

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: If it is accepted we should realise that there are many other clauses to which the same proposal may be applied.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Quite so. I know that.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	7
Majority for				4

AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. Lovekin
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. W. Hickey	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. E. H. Harris	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 98—Penalty for offences:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: When the clause was previously under consideration, I secured an amendment to Subclause 3. I now find that the amendment does not express the intention. In order to make it clear, I move an amendment—

That the words "to the employee of any person" be struck out and the words "by one employee of a person or firm to another employee of such person or firm" inserted in lieu; and that after "person" in the last line the words "or firm" be added.

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

Bill again reported with further amendments, and a Message accordingly forwarded to the Assembly, requesting them to make the amendments, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a Message from the Assembly.

QUESTION—WESTRALIAN FARMERS' LIMITED.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In answering a question asked by Mr. Lovekin this afternoon, I mentioned that certain documents he desired were attached to the answer and that the other would be furnished as soon as it was available. I have the other document now, the report and balance-sheet of the Westralian Farmers' Ltd. I ask that it be attached to the answer.

ADJOURNMENT.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In view of the extreme pressure on the "Hunsard" staff, I do not propose to proceed any further with the business this evening. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 7.35 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 30th November, 1921.

	Page
Questions: Workers' Homes, Metropolitan Area ...	1997
Firewood haulage, Goldfields—1, Kurrawang and Lakeside Co.'s; 2, W.A. Goldfields Firewood Supply, Ltd. ...	1997-8
Lake Clifton Lime Co. and Railway ...	1998
Lepers ...	1998
Hospital for the Insane Royal Commission, case of F. Cunningham ...	1998
State Insurance, Miners' Complaint ...	1998
Late Sittings ...	1998
Select Committee: War Gratuity Bonds, extension of time ...	1999
Annual Estimates: Water Supply, etc.; other Hydraulic undertakings; Perth City markets; State Batteries; State Dairy Farm; Cave House; Yandianooka Estate; Sale of Government Property Trust Account ...	1999
Bills: Closer Settlement, 1A. ...	1999
Workers' Homes Act Amendment, 1A. ...	1999
Constitution Act Amendment, returned ...	2027
Bank Holidays Amendment ...	2027
Land and Income Tax Assessment Amendment ...	2027

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, METROPOLITAN AREA.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: Do the Government intend to proceed with the erection of workers' homes in the metropolitan area in the near future?

The PREMIER replied: Applications are receivable for the building of workers' homes in the metropolitan area. A large number of contracts has already been let, and several houses are now in course of erection.

QUESTIONS (2)—FIREWOOD HAULAGE, GOLDFIELDS.

Kurrawang and Lakeside Companies.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the tonnage of fire-

wood hauled between Kurrawang and Lakeside stations inclusive for the 12 months prior to the concession granted to the Kurrawang and Lakeside Firewood Company in 1919? 2, What was the total amount of revenue received from this source for the same period? 3, What was the tonnage and the total receipts for a similar service for the year following the concessions referred to?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, The tonnage of firewood hauled to Kamballie was—ex Kurrawang, 146,493 tons; ex Lakeside, 142,763 tons. 2, Ex Kurrawang, £9,618; ex Lakeside, £14,005. 3, Ex Kurrawang, 141,776 tons, £3,774; ex Lakeside, 157,957 tons, £8,840.

Haulage and cost.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the schedule price for haulage of firewood by the Government per ton per mile? 2, What quantity of firewood is it proposed to haul per annum over the line leased to the W.A. Goldfields Firewood Supply, Limited?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, 1 to 13 miles, 2s. 7d. per ton; 14 to 16 miles, 2s. 8d. per ton; 17 to 50 miles, about 1.24d. per ton added for each mile; over 50 miles, 1½d. per ton added for each mile. 2, All haulage will be done by the lessees. The tonnage will depend upon the requirements of the mines.

QUESTION—LAKE CLIFTON LIME COMPANY AND RAILWAY.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: Is it his intention to place on the Table of the House all papers dealing with the Lake Clifton Lime and Cement Company, including the agreement for the construction of the railway from Waroona to Lake Clifton, entered into and carried out by the Government and the company?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes.

QUESTION—LEPERS.

Mr. McALLUM asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact—(a) That the s.s. "Bambra" on her last trip to Fremantle had natives placed aboard at Derby who were lepers and were booked as prisoners, no notice being given to the captain or the ship's crew that the natives had leprosy? (b) That those natives were treated aboard as ordinary prisoners, and were fed and attended to by the ship's crew, and not isolated either from crew or passengers? (c) That the first intimation the ship's captain had that the natives were lepers was the inquiry (upon the arrival at Roebourne) of the authorities there for the lepers? 2, Whose duty is it to inform a ship's officers that lepers are being booked? 3, If

this was not done in the case referred to, what action had been taken to prevent a similar omission? 4, Did the passengers from the "Bambra" undergo any period of quarantine, or were they allowed to mix with the general public upon arrival at Fremantle?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, (a) It is a fact that lepers were placed on the "Bambra" at Derby for transport to Roebourne. The department is not aware that they were booked as prisoners or that notice was given to the captain that they were lepers. (b) No. A special constable was in charge of the natives, who were segregated on the poop. (c) This is reported to have been so. 2, The State Steamship Service was informed of the fact when passengers were booked by the Chief Protector of Aborigines. The manager of the State Shipping service was under the impression that the captain would be informed at Derby by the authority in control of the natives there. (3) There will not be a repetition. 4, No; this is unnecessary.

QUESTION—HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, ROYAL COMMISSION.

Case of F. Cunningham.

Mrs. COWAN asked the Colonial Secretary: Can he instruct the Royal Commission now sitting to inquire into the case of F. Cunningham, who alleges that he is unlawfully detained in the asylum?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: I have no power to instruct the Royal Commission.

QUESTION—STATE INSURANCE, MINERS' COMPLAINT.

Mr. BOYLAND asked the Premier: 1, Considering the injurious effect gold mining has on the miner, and the inadequate compensation paid to him and his dependants when he is stricken with miner's complaint, is it the intention of the Government to bring in an insurance scheme to cover unemployment, sickness, and death, for the whole of the State? 2, If not this session, then next?

The PREMIER replied: The matter will have consideration by the Government during recess.

QUESTION—LATE SITTINGS.

