

a vote. Whether the word be "furnishing" or "hiring" does not matter. The difficulty can be got over by striking out "or the furnishing of any means of conveyance for any voter whilst going to or returning from the poll."

Hon. G. FRASER: I intended to put forward the same phase of the question as Mr. Parker has just done. It really makes no difference whether a person "hires" or "furnishes" in connection with an election. The clause would be quite ineffective, so why retain it? It would be impossible to prove that anyone had committed an offence.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I will withdraw my amendment so that Mr. Parker may move the amendment he suggested.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I move an amendment—

That in lines 4, 5 and 6 the words "or the furnishing of any means of conveyance for any voter whilst going to or returning from the poll" be struck out.

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

Clause 163—Undue influence:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to the clause:—"Provided that in relation to any charge under paragraph (d)—(1) no person shall be convicted if he proves that he had reasonable ground for believing, and did so in fact believe that defamatory statement to be true; (2) the person charged may elect to be tried by a jury, in which case all the laws relating to committal and trial of offenders on indictment shall apply."

I fail to understand why another place struck out that provision, with regard to which the Commission are unanimous and which follows the Federal Act.

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

Clauses 164, 165—agreed to.

Clause 166—Disqualification for bribery or undue influence:

Hon. J. CORNELL: Subclause 3, which is printed in italics, represents a highly necessary amendment. The two-years disqualification would not apply to a person acquitted.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2 the words "at the time of the conviction or finding" be struck out.

These words contradict what precedes.

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

Clauses 167 to 182—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 19th November, 1935.

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

QUESTION—WIRELESS SETS.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Have the Government been approached by the Australian Broadcasting Commission to legislate in the direction of minimising electrical interference with wireless sets? 2, Is any action contemplated?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No application has been made for the introduction of legislation. 2, When any interference is brought under notice locally it is remedied where possible.

BILL—ADELPHI HOTEL.

Introduced by Mr. Tonkin and read a first time.

BILL—RESERVES.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ST. GEORGE'S COURT.*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: The Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Company Ltd. are at present erecting extensive premises on land held by them in St. George's-terrace, Perth, adjoining the right-of-way which is now known as St. George's-court. This is a private right-of-way, because the land comprised in it is alienated from the Crown. It has, however, been in public use for about 60 years. The company referred to have offered to surrender to the Crown sufficient of their land to provide a street 40 feet wide, inclusive of the present right-of-way, which has a width of from 9 to 10 feet. All the holders of the land in the present right-of-way have agreed to surrender their rights to the Crown for the purpose, with the exception of the Armstrong estate. It is very difficult to locate the executors of this estate, however, and the title is not under the Transfer of Land Act, but under an old grant. The title is only a limited one, as right-of-carriage-way over it is held by the adjoining holders, which is being surrendered by them. The present legal owners, if any, of the freehold contained in St. George's-court are not ascertainable; and, even so, their estate therein is practically negligible because the general public long ago acquired by prescription a right-of-way over such land, which it is not now possible for any owner of the land to destroy. That is the advice given by the Crown Law Department. Provision is made in the Bill, however, to indemnify both the Crown and the City Council against all claims and costs in the matter, which has been embodied in the agreement referred to in Clause 3. There are two reasons why the Bill is necessary. The first is that the Municipal Corporations Act provides that no street shall be set out of a lesser width than 66 feet, and the second reason is the difficulty of obtaining the surrender of the portion in the Armstrong estate. With regard to the proposed width of the street, the Town Planning Board, the City Council and the Surveyor General have all signified their approval of the proposal. That is all that

is in the Bill. I regard the proposal as highly desirable. The matter has been thoroughly investigated. The new thoroughfare will be an ornamentation and a utility to the city. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.40]:

Any remarks I have to make on the Bill will apply also to the two complementary measures recently introduced by the Minister in charge of this Bill: that is to say, amendments to the Public Service Act and the Public Service Appeal Board Act. In introducing the Bill now under discussion, the Minister pointed out that its intention is that the Public Service may in future make application to the Industrial Arbitration Court to determine salaries, allowances and overtime payments. At present, under the Public Service Act, the Public Service Commissioner is the authority that determines all conditions relating to public servants. Evidently, however, public servants believe they will obtain greater benefits if their salaries, allowances and overtime payments are fixed for them by the Arbitration Court. From the decision of that court there will be no appeal. At present, after the Commissioner has fixed salaries and so forth, there is an appeal to the Public Service Appeal Board. That right of appeal is being removed by an amendment of the Public Service Appeal Board Act. Those are the whole of the proposals contained in the Bill. The measure does not seek to authorise the Arbitration Court to determine classifications. This matter will remain with the Public Service Commissioner, against whose decision there will still be a right of appeal to the Public Service Appeal Board. I fail to understand why the Government have restricted the appeal to the Arbitration Court to public servants receiving less than £700 per annum. Why has not the Bill a general application? And why does it not apply to schoolteachers as well

as to public servants? If it is right that officers of the Public Service should be entitled to use the Arbitration Court, why should not all State servants be similarly entitled? In the old days the various Ministers fixed salaries in the departments under their control. That was felt to be not quite the right thing, and so the Public Service Act was passed about 1904, appointing a Commissioner to deal with salaries and conditions in the Public Service. However, why the limit of £700 under this Bill? The Minister has merely told us that the same limitation obtains in other Australian States using this means of adjustment. That seems to me no argument whatever. At all events, it has no significance for me. If it is right for lower-paid officers to use the Arbitration Court, it must be right for all other officers to do so. I believe the idea behind the limitation is that last year, when dealing with financial emergency legislation, Parliament provided that there should be reduction of Public Service salaries in accordance with the fall of the basic wage. As I pointed out at the time, a new principle was being introduced affecting public servants, because previously increases of the basic wage had had no effect on their salaries, producing for them no increases whatever. But last year's legislation introduced the principle of reducing Public Service salaries in accordance with any fall in the basic wage. I admit that the Public Service Commissioner may or may not take into consideration the fall or rise of the basic wage when he fixes the classification. However, this was quite a new departure in respect of the Public Service. Under the present Bill the same principle will apply if the Arbitration Court so directs. Apparently, when it does apply, the variation is to be made only if the rise or fall of the basic wage is equivalent to £5 per annum. Will the Minister tell the House whether quarterly adjustments of the basic wage will also apply to the Public Service? I do not grasp whether or not that is intended. Probably it will apply if there is an alteration in the basic wage during the period. A most remarkable feature of the Bill is that any officer receiving over £500 per annum will not be affected by variations in the basic wage. That feature strikes me as extraordinary. Such an officer comes under the general provisions of the Bill, but if his salary reaches £500 a year it is not to be

affected by rise or fall of the basic wage. The Minister, when replying to the debate, might explain to the House why this should be so. He said there were good reasons for it, but neglected to give those reasons. To me there seems to be no reason at all. If the variation in the basic wage should apply to the lower-paid officers, it ought also to apply to the higher-paid officers. I hope the House will not agree to this differential treatment as between officers in receipt of more than £500 per annum and other officers below that salary, because certainly if there be an increase or a decrease, in the basic wage, those above £500 should be affected just the same as those on lower salaries. The only reason I remember hearing the Minister give for the introduction of this measure was because the Civil Service Association had held a referendum of their members and those members had decided by a large majority that they wanted to go to the Arbitration Court. That is an entirely new departure. Are we to introduce legislation here simply because a majority of those interested require it? I suggest that this is a very dangerous procedure. We may yet ask the people of the State whether they require a reduction in taxation. If that were done and the answer given effect to, eventually the Treasurer would find himself without any taxes; because I can assure him the public do not want to pay taxes, and if we were to ask them what they would like, I am afraid we should be making trouble for ourselves. It is not because the public servants have asked for the Bill that we on this side are supporting it; we are supporting the measure simply because we believe in arbitration for the settlement of disputes. We have never yet refused to support anything in the nature of arbitration. We on this side believe it is a sound method of settling disputes between employers and employees. But after the court gives its award, we hope that award will be abided by, and that we shall not have another referendum taken to see whether or not those affected by the award shall abide by it. I really think the worst argument the Minister submitted in support of the Bill was that the civil servants had asked for it.

The Minister for Water Supplies: I will explain the reason to you later.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I shall be glad to have the explanation. I listened very carefully to the Minister's remarks the other

night and could find in them no reason for the introduction of this legislation, except that the civil servants had held a referendum in 1933 at which a very large majority voted in favour of the change. At that time, presumably, they thought it was going to apply to the whole of the service, not only to those of salaries below £700 per annum. Also I venture to think they did not understand that an officer drawing over £500 per annum would not have to suffer any disadvantages by a downward variation of the basic wage. I hope we do not in this Chamber adopt that procedure of introducing legislation simply because some people request it. This Chamber is here to do what is right by the people in the circumstances in which we find ourselves at the time. I have already pointed out that the reason we on this side are supporting the measure is because we believe in arbitration. This gives me an opportunity to comment on what is going to happen in the near future. The general elections will be held in a few months' time, and we are going to have certain organisers running around the country—probably members of Parliament, too—saying that this side of the House is opposed to arbitration. But I repeat that in no circumstances have we ever opposed arbitration. Recently there was a paid organiser named Tankard, who lives in Northam, and who went through my electorate and said that if Latham were returned as Premier of the State there would be a 48-hour week and a 10s. reduction in the basic wage. Outside the financial emergency legislation which was introduced in this Chamber, and which I was bound to support, because it was accepted by all the Governments of Australia, I have never advocated a reduction in wages. I do not stand for that principle, neither do I stand for an increase in hours. Those two important factors are matters entirely for the Arbitration Court, and we should not interfere with that court in respect either of wages or hours of labour. It is their function to look to those questions, and I hope it will remain their function. Government members have frequently told us that it is not the function of Parliament to fix either hours of labour or salaries and wages. I agree with that; it is a matter for the Arbitration Court. If the civil servants are brought under the Arbitration Court, I hope it will prove to be in the interests of the lower-paid officers. I have always

argued that the lower-paid officers, particularly the married men, are badly underpaid. For a man to maintain on £230 per annum the position he is expected to maintain and provide for his wife and family, must be very difficult. We have been extremely lucky in this State in having good reliable officers, and consequently very few defalcations as a result of the difficulty that many of them must find in making both ends meet. We on this side believe it is the duty of the Arbitration Court to fix hours of labour and wages and salaries if there be any dispute between employer and employees, and I have no intention now, nor will I have at any other time, to advocate a reduction in wages and salaries, or an increase in hours of labour.

Mr. Raphael: The Press have got that all right!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not care what the Press may have got. The Press are extremely kind to the Government, and I have no desire to cast any reflection on the Press. It is neither their function nor their policy to advertise members of Parliament, so I am not concerned about what the Press may have to say. If the Bill goes through—and I hope it will—I propose to move an amendment or two when in Committee. I only hope the awards of the Court will be observed by those who are to benefit by this legislation. Following this Bill on the Notice Paper comes the Public Service Act Amendment Bill and the Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment Bill, both closely allied to this Bill. Therefore I do not propose to speak on either of those two following Bills. Both of them are complementary measures, one providing that the Public Service Commissioner shall no longer fix salaries—with the exception of providing for an officer temporarily filling the position of another officer—while the other Bill takes away the right of appeal from the civil servants to the Public Service Appeal Board after the award of the court has been given. So, as I say, in my opinion, the three Bills may be covered by one speech on the Bill now before us.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

I should like the Minister to allow this to stand over until to-morrow in order that

I might have opportunity to read the other two Bills.

Motion put and passed.

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 14th November.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 14th November.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [4.56]: The Bill was fully explained by the Minister when he moved the second reading, and I do not propose to add anything to his remarks. In the Committee stage I may be able to make one or two suggestions which should tend to the more equitable working of the measure. Meanwhile, I will support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. Sleeman, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1935-36.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 12th November, on the Treasurer's financial statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Public Utilities:

Department of Mines (Hon. S. W. Munzie, Minister).

Vote—State Batteries, £111,670:

MR. WELSH (Pilbara) [5.58]: I should like to ask the Minister to make provision

for housing the battery hands at Marble Bar. At present there is no accommodation at all for those men, who in some instances have to walk considerable distances to and from their work. It is necessary that men on night shift should have reasonably good housing accommodation, without which, of course, it is difficult to sleep in daylight hours. I should be pleased if the Minister, in view of these facts, would make provision of some sort of housing for the men at the Marble Bar battery. I think there is a boarding house near the battery where they can get their meals, but no housing accommodation. And unfortunately there is very little timber in the district with which to make camps.

Mr. Thorn: How many hands are there at the State battery?

Mr. WELSH: About eight. But there is no housing accommodation for them, and so if they cannot get in anywhere else they have to go down to the hotel about a mile away. But it is altogether too far for them to walk and, as I say, during the day time the men on night shift cannot get the sleep they require. I hope the Minister will make the necessary provision for some reasonable class of housing accommodation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The matter mentioned by the hon. member has not been brought under my notice previously. I realise that the battery at Marble Bar is probably a little isolated, but it is not the intention of the department to inaugurate a scheme of providing housing accommodation for State Battery employees.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Cave House (including coves of the South-West, etc.), £5,662—agreed to.

Department of Minister for Lands (Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister):

Vote—Lands and Surveys, £52,206—agreed to.

Vote—Farmers' Debts Adjustment, £2,582:

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Since the commencement of the Act 985 stay orders have been issued under Section 5, of which 367 still remain under the Act. In 153 instances satisfactory arrangements have been made and the stay order allowed to lapse, and in 65 instances satisfactory arrangements were made and the stay order

cancelled. In 366 instances no satisfactory arrangements were made, and 34 applications were cancelled as unsatisfactory. Under Section 13B, 47 applications have been granted this year to registered bills of sale to cover advances to enable farmers to carry on. Of review meetings 435 were held after the 1934-35 harvest, and in 355 instances it was decided to carry farmers on under the Act. In 41 instances no satisfactory arrangements could be made and the stay order was allowed to lapse.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Are those the figures for the year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, since the commencement of the Act. In 23 instances arrangements were made to finance outside the Act, and in 16 instances banks, etc., arranged finance outside the Act. As to crop proceeds for the 1934-35 season, farmers under the Act paid £145,169 for current supplies, and £18,905 for mortgages' interest, machinery hire, etc., a total of £164,074. The amount involved in seasonal credit totalled £179,652. Unfortunately, rust in the northern districts last season affected the position considerably. In order to finance the present season's operations the following advances, etc., have been arranged:—

	£
New moneys to be advanced by Associated Banks	12,913
Special assistance, Commonwealth advance to wheatgrowers	783
Other institutions and firms	35,522
Proceeds released by creditors	8,994
Supplies in kind (super., etc.)	62,827
Supplies ex bounty	17,990
Total	£139,029

In addition advances under Section 13B amount to £26,890. There is not much information to give beyond that, because the operations of the department were discussed earlier in the session when the Rural Relief Fund Bill was before us, but I thought members would like to have those figures in order to know of the work done by the board since the inception.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister might have told us how many additional applications were made this year.

The Minister for Lands: I gave them when the Rural Relief Fund Bill was under consideration.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Perhaps at a later stage the Minister could supply them. I should like to know the number of new ap-

plications and the number of farmers for whom arrangements were made, and whether any difficulty is being experienced in financing for the present year.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have just given figures to the effect that 435 review meetings were held after the 1934-35 harvest, and that in 355 instances it was decided to carry farmers on under the Act.

Vote put and passed.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about the Vote for the Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board and Soldiers' Land Settlement?

The CHAIRMAN: No amount is shown in the summary.

The Minister for Lands: That is a Treasury Vote now.

Mr. Stubbs: May we discuss it?

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that there is no Vote.

Mr. Sampson: On the page containing the items there is shown an increase of £8,803. May we not discuss the department?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot see that there is any estimate to put.

The Premier: You did not call the division.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to burke discussion, but there is no Vote to put to the Committee.

Mr. Thorn: This Vote was not put under the Treasury Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member move to disagree with my ruling?

Mr. Thorn: Those departments are shown on the Estimates as division No. 39.

Mr. Sampson: Figures are certainly shown.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow discussion unless a member moves to disagree with my ruling.

