perhaps partly in jest by the Premier may be turned into reality with regard to the amount for road board subsidies, and that next year and every year thereafter an increased amount will be provided. I would urge upon the Premier to remember the heavy burden that road boards have to face. They are very anxious to do their duty, and desire to keep their roads in fair order. They do get 25s., 30s., and perhaps 35s. worth of work done for every pound they spend. At all events, they get good value for their expenditure and it is only right they should do so. The best criterion of a country's progress is its roads. Unless they are maintained in good order and it is possible to get to the siding or station, the cost of haulage will render the work of the producer unprofitable. I wish to acknowledge the courtesy of the Minister for Rail-

ways in consenting to visit the hills districts and look into the matter of an extension of electricity, and also to consider the need for an improved time table. There is a great opportunity for the extension of electric current into the hills. I was told on a previous occasion that the extension could not be provided unless the amount it was estimated would be lost were guaranteed. I do not think it is likely that the Minister for Agriculture would provide any anticipated loss from the Agricultural Vote. It is a fact, and experience has proved it, that wherever electric light and power have been made available, there has always been a far greater consumption of current than was anticipated. I hope the Premier will give consideration to this matter. It means all the difference in the world to producers and orchardists to have at the crucial time facilities for watering their growing products. An extension of the electric cables would enable them to do what is necessary in this direction. In the case of Canning Vale, Maddington, Gosnells, Kelmscott and around Armadale, the change effected by the utilisation of electric pumps has brought success in lieu of failure. I know the Minister for Lands will feel sympathetic towards those who are trying to drag a living out of the soil, and have been trying to do it without the assistance of water. They cannot obtain water unless they have the power with which to lift it. This is of first importance to our producers. We have noted with great interest the projected improvements and extensions at the Fremantle harbour, but I have seen no reference to the provision of cool stores on the wharf. These cool stores are urgently required if our apple growers and other fruit exporters are to receive consideration, such as is essential, in order that their fruit may be sent away in proper condition. I know this is an old story, that has been told in the House for the last 25 years, but with the increasingly large export of fruit the construction of cool stores or refrigerators on the wharf is absolutely essential. I hope consideration is being given to the construction of necessary louvre trucks for the conveyance of fruit to Fremantle, and other ports from which fruit is shipped. We hear a great deal about the construction of trucks for the carriage of wheat. This is of course necessary, but it is equally essential from the point of view of fruit producers

that louvre trucks should be provided. Apart from a short reference I propose to make to the Wooroloo Sanatorium, that is all I desire to say. I wish to mention the matter at this stage in the hope that the Minister for Health, before we reach that vote, may be able to tell the House that something on the lines desired will be done. The particular matter to which I refer is the provision of an X-ray apparatus. To secure the full knowledge necessary for the proper treatment of patients at the sanatorium such an outfit is required. I cannot find any reference to it in the Estimates, but possibly the Minister will have something to tell us of the matter. I mention this now in the hope that consideration has already been given to it, and that we shall shortly hear all about it. It is of the first importance. To those who are suffering it is essential that the doctors at the sanatorium should have appliances necessary to make a complete diagnosis of individual cases. I notice in the expenditure the sum of £390 for X-ray treatment. It is evident that the needs of the patients are not being overlooked. Nevertheless it would surely be very much better to have an X-ray plant at the sanatorium. If that were provided it would mean that at least some of this £390 would be saved; but apart from the question of saving money in connection with the sanatorium, it is, as I have said, of first importance that the fullest consideration should be given whereby the equipment at the sanatorium would be such as to enable proper and complete treatment to be given to the patients.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [8.38]: The Premier had a very pleasing story to tell the House and the State, over the government of which State he has presided for several years. It is a fine thing for the State that we should have turned the corner, and that we are expecting another surplus. I have always tried my best to understand the statements made to us on the Estimates, but I think I could have understood better what I have been told if the annual report of the Auditor General and the "Public Accounts" had been available. I do not intend, in the absence of that document, to do more than deal generally with various matters. This is the first year for many in which we have had a surplus. When we consider the position of the Eastern States, and remember that they were in a much better financial position a few years ago