Mr. CORBOY (without notice) asked the Premier: In view of the fact that the "Hansard" staff are reporting three select committees and a Royal Commission, in addition to the proceedings of both Houses, will he endeavour to adjourn the House a little earlier to-night out of consideration for that staff.

The PREMIER replied: I am sorry for the "Hansard" staff, and for hon. members also. I hope we shall be able to adjourn earlier to-night.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So do I.

WAR GRATUITY BONDS, SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, time for bringing up the report extended till 7th December.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Closer Settlement.
- 2, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1921-22.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from 24th November; Mr. Munsie in the Chair.

Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage and Drainage Department (Hon. W. J. George, Minister).

Vote—Water Supply Sewerage and Drainage, £120,481.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [4.40]: It was my intention when last week the Estimates were under consideration to have made a statement giving some of the salient facts which, however, members will see for themselves in the report; but when the Estimates of this department were called upon, the House seemed to be in a most amiable mood, and it was thought that hon. members had so satisfied themselves by a reading of the report that any remarks by me would be superfluous.

Hon. P. Collier: There is nothing much in the report.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Neither is there much in the water, for that matter. In regard to the supply last summer, had we not imposed restrictions on the use of the water there would have been a considerable shortage in the metropolitan area. As it chanced, the restrictions imposed had the result of giving the firemen an ample supply of water on the night of the fire at the Economic Stores. For the present summer, in the opinion of the departmental officers, we should have plenty of water for the metropolitan area. I do not say there will be water to spare. Indeed it may even be found necessary to impose some restrictions, but that will not be done if we can possibly avoid it. The first bore put down at Osborne Park, at a depth of 650 feet, gave a supply of one and a quarter million gallons per day of first-class quality water at a low temperature. Emboldened by the success of that bore, we put down a second, which at a slightly greater depth, gave a daily supply of 1,800,000 gallons. Still having funds on hand, we put down a third bore, which gave a supply of one and a half million gallons per day of water scarcely distinguishable from hills water. It is of low temperature,

and it seems to be almost inexhaustible in quantity. In order to get this water to the service reservoir in King's Park, we shall have to pump it, but from there it will be supplied by gravitation. We are further extending the capacity of the Mount Hawthorn reservoir by a million and a half gallons. So far as can be determined, one is justified in saying that the supply available to the metropolitan area should be sufficient for the coming summer. In addition to that, we have the water from Bickley Brook, which is a continually running stream. From that we are supplying, and will continue to supply requirements from Cannington to Queen's Park instead of, as formerly, bringing the water right into the reservoir at King's Park and then sending it back through the 12-inch main. I think the officers are justified in their expectations of being able to supply enough water for the coming summer. It is no use living in a fool's paradise, and thinking we are to have an unlimited use of the water. No water scheme can be provided which will allow of everyone drawing water to the extreme quantity the pipes will carry. The water must be used with economy and care, otherwise there will be many disappointments, and next summer we shall have a big problem before us. From Mundaring we have 12-inch pipes as far as West Guildford. Thence to the city of Perth it is an 8-inch pipe. We are trying to fill in the gap between West Guildford and Mt. Hawthorn, and we are using every pipe we have in stock with this object, as well as finding the money for the wages. Our purpose is to bring that water from Mundaring considerably nearer Perth. If funds permit when we get into recess, it is the intention of the department to get a further supply of 12-inch pipes and so continue the main to Mt. Hawthorn. Through that extension we should get about 1,300,000 gallons per day from Mundaring, which is just the quantity we can get through a 12-inch pipe, and this would mean an additional half a million gallons to the Perth supply. If further quantities of water are needed we shall have to go to greater expense in putting down a new main. Members will see that so far as human experience and capacity go, the responsible officers of the department are doing all that lies within their power. If they had a considerable sum of money available they could do a great deal more, and could remedy any complaints that came before them, and fulfil any scheme they have outlined. The funds of the State, however, are not overflowing. Indeed, the opposite is the case. The public must recognise that they cannot expect to have such a supply of water as will give them every satisfaction, until they are prepared to find the money requisite for carrying out the work.

Mr. Mann: Do you think the Bickley Brook expenditure is justified?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If I did not think it was justified I would not have

gone on with the work. It would cost a large amount of money to put up a reservoir in King's Park, and unless we got the water from Bickley Brook we should not have had the supply we shall have for this summer.

Mr. O'Loghlen: What about the complaints of metropolitan members?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member does not want me to retort in the way he knows I could do. I am too much engaged with the realities of life, and will leave it to other members to bring forward their ideas on the question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have a lot of supporters amongst metropolitan members.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know that I have any in the world.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are discussing the question of water supply.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the Committee which has been mentioned finishes its inquiries and can deduce anything of any value, and will put it before the department, it will be considered with respect.

Hon. P. Collier: It will not discover anything.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The trouble at Fremantle is more difficult to cope with than that of Perth. Our source of supply has to come from pumping operations, and the well from which we draw our water can hardly be expected to increase its supply with the demand. The pipe which takes the hills water from the Victoria reservoir is not sufficiently large to enable us to get down the quantity we would like to put into Fremantle. We take it a certain distance and we then have a booster, which enables us to get every drop of water we can to Fremantle in order to cope with both private and shipping requirements. We also have completed the reservoir at Richmond. There are people who live around Richmond reservoir, who regard it as very hard that they cannot get a supply from that source. Applications have been made to me by people living within a few yards or chains of the reservoir, to connect them up with it. The water is practically all hills water and is brought down for two purposes, one to assist in getting a bigger proportion of hills water to the people, and the other to supply the very large shipping demand for that class of water. The shipping people pay 4s. a thousand gallons for it, which is of considerable concern to the revenue of the department. We were about £24,000 short last year in meeting our expenditure, and we had to find other ways of increasing our revenue. If loss of revenue through giving this water to the people of Fremantle had to be faced, other avenues would have to be sought. Let me tell the member for North-East Fremantle that I have not shelved the representations that were made through him. It is my intention, as soon as we get into recess, and I have a little time at my disposal, to go further into the question, and see whether those people who were brought before me can have a