Vote—Education, £665,000:

Department of Minister for Education (Hon. H. Millington, Minister): Hon. F. J. S. Wise in charge of the Vote.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [5.8]: The estimated expenditure for the current year is £665,000, which represents an increase of £52,297 on the actual expenditure of last year. Of the total, 92 per cent. represents salaries and 8 per cent. incidentals. Salary payments, of course, are definite commitments under regulations and under appeal board awards. Of the remain-

ing 8 per cent., the purchase of furniture and stock, the payments for driving allowances and expenditure on firewood and water for schools absorb one half, while the remainder covers the travelling expenses of teachers and inspectors and departmental expenses generally, including postages, Government University exhibitions, and secondary schools' scholarships.

The Minister for Lands: On a point of order, on further investigation, I find that there is a Vote for the Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board, and Soldiers' Land Settlement, an amount of £102,545.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We could discuss it under the Appropriation Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to burke discussion; I merely wish to do the right thing.

The Minister for Lands: So do I. I wish to treat the Opposition fairly. There is an amount of £102,545, and if you can arrange for the Minister for Agriculture to defer his remarks, we might dispose of that last division of the Lands Estimates.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am only too anxious to help. In the summary there is no provision, but we could discuss it under the Appropriation Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: On referring to last year's Estimates I find that the position was similar, and that the vote was put. In the circumstances I will allow discussion.

Vote—Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board, Soldiers' Land Settlement, £102,545:

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [5.12]: I should like to direct attention to the fact that a large number of men and their families were sent out under what was supposed to be an agreement between the British Government, Commonwealth Government and State Government, to settle a large area of land south from Southern Cross and east of Newdegate. The Migration Commission visited that area in company with the Minister at present controlling the Agricultural Bank and several members of Parliament including myself. The Commission were satisfied with the quality of the land and had no hesitation in telling the Minister so. The Minister can correct me if I make any mistake, but I believe my statement is absolutely true, and will be true especially when I refer to the rotten position in which those families now find themselves. Surveys were made and

roads were cut, and the families were led to believe that they would be financed and provided with facilities including schools, roads and water supplies. Unfortunately, after a year or two, the scheme, for some reason or other, was allowed to fall through. I understand the Commonwealth Government repudiated their responsibility towards the settlers, and that the British Government did the same. The State Government were thus saddled with the lot. Many of these families live from 30 to 60 miles from any railway. A few months ago the Minister for Lands was asked by my colleague, the member for Pingelly, who represents the northern part of the 3,500 farms area, to go out to those people and either give them some encouragement to carry on, or arrange for their transfer elsewhere. In some instances I know of families who took out as much as £1,000 to their holdings, and in one case a family took out £3,000. The assets are not worth twopence to-day. Every penny of their capital will have gone unless some financial assistance is rendered to them, and unless the Agricultural Bank gives forth some policy for the future. As things are, it is only a question of a short time when these settlers will be so despondent that they will leave their homes. Where they are to go then I do not know. The Minister for Lands did go out early this year, and spent two or three days in travelling through the district with the member for Pingelly, and me. He was so favourably impressed by what he saw, and by what these families had been able to do, that he promised us upon his return to Perth to ask the Agricultural Bank Commissioners to make an early visit to the locality. He also said that if possible the commissioners would take the member for Pingelly and me with them. We know all these families so well. I have been out many times during the last five or six years. I know the difficulties the settlers have to contend with, and the pluck and enterprise of the men and women. It would astound every member of the Committee if they could see what we have seen. The commissioners agreed to the Minister's request. The next thing the member for Pingelly and I heard was that they had started on their journey. I received that information from an officer of the bank. I then asked him to tell me the itinerary of the commissioners. He said he thought they would be at Lake King on a certain day. I had only a few hours in

which to get into touch with a man who could pass the information on to the settlers that the commissioners would arrive the next morning at 11 o'clock, according to the programme given to me over the telephone. I got into touch with that man, who travelled all night and arranged with 40 settlers to assemble at the centre that the commissioners, when they started out, had in mind, namely Lake King. There is only a store, a hall and one or two houses at Lake King, but it is the centre for the district concerned. The settlers saw the motor cars approach, and then saw them suddenly whirl off into the bush. The occupants did not go near the settlers, many of whom had travelled 40 miles to meet them, but went off to Mount Madden to stay there overnight. The settlers were so vexed at the action of the commissioners that they telephoned to Mount Madden, and were informed that the commissioners would be returning in about an hour. Another lot of settlers assembled thinking they would see the commissioners on their return, but, alas, the cars passed through at a warm pace without stopping. When the member for Pingelly and I were informed of what happened, we asked the Minister for Lands the reason why the commissioners did not see the settlers. Even if they did not desire to attend a public meeting, it would have been only common courtesy if they had stopped and allowed the settlers to see Chief Inspector Mitchell. That officer had framed a policy for the consideration of the commissioners, and it was in their possession at the time of their visit. On behalf of a large number of very fine families I should like the Minister to impress upon the commissioners the necessity for making an early decision as to their future policy with respect to these people. The settlers are nearly at the end of their tether, and are living between 30 and 60 miles from a railway. I admit the Government have been extremely kind in continuing the carting subsidy to enable them to transport their wheat to the nearest railway siding. Some of the families have not 2s. to call their own, after expending their life savings on their homes. They are deserving of the best that can be done for them by the bank so that they may carry on. In some instances they have cleared hundreds of acres. Their land is first-class, and despite the season, will yield probably from 15 to 20 bushels to the acre. Land that is capable of doing that year after

year is worthy of attention, and the settlers themselves are worthy of consideration at the hands of the Agricultural Bank. I ask the Minister to get into touch with the commissioners and request them to formulate a policy so that they may notify the settlers as early as possible whether they are expected to remain on their holdings or walk off them.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.20]: I should like to draw attention to the unfortunate position that has arisen in the case of several employees of the Agricultural Bank who have been put out of the service. I have in mind one case in particular. I mention this because the circumstances show a lack of that justice which Western Australia has in the past always meted out to its citizens. This man was employed at the Katanning branch of the bank. He is 48 years of age, a returned soldier, and has two children. He was for 15 years in the Civil Service, either in the ordinary service or with the bank. When the commissioners took over the bank under the new Act, they removed 11 members of the staff for different reasons. These reasons have never been conveyed to the men concerned. I understand they inquired why their services had been dispensed with, but were informed that they were going to be given no reason. The officer I am speaking of applied to the Public Service Commissioner for employment, and was informed that if the bank would say why he was dismissed, the Public Service Commissioner would endeavour to find some employment for him. I understand that on the 13th September the Civil Service Association waited as a deputation upon the commissioners in connection with this and several other cases of the kind. It is stated in the "Civil Service Journal" that the chairman of the commissioners informed the deputation that the bank was not obliged to give any reasons for putting men off, and would not do so. It seems to me that this man and others will be hard put to it to get employment elsewhere unless reasons for their dismissal can be given. I know the man in question personally. He tells me there is no reason for his dismissal unless it be that there are too many officers in the service. I hope some action will be taken to alter the procedure, and to give these people an opportunity, if they cannot get employment

in the service, to obtain it elsewhere. This opportunity can only be afforded to them if they are given reasons for their dismissal from the service of the bank.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.25]: Some of the clients of the bank are interested in bee, poultry and pig farming. The other night I brought down a Bill to exempt from the payment of land tax farmers of this description.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Are you talking about the Agricultural Bank Act?

Mr. SAMPSON: There are clients of the bank amongst these people.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The hon. member cannot discuss legislation that was before the House the other night.

Mr. SAMPSON: In certain quarters there is an impression that people engaged in these occupations are not exempt from land tax.

The Minister for Lands: What has that to do with this vote?

Mr. SAMPSON: Some of these people are clients of the bank. I have here a letter bearing directly on the subject.

The Minister for Lands: The commissioners do not impose the land tax.

Mr. SAMPSON: In some cases clients of the bank have to pay land tax.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The hon. member can only discuss the Agricultural Bank vote.

Mr. SAMPSON: I will make no reference to the legislation, but would like to read this letter.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Does it deal with the Agricultural Bank?

Mr. SAMPSON: I am speaking of the land tax as it applies to clients of the bank.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The hon. member cannot discuss the land tax under this heading.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then I shall refer to the recent Bickley storm, which affects some clients of the bank. I appeal to the Minister to make some reference to this in his reply. I hope it will be possible under the rehabilitation scheme for assistance to be rendered to these settlers, whose properties were so seriously damaged by the storm.

Mr. Lambert: You could make a substantial donation to them.

Mr. SAMPSON: Unless the settlers receive some assistance I am sure many of

them will never recover. With these remarks I will conclude my contribution to the debate on this vote.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.30]: When the Agricultural Bank Act was passed, provision was made enabling the commissioners to appoint their own staff and we also agreed that if alterations were made in the staff, and it was not found possible to retain the services of some officers, the latter would be absorbed within the Public Service. On page 14 of the latest annual report of the Public Service Commissioner there is this paragraph—

No reason has been given for the non-appointment of the 11 officers referred to. In the absence of information to the contrary, I have informed the commissioners I am assuming that their services were unsatisfactory, and propose taking action under Section 9, Subsection 6, for their retirement as excess officers. No charge has been made against them under the provisions of the Public Service Act.

In his report the Public Service Commissioner had previously referred to 11 officers who were not reappointed by the Agricultural Bank Commissioners. I hope the Commissioner will find employment for the 11 men referred to. If he regards the services of the men as unsatisfactory in the circumstances I have indicated, it is a very callous attitude to adopt. There may be some just reason for not finding employment for all of them, but surely the Commissioner cannot regard the services of all eleven as unsatisfactory, merely because no reason has been given by the Agricultural Bank Commissioners for their non-appointment. Naturally, if these officers are to be regarded as unsatisfactory for employment within the Public Service, their position will be much more difficult in seeking employment outside the service, particularly in view of the announcement that the Public Service Commissioner has had to take it that their services while employed by the bank were unsatisfactory. If any of these officers were to apply for a position and stated that he had been with the Agricultural Bank, this announcement in the Public Service Commissioner's report would make his position very difficult. I hope the Minister will go into the matter, with a view to at least not branding the officers concerned as unsatisfactory employees. I fully appreciate the fact that one or two may possibly have proved

unsatisfactory. I think the Minister mentioned some time ago that probably one or two would not be retained in the service, but I do not think he referred to 11 officers. Dealing with the salaries for the Commissioners and the secretary, provision is made for an expenditure of £3,770. The chairman's salary is £2,000 and that of one of the other Commissioners, £1,500. I understand that the Under Treasurer, Mr. Berkeley, who is the third Commissioner, has received an increase of £540. The secretary also has to be paid. I do not know what the latter gets. I have been unable to ascertain the amount. It will be seen, from the salaries I have referred to, that the provision of £3,770 is insufficient, and I would like to ask the Minister how he proposes to make up the difference between the actual amount paid in salaries and that which is provided in the Estimates.

Mr. Thorn: The total amount will be nearer £5,000.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It has been usual in the past for the salaries paid to officers of the Agricultural Bank to be gazetted in the ordinary way. That has been the procedure throughout the service. Are the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank now to be given carte blanche to pay what they like? Surely there must be some control over the salaries the Commissioners can pay to their officers, otherwise there will be competition between the Agricultural Bank and the rest of the Public Service in securing officers and regarding the payments made to them. As we have to agree to provide the necessary funds from which those payments are made, we should at least know what officers of the Agricultural Bank are to be paid. So far as I can see, there is no opportunity for members to deal with that phase. Next year, Mr. Chairman, you will probably rule as you did to-day, and I think you were correct in your ruling, that we have no power to debate this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I am right this time, but I was wrong last year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: You took last year as a precedent, and if you peruse the Committee's proceedings at that stage, you will find that no action was taken to object to your ruling, but I would point out that the Estimates show that the amount has been rebated, so that we have no opportunity to discuss the matter, except, perhaps, under the Appropriation Bill. All payments have to be appropriated either under the Esti-

mates or under the Appropriation Bill. The practice has been to discuss the Estimates fully and the passage of the Appropriation Bill has been regarded as a matter of form. Unless we are given an opportunity to discuss this particular matter—it can easily be done by providing a Vote for £1 only—it will mean that Parliament has lost control.

The CHAIRMAN: If I had to rule again, I would rule as I did before, namely, that you cannot discuss the matter.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, and you will notice that I did not move to disagree with your ruling, because I believed it was correct. There is only one way in which we can discuss the position. As a matter of fact, every year we seem to be handing over to other people authority to spend the public's money, and our position as members of Parliament is becoming more and more of a sinecure. We have before us legislation under which we are to hand over to the Arbitration Court the right to fix salaries. Naturally, I believe it would be quite impossible for Parliament to fix individual salaries but, nevertheless, the tendency is as I have indicated. Here is another instance in which we are handing over to the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank the right to do as they like. I hope we shall be given an opportunity to discuss this matter in future, or at least to know what salaries are being paid. I have already pointed out that I have been unable to find out what salary is being paid to the secretary.

The Minister for Lands: Which secretary?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The secretary to the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank. I have already pointed out that a lump sum is provided in the Estimates for the salaries paid to the Commissioners and the secretary, and I have looked through the "Government Gazette" very carefully but have not been able to find any reference to the salaries paid to the officers. We do not know what they are receiving, and we should have that information. I know also that that must be the opinion of Ministers. At one time, when we were dealing with the Main Roads Act, the present Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, rightly complained about this sort of thing.

The Premier: Yes, from the Opposition bench. You are right now—from the Opposition bench.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That was the Premier's attitude then.

The Premier: Of course we know nothing about it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Naturally, because the Premier has been away from the city on State business in the Eastern States.

The Premier: But we have not any say in it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I blame the Government for that. When the Agricultural Bank Act was being dealt with in Committee, I pointed out that we were handing over these powers to three men, of whose identity we were unaware at the time. We, on the Opposition side of the House, shall follow closely the activities of the Commissioners and if we are still in Opposition when Parliament meets next year, we may have to voice decided opinions. I would not suggest criticising the Commissioners until they have had a reasonable opportunity to get into their stride, but if, after a reasonable time has been allowed them in that respect, we may desire to express our opinions, we shall not have an opportunity to do so if no provision is made either in the Estimates or the Appropriation Bill. I trust the Minister will go into the matter that I have raised regarding the report of the Public Service Commissioner, because it is one that should be cleared up.

The Premier: There is only one officer with whose salary you are not acquainted.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know that that is so.

The Premier: You know what the Commissioners are getting.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, but I have already pointed out that, apparently, their salaries are not fully provided for in the Estimates.

The Premier: You are referring to all the Bank officers?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, only the Commissioners and the secretary. The amount set out in the Estimates is £3,770 and, as the chairman receives £2,000 and one of the other Commissioners £1,500, those two amounts alone total £3,500, and we know that the Under Treasurer, Mr. Berkeley, has received an additional £540 a year. The Premier will see that the amount in the Estimates is exceeded by those payments.

Mr. Lambert: Is that provision for the full year?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. The Commissioners were appointed before the 1st July and the Estimates make provision for the full financial year. However, I rose

principally to request the Minister to clear up the position regarding the eleven officers I have referred to, and I urge that course not from the Commissioner's point of view but that of the men. For the Commissioner to regard their services as having been unsatisfactory merely because the Agricultural Bank Commissioners did not give any reason for not appointing the eleven men to their staff, would be very unfair.

Mr. Lambert: They may have been put off as excess officers.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It would not be so bad if that reason were given, but it is unfair to the men themselves if the Public Service Commissioner is to regard their services as unsatisfactory merely because no explanation was given for their non-appointment. I do not believe the Government would agree with that, nor would any member of the House. That is why I ask the Minister to take up the matter with the Public Service Commissioner and the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank, so as to clear up the point and issue a public statement so that the 11 men shall not be branded as having rendered unsatisfactory service to the Government.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [5.40]: The remark made by the member for Wagon (Mr. Stubbs) that he would appeal to the Minister for Lands to bring pressure to bear on the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank for an alleged incident in the Lake Grace area indicates if I may say so, a lack of knowledge of the Act by that hon. member, because neither the Minister for Lands nor any member of the Government has any control over the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank. That is one of the reasons why I intend to take certain action in respect of this Vote. The Commissioners, to my mind, have so far followed, in the main, a perfectly rational course of action in an endeavour to take stock and ascertain the position of the 14,000 farmers under their care, before they embark upon any action under Division V. of the Agricultural Bank Act.