than we are, and that to-day we are in an infinitely better position than they are, in the matter of finances, we must realise that there is something exceptional about the position of Western Australia. Some time ago the Disabilities Commission paid us a visit. We certainly have received some financial assistance from the Federal Government as a result of that inquiry. When we examine our own position, and compare it with that of the other States, it appears that our disabilities must have to a certain extent been those of our own imagination. When we examine the figures we can realise why the position has somewhat altered. If we look at the increase in the production of wool and wheat, and our local timber, it shows that this State is dependent upon primary products, and that we have developed them at a rapid rate during the last few years. I informed the House on one occasion that the time would come when my electorate alone would produce 20 million bushels of wheat. I am now beginning to think that I was very moderate in my estimate. I listened the other night to the Leader of the Opposition dealing with the great area of country south of Southern Cross that we have yet to develop. I interjected, "Do not forget the country to the north." The Ejanding-Northwards railway is now being built. The Railway Advisory Board are in the district, and are advising a further extension. A report laid on the Table of the House some time ago suggested that 200 miles of railway should be built under the migration agreement. I believe that in the near future in the interests of the State, further extensions should be made in this locality. I interjected, "We will have a million acres to develop even in the North Ejanding country." The Minister for Lands has told us that we have an experimental farm at Ghooli, east of Perenjori. It is right to test our country and see how far east we can grow wheat and raise sheep. I think beyond doubt it will be proved that lines can be extended northwards at least another 100 miles. A very serious position has arisen with regard to our railway policy. I have a cutting from the "West Australian," dated September 27th, and headed, "Railway policy; Mr. Stileman's report." It reads—

It was stated yesterday that the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, chairman of a committee of four recently appointed by the Government to report on the general railway policy of the State to be adopted in the future, had completed his work. His report is now in the hands of the Government Printer.

The Minister for Works: There is no truth in the statement that the committee have reported.

Mr. LINDSAY: I was not aware of that. The Premier: It is a misstatement.

Mr. LINDSAY: Other things have appeared in the Press. We who do not belong to the Government have to take as the truth that which appears in the Press.

The Minister for Works: I denied that in the paper on the following morning.

Mr. LINDSAY: I believe so. I think I remember having read the denial. The member for Avon also read from a newspaper cutting. I will now read from another newspaper with regard to the Engineer-in-Chief's activities. This comes from an Albany paper and it says—

Engineer-in-Chief's Activities.—The Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Stileman) has been engaged on and should issue very shortly a report dealing with the general policy of railway construction in the State. It will among other things, review probably the decisions of the Agricultural Bank to make advances only on land within 12½ miles of existing railways. In view of the advent of motor traffic in farming districts, it is understood that the report will recommend that the 12½-mile zone be very considerably extended.

This makes those who represent agricultural districts wonder what the position is. It may be said there is no truth in the statement. Only yesterday I introduced a deputation to the Premier dealing with the subject. There must be something behind it. I have no knowledge of the qualifications of Mr. Stileman, but it should not be the function of the Engineer-in-Chief, who is a new man to Western Australia—

The Premier: It is not the Engineer-in-Chief. There is a committee appointed to deal with this.

Mr. LINDSAY: I know there is a committee dealing with the matter, but I have read the "West Australian's" statement, which did not come from the committee. Moreover statements from the Engineer-in-Chief have appeared in the Press.

The Minister for Works: I give you my assurance that they did not come from the Engineer-in-Chief.

Mr. LINDSAY: There were other statements made at other times.

The Minister for Works: The products of a pressman's imagination.

Mr. LINDSAY: Possibly, but in my district railway surveyors are now shifting the point of junction 10 miles. Yesterday's deputation comprised men living at that

spot. Somebody—who, we do not know—has sent surveyors to vary by a distance of 10 miles the route approved by Parliament.

The Minister for Works: That has nothing to do with the other point you raised.

Mr. LINDSAY: Parliament authorised that there should be two railways 25 miles apart, and now the new line is being surveyed so as to make the intervening distance 35 miles. Apparently there is something behind those Press reports. I, as representative of the district, raise my voice in protest against such a proceeding. Whether or not the lines should be 35 miles apart is a matter for Parliament to decide, and not for the Engineer-in-Chief. We who have lived in Western Australia practically all our lives must know more about such a matter than the Engineer-in-Chief. I desire to bring the subject before the House before it is too late.