better supply than they have had before. I am not at present able to indicate more than that the request is one that should receive every reasonable consideration. There has been a good deal of very refreshing talk regarding the sewerage at Subiaco. As I have said before in this House, it all resolves itself into a question of money. The cost of a scheme similar to that now adopted in Perth would, if installed at Subiaco, run perilously close to £200,000, while the fixing of house connections would cost another quarter of a million pounds. In view of the state of the finances, and in view of the position of private individuals in the matter of money, this is not one of those works which is within the grasp of practical politics at present. We are not unmindful of the troubles and worries and requirements of that large municipality. When, therefore, it was represented to us by the mayor and councillors that there was so much trouble in connection with the sanitary site, where they have the earthen system, and it was stated that the site had outgrown its usefulness and become a menace of the public health, I said, "It is the duty of the Government and should be their pleasure to try and assist municipalities, wherever they can, that I looked upon the Government as taking the position of the father of the household, and that if the Government could assist municipalities it was their duty to do so, especially in matters of health." I have made arrangements to let them have as a sanitary site a sufficient area of ground on block 714, which we intended for our septic tanks, and the Government are making a road up to this place. The arrangements made with Subiaco are that they shall pay, I think, £200 a year, which is a small sum, for the use of the ground, and the maintenance of the road which they will use for their carts. We have met their troubles as far as it lies within our power to do so. It is only right to say that during the time I have been Minister for Works, 5½ years, I have never had from the Subiaco municipal council anything but the most cordial co-operation. They have received my suggestions, not as if they were intended to be impertinent interference, but in the spirit and desire of co-operation, knowing that my object is to assist them in every possible way. At much personal inconvenience, and possibly at some financial loss, they have endeavoured to meet me, because they recognise I have in mind a desire to assist them to better their conditions. The Subiaco council will, I hope, always remain my friends.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Is there any further litigation likely to follow the verdict in the case against the department?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Whereas we cannot give Subiaco, for the reasons I have mentioned, a similar scheme to Perth, we have helped and are prepared to help them in other ways if possible. The drainage of the metropolitan area is a very big

question. It has so many different phases that I felt I had no right as Minister to advise the Government, unless I had a comprehensive scheme by which we could see that every portion of the work that was done would dovetail into a big scheme later on. We should not be in a position to find, as we have found in other instances, that work has been done in a penny wise and pound foolish manner and without sufficient foresight being exercised, and we must see that each item is correlative with the other. In some cases we have found that other schemes have had to be considered, and this has meant a lot of additional expense to enable the whole scheme to be made a comprehensive one. I had inquiries made as to what it would cost, and what sort of scheme would be necessary, to tackle the hill drainage from the foothills of the Darling Range through Midland Junction, and Guildford to the sea. The work will have to be done at some time or other. I tried to get the fullest possible information so that, whatever little schemes were put in hand, they could be made part of a big scheme when the department came to carry out the work in full. If we took this comprehensive scheme in hand at once, it would mean an expenditure of probably a million of money. That is not to be thought of. The question, however, will have to be faced by some Government, and care must be taken to make arrangements with the local authorities as to what shall be done, whether it is to be taken in hand as a Government scheme entirely, with power to raise the necessary rates to keep up the maintenance and pay interest and sinking fund, or whether it is to be on a co-operative basis between the different bodies interested. We have had during the year to go to the aid of the Bayswater road board over a drainage matter.

Mr. Davies: And they were very grateful.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They had to pay for it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. They came to us in trouble and the Government were able to assist them, not only so far as doing the work is concerned, but also in helping them with the trouble they were pushed into by speculative, black-mailing people who took advantage of the unfortunate circumstances, in which the authority found itself, to try and rook the ratepayers of the district. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that. The member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen) referred to Jolimont. It is true that the Supreme Court case went against us.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You should have gone into court and helped it along.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is nice of the hon. member to butter me up on every occasion as he does.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The case was not properly represented to the court.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We lost the case. We should not have lost it according to the advice we received from the law-

yers. Of course, lawyers make mistakes, and at different times we have lost cases which the lawyers told us we should win.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Did you get outside advice?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I believe so. Anyhow, we are appealing because we feel that the question is so important that it must be satisfactorily settled as soon as possible. Some years ago one of the Ministers who was in charge of the department, in all good faith—there is no question about that—did what he thought was the best thing for the State, and what he thought was equitable for the person who was suffering. He purchased one or two person's houses, and ever since then the fat has been in the fire. The records of the department show that from that date others have been coming in with similar applications, and they will keep on coming in and trying to get the Government to buy them out. I would not buy them out.

Capt. Carter: There are quite a few who want to be bought off.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is an unfortunate thing that in Western Australia this should be so.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Is it confined to Jolimont?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. Wherever there is a chance of coming at the Government, there are those who will always avail themselves of it.

Hon. P. Collier: That is very much in evidence in the country districts.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not saying they are not justified in doing so, but that they do it, and therefore it becomes an absolute necessity for the Minister in charge of the department to keep a stiff upper lip, and when he says a thing, stick to it. I have endeavoured to do so, but sometimes, being a weak man, I fail. I would like hon. members to understand throughout the metropolitan area the water level has been steadily rising for years and it was 8 inches to 8½ inches higher during the winter just ended than in the preceding winter. If hon. members wish to get a concrete example, let them go to Subiaco and see Shenton Park. I remember the time when Shenton Park was a place where we played cricket and football.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And also shot ducks in the close season.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If hon. members take a trip down there, they will see that the water since last winter has encroached upon the road, and that it is still encroaching. The Subiaco Municipal Council have invited tenders for the removal of the fence, as they recognise that that fence around the lake is of no use. Yet people are building within a few feet of the edge of the water, and I suppose we shall have a repetition of what has already occurred at Bayswater and Maylands.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Cannot the local authorities stop them building there?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: With regard to the sewerage works, so that hon. members may have some idea of the work they perform, I may mention that the septic tanks in Perth last year dealt with 624 million gallons of sewerage water, while those at Fremantle dealt with 67 millions, or a total of 691 million gallons, an increase of 70 millions over the total of the previous year. I want hon. members to realise that this is a great quantity of water to take away from the total that is supplied for domestic purposes. If the whole of the metropolitan area were seweraged and connected as Perth and Fremantle are to-day, we should probably be dealing with something like 5,000 million gallons of sewerage water per annum. Members will understand from those figures that the officers in charge of these works have onerous and responsible duties to carry out. So far as the staff are concerned, since we have got them to pull well together, they have realised their duties to a very satisfactory extent. The cash collections last year totalled £181,736. In the previous year the figures were £156,000, showing an increase of £26,000. The estimate was £170,000 but by the close attention the officers have been giving to their work, and the use of the extended powers by means of which they are bringing arrears up to date, this satisfactory result has been attained. The credit for that is, of course, due to the officers. So far as our rating powers are concerned, we have not got authority to increase our rates by 1d.