Mr. Stubbs: Did you say 14,000 farmers?

Mr. BOYLE: There are 14,000 securities.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But that would not necessarily mean 14,000 farmers.

Mr. BOYLE: Possibly not, so I will refer to 14,000 securities, not 14,000 farmers. The action taken by the Commissioners in the

Esperance area was eminently sound. A re-orientation of the position is taking place and the only difficulty one can foresee is with regard to the ability of the settlers in that area to shoulder the £1,600 that it is evidently proposed shall be the figures fixed for their first mortgage. As to the Bullfinch area and the miners' settlement south of Southern Cross, I understand from remarks made by the Chairman of the Commission (Mr. A. McCallum) that attention is being given to those areas at present. I submit this plea on behalf of the settlers in that part of the State: Starting off with 82 settlers, the men on the land now number 46. That is to say, practically 50 per cent. of the settlers have left their blocks. It is proposed to turn the holdings into stock-carrying propositions, which will mean considerable expenditure. In conversation with the settlers, I ascertained that it will be impossible to load them with any additional liability, but the extra burden should be borne by the community at large. That also applies to the position in the Bullfinch area. If there is one serious fault that can be raised regarding the conduct of the Bank Commissioners to-day, it is not so much in respect of the lack of a declaration of policy, because a policy cannot be declared until those concerned arrive at the basis upon which the policy is to be constructed, but to Sections 51 and 52 being applied before there has been any writing down. In an address I delivered in February last before members of an organisation with which I was associated for years, I pleaded for sufficient time to be given the Bank commissioners to get their house in order before expecting from them any declaration of policy. I am prepared to wait a little longer, but I do object, and strenuously object, to the imposing of a portion of the Act—Sections 51 and 52—before the writing down provisions have been brought into force. Under the drag-net provisions of Section 51 there have been mandatory seizures of the assets or proceeds of the farm to pay interest, principally on a debt which is inevitably due for writing down, possibly to an extent of 50 per cent. It seems unfair to me that the penal clauses should be enforced before the writing down. I do not say they should not be used, but I say they should be used with discretion. At the present time, however, they are not being used with that discretion one would expect

from the Commissioners. Another important matter is the evident attempt being made to pauperise the man under the bank. By that I mean that he is prohibited to-day from contributing out of his proceeds anything to the medical funds, and—I hesitate to say this—to his industrial organisation, that is to say, the Primary Producers' Association or the Wheatgrowers' Union. I have no personal interest in this.

The Minister for Lands: Do you suggest that those contributions should come before their legitimate debts?

Mr. BOYLE: I suggest that the first legitimate debt is that due to the protective organisation, and I hold that it is a debt that it is incumbent upon them to pay, and to a major degree I would say that the provision of safeguards for their health is certainly a debt that should have first consideration. I have here a direct refusal to allow the proceeds of the funds to be used in that regard. On 24th April Mr. Rogers, who is the officer in charge of the Agricultural Bank activities at Salmon Gums, in writing to the secretary of the Grain Pool of W.A., said—

On the 5th ultimo I wrote you in connection with wheat marketed for medical fees and union fees, and stated that the trustees would not agree to this being marketed as such, and that we desired the proceeds of such wheat. The present Commissioners have now confirmed this decision, and your early attention to the payment of proceeds to us would be appreciated. We would appear to have received certain payments on this account recently, but quite a number would appear to be still outstanding.

That was confirmed by the secretary of the Bank, Mr. Brownlie, and later on, on the 31st July, Mr. Grogan, Acting Manager of the Bank, wrote—

Further to my letter of the 17th instant regarding permission to settlers to pay subscriptions in wheat, etc., I have to inform you that the matter has been further considered, and the Commissioners are not agreeable to deductions being made for payment of fees, either to the Primary Producers' Associations or medical fees fund.

I might explain that the settlers in the Esperance area made arrangements with the Esperance hospital to pay £1 per year which would cover them for all medical attention except major operations, and that attitude by a body of settlers over 200 strong is to be commended. The arrangement was not interfered with until the present Commissioners assumed control. It

is obvious from the Act that the Commissioners are responsible in this matter. Obviously the Act speaks for itself; the Parliament of this State handed over to the Commissioners the administration of the Act.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You strongly commended it.

Mr. BOYLE: I did, and it is more in sorrow than in anger that I am referring to this particular matter now; but I am entering a protest on behalf of the men who for five years have been struggling to get on their feet. It is not fair to make them feel their position to the extent that they cannot contribute to a local hospital. I have a letter from the chairman of the Kellerherrin hospital, Mr. Deane Hammond, who says that the hospital cannot collect fees in Kellerherrin because the farmers cannot pay. If we wish to prevent people from becoming degraded altogether, the best thing we can do is to let them endeavour to retain some shred of independence. The old trustees were very lenient in that regard. I am a firm friend of the Agricultural Bank Act of 1934.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You know that you have no power now to direct the Commissioners.

Mr. BOYLE: I have already stated that the Minister has no authority whatever over the Commissioners, and that Parliament has handed over the whole control of the Agricultural Bank to the Commissioners.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then what is the use of addressing Parliament on the subject? Parliament cannot do anything in the matter.

Mr. BOYLE: It is my intention to move that the Vote be reduced by £1.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no Vote here to reduce.

Mr. BOYLE: Then I am hoist with my own petard, and I am afraid I am very much out of order. Still, I have entered my protest, and will leave it at that.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly [5.52]: Reference has already been made to the action of the Commissioners in going through the Lakes area a little while back without advising the settlers there of the time of their arrival. The Commissioners were only recently appointed to do a very big work, and consequently they should have the whole-

hearted support of everyone to assist them in the duties they had to perform. It is with reluctance that I refer to this matter at all, but it is necessary to do so, because the Minister made a promise that the Commissioners would go through that district. The Minister himself visited the district, and was particularly impressed. He thought the country was too good to sacrifice, especially as the settlers had been there for five or six years and had carried on operations 60 miles from a railway. On that score he considered them worthy of assistance. It was at the request of the Minister that the Commissioners paid a visit to the district, but they came away from it just as rapidly as they went to it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Did you say they went down at the request of the Minister?

Mr. SEWARD: Perhaps I should have said at the invitation of the Minister. Of course we know he has no power to order them to go anywhere, but he was so impressed that I suppose they went at his request. The member for Wigan and I endeavoured to find out where the Commissioners were—we knew they had gone to the district—but before we were able to learn anything, we read a telegram in the Press from Muntadgin that the Commissioners had completed their visit. It looked as if the Commissioners deliberately avoided meeting the settlers, who wrote a letter of protest, especially as Inspector Mitchell had previously gone through the district and had made certain recommendations for the future carrying out of a policy, and this would have been available for discussion between the settlers and the Commissioners. The unfortunate settlers were keyed-up with expectation only to be disappointed, especially as the Minister had given them every encouragement. The Commissioners, however, just flew through the district and took no notice of the settlers, who felt their action keenly. As their representative in Parliament I deem it my duty to voice a protest on this action of the Commissioners, and I hope we shall not have a recurrence of it.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [5.55]: I submit that it is a waste of time for hon. members to ventilate their grievances with regard to the Agricultural Bank. They admit the Minister has no power over the Commissioners, and that Par-

liament has placed full control in the hands of the Commissioners to direct the operations of the Bank. What is the use, therefore, of members loading up "Hansard" with speeches that will have no influence unless, of course, members themselves cut their speeches out of "Hansard" and send them to the Commissioners?

Mr. Stubbs: That is pretty good, coming from you.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have not forgotten the attitude I took up when the Bill was before the House. I told members they were handing over control of the Bank absolutely to the Commissioners and that as far as members of Parliament were concerned their influence had ceased for good.

Mr. Stubbs: Who is endeavouring to influence the Commissioners?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Then why do hon. members take up the time of the Chamber in the manner they have been doing, knowing as they do that their speeches are of no value? I am simply pointing out that a discussion on matters affecting the general administration of the Agricultural Bank is of no avail whatever now. The whole of the administration of the Bank was vested by Parliament definitely in the hands of the Commissioners. At the time members knew what they were doing when they gave that power to the Commissioners, and I submit that they must now recognise that it is useless to enter protests here. At one time it was possible to ventilate grievances here and to suggest to the Minister, who then had control, how the Bank should function, and how the general administration should be carried on. All that has gone now. Therefore I submit that the entering of protests, as members have been doing, is just so much waste of time.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [5.57]: I can hardly understand the reasoning of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat in connection with our attitude towards the Agricultural Bank. As a matter of fact, there are many things done with which we can sharply disagree even though we may not have actual statutory power to do more. Only a little while ago we read of sharp disagreements towards certain appointments to this particular institution. Parliament is the supreme body and it can say whether it agrees or disagrees. We should preserve our right to disagree even to an executive act, or any

administrative act, whether we have the statutory right to do so or not. This is the place to express our approval or disapproval. I thank the member for Avon for his contribution to the debate, and I assure him that I have kept a most watchful eye upon my own district and the settlers within the four corners of it. Their position has been of grave concern to me for a considerable time, and while I know it is possible and may be absolutely necessary to carry out the painful process of elimination amongst many of them, the only way that these settlers can do any good in single-handed farming or single-item farming will be by the amalgamation of areas and the provision of water supplies. Many of these farmers are fine fellows, sterling chaps. But this must be clearly recognised: unless they get a chance through provision of adequate water supplies and linked localities to go in for mixed farming, the Agricultural Bank will continue to incur losses. Mistakes initially made must be acknowledged. It is a matter not so much of Agricultural Bank administration as of hopeless attempts to farm in areas too dry. From that aspect I am glad of the weighty support of my friend the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle). Let me assure the hon. member, however, that I keep a watchful eye on the present Government, and also on the Agricultural Bank Commissioners.

Mr. Cross: You must have developed an agricultural conscience!

Mr. LAMBERT: It is just as well to have a conscience of some kind or other. I urge the Minister to give immediate consideration to the furnishing of water supplies and other needful facilities in that area of my electorate. Otherwise the settlers in question cannot make good. With the Leader of the Opposition I appreciate all the disadvantages involved, and with the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) I realise that fundamental mistakes were made initially by placing settlers in areas where they had not the slightest hope of success. Bearing in mind the fact that the scheme was fostered in triplicate by three successive Governments, in the hope of advancing land settlement, I feel that the financial obligation entailed is one in which the general community must share. Through taxation the general community shares many responsibilities, and this is not the least deserving one to be so shared. I look forward to the formulation by the Agricul-

tural Bank Commissioners of a policy having regard to a diminution of the number of settlers who cannot be expected to succeed, either for physical, climatic, or some other reasons. Possibly such settlers could be placed on more suitable areas. I firmly believe that a large proportion of them who have battled for years would, if given new spirit, new heart, new inspiration, make good, with resultant advantages not only in returns to the Agricultural Bank but in greater prosperity to the whole people of Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [6.6]: With regard to the speeches of the members for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) and Pingelly (Mr. Seward), it is true that both gentlemen wrote to me expressing some indignation that the Agricultural Bank Commissioners had not attended a meeting of the settlers in the 3,500 farms scheme areas. The Agricultural Bank Commissioners are entirely responsible for their actions. Their statute gives them great powers, and they are entitled to administer as they deem best. My own opinion is that to attend meetings of settlers is undesirable, that the better course is to visit the individual settler on his farm and discuss the situation with him. I think, however, considering the isolation of these particular settlers, that were I a Commissioner, I would have seen the settlers on the areas mentioned. Still, the Commissioners state they are of opinion that they could but see these people on their farms, that they could meet the individual settler on his own holding and with him take stock of the place and its requirements, and thus get a better grip of the situation. It is a fact that at meetings one does not get the true atmosphere. At meetings there are always a few people who are given to exaggerate matters beyond all reason.

Mr. Stubbs: You saw these people. Were they likely to exaggerate?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: My experience is that some settlers should be taught to look a little more moderately, for less consideration. If one sums up the position, adopting the medium attitude, making a moderate estimate, one will probably be right. I was impressed with the settlers on the 3,500-farms area. They struck me as very worthy people, and the same remark applies to their womenfolk. I would

not like the member for Wagin to think that the Government pay no regard to the isolation of those people. If they were not wheat growers and had to carry their products to market, their isolation would not be remarkable, because there are hundreds of areas in Western Australia where the isolation of the settlers is greater than it is in that district. In two-thirds of the State the degree of isolation is much higher.

Mr. Stubbs: But these settlers went out to the area under different conditions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Undoubtedly isolation is a great disadvantage when one is growing wheat and has to cart it to the nearest centre. But these settlers have some advantages. Roads have been constructed for them, and magnificent water supplies have been provided. Nowhere have I seen better water supplies than those in that area.

Mr. Stubbs: The settlers admit that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are truly magnificent water supplies. When I found such water supplies in areas with but very few settlers, I came to the conclusion that the Government had been generous to the settlers. I have travelled through many thousand miles of farming country, and nowhere have I seen one water supply equal to those in the area in question.

Mr. Stubbs: We admit that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Elsewhere I saw dams empty at this time of the year. That remark does not apply to the area under discussion. It is only the fact of isolation that concerns me. The land is all right. The crops produced are good. I have no doubt the crops there will be good this year. Those settlers have never had bad crops. They have generally grown seven and eight bags. They will have a good crop this year, when probably 40 per cent. of the wheatgrowers of Western Australia will have poor crops. These settlers are not located in an unfavourable area. The only drawback is isolation. They are disappointed at not having got railway communication. Had the depression not occurred, they would have got it. I have stated the facts of the Commonwealth Government's attitude on more than one occasion. Before the area was settled, there was a conference between members of the Government, Mr. John Gunn, and Sir Charles

Nathan. At that time everybody was looking for land, and this particular settlement was justified. Sir Charles Nathan and Mr. Gunn said to the Government "Let the settlement proceed: it will be included in the larger scheme." A large sum of money was provided for opening-up by roads and also for the construction of wells. The development was approved. However, when the depression came, Sir Charles Nathan said to me that he did not remember this conversation. I remember it very well. I told him so. I am cautious about such matters. The Commonwealth Government must have been satisfied when they advanced money to build roads and provide water supplies.

Mr. Stubbs: They deny it now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The settlers there do not pay any rent at all, not a shilling, for ten years. They are clear for ten years. All settlers outside that 3,500-farms area have to pay farm rents, but these settlers are being carried on the policy of not expecting any rent for a period of ten years. In the area of the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) some settlers are 17 miles out. They suffer from the same isolation. Apart from that, I daresay they have reasonable prospects. If I were going in for a grazing proposition, I would settle in that area. Settlers from Lake Newdegate went out there recently.