The Minister for Works: What you suggest could not be done without an Act of Parliament.

Mr. LINDSAY: That is the peculiar feature. It cannot be done without an Act of Parliament, but why are surveyors doing that work? Here is a junction fixed by the Railways Advisory Board, who have the right to survey a line five miles to either side of the route approved by Parliament. The surveyors in question, however, are surveying a line on the basis of a variation of 10 miles.

The Minister for Works: Surveys can be made wherever we like without Parliamentary authority.

Mr. LINDSAY: The question was submitted to the House, and the Bill fixed a certain route subject to a variation of five miles on either side. No engineer or surveyor, so far as I can gather, may go outside the Act. However, surveys at a distance of 10 miles are being made. Why spend money on surveys?

The Minister for Works: Information is being sought. We can send surveyors wherever we like without asking for Parliamentary authority.

Mr. LINDSAY: The object can be only one thing—to build a railway 35 miles distant from the existing line. Perhaps the Bill to discontinue certain railways has a bearing on the matter. However, it is not in the interests of the State to build railways 35 miles apart. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) has frequently stated that

the settlers in question are about 35 miles from railway communication. I have heard hon. members state that it was a calamity to build the Dowerin-Merredin line on its present route, that the railway should have been nearer the eastern gold-fields line. The Ejanding Northwards railway runs between two lines 40 miles apart. If we agree with Mr. Stileman's ideas as to distance between lines, we had better stop the construction of this railway finally. It may be possible to grow wheat on the best quality land in Western Australia and cart it such a distance as I have indicated; but that is not possible on average land. I protest against the idea of shifting the railway as proposed. Regarding the Commonwealth road grant and the Main Roads Board, I do not wish to criticise more than is necessary, but each road board was allocated a certain amount to be spent in this financial year. That money has not been spent. It should have been spent during the winter. Certain plans and specifications were prepared, and the road boards were notified of their being available. However, those plans and specifications were impossible in regard to developmental roads in the wheat belt. The boards in my electorate decided to hold a conference during Show week, as they were perturbed by the position and were not getting the money they had expected, and also because the plans and specifications were impracticable. The Main Roads Board allayed all the fears of the deputation, who went away quite satisfied. But all boards concerned should have been notified of these things. It should not be necessary to hold conferences and to approach the chairman of the Main Roads Board for information which ought to be volunteered to every board affected.

The Minister for Works: What information is that?

Mr. LINDSAY: The information was highly important from the standpoint of the boards. It dealt with plans and specifications, as to which the boards are now satisfied. New plans and specifications are being prepared for use on the wheat belt. The grants of money promised not having been made available, the boards were afraid that this year's grant might not be available next year. They were, however, told that both amounts would be available next year.

The Minister for Works: I have made that statement in the House often enough.

Mr. LINDSAY: But the information has not been furnished to the boards.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it has been.

Mr. LINDSAY: Not one member of the conference knew anything about it. The conference also discussed the Main Roads Act, being anxious to know whether the provision as to half capital cost would be enforced. They have been informed by the chairman of the Main Roads Board that it will be enforced. The boards now know what is going to happen, and they are not grumbling. Another matter to which I desire to draw the Premier's attention is taxation. The courts have within the last few days given a decision which I regard as most serious. The remarks of the judge should cause the Premier some concern. Some of the methods of the Taxation Department are mere bluff. In test cases it has been proved that the Commissioner has been collecting tax illegally for some years. The matter does not appear to necessitate interpretation by a judge. However, the Commissioner of Taxation should administer the Act as printed, and not according to his version of it. Within the last 12 months many taxation cases have been before the courts, and practically every one of them has been decided against the Commissioner, the judge's comment being that apparently the Commissioner had not studied the Act and had not interpreted it as he should have done.

Mr. Davy: He studied it from the wrong point of view all the time.

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not know that. The "West Australian" report reads—

Mr. Justice Draper said he could see no reason for continuing Section 37 merely as an optional power. Subsection 2, on which the appeal was based, said every assessment should remain in force for five years. He considered the contention of the appellant was correct.