Hon. P. Collier: You will not get any further authority either.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is always pleasing to know what a definite fact is.

Hon. P. Collier: I have just paid you £13 10s. for water rates.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I owe more than that, and I am sorry to say I have not yet paid. We are at our maximum, and the balance to the debit of working last year was £20,831. That cannot continue. The only way is for the assessments to be made larger. Of course, we do not do this work, but still, if they are increased, we shall get in more revenue. If they are not increased, the only way by which we can get more revenue will be to ask Parliament to authorise the raising of the maximum on the water, sewerage and storm water rates. That will have to be done next year unless some other suitable method is found to render that unnecessary.

Mr. Mann: Cannot you cut down your staff.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: When I took charge there were 224 officers in that building and an effort was made to get 24 more. I not only refused to give them the additional 24, but I cleared out 76. That was not a bad start. If the member for Perth can clear out another 76, he will be a man worth recognising. I shall welcome any assistance he can give us, but let him not belittle the officers of the department. The system may be wrong, and

improvements may be possible, but for goodness sake give the men there some credit for having a sense of decency. It is so easy to make out that a staff is no good, and to say that it must be their fault. That is the cheapest way to get notoriety.

Hon. P. Collier: These young members do butt in like that.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the proud lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail, and the House must put up with the display of enthusiasm which we so often see. The only regret I have is that I cannot graft some of that youth to my poor old aged body. With regard to our finances, last year the increases in salaries totalled £2,764.

Hon. P. Collier: That was in consequence of the reduction of the staff, I suppose.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, it was the result of the reclassification and the appeal court we have now. I said some little time ago that Ministers had no control over the staffs. I can make hay with them as I am doing to-day, but it does not cut much ice. As soon as they are out of my office, they can do what they please. You cannot sack any of them, not as I would sack a man. If I sacked a man he would know it, but in the service if a man is sacked, he goes to the appeal court.

Mr. Johnston: What are you going to do about it?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will tell the hon. member later on. The increase in wages totals £7,900 and on the railway award £5,681, so that on salaries, wages and railway awards we have had to pay an additional sum of £16,345. Had it not been for that instead of a balance to our debit of £24,000, it would have been about £8,000. The capital of the concern, according to folio 6 of the report, is £2,182,403. Depreciation and sinking fund stand to-day at £392,868. The capital expenditure last year was £115,000. The water consumed in the metropolitan area last year totalled 2,327 million gallons and the highest consumed on one day was 11½ million gallons. When I turned the water on to Perth in October, 1891, from the scheme belonging to the firm for whom I was manager, the maximum daily supply was half a million gallons. To-day we consume 11½ million gallons and but for the restrictions which had to be imposed last summer, the consumption would have totalled nearly 14 million gallons. The next point I wish to touch upon refers to a letter which appeared in a newspaper arising out of a report of some remarks I was alleged to have made in this Chamber. An officer of the Department has requested me to reply to the newspaper criticism, but it is not worth while doing so.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Which paper was it?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I shall pass the matter by. The next question I wish to deal with is the complaint made by

the member for South Fremantle last week. Since then the hon. gentleman has seen me and I think he understands me far better now than he did on that occasion.

Hon. P. Collier: There has been a reconciliation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We were all a little bit highly strung the other evening, and the hon. member is new to the House and he did not know how to appease an old man's ire and consequently got into trouble. His case is one that is typical of others throughout the metropolitan area. In his street, there is a 4in. main, the pressure from which is 57lbs. That would be sufficient to send a jet over Parliament House. Then there is a $\frac{3}{4}$ in. line of piping, some $\frac{1}{2}$ in. piping and then a further length of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. piping. Theoretically, the position is that, while drawing water through the main in that way, it is like asking the figure "4" to carry what the figure "9" requires, and it will not do it. Apart from that aspect, however, if the theoretical pressure of 57lbs. to the square inch is there, the hon. member should be able to get a decent supply of water. From what the hon. member has told me, however, and his complaint is being investigated now, he cannot get that pressure and supply of water even from the 4in. main. That is a matter that must be looked into and dealt with promptly. The hon. member can be satisfied that the trouble will be properly dealt with and the same thing applies to other cases which have been coming before me. At the time this matter was mentioned before, I thought that this information could have been obtained at the department without the necessity of troubling Parliament or the Minister about it. There are some complaints in the paper to-day and I received about 16 complaints to-day by way of letter. If people will go out, as many have done, right away from the more closely settled portions of the district, they are not able, and will not be able to get a water supply that will satisfy them. I have a complaint here from Victoria Park. The people are living along the Welshpool-road. There are five people drawing their supply from an inch pipe. Originally one person asked for the provision of the 1in. pipe and the department was told on that occasion that, if only sufficient water for drinking purposes were supplied, the people would be quite satisfied. Since then, however, the people have gone in for gardens and the 1in. pipe will not give them the water supply that they require. The department has decided not to put down any more of these small pipes. It only means building up trouble. We intend to wait until we can put down larger mains. There was a lady from Leederville in my office to-day. She considered that it was very hard that an adequate water supply could not be provided for her home.

She was outspoken regarding her complaint and I asked my secretary and typist to come into the office while she was there.

Capt. Carter: Where did you say she came from?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will not give the hon. member her address anyhow. She is a widow with seven children. She considers it a hardship that the Government will not incur an expenditure of £200 to provide her with a water supply. In the circumstances, it is impossible for this or any other Government, in order to provide for the requirements of people who go into the outside areas where they can obtain cheap land, or where they have a cheap house, to spend £200 in order to give even a widow a water supply, whether she has seven or 17 children. It is very painful, indeed, for one to get such complaints continually coming before him, but it is impossible to grant assistance at the present time. Regarding the Canning scheme, that is another matter in which members are interested. Ever since Mr. Ritchie came here, we have had five survey parties making inspections in connection with the Darling Range scheme, the Canning River scheme and also with schemes further afield. We have got together a lot of useful information which has more than repaid the time and cost that investigation has involved. I think I am justified in saying that the further investigation has saved us perhaps from making mistakes in regard to some matters, although the main question, of course, is quite all right. When the investigations reach such a stage that we can collate all the facts and submit them to men whose professional skill and career entitle them to be relied upon, we will be able to go on their advice. The scheme, however, will probably cost 1½ millions of money and that aspect will have to be seriously considered, because the adding of 1½ millions of money to the already large capital cost of the metropolitan water supply scheme means that the water rate, which is now 1s., will have to be considerably increased. We cannot live without water and the people will not be able to get an adequate water supply unless funds can be found for the work and the people are prepared to meet the increased charges. I emphasise this matter because people are careless in their criticism. If they have experienced a little water shortage, they at once condemn the Government—not only this Government, but all Governments are bad in the circumstances—and the people generally do not seem to realise what the pioneers of this State had to recognise in earlier days, namely, that the Government could not do everything that might be expected and that something must be done by the people themselves. People nowadays pay 15s. or 16s., or even 20s., for rates and they demand in return for that payment, water supply and other services which probably cost five or six times the amount they pay, and those people do not worry as to who pays the balance, so long as they do not have to meet the