Mr. Doney: It is absolutely perfect grazing land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When I saw the grasses and the magnificent stock at Kondinin, I was greatly impressed. The land has a limestone foundation, and is splendid country for stock. Although development under the 3,500-farms scheme has been held up, and probably will continue to be held up until prosperity returns, I consider this to be the only area suitable for land settlement in that quarter. The greater portion of the land there is taken up already, and pressure of population will push other settlers further out. With the return of advantageous times, settlers on that area will do well in grazing. The member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) raised a question about the services of former employees of the Agricultural Bank being dispensed with. I cannot help that. By Act of Parliament the Agricultural Bank Commissioners have the right to select their own staff. In view of what the Royal Commis-

sion on the Agricultural Bank reported concerning some officers, it was highly desirable to dispense with their services. Some officers have my sympathy. Nevertheless, it is most advisable that the Agricultural Bank Commissioners should have control of the Bank staff. In fact, I believe to an extent the former trustees picked their staff. I know of many men in the service who were selected by the former trustees.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Regarding the dispensing with the services of some of the officers of the Bank, I am sure the Commissioners are qualified to appraise their staff. Whilst I sympathise with some of those officers whose services have been dispensed with, it must be remembered that the Act prescribes that the Commissioners shall have full power in that regard. Whilst the Act was the responsibility of the Government, it must be remembered that it had to pass both Houses of Parliament and that both Houses of Parliament agreed to it in its present form. Certainly the Government had a majority behind them in this Chamber, but they had no majority in another place, where nevertheless the Bill was agreed to. I admit that the Royal Commission referred to some of the Bank's officials in no pleasing terms, and I have since heard that the Bank has dispensed with the services of some of them. I do not think it should be taken that because a man is a member of the Public Service he is entitled to be retained in his job all his life. Many private firms dispense with the services of a man when he no longer suits them. Indeed, practically all the persons in employment of one sort or another in Western Australia, when they cease to give satisfaction, have to go and make room for somebody else. And because they thus leave one employment, it is not to say they are prevented from applying themselves to another industry or to another firm. Members know it is not usual for a man to be in one occupation all his life, and that when a man loses one job he sets off in search for another. Even before the Act of 1934 was enacted, the services of many public servants had been dispensed with for one reason or another. I have had officers tell me that although they have been commended on their work, they did not feel very safe.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You agree that the Public Service Commissioner's comments in his report are fair criticism.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the Public Service Commissioner has said many things which he was not entitled to say. He referred in strong terms to one officer in the South-West, whereas he was not in a position to know the slightest thing about that officer's qualifications. In the Public Service Commissioner's report there are many things that would have been better left unsaid.

Mr. Seward: He states that if he has an assurance that those men were not retired from the Bank because of incompetence, he can place them in the Public Service.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very well, but what has it to do with him, anyhow?

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Act gave him some power.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the Act provided that if the Commissioners had no place for certain of their officers and there were vacancies in the Public Service, those vacancies could be obtained for them. In stating that the officers dispensed with were not incompetent, the Commissioners were quite decent about it. I do not think that is a wrong attitude at all.

Mr. Boyle: But they gave no reasons at all.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the Public Service Commissioner has said many things that might well have been left unsaid. He is a bit peevish because an important part of the administration has been taken from him. However, he made reference to officials of whose capacity he has no knowledge at all, and when I spoke of a certain appointment, he told me that he himself had not made that appointment. I know he was not in a position to judge of the capacity of the man appointed. However, I hope that those of the Bank's staff whose services have been dispensed with will find occupations somewhere else. I am certainly not pursuing those officers. On one occasion I did criticise the capacity of an officer, but I told the chairman of the Bank Commission not to be influenced by me, but to exercise his own judgment. I made it clear to the chairman that nothing I had ever said about that officer was to influence his decision. I put that definitely to him. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson)

asked that some assistance should be given to those in the citrus industry from the money granted for necessitous farmers. But that is impossible, because the Act provides that the assistance shall be given only to wheatgrowers in necessitous circumstances.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not that £134,000?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Necessitous farmers!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but wheatgrowers who are in necessitous circumstances, and have suffered loss from disease. I will make sure of that; it is just possible that I am making a mistake.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Certain sums were set aside for wheatgrowers, but there were also certain other sums.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but under the Rural Relief Fund Act the citrus growers could receive some consideration if creditors agree to compound debts. They cannot get any monetary assistance, but I am sure that this Act is known as the wheatgrowers' relief Act.

Mr. Sampson: If it is not possible for the Minister to find that assistance from the one fund, it might be possible for him to provide it from some other fund.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition asked what salaries were being paid. To Mr. McCallum there is paid £2,000, to Mr. Clark £1,500, to Mr. Berkeley an extra £540, and to Mr. Brownlie, the secretary, £600. Arrangements are now being made for the classification of the bank's officials, and to that end the services of Mr. Andrew, the Under Secretary for Labour, are being availed of. The work will soon be in hand, so members may rest assured that the Commissioners are not fixing salaries and classifying their own officials, but are leaving that to the Under Secretary for Labour. It is true that the Commissioners are taking stock of their securities, as stated by the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle). That, of course is a very big job. The Commissioners, operating under the Act of 1934, in regard to revaluing must act consistently.

Mr. Boyle: That involves £14,000,000.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They must act consistently and know what road they propose to follow. The chairman has recently announced in the Press that the Commissioners are prepared to work in with the trustees to be appointed under the Rural Relief Fund Act, who will be working to

bring about a debt adjustment. The Commissioners will be prepared to co-operate with them. When the Act was passed last year, the Commissioners were given power to write down their securities. During the last five years, of course, the settlers have had a very bad time, and last year in many portions of the State, owing to rust and disease and in some instances drought conditions, the farmers had a decided setback. This year in many parts of the country the season has not been altogether favourable, but in other parts of the country, I am glad to say, it has been very gratifying. I do not regard 5s. per bushel, which is the expectation of some farmers, as representing a normal price for wheat. I regard it as representing a period of prosperity, and so I think the average value of the land cannot be based on that price. I cannot see that the policy adopted by some countries of making themselves self-contained in the matter of food supplies can be pursued forever, but during the next 10 years we shall still be experiencing difficulties in Australia. The position has to be faced. We have given the Bank Commissioners certain powers and they will exercise those powers consistent with their policy being approved by the Treasurer. If the Commissioners satisfy him that what they have done is the proper thing, I do not think the Treasury will offer any opposition. Of course if the Commissioners do not have due regard to the interests of the country, it may be necessary for the Treasurer to intervene, but I hope that will not occur. Members will recognise that this burden of debt must be placed on somebody's shoulders, and that somebody must carry it, but we must be careful, in apportioning it, not to overload one section unfairly. I think there will be times when temporarily there will be a good price for wheat. Last season's wheat reached 3s. 2d. I certainly missed the market because I accepted about 2s. 4d. for mine. If we could get 3s. 4d. a bushel during the next four, five or six years, I think we would be doing very well. The member for Avon spoke about the inability of Esperance settlers to carry a capitalisation of £1,600. If the settlers at Esperance have come under the amalgamation system, which is the policy for that part of the State, and if they have a larger area of country than normally, a capitalisation

of £1,600, while it may appear large, should not be beyond their ability to carry, provided they have 3,000 or 4,000 acres of land and are carrying stock. I think the Esperance settlers have a market which they could well exploit, namely the goldfields market. For all their produce they could find a market in Kalgoorlie and Norseman.

Mr. Boyle: Norseman would be a good market.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. The new mining centres north of Kalgoorlie would also provide good markets and if the Esperance settlers exploited them to the fullest extent, they might do better than settlers in other parts who have not a cash market. It is the settlers in the Salmon Gums district about whom I feel concerned. Only 150 settlers remain there and the State will lose a large amount of money. Still, it is to be hoped that the experiment proposed by the Commissioners regarding the 150 settlers will put them in a position to give encouragement to other settlers. If a few settlers are able to carry on successfully, others will be encouraged to go there. That was the idea behind the settlement of the Esperance country in the first place. It is hoped that this experiment will be the last one, and that it will prove successful. Regarding the miners' settlement, the Government have advanced large sums of money there also. I admit that the miners who went there were not in good health, but I will not accept the statement that the Government put them there against their will or induced them to go there. The Government did nothing of the sort. They were asked to provide a settlement and eventually it was established at Southern Cross. Members speak about unsafe areas. I do not know that there has yet been settled any large area in Western Australia which might be regarded from the standpoint of rainfall as being unsafe. I travelled to Canberra in October of last year and again in October of this year, and east of Southern Cross I saw much better crops than I saw anywhere north of Peterborough in South Australia, or even for some distance south of Peterborough. Properly tilled, I do not think there is an acre of the wheat belt—save for exceptions which I will mention later—where profitable farming is not possible. I never have regarded the Bullfinch area as a sound area, but south of Southern Cross, and immediately east of Southern Cross and Moorine Rock, I regard as fairly safe coun-

try provided the farmers fallow and farm properly.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: If that is so, 25 per cent. of South Australia is not safe.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A member of the Federal Parliament told me that in South Australia he had had only two crops in 10 years.

Mr. Boyle: For five years many of them had only 7 bushels.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Ghooli State farm is an average farm. Some members are under the impression that, because a farm is conducted by the State, it is farmed so well as to be highly productive. They lose sight of the fact that crops are sown at various periods of the season for experimental purposes. Yet the Ghooli State farm shows an average of 14 to 15 bushels. At the Dampawah farm, 30 miles east of Perenjori, some of the finest averages in the State has been obtained. Of course in that country farming is more or less established. Down through Dalwallinu, I have been informed, the average will not be very high this year.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It will not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am inclined to think that the average for Southern Cross will be much higher than for the Dalwallinu district, and Southern Cross is situated 100 miles further east than is Dalwallinu. Southern Cross certainly gets no more rain than does Dalwallinu, so the difference must be due to the character of the country. Because of the character of the country, I regard the Moorine Rock district as safe farming country. Stress was laid on the fact that in some districts only a small percentage of the original farmers are left. Only 2 per cent. of the miners are still located on the settlement at Southern Cross. At Yandanooka, I have been informed, only a very small percentage of the original settlers remain. Yet Yandanooka is a favoured farming area, both for rainfall and soil. The member for Avon spoke of the Agricultural Bank Act and the enforcement of Section 51. His reasoning was extraordinary. The Commissioners can get at most one year's interest; they cannot collect any more. They did not attempt to collect the interest accrued over the years. In the majority of instances they have not in the last five years collected one year's interest, but have been lucky to get half a year's interest. Since the interest paid is, in many instances, on one-half of the in-

debtedness, why should not the Commissioners exercise their powers under Section 51 of the Act? I do not think the Commissioners have enforced Section 51 unfairly. The hon. member stated that a few eggs, a few head of poultry and a pound or two of butter would be confiscated. I said the statement was ridiculous, and so it is. The Commissioners are not bothering about that sort of thing; in fact they are encouraging the production of those lines. What the Commissioners are concerned about are the major items—the chief revenue-producing items of the farms. There are still a few settlers in respect to whom the Commissioners find it necessary to exercise their powers. I was surprised to learn to-day that at least one settler, who had received assistance in the form of chaff, had sold it to somebody else. When I was informed of that, I said it passed my comprehension that when we went to the help of a settler and provided him with necessities, he immediately sold these things to someone else. This has happened in one case at least, I am credibly informed, but I do not think there can be many others of that kind. I do not think that sort of thing will happen in the case of many settlers, although it appears to have happened in this particular case. Section 51 of the Act must be applied in such circumstances. I regret it if the power was exercised to penalise the average man who was attempting to do his best. He is a very good man who can get the best results in these days, and with present prices ruling. I do not sympathise with the man who has had to give an authority to private banks to pay his subscription to his organisation, but I do not know what would be said by members opposite if employees on Government works did the same thing. I do not think we would get much support from members opposite for that sort of thing.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You find money for it to-day. You insist upon the workers joining the A.W.U.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If they can pay, they do pay, but they get their living first. We have never yet achieved the distinction of inducing people to sign an authority for the payment of their subscriptions by the Bank.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Part of the conditions of employment is that the workers sign an order for the payment of their fees.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Quite a number of people have signed an authority for the payment of their membership fees to their organisations, and now want to cancel such orders.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There is nothing to prevent them from doing so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: One man said to me, "I am a member of two organisations. I have given the authority to pay, and willy nilly I will have to pay."

Hon. C. G. Latham: Did you not put him right and tell him he could cancel the order?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did not bother about it.

Mr. Stubbs: The Agricultural Bank has asked some farmers to refund the amounts that have been paid to organisations.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All I know is that I have been told that some farmers gave an order on the Bank to pay the membership fees of their organisations, and that the fee has been collected through that channel. Probably had the fees not been paid by the Bank, whose funds are really there only for the purpose of developing the agricultural industry, they would not have been paid. I do not agree that union fees or subscriptions should come first, but a man's living should come first. I sympathise with the idea of making payments for hospital treatment. Good health is a necessity. Something might be done in that way. I had a talk with the former trustees of the Agricultural Bank with regard to creating a hospital fund. I thought the settlers should get some help in times of sickness in their families. I should like to see this brought about. I believe I have now touched upon all the matters referred to by members. I am glad the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to give the Commissioners an opportunity to achieve results. A member in another place has condemned the chairman of the Commission. I do not propose to discuss that just now, or to disturb the harmony which prevails here. There is, however, a definite answer than can be given. The Commissioners are confronted by a very heavy task. They have the majority of farmers in the State as their clients. They have already inaugurated a policy in respect to group settlement, and I hope that will work out well. They have fixed certain capitalisations, and have asked settlers to pay interest on those amounts. If the interest cannot be paid, the settler is ex-

pected to make it up by maintenance or improvement. That is a good idea. I am hopeful the settlers will respond to it. If they make up their minds to succeed, they will receive every encouragement to do so. None of them will be forced off their holdings. A few public meetings have been called lately, but they will not have any particular influence upon the Commissioners, which is a good thing. If instead of calling public meetings the settlers endeavoured to live up to the expectations of the Commissioners, they should ultimately derive a definite advantage. Whenever I have made concessions to settlers and they have reciprocated, they have always been given a chance and been left alone. I hope the group settlers will try to live up to the proposals made for them by the Commissioners, and that as time goes on they will reap the benefit of the scheme. The prospects are better to-day than they were a few years ago. Butter fat has risen to 1s. 2d. or 1s. 3d. a lb., which is a very good price.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is 1s. 4d.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is better still. This improved price will make the outlook for the producers very much brighter. With this advantage, settlers in the South-West ought to be more contented. The member for Pingelly and the member for Wagin may have a grievance with regard to the non-attendance of the Commissioners at the meeting called at Lake King. I do not altogether object to their point of view. I feel, however, that most members of this Chamber approve of the appointment of the Commissioners. Some question arose in another place with regard to the appointment of Mr. McCallum as chairman. That gentleman is well known in this Chamber. It was necessary to have a man of strength, integrity, and experience. Members are not doing themselves justice if they put forward the view that no member of Parliament is entitled to an administrative post. Men do not stay in Parliament for years because they are fools, and they do not hold Ministerial office because they are fools. Members of this Chamber are men above the average capacity. If most of them had been trained in any particular business, they would have done well. Many members of Parliament would, if they had concentrated upon the making of money, have been able to make plenty of it. If they had concentrated on any particular business activity they would have done well.

The last thing members should do is to hold a man up to public criticism because he happens to be or has been, a member of Parliament.

The Premier: Because a man is a member of Parliament he is supposed to be unfit for any other position.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not think the question has been raised in this House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but it has been raised in another place.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Then leave it alone. You have representation there.

The Premier: A lot of dirt has been thrown up there.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You have the representation. Let your representatives put up a defence, if it is required.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is only a minority representation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But they can put it up.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Members of this Chamber have agreed that the appointments were sound. The selection of Mr. Clarke was a good one. He is a good business man with wide experience. If any man should know the dairying industry, he should, and I think his knowledge will prove valuable to the people of the South-West. He has for a long time been connected with a number of industries in that part of the State. He ought to be able to go upon any farm in the South-West and decide what the average settler can reasonably be expected to accomplish. He ought to be able to say, "Under these conditions, and carrying this quantity of stock, that settler ought to be able to achieve a certain result."

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not think he made too much out of farming himself. I think he had another line of business.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Who has made anything out of farming in the last five years?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: He has lost a lot.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some of the best business heads have made nothing out of farming of late years. If Mr. Clarke has not made much out of farming, he will be all the more sympathetic to others. During the last week I was on the Yandanooka Estate. I saw settlers there farming 600 acres. Under present conditions and with the capitalisation it is impossible for such men to succeed. I did

not like the outlook for them. No one has even asked a settler to do what is beyond his capacity, and no one expects it of him. When the Government appointed the Agricultural Bank Commissioners, they chose men who would look after the interests of the State, and secure a fair return to the State for the outlay, but who would not expect from the settlers something beyond their capacity to give. I hope members will give the Commissioners a chance. The work they have to do will certainly take them more than 12 months to accomplish. It must be carried out systematically and consistently. It is inevitable that complaints will arise. One settler will say he has had nothing, and complain that his neighbour has had something. The man who is able to carry on and pay his way cannot expect to have a writing down of his property. The Bank is not an institution for general benevolence. One man said to me the other day, "I have paid all my debts. What will I get from the Rural Relief Fund?" I said, "Nothing." He said, "What! That is very unfair." I said, "How is it unfair? Has anything been taken from you? Are you entitled to something that has been withheld from you?" He said, "But this is a gift, and you have given it to people who do not deserve it as much as I do." I replied, "Yes, that may be so, but that is one of the inequalities of life." It may be that all the farmers expect to benefit from the writing down, but if a man can pay his way he should not expect any writing down. Members of this House are expected to pay their way, and why should not others be in the same position? It may be said that some individuals will receive assistance who do not deserve it as much as others. That may possibly be so. However, members can depend upon it that the trustees who will administer the Rural Relief Trust Fund will carry out the expressed intention of the Federal Parliament and will provide relief in cases that they think comply with the necessary conditions. Similarly if the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank in valuing their securities give assistance to some, exception is bound to be taken by others to what they do. The Commissioners will do what they are empowered to carry out, but whatever they do, I do not expect they will give entire general satisfaction. On the other hand, members of Parliament who

have some experience and sense of responsibility will not, I feel sure, criticise the Commissioners unduly if they carry out their duties conscientiously and act in the best interests of the community.