It is remarkable that in that instance the Commissioner should have been overriding the Act by making reappraisements every year. A little while ago I made a statement concerning another case dealing with Section 31. Undoubtedly the Act needs altering and clarifying. Section 31, dealing with production of income, allows a good many things as to which there have been no decisions by the courts. If the decision allowing five years in which to claim holds good, refunds will have to be made by the Taxation

Department. Under Section 61 the Commissioner must make refunds of any overpayments provided the claim is made within three years. Under another section, however, Section 61 may be overridden if the Commissioner thinks fit. It is time an amending measure was brought down and the Commissioner was informed that he had to carry out the Act as passed by Parliament and not as interpreted by him. In speaking on the Hospitals Bill some little time ago, I replied to the member for Cue (Mr. Chesson), who made a statement of which I had not taken notice at the time. However, I saw the statement in "Hansard." The mis-information attributed to me by the hon. member did not originate with me, as I quoted it from a pamphlet issued by the secretary of the Health Department and laid on the Table of the House two years ago. I make these remarks because I should not like it to appear, according to "Hansard," that I left uncontradicted or unexplained an assertion that a statement of mine was not true. The pamphlet stated that at Cue Hospital the rate per patient per day was 15s. 11½d. I shall deal with that matter when touching on the Health Department, but not in an antagonistic spirit. I have said that hospitals should be treated on something like an even basis, and certainly there should be divergence from a fixed plan, since all hospitals are not similarly circumstanced. But to me there appears no reason why at one hospital the rate should be 15s. 11½d. per patient per day and at another hospital 9½d. Why should a hospital be penalised for doing its work well? I find that two of the lowest subsidised hospitals in the State are situated in my electorate. One of them is at Wyalcatchem with 11¼d. per day while the other is at Goomalling with 9¾d. per day.

Mr. Chesson: How old is that report?

Mr. LINDSAY: It is the latest available, although we hope to have another one this year. In the report it sets out that the Cue hospital received £700 from the Government whereas the Beverley hospital received £200.

Mr. Chesson: What is the date of that report?

Mr. LINDSAY: It is the Health Department's report for the year 1923-24. The reports are issued biennially and we should get another one this year.

Mr. Chesson: Well, the Cue hospital received £500, not £700.

Mr. LINDSAY: But the figures contained in the report show that the revenue from the Government was £700. Here are the complete figures for the Cue-Day Dawn hospital—

Subscriptions, £495; donations, £158; special efforts, £102; maintenance fees, £133; other revenue, £414; from the Government subsidy, £700; special grant, £63.

Those are the figures I read when the member for Cue said that my statement was not true! At the time I was comparing the treatment meted out to Government hospitals with that extended to committee hospitals. I pointed out that whereas the Beverley hospital received £200 for practically the same number of patients as were treated at the York hospital, the latter institution received £1,000 from the Government. It is only fair and reasonable that hospitals in practically similar districts should receive, as nearly as possible, similar subsidies from the Government. That was the protest I voiced previously, and I would not have referred to the question now were it not for the fact that I wish to take advantage of this opportunity to reply to the member for Cue. I have little more to say. It is very gratifying to note the financial position in which the State finds itself to-day. I do not think the position in past years was brought about through any fault of Governments of the day. I believe the explanation of the improved condition is to be found in the expenditure of loan moneys on the development of agriculture. When we hear it said, as we often do, that Western Australia has a vast mileage of railways per head of population, remember the railways that have been constructed during the past few years through new agricultural areas, and take cognisance of the fact as well that our railways are in the best financial position of any in Australia to-day, we can draw our own conclusions. When the Engineer-in-Chief commences to query whether railways should be placed at greater distances from each other, we should take existing facts into consideration. Notwithstanding what we are told from time to time that if we build a new agricultural railway it will not pay axle grease, the experience of this State is that the more railways we build into agricultural areas the better will it be for the State as a whole.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [9.4]: I am sure every member shares with the Premier his pleasure at being able to predict a surplus for the current financial year, but some of us hope it will be a surplus rather different from the one he succeeded in producing last year. We hope that it will be a surplus produced without the aid of windfalls, or by bookkeeping entries that might not be in accord with the best accountancy methods.