extra cost themselves. I hope that hon. members will try to think over these matters as seriously as I have tried to explain them, because it certainly is a serious question. I do not want to cry stinking fish, for I have no fear that we will not get out of our troubles. I am an optimist in many ways, but I do say that we shall never be able to make the scheme pay unless the community as a whole are prepared to recognise their responsibilities and to share in the care and worry that those in higher places have to bear on behalf of the citizens at large. When our population has increased and the position generally has rectified itself, we will be able to pull through, but neither this Government nor any other Government can undertake to supply water in this huge area in unlimited quantities without the funds being available to put down the scheme and revenue being forthcoming to maintain it. I shall be pleased to answer any questions that hon. members feel it is in the interests of their constituencies and the country that they should ask. As to the officers in the Water Supply Department, apart from trivial matters that occur when men of strong character come together, I am satisfied that the officers I have under me in that department are doing their best for the State. I do not always agree with them, nor do they always agree with me. They have the utmost freedom in connection with their work and they know that they can discuss it with me, as man to man. I never put on the Ministerial cloak unless it is necessary, and when it is put on, it is put on to be used. I always recognise, and want members of the House to recognise, that the officers of that department, when they are engaged upon professional work, are quite up to the average of those men I have been accustomed to deal with during the past 50 years upon similar works. I think the State should recognise that we have good men. We may have some who are not so good as others but, on the whole, the men in these branches of the Government service are men of whom I am proud and of whom I think we should all be proud.

Mr. SIMONS (East Perth) [5.25]: In connection with this vote, I was pleased to hear the Minister pay a tribute to the loyalty of the engineers of the Water Supply Department, but I cannot understand why he should express such limitless pride in their doings. So far, those officers have succeeded in giving us everything but water, and water is the only thing they are being paid to supply. We are not getting an adequate water supply. The position may be summed up in an assertion that this department should be called the "waterless department," because the city of Perth has to go through a period of drought throughout practically the whole of the hot season of the year. It was November last year when the water restriction were first imposed, and a metro-

politan area without water is one of the most sluggish institutions that could possibly be contemplated.

Capt. Carter: And the most dangerous.

Mr. SIMONS: It is a constant reflection upon the resourcefulness of the officers of the Water Supply Department of Western Australia that, although we have a city which is nearly 100 years old, we have not been able to keep step with the comparatively small population within our boundaries and to give them sufficient water to keep themselves clean.

The Minister for Works: We never had a scheme until 30 years ago.

Mr. SIMONS: That is all the more reason why we should have it now. If we cannot have a proper water supply after three decades—and some of these officers have been in the department for practically that time—we should ask, if we cannot get a proper water supply in a third of a century, how much longer will it take?

The Minister for Works: Your statement regarding the officers is not correct.

Mr. SIMONS: There are some of them who have been there for nearly three decades, and some of their opinions are nearly 300 years old. If the city of Perth were in a drought area, or situated in one of the arid portions of Australia, there might be some defence for the present position, but it should be remembered that between Perth and Brunswick Junction, a distance of perhaps 80 or 90 miles, we have running into the different estuaries, at least six permanent freshwater streams, any one of which could be dammed up to give us an adequate and proper supply of water. After all this time, however, we have not been able to secure that provision. The Minister is aware, as we all are aware, of the number of rivers which empty themselves from the Darling Ranges into the sea. Nature has given us the supply but administration has not given us the men to harness them for the purposes of water supplies, the benefits of which we are longing to enjoy.

The Minister for Works: We can provide it if only we can get the money.

Mr. SIMONS: If the Government cannot find the money, will they agree to some other form of administration which can raise the necessary money? I would like to see a full and proper inquiry into the administration of the Water Supply Department and the necessity for handing over the control of that supply to a metropolitan board. That is the only logical way out of the difficulty.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are a lot against that.

Mr. SIMONS: There are a lot of interjections at the present stage, but that is my opinion; these interjections come from some members who always object to anything new.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That suggestion is not new.

Mr. SIMONS: Some hon. members are prepared to go about with minds belonging to an age in which wooden boots were reckoned progressive.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That proposal was made before you were born.

Mr. SIMONS: And proposals 400 years ago, which were modern, are not yet accepted by some members.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In any case, we do not want a board.

Mr. SIMONS: At any rate, I consider that from what my experience has shown, this thing will not be settled until we have the water supply handed over to a board comprised of those who are fully acquainted with local interests. Look at the present position regarding the Cabinet! There is not a single metropolitan member who is a Minister of the Crown.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Our new party will settle that point.

Mr. SIMONS: No wonder we cannot get some redress. I ask again regarding such a purely local matter as water supply, of what interest is it to the member for Wyndham, the member for Broome, the member for Kalgoorlie, or the member for Wyalatchem.

Mr. Harrison: We are all willing that you should have the whole administration.

Mr. SIMONS: Here we have 50 members deliberating on a matter of purely domestic concern. It may have been a fitting function of Government when we were a small struggling town to allow the supply of water to be controlled by the Minister, but we have become a city. In course of time we will become a great city, and the system applying to a little village is not applicable to a community who have reached cityhood. This should no longer be a Government function. We should have a board created with power to finance such a scheme and, above all things, with power to exercise a free choice of its officers. In my opinion, some of the Government departments contain officials, whom it is too hard to sack.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Sydney people were glad to get rid of their private board.

Mr. SIMONS: That was out of date administration. No one is talking of a private board.

Mr. Mann: It has been a success in Melbourne.

Mr. SIMONS: Yes, and in every other city. I do not know of any metropolis of the size of Perth where the Government are content to blunder and muddle along with an inadequate water supply.

Mr. Latham: Perth should have it, too.