Vote put and passed.

Department of the Minister for Education (Hon. H. Millington, Minister; the Minister for Agriculture Hon. F. J. S. Wise, in charge of Vote):

Vote—Education, £665,000:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gaseoyne) [8.17]: In submitting the Estimates for the Education Department for the current financial year, I would point out that the estimated expenditure is £665,000, an increase of over £52,297 compared with the actual expenditure for last year, and of that sum 92 per cent. covers salaries. Of the increased expenditure for this year, £50,802 represents increases in salaries and allowances. The bulk of the salaries increase consists of the restorations under the Financial Emergency Act, and as from the 1st January next the whole of the staff of the department will have their salaries restored to the 1931 level. Other notable expenditure increases are for long service leave to teachers, promotions on classification, sick leave and travelling allowances. There is every indication that the improved conditions for teachers have helped to restore the spirit of harmonious working, which was doubtless impaired by the former somewhat irksome state of affairs that may, to some extent, have been unavoidable. The teachers are now co-operating with the Government in the interests of the State and of our future citizens. They are performing in some instances voluntary work. While there was an occasion recently when the teachers resented to some extent the congratulations that were offered to them, I still think they are deserving of commendation for the great deal of voluntary work they are carrying out, in addition to their ordinary duties. There is no doubt we have a staff of teachers who are conscientious and energetic and who set a high standard of efficiency. The Government fully appreciate both the value of their work and the difficulties with which they have to contend. While we would be pleased to lighten their burden, to do more in their interests, and at the same

time create further advantages under our educational system, we are limited in that direction by considerations of finance. The financial limitations necessitate making haste slowly in many directions, but we are doing our utmost with the funds available. During recent years the increases in the Education Vote have been marked, and the figures for recent years are interesting. For 1932-33 the Vote was £553,847; for 1933-34, it was £576,296; for 1934-35, the Estimates provided £612,703, and for the current financial year, 1935-36, the estimated expenditure is £665,000. While the expenditure for the current financial year will be over £110,000 in excess of that for 1932-33, it will still be nearly £30,000 less than the Vote was in 1929-30. The strictest economy is still essential in the Education Department as in other departments, and that means that many of the activities of the department cannot be extended in desirable and commendable directions. As a means of assisting the youth employment movement, additional provision has been made for manual training and household management. In connection with technical education, the Government realise fully difficulties of the moment. We realise the position with regard to the technical college in the centre of the city: we are aware of the overcrowding that obtains, and other undesirable conditions that we are forced to permit to exist for the time being. With regard to the staff, during recent months there has been an alteration in the administrative head of the department, and a very learned and capable man in the Public Service has been appointed as Director of Education. Very shortly an appointment will be made to fill the position immediately below him. We hope that in the reconstruction of the staff other very important appointments will be made. The number of teachers in all grades on the staffs of our primary schools is 2,132, including 218 monitors and 172 sewing mistresses, who are employed for three hours weekly in country schools in charge of a male teacher. It is interesting to note that 36 per cent. of the teachers are men, the figures being 768 men and 1,364 women. In addition, there are 28 instructors and 10 monitors in the manual training centres, and 25 instructresses and four monitors in domestic science centres. A new domestic

science centre has been opened at Fairbridge. The Fairbridge Farm authorities provided the building and equipment, and the department recently made the appointment of an instructress to take charge of the work at that centre. The secondary schools have a staff regularly employed comprising 42 men and 35 women, while at the technical schools there are 19 men and 16 women. There has been a definite increase in the number of assisted schools at remote centres. The schools are subsidised by the Government, and that has resulted in 63 teachers being thus engaged. Where the number of children do not exceed eight, the Government provide a teacher if the parents of the children make available accommodation for the school-house. The increased facilities provided through our system of secondary education are reflected in the calibre of candidates for admission to the profession. There is a wonderful improvement in that direction, and the percentage of unclassified teachers has been reduced from 20.8 in 1921, to less than 10 now. The re-opening of the Teachers' College at Claremont was a definite advance and the number of students has gradually increased to meet the requirements of the department. There are 90 students at present for whom places will be found when the schools re-open in February of next year. An interesting point also is that the number of female teachers who resign for the purpose of marriage has reached normality, and the department experiences no difficulty in offering appointments to Teachers' College students. With reference to the marriage of our female teachers, bearing in mind that the number of female teachers so predominates, it is a wonderful thing that in our country centres particularly the influence wielded by the women teachers over the whole populace is such that their whole lives are affected by reason of the teachers being in their midst. Teachers of the calibre of the girls who are going out to the country centres are such that they wield a great influence, and I am pleased to know that many of them are living in the country after marriage. It is a splendid thing that in the lives of the people of some remote districts the teacher really sets the standard. I desire to make a brief reference to the correspondence classes and at the outset would point out that the work

in that direction is Australia's contribution to the educational systems of the world. It is remarkable to think that such a system emanated from within Australia not merely because it is so suited to our unusual conditions and requirements, but because it is a system that cannot be faulted. It is a wonderful tribute to those in charge of the correspondence classes that students who have taken the course, although they have never seen the inside of a schoolroom, have even graduated, although they were not provided with many of the facilities that in the past were considered necessary to complete the education of a child. Regarding manual training work, the building at East Perth will provide for domestic economy requirements, and four additional rooms will be available for that purpose. It is hoped that at least two rooms at the present Perth Girls' School in James-street will be available for manual training as soon as the East Perth school is ready to accommodate its quota of girls. In connection with buildings, the total number now is 870, and the expenditure on buildings has increased this year to £67,000 from £10,000 that was provided for the previous year. That is certainly a great achievement within 12 months.

Mr. J. H. Smith: A lot of that expenditure would be on the girls' school.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:

No, £14,000 only. On repairs and renewals there was spent £35,621, while new building extensions and the Perth Girls' School cost £14,904. Therefore it is not correct to say that most of that money was spent on the Perth Girls' School. Eight new schools were erected during the year, seven of them being in country districts. Six schools which were previously closed were transferred to other centres. Ten new classrooms and two additional sets of teachers' quarters were erected to provide additional accommodation at overcrowded schools. That is the direction in which we were hoping to make further improvements, but of course again limitations were imposed by the finances, and we had to restrict our programme. I should like to refer to a statement made by Mr. Doney on the Address-in-reply. He expressed doubts regarding the need for a new girls' school at East Perth and questioned whether it was needed as urgently as were a hundred small schools that he could name in farming districts, with particular reference to Toolibin and Dardadine. The conditions for small schools are that for

an average attendance of 10 the department provides the building, and for an average attendance of eight, applicants are required to provide the building and the department supplies the teacher, furniture, stock, etc. What is the truth in that regard? Is it that 100 small schools are more urgently needed than the school at East Perth? Definitely not. Not one small country school was closed even in the depths of the depression if the minimum attendance was maintained or was likely to be maintained. Nor was any application refused if the conditions were fulfilled.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Within the three-mile limit; I can give you instances.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It was sufficiently extravagant language on the part of the hon. member who said that 100 schools in the country could be named, all of which were urgently needed. Owing to settlers leaving farms, some few schools were closed because the minimum attendance fell; but in most instances, especially where there was a building, assisted schools were established. The increases in these schools are shown by the following numbers:—In 1929, 29; in 1930, 37; in 1931, 55; in 1932, 64; in 1933, 67, and in 1934, 74. In both cases quoted by the member for Williams-Narrogin, there were insufficient children to warrant the opening of a school, but the department agreed to supply a teacher if the parents provided the building. At Toolibin £35 was granted by the department to assist. A school was erected and opened but was found to be unsatisfactory and it required another £25 to make it meet requirements. The parents were informed that they would have to make the building safe at their own expense. At Dardadine the parents erected the building and the school was opened. In addition, certain allowances are made for driving children to school. To enable children in the country to reach schools an allowance not exceeding 6d. per day is paid for each child in cases where the children are conveyed to school by horse, or 6d. a week when a bicycle is used. In addition, contracts are let for driving children to school by charabanc. This course does away with the necessity of erecting a number of small schools. At the present time there are 23 such contracts in operation.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: All this is very much appreciated.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No fewer than 3,403 children take advantage

of these conditions. There are 2,647 children who use private conveyances, 121 who use bicycles, and 635 who are driven by charabanc. The cost of these allowances during the year 1934-35 amounted to, ordinary £10,130 and charabanc £5,574, a total of £15,705. In connection with the curriculum it is the intention of the department to print the revised curriculum which has been on trial in schools for over a year. It was compiled by committees consisting of inspectors and teachers, and it is hoped it will offer opportunities to develop the potentialities of each individual child in harmony with his own best interests. It is not a hard and fast State-wide curriculum to be stamped down on individual districts, regardless of their particular needs of educational aspirations. It provides for a certain basic core of common learning essential to domestic well-being in the interests of a common system of education, and in this respect only is it to be set up and definitely proscribed for all. Hand work is stressed throughout the curriculum. An additional manual training centre has been built at Victoria Park, and the Fairbridge Farm school authorities have built and equipped a centre there. The department has supplied the teacher. Interest in the course of domestic economy for girls is well maintained, and the four new rooms being provided for in the new girls' school at East Perth should relieve the situation considerably. The present Government are interested in all forms of technical education and manual activities, even from the lowest grade in the primary schools to the senior classes at the technical college. In connection with technical education, under this branch are included the Perth Technical College and the technical schools at Fremantle, Midland Junction and eastern gold-fields (Boulder). The School of Mines at Kalgoorlie is not included in the technical education branch although the Superintendent of Technical Education has also the administrative control of the institution in order to co-ordinate the work done at the Technical College and the School of Mines and the classification of the staffs. The average number of individual students at the technical schools in 1934 was 4,081. The average number for the past four years was 4,142. The number of registered trade apprentices attending the compulsory classes in 1934 decreased by 121, 98 at Perth and 23 at Midland Junction. The decrease of building trade apprentices at Perth Tech-

nical College was 53 compared with the 1933 figures. The preparatory class enrolment of individuals was 357, an increase of 177. The self-supporting classes, which are increasing, had 618 individual students. There are 50 classes in operation. There is great increase being shown in the self-supporting classes and good work is being done in this direction. New classes under this scheme were commenced as follows:—Postal mechanics, Commonwealth typists, insurance institute, cookery, aero (Boulder), wood-working (Boulder), nurses (correspondence), and art (correspondence). A certain amount of correspondence work was done under the self-supporting scheme, but a comprehensive scheme is needed for country boys and girls past the departmental correspondence stage. The accommodation is inadequate, up to 400 students having to attend the Perth Boys' School during evenings on account of lack of accommodation. The overcrowding is responsible for the big fall away during the year. Little modern equipment is available for the class work. The fees to which reference was made in the Address-in-reply are as follows:—Students under 21 receive free tuition on payment of a registration fee of 5s.; free students pay 10s. per term laboratory fee in higher grade chemistry and physics. Commercial students pay a fee of 5s. per term for typewriting. Students, 21 years and over pay fees from 10s. to 40s. per term, the former fees generally for the two-hour class in lower grade commercial and general work, and the latter for high-grade work in chemistry up to 12 hours a week. The Minister may exempt any student from the payment of fees. Regarding self-supporting fees, these are charged in classes which could not be carried on otherwise owing to want of funds. The fees are fixed according to the costs of the class work, and all students who attend must pay. The accommodation requirements are at present met at Fremantle and Boulder, but Perth and Midland Junction require more accommodation. The science equipment at the Perth Technical College has been out of date for years. The engineering department, including electrical engineering, has few laboratory facilities. No department can procure textbooks. Classwork extensions are needed to cope with the ever-changing conditions of industry. I should like to pay a tribute to the work of all those engaged in this very valuable department and

I hope that, with the relief the Government have been able to afford, there will be a general settling down and that a better outlook will prevail than has been the case in the past. The greatest co-operation exists between those on the administrative side of the department and those actively engaged in the schools in the metropolitan area and rural districts. I submit the Estimates.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [8.45]: In introducing these Estimates, the Minister must feel proud of his department. Every hon. member will agree that the Government made a wise choice in the person of the present Director of Education. I listened with great interest to the Minister's remarks, and I appreciate what the department have done. However, I regret that there is not more money available for additional schools in country areas. One point I wish to stress is the wonderful activity at the Narrogin School of Agriculture. In referring to that school I do not wish to go over the head of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney); but when one is personally interested in an institution, it has a special appeal. I have a son attending the Narrogin school. It is a pity that additional funds cannot be made available for extensions of buildings, particularly sheds. An assembling shed is badly needed at the school—a place where the boys could do the assembling of machinery generally. At present no accommodation whatever exists for that purpose. When one visits the Muresk School of Agriculture, the comparison is most striking. Mr. Shugg has proved himself a man of outstanding ability in the conduct of the school. Not long ago two members of the New South Wales Parliament—Country Party representatives—came to Western Australia to investigate our land policy, and toured the South-West in company with the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson). I met the party at Beverley, and both gentlemen said that as a result of their experience throughout the whole of Australia they considered the Narrogin School of Agriculture afforded the highest type of education.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: They said that school stood on its own.

Mr. MANN: We may justly be proud of the institution. A boy does not go to such a school so much for the scientific side as for the practical course. While not decriing Muresk, I may say that many of the young

men to-day on the land attribute their presence there less to instruction in the scientific side of farming than to instruction on the practical side. As a farmer I am convinced that practical experience in all branches of farming is obtainable at Narrogin. I pay that tribute to the school, and express the hope that the Minister will if possible make more money available so that a larger number of boys may attend the school. To-day the attendance is 70, and I understand that last year 40 applications were turned down. There are wonderful possibilities at the school. There is another aspect on which I desire to congratulate the Education Department. The Minister referred in feeling terms to the system of correspondence classes. Of that system we have every reason to be proud. My own children spent their first years on the farm under the system of correspondence classes, which are a wonderful method of education. The girls who have been selected to conduct the system may be described as marvellous. Their corrections and suggestions to the pupils are admirable. Many a country child would have no possibility of obtaining an education were it not for the correspondence classes. Certainly, in many cases the system is hard on mothers, who have enough work in domestic life. Still, mothers do make sacrifices to help in the education of their children. I feel proud of our Education Department. Whenever I go to the department to discuss matters with the officers, every possible consideration and aid are given. If more money can by any possibility be allocated to the Narrogin farm school, I hope it will be done. That institution has a great and excellent influence on boys intending to adopt farm life.