Mr. Corboy: Abrahams is coming to his assistance this time.

Mr. DAVY: I hope the Premier will not copy Mr. Abrahams' methods, but will courteously receive from him his contribution towards the revenue of the State. I am of opinion that we are in for an extremely good time for the next 10 or 15 years if the State is given a fair chance. The eyes, not only of Australia, but of the whole English speaking world are on Western Australia. People are beginning to realise that this is the portion of the British Empire that is likely to make the greatest strides in increased production and wealth in the immediate future. On the other hand, I believe that we can seriously block that progress if we are not content to be patient and to take care that we allow the natural genius of the population to work out its own destiny. I do not say we should not help in every possible way, but we must be careful not to do anything that will hamper progress. Every piece of legislation that we pass that imposes either a new financial or industrial burden on the community, will tend more to hamper development than to encourage it.

Mr. Sampson: It means leg-roping someone.

Mr. DAVY: That is what it amounts to. It would be interesting to know, and we may ask the question at the proper time, just how many new inspectors have been appointed under legislation passed by the present Government during the life of this and the previous Parliament. We would like to know how many persons there are whose job it is to go round and see that others are doing something that they were not expected to do before. At the same time the people are expected to pay for the privilege of such inspections. I am not suggesting that all the inspectors who have been appointed are unnecessary, but we must observe carefully lest we have more people engaged in watching others than we have people who are to be watched.

Mr. Corboy: You did a little bit of inspecting yourself at a foundry.

Mr. DAVY: I do not know what the hon. member, who is out of order and who is out of order still more, since he is interjecting from a seat not his own, means by that statement. Of course we all do a little voluntary inspecting from time to time. The inspections I refer to are made by whole time inspectors who are engaged in seeing that persons obey the laws. Such work may be necessary, but it always means a further burden upon industry.

The Minister for Works: The police force, for instance?

Mr. DAVY: I noticed a report in this morning's paper in which the Commissioner of Police pointed out that the police force for the whole State totalled, I think, 558 men. It redounds to the credit of the people of this State that in such a vast area so small a number of policemen can keep us within bounds. Of course, in a perfect community there would be no need for any police at all.

The Premier: Strange to say the police are fewer in number than 20 years ago.

Mr. DAVY: I noticed that, too.

The Premier: Notwithstanding the increase in our population.

Mr. DAVY: I am not impressed with the assertion that there is a necessity for an increased number of policemen being appointed. I want some stronger argument to make me support an increase than that we have the same number, or fewer than 20 years ago. As the Minister for Works points heavenwards, I admit that in a perfect community we would not require any policemen at all but, as a matter of fact, it is inconceivable that a latter day community would need the services of no police at all. We cannot make people good by merely passing laws. We can merely assist in guiding our community by the passing of laws that are necessary and we, as a people, are entitled to pride ourselves on the superiority of our little portion of humanity that requires fewer policemen than other sections elsewhere. We should resist any suggestion that the number of policemen in the State should be increased. The fact that we have so small a number in proportion to the total population redounds to our credit. Unless, of course, it can be pointed out that crime in proportion to our population is greater than it should be—that is actually not a fact in Western Aus-

tralia—we should resist any such suggestion to increase the police force. I merely wish to urge what has always been my view, that the function of the Government is to help people along the right road, not to hamper them. I think we are in for a wonderful time if the prices of the products we mostly produce are maintained and if we have within a reasonable degree equivalently fine seasons, such as we have experienced during recent years. I think our prospect is a rosy one for the next 10 or 15 years. It is a fine thing to be a citizen of a country that is on the upgrade, where prosperity is increasing, and where people are hopeful with a rosy outlook. It has been observed by students of political economy on many occasions that the frame of mind of the individual members of a nation is always happier and brighter when the national prosperity is on the upgrade. We can be extremely thankful that we are living in a country where that is our experience. In a country that is achieving a greater degree of prosperity, the outlook of the individual citizen is much brighter than is the outlook of one living in a country that is more or less stationary. Particularly is the prospect bright in a new country, such as Western Australia, where the people are engaged actively in developing the various resources. In some degree it has to be realised that the improved aspect of our financial position of recent years is due largely to the expenditure of loan money. Of course I refer to loan money that is wisely expended in encouraging production, for that will produce a tremendous improvement in our financial position. Even a totally unwise expenditure of large sums of loan money will have an immediate beneficial result on the finances of the State. But we cannot judge at the moment if the loan money we have spent in recent years has been spent wisely merely because we note an improved financial position from year to year. If, by some means, the Premier were to go mad and find a number of other persons who went mad at the same time so that he could borrow £10,000,000 and spend it next year in wages and so on, Western Australia would have an enormous surplus because that £10,000,000 would be circulating within the State. The money would find its way into the pockets of various people and swell their incomes with the result that the returns from income taxation, railway receipts, and every other source of revenue that can be imagined, would be increased enormously. In