Mr. SIMONS: We have had experience of departmental control for a number of years, and it has failed. Let us now have something new. If the remedy fails, we can always revert to the present obsolete system. I was very sorry to hear the Minister for Works say that those who settle at Canning or Vic-

toria Park cannot expect a full and sufficient water supply. If there is any wisdom in administration in Australia, it is for administration to follow the lines which will give relief to the congested populations of the cities. Instead of making such a dispiriting utterance, he should encourage settlers to go out into the environs, and permit the city to spread to the foothills of the Darling Range.

The Minister for Works: But you must give us the money.

Mr. SIMONS: I cannot subscribe to the dispiriting statement that if people care to settle in the environs of the city, they need not expect a decent water supply. Such a policy is only contributing to the congestion of the city which every one deplors. I hope the Minister will proceed along the lines of encouraging settlement to spread into the open spaces, instead of being bunched in a restricted area in the city.

The Minister for Works: Can you afford £200 to give one person a water supply?

Mr. SIMONS: Yes, if by so doing it is possible to attract other people to settle in the vicinity. Unless we can give a decent water supply to those people settled in the distant suburbs we shall be contributing to the congestion of the city which we all deplore. I am not satisfied, without further inquiry, about the statement that the Mundaring scheme is not capable of being tapped to supply the city. I am of opinion that that huge scheme, undertaken to supply a growing goldfields population, can no longer profitably fulfil the functions for which it was originally created.

Mr. Mann: We want it for the dry agricultural areas.

Mr. SIMONS: We want it for the dry city areas, where we are parched all through the summer. If it is tapped only as a temporary expedient until we can finance a bigger scheme, let us have it for the city. When the city has been supplied with an adequate scheme we can then divert the Mundaring scheme to the wheat areas. The country to-day is not asking for that water.

Mr. Latham: It is.

Mr. SIMONS: We are going to let the country have it, but meanwhile there is an immediate need for it in the city.

Hon. P. Collier: The people in the country will not pay for it.

Mr. Latham: They will pay for it.

Hon. P. Collier: Many of them have not paid.

Mr. SIMONS: No one questions the surplusage of water behind the Mundaring embankment. No one questions the waste of countless millions of gallons of water every year. To anyone who has given the subject the least thought, it must be apparent that there are no grave engineering problems to overcome in order to bring that water to the city. The levels taken by experts indicate that the highest point of Perth—King's Park—is 80 feet below the level of the outlet of the Mundaring scheme, so that the water could reach a small storage reservoir

in King's Park without the necessity for installing any engineering schemes or pumping plants. Therefore, it seems that millions of gallons of water could be brought from Mundaring to King's Park, from which it could be gravitated to every point in the city. We are short of revenue, as the Minister admits. Yet we have people in the city of Perth with real genuine money, longing to give it to the Government in exchange for water. The Government have a surplusage of water running to waste at Mundaring, but they have not the organising ability or the intelligence to bring the man who wants the water into contact with the surplusage. There is something wrong about administration of that kind. I could quite understand the necessity for waiting for 12 months or two years to instal a scheme, but we have had an administration in power for the last five years, and they are now no nearer the point of solution. There is something lacking in an administration of that kind. I cannot share the pride which the Minister feels in his officers, who allow such a chronic shortage to exist.

The Minister for Works: Can you do anything without money?

Mr. SIMONS: If we could put into operation a scheme which would pay from the jump, the Minister would be able to get all the money required. To instal a scheme which would more than pay interest and sinking fund, every member would give his vote irrespective of the rate of interest at which the money had to be borrowed, knowing that it would relieve the water famine with which the city is afflicted every summer, and do it on lines which would show a profit. We metropolitan members are keen about this, because we are advocates of living in a cleaner period than some of the administrators want us to live in.

The Minister for Works: That is a dirty thing to say.

Mr. SIMONS: I am not referring to the Minister.

The Minister for Works: It is a dirty thing and you should not have said it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They said it of me when I was in office.

The Minister for Works: It was a dirty thing to say, anyhow.

Mr. SIMONS: Everyone knows that I reverence the Minister for Works, and he must not think that any reflection was intended.

The Minister for Works: I still maintain it was a dirty thing to say.

Mr. SIMONS: And it is a dirty thing for the water supply engineers to keep us in such a condition of filth all the year round.

The Minister for Works: They do not do that.

Mr. SIMONS: They do, and the whole united brains of the department have not been sufficient to overcome the trouble.

The Minister for Works: I pity them if they have not more brains than you.

Mr. SIMONS: Don't talk like that, father.

The Minister for Works: You know it is a question of no money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Would that supply the brains?

Mr. SIMONS: Perhaps the Minister has a meter put on to measure brains as well as water, and I have heard that a lot of his water meters record very inaccurately. Take one suburb, Subiaco, which is rapidly increasing in number of buildings and in point of population and yet, because of the insufficiency of water, it is impossible to sewer that large area.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They complain that they have too much water.

Mr. SIMONS: In spite of the fact that Subiaco has a Rechabite lodge, it is said there is too much water. The people are anxious to have the sewerage system installed, but it is impossible to instal it because of the water problem. I do not know of any other modern community where one could find such marking time or standing still in connection with the institution of a system of such recognised necessity. We have a large community longing for the privilege to pay for a great necessity; the Government have the great necessity on hand but they have not the organising ability to bring the consumer into contact with the commodity.

The Minister for Works: That is not fair, either. They have all the ability but not the money.

Mr. SIMONS: The money could be easily raised. There is not a member of the House who would oppose a vote for such a purpose.

The Minister for Works: Are you a financial agent?

Mr. SIMONS: There are some people in this House to whom I would not lend money if I were a financial agent. It is time we gave urgent attention to this proposal. We have spent a great deal of money in attracting population to this State, and people arriving here get their first impression of Western Australia from what they see and experience in the capital city. It is shockingly humiliating to have to confess that when people come here from abroad and pay for accommodation in first class hotels in the city, they are denied the privilege of a decent bath. We cannot allow this to continue without making some protest and trying to assist the Minister and his officers with suggestions to remedy the position. Two influences are operating in Perth. At night time one cannot sleep owing to the mosquito plague, and in the morning when one, weary and sleepless, hopes to get a refreshing influence in the shape of a bath, he finds that necessity unobtainable. In no other capital city in the world does such a state of affairs prevail. I am saying this to emphasise the great necessity for giving close attention to the matter of the water supply. We

have trifled with the matter too long. During the last election campaign, the only Minister who referred to the water question was the then member for West Perth and he said it would be many years before we could secure an adequate supply for the city. That is a hopeless gospel, and I regret that the Minister for Works to-day has practically said that a big section of the community must be prepared to do without sufficient water. We are told by the medical experts of the possibility of bubonic plague spreading all over Australia. I hope that they will prove alarmists.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are the worst alarmists you can get.