MR. WARNER (Mt. Marshall) [8.51]: I paid close attention to the Minister's introduction of these Estimates. It was most pleasing to hear his exposition of them. There are, however, a few things I wish to comment upon. Chiefly, there is the inconvenience caused to country children attending school in connection with transport and matters appertaining to comfort while in the school. The Minister stated that 121 children were receiving the allowance of 6d. per week for travelling on bicycles. That allowance should be doubled. In many instances parents who have bought bicycles because they are unable to keep a

cart or a sulky, in view of bad seasons, have made the purchase on time payment, and find it highly inconvenient to keep up the payments although the terms are reasonable. Could not the Minister double the allowance of 6d. per week? The bicycles represent a heavy cost to the parents. Much time has to be put in to keep the machines in repair, and in the country during summer the perishing of rubber means considerable expense. In addition, tubes and so forth have to be replaced. The system of relegating scrapped furniture from metropolitan schools to the country centres should be abolished. Many desks in country schools should be scrapped. As regards many of them in schools throughout my district, I assert that they should never have been used at all. Children six or eight years old, and growing as Australian children should, develop a hump on the back after two years of sitting at those desks. That remark applies to my district, and I hope the evil will be remedied straightaway. I suggest to the Minister that he obtain a report from country inspectors on the question of scrapping furniture in country schools. Many applications have been made for shelter sheds, and turned down on the ground that funds are not available. In the country there are not the conveniences and comforts and travelling facilities available in the metropolitan area. Reasonable shelter sheds should be provided to enable country children to eat their mid-day meal in comfort. I hope the Minister will call for files showing applications for shelter sheds in towns and small centres of the wheat belt, where there are assisted and other schools. I hope the hon. gentleman will endeavour to provide that little comfort for the country children.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.55]: As the result of the Youth and Motherhood Campaign we shall have to decide the question whether or not the school age should be raised. In many countries it has been raised to 16 years, and a great proportion of our people are of the opinion that the age should be raised here where possible. I know there are economic difficulties in the way of this proposal, but these difficulties affect every problem. I trust the matter will receive consideration from the Government, especially if a strong report on the

subject comes in from the Youth and Motherhood Campaign committee, as I hope. The Minister for Education and his new Director are placed in a difficult position with regard to amending the whole basis of education to meet the times in which we live. It is even more difficult for the Education Department than for any other form of activity, because the department deals not with the next few months but must prepare for changes extending over four or five years. I appreciate the difficulty facing the department. There is also the question of dealing with the new training for leisure. All these problems are ripe for the department, and I feel sure the Director of Education is closely considering them. It is quite certain that whatever has obtained during the past 50 years will not apply within the next few years. A great many changes must be expected, and the Education Department have to keep pace with altering conditions. One often hears parents say that at school their children are not trained in any way to meet the problems of the time, problems which they will have to face after leaving school. Looking at the position from another angle, a great problem confronting the department is the degree of effervescence characterising Australian youth. During the holidays one sees hundreds of broken bottles scattered all over suburban roads or thrown into the sea. Youths are even known to ringbark the beautiful pines which have taken 20 or 30 years to grow to their present height, and the municipalities have been compelled to send round gardeners to rescue the trees. Can it be said that with the years and years of education we are giving our youth it is not possible to guide or train that effervescence into better directions than the ringbarking of beautiful trees and the throwing of bottles all over the street, and vandalism of all kinds? I may add that I have heard of similar conduct in King's Park. Thus the Education Department have a great problem to solve. There is much talk of training for leisure. Here we have leisure that needs training in order to prevent that kind of conduct. As for the bottles that get into the sea, Nature is kind and quickly smoothes the jagged edges until they are like wood. However, our youth as a whole are certainly out of hand, and we must

look to the Education Department to devise means of guiding them in these times.

Mr. Marshall: Would not you have chopped a little tree when you were young?

Mr. NORTON: But these fellows are not so young. They are the product of the educational system. The third matter to which I would refer is already receiving attention at the Department of Education, but that attention could certainly be increased. I refer to the question of educating our children in regard to hygiene and their physical fitness and their diet. This is particularly important, because we have Mr. Bruce at Home seeking to educate the people of Europe up to the eating of better food and the living of better lives. Mr. Bruce is taking the responsibility on himself of trying to educate those people, but it leaves us open to the retort that people living in glass houses should not throw stones, because there is in this country great room for the tuition of children in regard to hygiene, physical fitness, and diet. I believe that in this direction Western Australia leads the other States, but I say that even more attention can be given to these important subjects here in Western Australia than has been given to them in the past.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.2]: The Minister had a pleasing and heartening story to tell, and one which I believe gave pleasure to all of us who were present. It is gratifying to know that the trouble that occurred with the teachers some time ago has been happily settled, and that the work which those teachers did—I refer to work performed outside their ordinary hours—is being resumed. As a matter of fact, our teachers provide an example of enthusiasm which would be very hard, if not impossible, to beat. The teachers almost without exception are keenly concerned in their work, and I am satisfied that, whatever they may be paid, they receive a satisfaction quite beyond monetary value. It was pleasing to all Western Australians when one of the senior officers in the department was appointed to the position of Director. I applaud the policy which sees in junior officers the making of qualified senior officers, and in senior officers fit material for the highest posts. That policy should be adopted generally. I know it is adopted in the appointment of successive railway commissioners, and I have never seen an error made in that

regard Without going back beyond Colonel Pope, Mr. Evans and Mr. Ellis, no one can dispute that successive Governments have made wise selections. I am satisfied that the same wisdom has now been shown in the appointment of the Director of Education. Reverting to the work done by the teachers, it is indeed surprising to find how exceptionally keen they are on their task, how exceptionally anxious they are to assist the children in avenues quite outside the ordinary curriculum. I refer to the various applied arts and exhibitions of drawing and painting. Their work in that way must be gratifying not only to the Minister but to everyone taking the slightest interest in the work. The correspondence classes have enabled children in outback districts to receive an education which otherwise would have been impossible. And I find that the parents become just as keen on these lessons as do the children, and I believe that parents and children are brought closer together because of that work. The exhibition of work done by the correspondence classes, as shown at the Royal Show each year, is one of the most remarkable examples of what children can do. A suggestion has been made in regard to the Youth Appeal. I am not quite sure what Mr. Kennelly intends in respect to the expenditure of the moneys raised, but it might possibly be that the provision of better school furniture, referred to by the member for Mt. Marshall (Mr. Warner), will receive consideration. I should imagine that furniture, which is constructed to conform to the health requirements of a child and the avoidance of an unnatural attitude, would be in the best interests of the youth and perhaps would prevent the undermining of a constitution which otherwise might be injured throughout life. Now I hope, Mr. Chairman, you will pardon me for referring to electorate matters. One is the need for a school at Kenwick, which is on the boundary of the Swan and Canning electorates. Combined, the number of children there is considerable.

Mr. Lambert: I wanted a school for Bullahulling.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am prepared to assist to provide a school for the hon. member himself. Children in the locality of Kenwick have to travel up to a distance of three miles in order to attend an existing school. No doubt the Minister has the matter under consideration.

Mr. Coverley: Some children have to travel farther than that in the North.

Mr. SAMPSON: Still, three miles is a long way for a young child to travel. Many years ago, when Mr. Clydesdale was a member of this House, we took up this matter together, but at that time there was scarcely sufficient justification in point of number of children for the proposed school. To-day that condition has greatly improved. Another matter relates to those very small centres where the school is the only building of a public or a semi-public nature, and where there is neither hall nor church, and no private building suitable for the holding of a religious service. It is there customary for representatives of the various religious organisations to hold a church service in the school. I know that the rental charged, namely, 2s. 6d., is very small, but compared with the financial ability of the people, it is a large sum, the payment of which causes a good deal of anxiety. We can quite understand that where the small school is in one building and the settlers are scattered long distances apart, many of them struggling to remain on their holdings, they have literally not a penny to spare. The request I am making to the Minister is that consideration be given to those religious bodies who are unable to afford even the small sum of 2s. 6d. I could mention three places where the payment of that amount constitutes a serious problem.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Do not they take round the collection plate?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is no use taking around a collection plate if there is no money whatever in the congregation. I hope the Minister will be good enough to give consideration to this matter. I can assure him that in some instances the payment of the 2s. 6d. has prevented the regular holding of religious services.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [9.12]: I was pleased to find that there is an increase in the Vote this year. For several years past the Vote has been well below normal. Even yet we have not got back to normal, and I cannot give the Government any praise on account of the economic position having improved a little. We are not yet within £100,000 of the figures for 1929-30, but I trust we shall get back there in the near future. This is a department in regard to which the Treasurer has been

particularly generous. The Minister, in introducing his Estimates, said that in no instance where application is made for a school and where there are ten children available, had the department refused to build a school, and that where eight children were available, if the parents built the school, the department would find teachers. In view of this I am going to interview the department first thing in the morning and ask for a school, the original application for which went in a considerable time ago. I have great respect for the Director of Education, and I think his appointment was a good one. Whenever one goes to that department he receives courtesy from whichever officer he may chance to meet. The Education Department in Western Australia is something to be proud of. What we require is a much bigger vote, bigger to the extent of £300,000 or £400,000. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) said that in the outback there were 100 places he could mention where schools were required. I am not going to say that, but I say that many schools in country districts have been neglected. Of course we had the depression to blame for it. And in those outback areas no provision has been made for the teachers.

The Minister for Education: That will mean another £300,000.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, it will require a great deal of money to bring up to standard the education facilities in Western Australia. It is a department with which the Government cannot afford to be stingy. Like the member for Swan I intend to be a little parochial and inform the Minister of what is happening in my district. A few years ago the then Minister for Education (the late Mr. Davy) approved of a new school on a different site at Manjimup. The area occupied by the school was handed over to the Lands Department, subdivided and portion of it was sold. We still have the old school on part of the original site, and one new classroom has been built on the new site. The Government have not had the money with which to complete the new building. I hope the Minister for Education will see that the new building is provided out of this year's Vote. The proceeds from the land sold, I believe, were sufficient to build the new school. This is a growing want in the dis-

trict. Manjimup is a populous district, and it is not fair to the people to have one part of the school 300 or 400 yards from another. Another long-felt want of my district is a high school at Bridgetown. There is one at Bunbury, but it does not serve the purpose. As the Premier and the Minister know, Bridgetown is the most important centre, being fed by the Upper Blackwood, Manjimup, Greenbushes and Balingup districts. I compliment the Minister on his winning ways in having succeeded in getting an increase of £52,000 this year, and I hope that next year he will be able to persuade the Premier to increase the vote of the Department by £300,000 or £400,000, because this is one of the most important votes on the Estimates.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.17]: There are so many requirements in my district that I am afraid to enumerate them all. I should need nearly the whole of the increase to supply everything that is really required. I appreciate the fact that during the year the department saw fit to erect a new manual training room at Victoria Park. That will be keenly appreciated by those concerned. Children of that one school will save £5 per week in tram fares, so members will realise that the new room is appreciated.

Mr. Sampson: Perhaps the Minister for Railways will not.

Mr CROSS: Immediate steps should be taken to erect a manual training room for girls in South Perth at either the Forrest-street or Kensington-street school, so that they will no longer need to travel to the city. A number of schools would supply sufficient pupils and there has been a demand for housewifery classes for girls at South Perth. Such a room would serve Como, and the Forrest-street and Kensington-street schools, as well as the lower end of Victoria Park district. A site should be secured for a central school in South Perth. I think I directed attention to this matter on a previous occasion. At South Perth and Nedlands, at no very distant date, I believe that central schools will be required, and if the rate of building at South Perth continues, unless the department secure a site soon, they will have to pay a fancy price for land. It would be wise to secure a site while suitable land is available. Regarding central schools, the Minister should

give attention to a matter that has been brought before him or his predecessors on several occasions during the last two or three years. Children who are compelled to attend central schools in the metropolitan area and to travel by tram have to pay their own fares whereas children fortunate enough to reside near the railway are given free transport. A child in my electorate won a scholarship. If she had lived at Kalamunda or in one of the country districts she would be entitled to a living allowance of £24 a year. The child's parents are invalids, living on the invalid pension, and there are other members of the family. The girl has just turned 14, and unless special effort is made to get outside the existing regulations, the child will be compelled to give up the scholarship owing to the poor circumstances of the family. Representations have been made to the department, and I hope the Minister will strain a point to make a living allowance available to that child so that she may take advantage of what she has won in open competition with other children. During the last year or two quite a number of schools in the metropolitan area have installed wireless sets. This is to the advantage of the Education Department because, on certain days of the week, the department have made arrangements with broadcasting authorities to have suitable lectures broadcast to the children. Those lectures are of great benefit to the children and are keenly appreciated. One must compliment the Parents and Teachers' Associations who have provided sets for many of the schools in the metropolitan area. In this direction I think the department could give some assistance to the smaller schools in poorer districts where it has not been possible to take advantage of the arrangements made by the department. In the schools in South Perth and in Victoria Park sets have been installed, but some of the smaller schools like those at Queen's Park, Cannington, East Cannington and Wattle Grove cannot afford sets. Those are poor communities, and assistance should be given so that the children attending those schools might have the benefit of the lectures. I wish to direct the Minister's attention to the matter of school quarters. Some of the headmasters in my electorate are compelled to live in the quarters, while others do not do so. I have a grouch about the school quarters at Queen's Park.

Mr. Lambert: Some of the teachers in my districts are living in tents.

Mr. CROSS: Perhaps they are fortunate. In Queen's Park the average rent paid for a house is around 15s. a week. The schoolmaster could get cheaper quarters, but he is compelled to occupy the school quarters and pay £1 a week. My attention has been called to this matter, not by the master, but by residents who desire to have the master residing in the district where a Parents and Teachers' Association has been formed. Some months ago we made an inspection of the Queen's Park school and found that some of the posts of the enclosing fence had rotted off while others had been burnt down. A small sum was asked for to enable repairs to be made, but so far no satisfaction has been obtained from the department. My information is that the Treasury refuse to grant anything towards repairing the fence. Members of the Parents and Teachers' Association are endeavouring to beautify the school grounds, but their efforts are being nullified by the depredations of straying cattle. The department should see that at least a stock-proof fence is erected. Quite a number of posts in the back and side fences have gone, and there is hardly any wire-netting left. There are many other requirements in my district. I hope that a new school will soon be built at Mt. Henry. If the work is not soon put in hand, instead of having to build one room, two rooms will be required. In the next 12 months there will be a demand from that district for an additional room. I hope the requests which have been submitted to the department will receive the consideration of the Minister. It appears to be the practice of the Education Department, when a new room is added to a school, to build it on the gravelled area. When a room occupying 800 square feet of gravelled area is erected, an equivalent piece of the school ground is not gravelled for the use of the children.

Mr. Marshall: That comes under the Public Works Department.

Mr. CROSS: Perhaps so, but I should like the Minister to give consideration to the matter. The masters desire the gravelled area in order to drill the children, and it is only fair that a reasonable area should be available. A lot of work has been done for the schools in my district, but I regard it as only a first instalment and hope the work will be continued.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.29]: It is not my purpose to enter into details of the many school facilities required in my district. It is certainly not my purpose to suggest that we should shift the University to Coolgardie or establish a technical school at Southern Cross, or erect schools at Bullabulling or other places that probably require them. My desire is to address myself to a very important matter, namely, the result of the Youth Appeal in this State. I hope the Minister will give serious consideration to the utilisation of the money that has been subscribed, for the provision of buildings for recreation for boys. I speak of gymnasiums, etc., at the different schools. We lack provision of that kind such as the boy scouts and sea scouts are endeavouring to cater for. A great advantage would accrue to the boys if they were provided with healthful recreations in the evening instead of being left to get into mischief and roam the streets. The boy of to-day has nowhere to go, and is usually restless in mind. Under proper direction he would soon become interested in a form of recreation such as I have described. This appeal money could well be used for the erection of suitable buildings and equipping such buildings with the necessary appliances. With a number of useful citizens to take an interest in the boys and show them what to do, much good could be accomplished. It is remarkable the amount of good work that is being done in England, in the country districts as well as in London, particularly amongst the unemployed and unemployable lads. If we could do something along those lines it would help the boys who are to become our future citizens and would be very good for them. I notice a considerable increase in this Vote. It has been suggested there ought to be a close scrutiny of the expenditure, particularly as there is an increased expenditure estimated for the current year of £50,000. If a close scrutiny of the Vote were made, it is possible that considerable economy could be effected, without decreasing the efficiency of our educational system. I hope the Minister will consider the advisability of building recreation and gymnasium rooms at the different schools throughout the State. The member for Canning complained about children having to walk about two or three miles to school. In my district children often travel 15 or 20 miles. Some of them are away from home for 13 or 14 hours every

day. Much good could be achieved in the way of beautifying the school grounds by a closer co-operation between the Education Department and the Forests Department, as a result of which many beautiful shrubs and trees could be planted in the school grounds. Almost every school ground in the metropolitan area is a disgrace from this point of view, despite the fact that thousands of suitable trees and shrubs are available in the nurseries of the Forests Department.