such circumstances the Premier might have a surplus of £1,000,000 next year. It is hard to say where such a thing might end. If 10 millions would not produce a surplus of a million, then let us make it 20 millions. But if we should imagine the country's position had improved because of that improved financial surplus, we should be making a great mistake. So, one has always to eye any improvement in the financial position, not with suspicion, but with careful scrutiny to be sure that it is not merely the reflection of a large expenditure of loan money, but is the reflection of the wise expenditure of loan money during the years that have immediately passed. Now I should like to say a word in support of the remarks made by the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay). There is some extraordinary feature of human nature that comes to light in the professional tax gatherer. Why it should be I do not know, but if you get a perfectly frank, decent, honest kind of man with a fair mind in all other respects, and if you put him in the position of a tax gatherer he immediately becomes warped in his vision. Our present chief tax gatherer is a man for whom in private life everybody has the greatest respect, regarding him as a worthy citizen. Yet really some of his actions during the last two or three years have been extraordinary, and have called down severe judicial comment. I do not for one moment believe that his extraordinary actions have been prompted by the Treasurer; I am sure they have not been. I sometimes think the multiplicity of assessments is so great as to make it impossible for the chief tax gatherer to follow them all, and so he throws on to enterprising juniors some of his responsibilities. Some extraordinary assessments have been produced and have evoked severe comment, not only from our own judges but from the High Court of Australia. Everybody must remember the exceedingly strong strictures passed by the High Court sitting in Perth on two recent cases. The High Court did not fear to use terms indicating that they were not exceptional instances. I urge on the Premier that if he expects citizens to render their assessments honestly and candidly and not ape the habits of the gentleman who is going to present him with a beautiful windfall this year, he must impress on his tax gatherer the necessity for acting fairly and properly with the taxpayers.

The Premier: I cannot control him in any way.

Mr. DAVY: Of course not. I am aware of it. The Premier could not possibly follow the ramifications of the department. But if he cannot control his officers in that department, he might influence, not their action, but their trend of mind; he might indicate to his tax gatherers that their zeal, if it exceed justice, will not meet with his approbation.

The Minister for Works: The Commissioner of Taxation is both a State and a Commonwealth officer.

Mr. DAVY: Yes, he is, but he started his career as a State officer. Whosoever officer he be, it seems to me it should be the aim of the governmental head of the department to impress on the chief officers of the tax gathering department that he desires them to be just even to the point of leniency towards citizens. Of course, when they had a taxpayer dishonest in attempting to avoid his just obligations, there should be meted out to him the most severe punishment possible. But with the ordinary citizen who desires to pay what is just and proper, towards him the attitude ought to be one of scrupulous fairness. From my experience of the Taxation Department I cannot for one minute admit that that has always been the case. One constantly finds that assessments are put out and are challenged by the lodging of objections. They then hang fire for a long time. The money has to be paid if you wish to appeal. Perhaps your objection is not disallowed until the High Court is about to arrive here. Then you go along and make the strongest representations possible that your case may be dealt with so that it can be disposed of by the High Court. Then, instead of the department immediately admitting the justice of your appeal, or refusing to admit it, you will get perhaps offers of compromise. Then, if you are not to be bluffed off by such methods, at the last moment perhaps you find the case is withdrawn and your appeal conceded. In the meantime the taxpayer has been out of his money for months and months, and so has lost the interest on it.

Mr. Sampson: Or has had to pay interest for it.