Mr. SIMONS: It is always well to err on the right side. No doubt those experts know what they are talking about, but I hope their forebodings will prove to be groundless. The possibility of an epidemic of plague threatens us and we must recognise the necessity for proper sanitation, which cannot be provided until ways and means are found to give the people an adequate water supply.

[Mr. Stubbs resumed the Chair.]

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [5.43]: As another metropolitan member whose district is peculiarly affected by the existing state of affairs in relation to the water supply, I wish to add my voice to those already raised in complaint. I do not believe in criticism which is purely destructive; any criticism to be of value must be constructive. I believe there is a possibility of much good work being done by the metropolitan Parliamentary committee in connection with the water supply. I was sorry, therefore, to hear the Minister for Works refer to the committee in a slighting tone.

The Minister for Works: No, I did not.

Capt. CARTER: As a member of that body, I feel that the Minister does not know the genuine desire of the committee to do good service for the metropolitan area, to do good service to his department, and to render to the Minister himself that advice which I think would not come amiss in connection with our metropolitan water supply. Our idea in meeting has been to formulate a scheme whereby we can hurry on the construction of that scheme of water supply which will give everybody an adequate supply. When approaching the Minister previously, we have been told that we were to receive an adequate supply this year, and that there would be something like three million gallons per day extra from the bores being put down in my own district, at Osborne Park. And yet at this very day there are people in my district who cannot get sufficient water in their houses.

The Minister for Works: The bores are not at work.

Capt. CARTER: The Minister in his speech did not tell us when the bores are to be at work. We have not had that supply

for years, in spite of promises, and it seems to me that we are not going to get it this year. The fact remains that the Minister stands self-condemned when he says in this regard that only this morning he received letters of complaint from 16 men all over the metropolitan area. I was talking to-day to a man residing at Nedlands, who complains that even now his wife is unable to obtain a sufficient supply of water for domestic purposes.

Mr. SIMONS: And the summer has not yet begun.

Capt. CARTER: No. We have had a very mild summer so far. The question of water supply is of paramount importance. The Government should take some steps to bring into operation an adequate scheme, or allow those willing to bring such a scheme into operation to do so. The result of the meetings of the committee up to the present has been this—I speak personally now, other members will no doubt state their point of view—that the committee have discussed other matters of local utility. Our reception by one Minister was of a rather humorous nature, ending up by his saying to me, "Unless you are prepared to take over the whole of the metropolitan area utilities, I am not prepared to discuss any one of them singly." I do not know whether that is the attitude of the Minister for Works; I do not think it is.

The Minister for Works: I do not know anything about the matter.

Capt. CARTER: That is not our fault exactly. The point I wish to make is that the committee are really desirous of benefiting the people of the metropolitan area. We wish to benefit all of them, but we cannot do that if the Government take a stand-and-deliver attitude relatively to our overtures. If there could be, as advocated by the previous speaker, a board established on the Melbourne system, the water supply would be much more satisfactory. After all, the position is that the people of the metropolitan area are to-day paying for their water supply, or practically so. Therefore they will be in no worse position by taking over the entire undertaking; in fact, I believe they will be in a much better position. The Minister complains in this connection that up to the present he has not been able to get sufficient money. Let me ask the Minister why it is that he has not come down this year, to this Parliament, with a comprehensive policy and asked for money? He has not done it yet. I would like to hear from the Minister that he has suggested in Cabinet to the Government a comprehensive scheme. The desire of metropolitan members is to increase and better our supply of water. Although we have been promised great things, they have not materialised. When we met the Premier in his office, the hon. gentleman said that three million gallons of water per day would be obtained from the artesian basin of Osborne Park,

artesian water of a better type than that previously obtained from bores. That supply was to be available for this season, at any rate, and probably for a few years more, to supply our needs adequately. In my district, at the top end of North Perth, people rush to get sufficient water before the demands on the mains become heavy in the morning; and people are to be seen there securing supplies of water at night, after 11 o'clock, to water their lawns. The Minister has spoken in somewhat sneering terms of the man who wants a garden. I commend the man who improves his property, and takes a pride in his home. If in this fair city of Perth we are in such a position that we cannot get a water supply sufficient to keep green the bits of gardens around our homesteads, our condition is a parlous one indeed. Meantime millions and millions of gallons of water are running to waste from Mundaring Weir and in the catchment areas of the hills. The sewerage question has become a very grave question in the Mt. Hawthorn district of Leederville. As I stated on the Address-in-reply, last year there were five cases of diphtheria almost directly traceable to the open pan system, which Mt. Hawthorn has at the present time. In this connection Subiaco has been mentioned, a much larger area which is also unsewered. I agree with the member for Subiaco, who has also voiced his opinion on this subject, that something should be done immediately, even at great expense, to preserve the public health. This matter of sewerage, like that of water supply, is bound up with the future happiness and prosperity and strength of the race. I hold that a model system of sewerage, such as we have in the other districts, should be immediately installed at Leederville and Subiaco, even if we have to go on the money market again for the funds. With regard to Mundaring Weir, the member for Perth has asked why it is not possible for us to extend that scheme. As far back as 1904, reports were laid on the Table of the House giving most favourable consideration to the extension of that scheme to supply the metropolitan area. Mundaring Weir has been laid out with a great area of catchment, and the reports I refer to state that an extension of the scheme sufficient to meet the demands of the metropolitan area for another 20 years, would be a matter of easy engineering. But, strangely enough, the reports in question are contradicted by their writer, about two years later. No reasons are given for the change of opinion, none whatever. I agree with the member for East Perth that some inquiry should be made into the whole question of water supply in relation to Mundaring Weir.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We had an engineer here for that purpose less than two years ago.

Capt. CARTER: But he was an engineer who came with a pet scheme in his head, with a preconceived idea of what was to be done. I do not positively know that I am right in saying so, but that is my impression, from my limited knowledge of the situation.

The Minister for Works: You have no business to say that about the engineer who came from the other side. He was loaned to us, and he did not come here with any preconceived ideas, but to examine the whole thing thoroughly.