Mr. Moloney: You would not say that if you looked at the Thomas-street school.

Mr. LAMBERT: I did not know the hon. member had been planting trees there lately. Most of the school grounds are bare. The children would take a pride in looking after their trees and shrubs, and this would probably minimise the destructive instincts that were referred to by the member for Claremont. The young Australian loves to get hold of a pen-knife and ring-bark a tree. If a love of trees and shrubs were inculcated in his mind by reason of his being detailed to look after certain trees in his own grounds, he would have a better consciousness of his duties as a citizen. He would certainly not be so destructive as the boys in Cottesloe appear to be. The Conservator of Forests is an enthusiast in matters of this kind, and I am sure would help the Minister to carry out such a project. We could have a State-wide campaign for the planting of trees and shrubs at all the main schools. The school at Cottesloe has no shrubs or trees around it, and the same can be said of the James-street school and most of the suburban schools. I do not see why the principle should not be extended to rose beds and other flower beds.

Mr. North: Such as we see on railway stations.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. Instead of children engaging in a lot of useless play, they could have inculcated in their minds a love of the beauties of nature and the value of flowers, shrubs and trees. In this way our school grounds both in town and country would be beautified and a strong appeal made to the minds of the youngsters attending school.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.40]: I wish to refer to one statement made by the Minister. I have tried to get a school started at Culgullin, a mining centre in my electorate where at present there are eight children requiring tuition. I have had two

replies from the department to the effect that where there are fewer than 10 children available the only form of education open to them is by correspondence.

The Minister for Agriculture: Or an assisted school.

Mr. MARSHALL: I was not offered any assisted school, and, even if the people provided the school, the department did not offer a teacher. The brighter aspect of each department is generally placed by Ministers before members.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I think you are wrong.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not wrong in stating that I had those two replies from the department. Statements are made by Ministers in good faith. The Minister for Mines said that single men could get 15s. a week to go prospecting. That is true, but many applications are rejected. We should know both sides of the case. My application was rejected, although the Minister said this evening that, if the people provided the school, the department would supply the teacher where there were fewer than 10 children.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is definite.

Mr. MARSHALL: I hope the Minister will look into the case. I am not asking for more than is being asked for in other instances of the kind.

The Minister for Agriculture: They can get a teacher.

Mr. MARSHALL: Reference was made to raising the age at which children should leave school. There is nothing to prevent a child from continuing his education beyond the age of 14, unless it be lack of accommodation, etc. If it were compulsory for a child to continue at school after the age of 14, the Government would have to consider making provisions for books for such children. I know of scores of parents who would allow their children to stay on but for the cost of the books. As the father of five children I assure members that it takes a fair sum each year to provide the necessary books. We talk of a free education system. It is of the utmost importance to children that instead of starting school at the age of six and leaving at 14 they should start at 10 and finish at 18. Children do not begin to appreciate the value of education until they are at least 14. They are like parrots prior to that age, repeating what they have been

taught. They have no idea of the value of the studies they are engaged in. When they do reach the age where they can show an appreciation of the value of the teaching and can understand the advantage of learning we throw them out into the world. It is a very cruel world into which they are thrown at the moment. I still believe that the Education Department would be well advised if during the last 12 months the child is at school the system were adopted of devoting a few minutes each day to object-lessons indicating the evil effects of over-indulgence in gambling, drinking and smoking. I mentioned this matter recently, and merely desire to emphasise it now. Children leave school without any idea as to the harmful effects of over-indulgence in these vices, and so they are not fortified with the necessary information to safeguard themselves against these objectionable features of our everyday life. If daily object-lessons were given in the schools during the last 12 months of the children's attendance, they would at least have some knowledge of the effect of over-indulgence. What is the good of giving children a technical education enabling them to provide themselves with a livelihood, when all their earnings may be spent on gambling, drink and smoking to excess?

Mr. Rodoreda: Why should not the parents give the children lessons in that respect?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Education Department is being called upon more and more to do much that the parents themselves should carry out. Responsibilities are being thrust on the department, whereas the homes should accept those responsibilities.

The Premier: And perhaps not much is done in some homes.

Mr. MARSHALL: Unfortunately, I think the Premier is right. My own children have not been able to show me that in the elementary schools any lessons have been given regarding the evil effects of the vices mentioned. Probably the Minister could see the Director of Education and ascertain what could be done along the lines I have suggested. Even if a hundred per cent. success were not achieved, we would at least have the satisfaction of knowing that our educational system provided the children with a chance.

Mr. Moloney: What about the Sunday schools and churches?

Mr. MARSHALL: Attendance at Sunday school or church is not compulsory. That is where we missed a great opportunity. If we made it compulsory for the children to attend Sunday school and church—

Member: We would have a riot.

Mr. MARSHALL: We teach the children how to provide themselves with a livelihood, but fail to educate them regarding the ill effects of over-indulgence in vices. Therefore we assist them to earn correctly, but to spend their earnings wrongfully. Something should be done to remedy that position.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [9.50]: It is pleasing to note that there is a substantial increase in the Education Vote, and possibly we would not exaggerate the position if we said it was necessary to double it. The financial situation will not permit of that being done, but the increase certainly indicates an improvement in the finances. The officers of the Education Department are always very courteous, and during the past three years my interviews with them have always proved conversationally pleasant, but financially sterile. I made application to the department this year to have the school ground at Herne Hill gravelled, and suggested that the matter might be left in the hands of the schoolmaster. My reason for the suggestion was that there are gravel pits all round the school, and the master understands local conditions. If he had been provided with £10 by the department, the school yard would have been gravelled and put in good order. There is too much red tape associated with such matters. As a result of my application, two officers of the Public Works Department visited Herne Hill, and they reported against the work being undertaken. These visits per motor car are more or less costly, and I do not think the action in this instance was warranted. Another matter that I desire to place before the Minister is that in the Swan district schools provision is made to the sixth standard only and if children are to continue their education beyond that stage, they have to travel to Midland Junction. People who live beyond the three-mile limit receive a driving allowance when they send their children to the country schools, but the

children who travel by bus to Midland Junction represent a charge of 2s. 6d. per head to the parents, who do not receive any allowance. If several children from one family have to travel to Midland Junction, it becomes an expensive matter for the parents, and I contend they should be entitled to an allowance. I understand the Education Department intend to do away with the position of the instructor in physical culture.

The Minister for Agriculture: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. THORN: I am pleased to have the Minister's assurance, because I heard that the Vote was to be deleted from the Estimates. Physical culture plays a most important part in the life of the child, assisting in its development and safeguarding its health. One other matter I will refer to is a request I made for the establishment of a school in the district between Chidlow and Wooroloo. The department was unable to accede to my request. This means that the children have to catch the train that leaves Perth at 7.38 a.m. so that they may reach school in time. The trouble is that in the afternoon they have to hang around Wooroloo until after 5 p.m. before they can catch the train back to their homes. The station there is about the most inhospitable in the district, and parents, especially in the winter, have to travel in to meet the children in order to accompany them home. There is a number of children there but the Education Department takes the view that, there being a school at Chidlow and another at Wooroloo, it is not an economic proposition to grant the school asked for, although the travelling distance is anything up to eight or ten miles. I hope that, with the improvement in the Education Vote, it will be possible to reconsider that decision.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.56]: The general tenor of the Minister's remarks was to the effect that the State was doing as much for education as it could afford. But the question I put to myself is, can the State afford to do so little for education? We must have more education, not only more in quantity but better in quality. And we cannot in this subject be satisfied with makeshift or slipshod methods; and for the people of this State no education but the best should be sufficient. We

constitute a democracy, and a successful democracy requires an enlightened people. Fear and repression have been tried in a number of countries, but we pin our faith to democracy and, if it is to be successful, we must have a fully enlightened people. To that end we must aim progressively to raise the level of the trained and informed intelligence of the community. Under the depression through which we have been passing education, together with other matters, suffered severely and the measure of recovery which we have achieved up to the present has been achieved at a heavy cost of physical and mental development of the masses. I believe that as the first step towards more education, we must raise the school-leaving age. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) mentioned that and said he supported the idea. I agree with him. Action has already been taken in a number of countries, and a number of counties in Great Britain have increased the school-leaving age to 15 years, and I think we also should take the same step. The post-primary education which we give in this State is of a cheap variety and is not such as we should be satisfied with. We want a better quality and more types of post-primary education, because when children pass through the sixth standard and go to the post-primary school, it is not possible to find one course of training which will suit them all. Quite a number of courses are essential to meet the various needs and aptitudes of the children. At present we have the position that the children of working people are for the most part given their post-primary education at the bigger central schools, which in no way compares with the secondary education obtainable at Perth Modern School. I claim that every child in the country is entitled to a standard of post-primary education equivalent to that given at the high schools. I repeat that the post-primary education which the majority of the children are receiving is too cheap to be of much value. I realise that one of the big difficulties under which the department is labouring is the fact that there is insufficient accommodation for the classes. It is generally accepted that a class of children in a primary school should not be larger than 40. We have classes very much larger than that, and I urge first of all that we should endeavour to provide accommodation even for classes of 50. We cannot come below that yet, because at pre-

sent we have children accommodated in bat rooms and in sheds that are not at all desirable and this state of affairs should be remedied right away. Some of the buildings, especially in country districts, are obsolete and not at all suitable for the proper education of children, and it is the proper education that we are seeking. Those obsolete buildings should be demolished and modern buildings erected. Take for example the household management training given by the department. There the overcrowding is lamentable, with the result the work that is done is very much less efficient than it should be for the expenditure of the money. Not only do we get a less efficient type of training, but a large number of the girls get no training at all. I find that last year in the metropolitan area there were 682 girls in Class 6 who were denied the right of household management training. That is entirely unfair. If it is right that several hundreds should get household management training in Standard 6, then it is the right of every girl in Standard 6 to have that training also. As I say, in the metropolitan area last year 682 girls were denied that training and I find that, out of a total of 3,100 girls in Standard 6 throughout the country, 1,700 had no training in household management. That must mean that in country districts girls in Standard 6 have had no household management training whatever. Something should be done to remedy that position. The isolation of children should be no bar to their having what we consider to be essential education. All steps should be taken to see that that education is given to those children who are of the age to receive it. I find in reading through the annual report that the instructress in household management says that even to those children who receive the training full justice cannot be done, because it is desired to extend the training to make it more embracing. The instructresses realise its value and it is not possible to make the extension owing to lack of funds. The same story can be told of manual training for boys. The accommodation is insufficient. There are not enough manual training rooms, not enough benches in the rooms already provided, and there is a shortage of tools. Last year 2,000 boys in the metropolitan area were denied manual training. That is an astounding figure. Surely something should be done to remedy the position. I remark again that the country chil-

dren have practically no facilities for training of that kind. The deficiency, however, is being made good in some measure by the action of parents and teachers' associations and also of road boards throughout the State. The road board at Gingin has donated benches for a manual training room; Millars Timber and Trading Company have done the same at Jarrahdale; the returned soldiers are building a manual training shed at Boyanup. This shows that the people realise the need for manual training and are doing their best to make good the deficiency. The burden of doing those things should not be thrown on them. They pay their taxes and are entitled to have for their children the education that is given in the metropolitan area. Such needs should be supplied from the vote of the Education Department.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It would mean increasing the vote.

Mr. TONKIN: I am advocating that it should be increased; an increase is very necessary. The same thing applies to the science branch. The bench space and the locker accommodation are much below requirements and the result is much reduced efficiency in the teaching. Another aspect is that where there is insufficient locker accommodation, apparatus cannot be stowed away. It is left out with the result that breakages are more extensive and so indirectly the cost is greater. Considerable expense might be saved if a little more money were expended in providing additional lockers and so saving breakages of apparatus that cannot be put away. The equipment supplied to the various schools is not nearly sufficient and, in many instances, that which is supplied is obsolete. That represents a waste of money. Obsolete equipment should never be sent out; it would be far better to destroy it. I advocate a more liberal supply of books, paper and pencils to the schools because those are essential items. Parents are not in a position to provide those requirements for the children. Regarding arts and crafts, equipment is absolutely essential. We cannot expect the teachers to buy it, nor can we expect the children to do so. A certain amount, say 6d. per child, should be made available for the provision of initial equipment. That would enable the teachers to make a start, and the finished articles could be sold and the proceeds devoted to buying additional equipment and so the work could be carried

on. But the department should make money available in the first place to enable a start to be made. Reverting to manual training, more tools must be supplied to the different centres. Another essential is to supply suitable timber. So far only two types of timber have been supplied to the centres—pinus radiata, commonly known as Ludlow pine, and jarrah. I understand that neither of those woods is suitable for teaching manual training and therefore the expenditure on timber of that kind is so much money wasted.

Mr. Seward: The boys are doing very good work with what they have.

Mr. TONKIN: It is foolish to supply unsuitable timber for children when teaching them manual training. Ludlow pine is full of knots. Give an experienced carpenter timber that is full of knots and he is not too pleased with it or too sanguine of the result of his work. It is a waste of money to supply such timber to children, because boys in the sixth standard commencing woodwork know very little about handling a plane or chisel, and so we should ensure, if we are to have manual training at all, that suitable wood is supplied. I do not know what the change would cost, but I suggest that a change is imperatively necessary. Regarding the science branch, members realise that it is useless to supply obsolete equipment. The developments in science are so rapid nowadays that books quickly get out of date and equipment quickly becomes obsolete. If there is one branch of the department which should be kept supplied with the most modern equipment, it is the science branch. Otherwise the best work cannot be done. Every effort should be made to ensure that the libraries of the science classes are kept up to date and that the equipment is modern. Obsolete stuff should be scrapped straight away. I am making a special plea for an extension of manual training in this State. Let me give my reasons for so doing. Many people regard manual training as a frill—something which could easily be dispensed with and without which the educational process would not suffer much. I do not hold that view. I claim that it is absolutely essential to the educational training of the community because it is something more than the mere development of mechanical skill in the use of tools. Some people believe that that is all manual training amounts to; that we give a boy a certain training in the

use of various tools. That idea is quite wrong. Manual training is a real educational process. It is not a mere accumulation of knowledge of facts. Education itself is primarily a development of natural mental powers and the cultivation of the moral faculties. A well selected and properly-graded course of manual training aims at quickening and developing the mental powers of observation, attention and accuracy. It also aims at cultivating the moral faculties of order, neatness, perseverance, and self-reliance. It aims at awakening and training the artistic faculties, and directing a child's instincts towards things beautiful. A well-graded course of manual training aims at satisfying and cultivating a child's instincts for activity. We know how anxious children are to be busy. The member for Claremont mentioned that the desire to be busy found expression in his electorate in the ringbarking by children of ornamental trees. That is probably the result of the curtailment of manual training. We must provide an outlet for that activity which is inherent in all children, and a well-graded course of manual training will do that. It will excite pleasure in children in the acquisition of skill. The aims of a properly-graded course of manual training are truly educational. No system of education is properly balanced without manual training. Unfortunately that is the position to-day. For the great majority of children, there is no manual training, and therefore the education they are getting is not a balanced system, and they do not get full value from it. Members will recollect how in their school days manual training lightened and brightened the work of the school. They will remember how it provided that element of attractiveness which was a relief. It is unfair that certain children who get manual training should have that relief from mental effort, whilst the great bulk of them, with no manual training, are not afforded that relief from purely mental effort. Children who are deprived of manual work are deprived of a very strong lever so far as an inducement to learn their other lessons is concerned. Take a boy from his lessons and put him to manual work. When he returns to his ordinary lessons, which require mental effort, he will do much better work, and have a bigger incentive to do it. Any course of education which aims only at the development of the mental

faculties is not only undesirable, but is positively harmful to a community. We should therefore, not be satisfied to have children reach the sixth standard and then be deprived of this essential education. There still persists in this country a fair amount of snobbishness, though that will be hotly denied in many quarters. There are still people who have no regard for the dignity of labour. I claim that a properly graded course of manual training has the effect of giving real respect for the dignity of labour. That is something we should foster.