Mr. DAVY: Yes, if he is working on an over-draft. Moreover, he is probably faced with a large bill of costs for all the work done up to that point. For no costs are recoverable on a taxation measure, if ever, until the case is set down for hearing and

immediate preparations for trial take place. Members will remember the successful appeal of one of our fellow members. Apparently the appeal was completely justified, for our own court upheld it. Although the amount of tax was comparatively small, some £30 or £40, a distinctly important principle was involved. There was involved in the appeal far more than the actual amount appealed against. Yet, owing to what appears to me an unjust provision in our Act, no costs were allowed; in fact, the appellant actually lost by his appeal. He claimed that the Commissioner of Taxation had improperly assessed him. He appealed against the assessment, and the court held that he was right. Yet he had to pay his own costs, which must have exceeded, indeed probably doubled, the amount of tax at issue. That was because of a provision in our Act, which says the costs shall not be awarded against the Commissioner of Taxation unless the court finds that the Commissioner's attitude was unreasonable. Surely if the Commissioner's attitude was wrong, that should be sufficient. The citizen is always at a disadvantage when fighting the State. To begin with, the State has a purse inexhaustible as compared with that of the citizen. And the State can appeal to the Privy Council.

The Premier: I think that sometimes the sympathies of the court go to the individual against the Crown.

Mr. DAVY: That may be, but when a citizen makes an appeal and proves the Crown's contention to be wrong, what conceivable reason is there why a different rule should apply as to the costs from the rule applying when the case is one of citizen against citizen? The State is the whole. Why should the whole attempt to do something against the law to one of us; and when that one goes to court and succeeds in his protest, why should he have to bear the cost? Why should the position as between a citizen and the State be different from that as between a citizen and another citizen? I could never understand why, if a citizen wishes to bring an action for damages against, say, the Commissioner of Railways, he should have to observe a different procedure from that he would have to observe if he brought an action against another citizen. If a citizen has been run over by a tram and desires to bring an action for damages against the Commissioner of Rail-

ways, who controls the trams, he has in the first place to give a month's notice of action and then he has to begin his action within six months of the date of the accident, or he is finished and out of court. What reason is there why the Commissioner of Railways should be in any different position from the man who drives a motor lorry or a motor bus? As against a citizen the State has every possible advantage. It has the purse and it has the expert legal advisers. Why should there be this distinction? One could quote numerous instances showing that in the past Governments have initiated and induced Parliaments to pass legislation that has favoured their departmental officers and departmental administration as against citizens. I submit that the citizen ought to be at least in exact equality in litigation, taxation and everything else with the Crown, which is on the same footing as one citizen to another. That is all I wish to say, except this, which I will raise again when we come to that section of the Estimates dealing with it. For the last two years I have mentioned on the Estimates the fact that two of the three most important magisterial positions in Western Australia are occupied by acting appointees. I submit that is a position that ought to be remedied immediately.

The Premier: I drew the Public Service Commissioner's attention to your statement in both years. The matter is entirely in his hands.

Mr. DAVY: I have raised the point now so that I can get it definitely established and make further inquiries before we reach that section of the Estimates where I shall raise it again. It is most amazing if the Public Service Commissioner uncontrolled is to be able to keep such highly important positions as those of the principal magistrates in Perth filled by gentlemen who are only in an acting capacity.

The Premier: I have no control over him.

Mr. DAVY: I have always understood that the Public Service Commissioner's duty was to fix the salaries of public servants and to make recommendations as to rearrangements of offices. Do I understand the Premier to say that actually the Public Service Commissioner has power to decide whether or not reappointments to the positions of magistrates shall be made, or whether they shall be merely filled by gen-

tlemen in an acting capacity, and that it is for him alone to decide what magistrates shall be dismissed or have their services dispensed with? For one of these acting magistrates, I am reminded, is filling the position of Warden Walter, who was retired, I understand, by the Government because he had passed the retiring age of 60 years. He was then retired and his position is now filled by a gentleman a great deal older than Warden Walter was when he was retired. And the present magistrate is occupying the position purely in an acting capacity. Now the Premier assures me that such a matter is completely and without control in the hands of the Public Service Commissioner. Is that what I am to understand?