Mr. Warner: It takes more than manual training to do that.

Mr. TONKIN: It will go a long way towards breaking down that idea. Another thing that has come to the fore because of the depression is that, whether we like it or not, there will be more leisure for everyone. Manual training is the one way to train a person in the profitable use of his spare time. There are hundreds of men who have no idea at home how to handle a hammer, a saw, or a plane. If we provided proper training in the schools we would remedy that defect, and make it possible for men to spend many profitable hours at home in making small articles of furniture and different knick-knacks, during their leisure time. The department should, therefore, make an extra effort to provide this manual training. What I have outlined will take not a few hundred pounds but many thousand pounds. After the modest claims of the member for Canning, who desired to appropriate about 99½ per cent. of the money under this Vote for his electorate. I have some diffidence in asking the Minister to provide these additional facilities. I take the risk, however, and offer these suggestions which I claim are of a practical nature and are possible of immediate application. The new school at East Perth will soon be completed. That will free several rooms in the Perth Girls and Perth Boys' School. I suggest that all the rooms so freed should be utilised as manual training and household management centres.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Most of the schools in the metropolitan area are overcrowded.

Mr. TONKIN: My suggestion will relieve the congestion.

Mr. Moloney: How do you know the rooms will be freed?

Mr. TONKIN: I am assured of that from my own observations and inquiries.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think you will find they will be filled by the overflow from other schools.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not making these suggestions without having gone into the matter. I have the assurance of someone who ought to know.

Mr. Moloney: That ought to satisfy him.

Mr. TONKIN: Something else—and I am sure I shall have the support of the Leader of the Opposition on this—requires to be done, and that is in connection with the teaching of natural history. Hon. members will be aware that for some time past lectures on this subject have been given at the Perth Museum. Classes of children have been taken to the Museum and enabled to examine specimens there, and have had lessons on those specimens. Such an advantage should not be restricted to the metropolitan area. An effort should be made to extend this benefit to country children. Arrangements could be made with the Museum Trustees to provide cases of specimens in somewhat the same way as books are now sent to the country by the Public Library. Cases of specimens could be forwarded free on the railways to various country schools, and teachers there would then be in a position to give country children lectures which are now confined to city children. If the lectures delivered to city children have any value—and I consider they have great value—country children are entitled to hear similar lectures if arrangements can be made. I for my part see no obstacle in the way. I would be lacking in my duty to the men and women engaged in conducting the correspondence classes if I did not congratulate them upon their work. The Minister remarked that Western Australia had led the way in education by correspondence. That is perfectly true. People have come from other States to examine our system with a view to modelling systems of their own upon it. Excellent work has been done by the correspondence classes, but there is just one feature which appears to need amendment. The present practise is to send correspondence papers to head teachers in small schools, who distribute them to children taking standard 7, 8, and 9 work. Too heavy a burden is entailed on the country school teacher, who has a number of classes to attend to apart from marking correspondence papers worked by children

taking the higher standards. One result is that the papers are not marked as well as they might be. I say this without attaching any blame whatever to the teachers, who cannot possibly cope with all this work. Could not the worked papers be forwarded to the correspondence classes staff in Perth in the same way as papers are forwarded from children not attending school? Then the papers, after being marked by the staff of the correspondence classes, could be returned to the teachers at small schools; and there would be the additional benefit that the teachers at the small schools would be able to go through the staff's corrections with the children, who would derive much greater advantage from this teaching than is gained by children not attending any school and sending their papers to Perth in the ordinary way. I hope the Minister will investigate the possibility of, say for a commencement, the third-year post-primary papers being sent in to the correspondence classes staff. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) stated a belief that the department intend to cut out the physical training instructors. As I understand the position, those officers have already been cut out. For some time there was a physical training instructor for boys, and another for girls. For several years past, however, there has been no physical training instructor for either boys or girls. The department dispensed with the services of those instructors years ago. In my opinion every effort should be made to re-appoint instructors. Western Australia is behind as regards physical training. Probably Germany goes a little beyond the mark in that direction. Great attention is given to this subject in Sweden and other countries; but we here have economised, depriving our schools of their physical training instructors. The Minister should make a special effort to re-appoint this year physical training instructors for both boys and girls. I realise that I have given the hon. gentleman a formidable programme, but I shall be thankful for small mercies. So long as a start is made in doing something additional, there will be some hope. On the other hand, if there is never a commencement made with improving our educational system, we shall find that instead of progressing our standard of education will retrogress. I hope that at least some of the things I have advocated the Minister will find it possible to put into operation.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.32]: I shall not follow the previous speaker into a dissertation on the educational system, because I regard that hon. member as much better qualified to speak on that subject, seeing he was associated with the Education Department for many years.

Hon. C. G. Latham: He has not told us where the money is to come from.

MR. HEGNEY: There are in this community organisations which have already informed the Leader of the Opposition how funds can be made available. The hon. gentleman was recently on a platform from which it was stated that a solution of the financial problem had been discovered. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) said, among other things, that as regards the agitation for an increased Vote there should be some definite and close scrutiny of expenditure. I understand that one of the complaints of the Education Department is the keenness of the scrutiny already applied. Certain things are desired by the department; and though we pass a Vote here not one pennypiece of it, outside salaries, can be spent without the most rigorous investigation on the part of the Treasury. The Leader of the Opposition knows that. The system was instituted during the regime of an Administration with which he was associated. Undoubtedly that course had to be adopted because of the financial position then obtaining.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It has been the practice for a long time.

MR. HEGNEY. The practice has been continued. I have made representations as to improvements generally needed in schools in the Middle Swan electorate. Whilst willing and anxious to do whatever is possible, the department have on each occasion raised the plea of financial stringency. The expenditure, I am informed, has to run the gauntlet of the Public Works Department and then of the Treasury. For one thing, I look towards the extension of wireless in schools. It is true that good work has been done by many branches of the Parents and Citizens' Association in providing wireless sets for schools; but the department, when asked to furnish a power point, are unable, though willing, to accede to the request. The Public Works Department, upon the matter being submitted to them, submit it to the Treasury, which is extremely reluctant to approve of the expenditure. I know that happened in nine or ten instances, and I

have one in my own electorate. The school at Helena Valley is a small one and only recently, after many years of agitation, the Government Electricity Supply Department extended their mains to the district. Three lights are required at the school, two inside and one on the outside, and also a power point. From time to time the people of the district have raised money for various works, but in this instance it is regarded as a matter for the department to provide the lights, which would involve a cost of about £3. I have made representations with that end in view and the secretary of the Parents and Citizens' Association has also written to the department with regard to the matter. I trust the Minister will discuss the request with the department and that this small concession will be granted. Then, again, for the past three or four years I have been endeavouring to secure the provision of a shelter shed at the school, where there is no verandah. Many of the children have to travel long distances and in winter they require some shelter. At one time the local people were prepared to erect a shed if the department made timber available, but unfortunately that course was not followed. A new school is required at Wattle Grove. For some time the headmaster has carried on in the Progress Association's hall but it is difficult for him to get the best results with the children when all classes have to be taught in the one room. The school grounds are most unsuitable and the Government have acquired another site. I urge that consideration be given to the provision of a school in that locality. It is peculiar how difficult it is to secure supplies of gravel to improve school grounds. I have not pressed that matter lately because of the financial stringency, but at North Maylands and Carlisle there is great need for gravel supplies. Then, again, at the Bayswater school, at which there is an attendance of over 550, the ground space is very limited. It has been admitted by the departmental officials, the Town Planning Commissioner, and the Chief Architect, that that is so. For the past five years the local Parents and Citizens' Association and others have joined with me in pressing for improvements at the school but so far without success. While I recognise the difficulty confronting the department in apportioning the available expenditure to the best advantage, nevertheless I feel bound to submit these matters for consideration. At Bayswater the local

authorities recently raised a loan and they intend to improve the footpath, but the work cannot be undertaken unless the Education Department attend to their portion in front of the school building. The question of household management, which was referred to by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin), is most interesting and I think that branch of education should be extended not only with regard to the girls at school now but in the interests of those who have left school. There is great need for these young women to attend classes in cooking, ironing and so on. We have not the benefactions that have been available in Victoria, where the Macpherson institution is a magnificent place in which this particular work is carried on. I have much pleasure in supporting the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle and in submitting these few matters for the consideration of the Minister.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [10.42]: I regret that I was engaged upon business in another part of the building when the Minister introduced the Education Vote. I understand that he took me to task for certain remarks allegedly made by me during the Address-in-reply debate.

The Minister for Agriculture: They were made by you.

Mr. DONEY: That is the point I am disputing. I have been informed that the Minister said that according to "Hansard" I stated I knew where 100 small schools were needed in the farming areas. Surely it must have been obvious to the Minister that I could hardly have referred to 100 schools. Naturally I have now no very clear recollection of the words I used when I was speaking on the Address-in-reply, but the probability is that I used the word "number," not "a hundred." I admit that I was reported in "Hansard" as having referred to a hundred schools, but I was obviously misreported. There would be no sense at all in my making such a statement.

The Minister for Agriculture: The statement appears in "Hansard" definitely.

Mr. DONEY: Yes, I have just looked it up, and I am aware that the Minister quoted from my remarks as reported in "Hansard."

Mr. Hegney: Did you not look over your duplicate?

Mr. DONEY: What I was complaining about at the time I spoke on the Address-in-reply was that £70,000 had been listed for expenditure on a new school at East Perth and at the same time I was facing a very heavy task in securing £30 and £50 respectively from the Government in order to assist the farmers of Toolibin and Dardadine to build their own schools.

The Minister for Agriculture: You got that.

Mr. DONEY: I admit that I was successful ultimately, but naturally I was irritated at the difficulty I experienced in securing those small amounts to enable the farmers to build their own schools, when so much money could be found for the East Perth school.

The Minister for Agriculture: Which was a national work.

Mr. DONEY: The money was for one building only, yet I was confronted with so much difficulty in securing a few pounds to assist the men in the country centres I have referred to. Still, I was prepared to be satisfied, provided it could be shown by the department that the three jobs were being carried out in the order of their urgency. I should like to assure the Minister that my complaint at that time was not against his department, but against the Treasury. I had made, I do not know how many visits to the Education Department and the Treasury in respect of that same matter. It is seldom that anyone hears me complain of the Education Department. On the contrary I am always very ready to admit that I am dealt with very courteously indeed in that department and in a practical, prompt and business-like way. I am sure every member will agree with me that both Mr. Klein and Mr. Hilary are extraordinarily competent officers. I shall shortly be calling on the Minister in company with a couple of other members in order to submit some requests respecting the Narrogin School of Agriculture. I make no apology for reading the Director's remarks on the Narrogin School of Agriculture, if only to coax other members to read the report in full. The Director started in this way—

As pointed out in the last annual report, the accommodation of the school does not meet with the number of students who desire to enter.

Later he says—

The accommodation was taxed to the uttermost, and it was necessary to place beds on the verandah and to improvise a dressing room at the end thereof.

—
The report continues—

The instruction in all branches has been of a high standard, qualified experts in each department giving the necessary instruction but, as I pointed out in my last report, the farm preparations are not receiving sufficient attention. The farm foreman has so many duties to perform that he has very little time for actual farm work. Additional help has been asked for, and funds have not been available. As the State will ultimately have to depend upon those who are on the land, an additional instructor should be made available.

Then, dealing with another matter, he says—

The school residential buildings have been in existence for 30 years, during which period very little has been done in the way of renovations. The kitchen and dining room still require to be made fly-proof, and the cottages used by some of the instructors have been in existence for about 40 years, and are rapidly approaching the condition which makes them unfit for habitation.

There is a great deal more of the same kind, all tending to show the extremely high regard in which the principal and his staff are held because of the work accomplished at the farm school. It indicates how desirable are the improvements that have been asked for. I think both the director and I have struck the same obstacle; when visiting the Treasurer in each case the explanation has been lack of funds. One has to admit that, on most occasions, that was the correct explanation to make. The Minister, I am sure, will agree that at the Narrogin School of Agriculture we have as fine a principal as it is possible to get, and that we have also as fine a matron as could be desired. There could be no finer control of the boys, no matter from what point of view that matter is regarded. I am hopeful, therefore, that if the Minister will again read the report from which I have quoted, he will find no difficulty in granting the improvement which in a few days time other members and I will submit to him.

MR. BROCKMAN (Sussex) [10.50]: I have but a few remarks to make on the Education Vote. My first point is that there is nothing mentioned about the physical training of our boys and girls. I am told it has been cut out of the Education Vote, but I hope it is not true, and that the Minister will see fit to do something to re-

instate that training. Also I want to mention a small matter in my electorate, namely a school building at Augusta. It is badly needed. I took the Minister for Works there only a fortnight ago and on inspection he agreed that something should be done with the school. I hope that matter will not be overlooked, nor the enlargement of the ground at Busselton, which I put up to the Government some time ago.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [10.51]: I hope the Treasurer while over East made arrangements that will permit of a very considerable increase in this important vote. I should say that in all about another million pounds will be required.

The Premier: Yes, the member for Nelson got it up to £400,000, and it is now at about a million.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The member for North-East Fremantle wants another half million. I do not propose to ask for anything of the sort. It is very important that we should provide the necessary education for the children and improve that education as far as finances will permit. But I want to protest against the Education Department sending out second-hand furniture to country schools. I believe that whenever a school is built here, if there be the slightest opportunity for any new furniture it goes into the city school and the old furniture is sent out to a country school. Frequently country children have to travel long distances to school, and then have very uncomfortable seats, far more uncomfortable than have the children here. And so I hope the Minister, since he represents a country district, will take this up and see if there be any new furniture for distribution the country children will get their share. Some of the school furniture is made very strong, calculated to last 50 or 60 years, and the seats come away from the desk and have to be re-bolted on. With such furniture there is no comfort for country children.

The Premier: Country children are very hardy.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There are others who have the same opinion as the Treasurer. I am sure of that, otherwise the nice little new forms and desks that come into city schools would be diverted, some of them, to country schools. I protest against any new furniture being put into city schools with a view to sending the old furniture out to country schools.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply)
[10.53]: The Leader of the Opposition has just suggested that since I am a member of a country constituency, I should understand the requirements of country school children. I would like to stress that point by saying that the distance between two schools in my electorate is 204 miles and there are many difficulties of transport.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is that between Carnarvon and Yankee Town.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:
No, that is between Carnarvon and Shark Bay; so I fully appreciate the difficulties confronting country children. Most of the points raised to-night represent simply a matter of money.

The Premier: That is no trouble at all.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:
And however easy the attaining of money may be so will be the answering of their desires. It is not a question of what we wish to do, but simply what we are able to do. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) said that we cannot afford not to do it. But the fact remains that within the best of our financial capacity we cannot afford to do it. In connection with minor matters such as power points for wireless, I should like to advise members that if they will let me know where their parents and citizens' associations have made available to the schools wireless installations, I am sure the Premier will agree that the points for the coupling of those services will be provided. We desire to assist parents and citizens' associations in those directions where they exhibit such interest to further the education of the children. I should like to refer to one point mentioned by the member for Mt. Marshall, and to stress the fact that the Government are neither unaware of the conditions in the country nor unsympathetic to the children concerned. It was the present Government that instituted the payment of a bicycle allowance to children in country districts. We are quite aware of the conditions obtaining, and everything that can possibly be done to afford facilities for children to reach the schools is being done. I suggest to the member for Murchison that if he writes to the department on the requirements where there are eight children, no doubt a teacher will be supplied for an assisted school. I have listened attentively to the speeches of members, and will consider

the matters mentioned by them, and where they are within the compass of the Treasurer's supplies, their requests will be attended to.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £226,805—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported.

House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 20th November, 1935.

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Bills: Lotteries (Control) Continuance, 2a.	1874
Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Amendment (No. 2), 2a.	1868
Electoral, Com.	1867

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

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.35]: I support the second reading, and am glad the Government are renewing the measure for one year only. I understand that the Lotteries Act was brought into force to control gambling, and to a certain extent it has done so. It was also supposed to control street collections, but these go on almost as badly as ever.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are exaggerating.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The hon. member is not in Perth very often. Nearly every week some collections are taken up in the streets of Perth.