The Premier: Yes, I drew the Commissioner's attention to it and I think he called for applications once, but considered that none of the applicants was suitable, not at the salary that was offering.

Mr. DAVY: Well, I submit that the time has arrived when we ought to put our magistracy on an entirely different footing. I see no reason why our magistrates should not be on the same sort of footing as our judges are. Our magistrates exercise most important functions, and they should be independent and quite outside the control of the authority that has charge of the Civil Service generally. In essence the magistrates should not be civil servants any more than the judges are.

The Premier: But of course they are.

Mr. DAVY: I agree that they are.

The Premier: The Public Service Commissioner said he would not make a recommendation from any of those offering.

Mr. DAVY: I have not heard of his having called for applications. It was not generally known amongst the profession that he had called for applications, but I accept the Premier's statement.

The Premier: I do not say that he actually called for applications, but he said no one suitable was offering.

Mr. DAVY: If that is the position, I urge that it is time we carefully scrutinised the whole system of appointing magistrates. If we cannot get men to take the job and therefore have to have men filling the positions in an acting capacity, it must be because the remuneration is not sufficiently attractive or the tenure of office is not sufficiently secure. We ought to take steps to put that right. At the proper time I shall do what I can to have it put right. There are many

other things to which I might refer, but since the practice, initiated I believe by the present Government, of having each division dealt with at some length by the Minister in charge, has been adopted—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That has always been the practice.

Mr. DAVY: It appears to me that many of the matters could be dealt with better when the divisions to which they relate are under discussion.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.34 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 20th October, 1927.

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

MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

To disallow Regulations.

Debate resumed from the 13th October on the following motion by M. W. H. Kitson:

That Regulations Nos. 4, 5, 6, 21, and 23, and Routes 7a, 54, and 55, made under the Traffic Act, 1919-26, and laid on the Table of this House on the 11th October, be and are hereby disallowed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M.

Drew—Central) [4.33]: When, some weeks ago, the disallowance of another set of traffic regulations was under consideration. I pointed out the diverse interests affected, and expressed the opinion that no matter how wisely these regulations might be framed in order to safeguard and protect the public, there would assuredly be a section whom they could not please, and that it would be beyond human power to pre-

pare regulations governing our public thoroughfares in such a manner as would give satisfaction to all and sundry. We have further proof of that in the action taken by Mr. Kitson for the disallowance of other regulations, which have not met with the gracious approval of the same parties who previously found champions to plead their cause successfully in this House. It may be here remarked that Mr. Kitson's attitude is unique inasmuch as the majority of the regulations he seeks to have disallowed are either those that are practically word for word with the Act itself, or cannot be disallowed owing to the effluxion of time. Take regulations 4, 5, 6, for instance. The Solicitor General informs me that the Council can disallow these regulations, simply because they are new regulations, but he points out that under Section 42 of the Traffic Act Parliament expressly authorised and intended regulations to be made in the precise terms of Regulations 4, 5 and 6 and therefore the objections of Mr. Kitson are as unreasonable as they are contrary to the intention of the Legislature. Let me read Section 42 of the Act and then read Regulations 4, 5 and 6. Section 42 reads as follows:—

(1) The Governor, by regulations made under this Act, may prescribe the routes within the metropolitan area, or in any other defined parts of the State, to be observed by omnibuses and prohibit the use of omnibuses elsewhere than along a prescribed route.

Regulation 4 reads—

The use within the metropolitan area of any vehicle as an omnibus elsewhere than along a prescribed route is hereby prohibited.

Regulation 5 reads—

The use, on and after the first day of October, 1927, within the metropolitan area of any vehicle as an omnibus is hereby prohibited—(a) unless a prescribed route is specified in or indorsed on the license for such vehicle by the Commissioner of Police as the local authority in the metropolitan area; and (b) on any route other than the route specified in or indorsed on the license.

Regulation 6 reads—

The holder of a passenger vehicle license for an omnibus in force at the commencement of these regulations, and having effect in the metropolitan area, shall surrender such license, and shall be granted in lieu thereof a passenger vehicle license for such omnibus to be issued in accordance with these regulations, subject to the payment of the prescribed fees for the current year, if and so far as such fees have not been already paid for the surrendered license.