Capt. CARTER: My desire is not to attack the man's reputation.

The Minister for Works: But that is what you are doing.

Capt. CARTER: My reason for making the statement I did make is that practically no attention whatever was paid by that engineer to the Mundaring scheme.

The Minister for Works: How do you know that?

Capt. CARTER: Simply because in his comparative report there is such matter as leads one to that belief. I said that my knowledge of the subject was limited, but that it goes far enough to indicate to me in that comparative report food for thought sufficient to induce a belief that the Mundaring scheme was not seriously gone into by that engineer. I believe that the brain of our own engineer who devised that scheme at Mundaring went further than the immediate necessities of his time. I believe that engineer in his mind's eye saw the day when the scheme would be greatly extended, so as to supply all the needs of the metropolitan area. One of the matters coming under the Water Supply Department is drainage. The Minister referred to a case which has gone against the Government in the law courts. Unless I am very much mistaken, that case will prove but the forerunner of other cases. The Minister may have evaded the point in the statement he made in the House a few weeks ago with regard to the position of farmers on the edge of Herdsman's Lake. They are in this position, that men who this time last year were reaping crops from eight acres, or planting up to eight acres, are this year in some cases using only two acres—for the simple reason that the other six acres are under water. In this matter again I am not an expert, and am not laying down my statements as definitely correct; but I do want more information than the Minister has given me up to the present. I have asked him two or three times to come with me and see the position for himself. I have got him as far as the bores, but no farther. It is due to those farmers that the matter should be thoroughly sifted. There has been known to all of us a natural rise in the water level of that district for several years past, and that rise has gradually increased. But the difference between a rise of four inches and one of 12½ inches in the last two years is such as to lead one to look for special reasons. The Government have opened up three bores on a rise just above Herdsman's Lake, and the natural outflow of those bores is into the basin provided by Herdsman's Lake. Not a few million gallons, but many million gallons, of water have rushed forth from those bores into the basin of Herdsman's Lake.

The Minister for Works: Ten million gallons of water escaped from those bores, raising the level of Herdsman's Lake by one-eighth of an inch.

Capt. CARTER: I do not know the means of measurement which the Minister has, but I am now making inquiries to find out how long the water was running from the bores when the basin was tapped.

The Minister for Works: The engineers say they lost 10 million gallons, which would serve to raise Herdsman's Lake one-eighth of an inch.

Capt. CARTER: There is still required an explanation of the extraordinary rise which has taken place in that area. There are out there returned soldiers under the repatriation scheme. One of them, the father of six children, will be liable this year for the interest payments on the loan which bought his farm. That man has not an acre in crop, because the water has flooded his land and, in addition to other damage, has washed away £30 worth of manures. From the point of view of saving money, the Government would do well to go fully into this question, because at present all that those people are asking for is a speeding up of the drainage scheme.

The Minister for Works: Do you guarantee that there will be no claims for loss of water after we have drained Herdsman's Lake?

Capt. CARTER: I am not here as the legal adviser of those people. If the Minister had come with me weeks ago there would have been no difficulty, the people would have been satisfied to go ahead and scrape along as best they could. They are convinced that when the water recedes their land will be all right. They merely want a possibility of farming their land, which they cannot do until the water is withdrawn. The Minister has written to the Press to show that his work of opening that drain cannot possibly be speeded up.

The Minister for Works: I refuse to waste money on it.

Capt. CARTER: It is not waste of money; it is only common sense.

The Minister for Works: I am the responsible man; not you.

Capt. CARTER: I plead with the Minister to give those people a fair deal. As he says, he is responsible. It was up to him to accede to my request to go and see those people. Responsible and all as he is, he has refused to do this, and so I am forced to place the matter before the House. Those people have a just claim. If it is put before the law courts, there will be another decision similar to that in the Jolimont case, which cost the Government far more than it would have cost to speed up the work.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government did not put the water there.

Capt. CARTER: The Minister admits having put 10 million gallons into Herdsman's Lake. If the Government had come to our aid three months ago, when this matter was put up to the Minister, there would have been very much less trouble than is now inevitable. These people are forced to go out and take work anywhere. There is the man with the six children, to whom I have referred; his interest payments are due, and he is out working for others because his land is under water. When the Government can see that they will save money by speeding up the work, they ought to accept the position and speed up the work.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [6.5]: While I regret that I had a little brush with the Minister the other evening, I feel that some good will result.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you not spoken already on this vote?

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, this is general discussion, and the hon. member can speak but once.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [6.6]: I was interrupted in my address the other night by the failure of the lights.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is so, the hon. member has the floor.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The other night I pointed out that since the amalgamation of the Perth and Fremantle districts the Fremantle district has been placed at a great disadvantage. Even the Minister said to-day that it is not in as good a position in respect of water supply as is the Perth district. Prior to the amalgamation of the districts, Fremantle had almost the same water supply as it has to-day, and that at a sixpenny rate. Soon after the amalgamation our rate went up to 1s., and it is 1s. to-day. The Perth city water supply was at first a private supply, after which it became a nominee board supply. The Fremantle supply was always a Government supply. To that extent Fremantle had the advantage.

Mr. Harrison: Where did you get the Fremantle water from?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: From the same source as at present—the gaol.

Mr. Mann: It was not satisfactory.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, we had quite sufficient water, just as we have to-day. The board system has been tried and found wanting. Since the time the board was removed, there has been a considerable influx of population, which has kept successive Governments busy in providing for the development of the State and financing water supplies all over the place.

Mr. Harrison: Has not that water supply at Fremantle been supplemented?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is an 8-inch pipe running down from the Victoria reservoir, but it is used principally for the shipping.

Mr. Sampson: What did you say was the source of the Fremantle supply?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The gaol. The only difference in the system is that a few years ago the pump was worked by the prisoners, whereas to-day they have steam pumps. The supply comes from a well. It is over-capitalisation and bad management by boards which has caused the increased rates in Fremantle in association with the Perth district. I hope it will be long before they again entrust the management to a board. Of course, just now the State has not any money, and cannot get money at a reasonable price. If a board be appointed by the metropolitan members, districts such as the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter), and the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) and I represent will be debarred from having extensions in the outer areas. The influence of the board will be centred in Perth, and no doubt Perth will get all the supply it requires, while there will be very little water for outside extensions. We have an example of that to-day in the fire brigade. All the money spent in the City of Perth.

Mr. Mann: Is that not justifiable?

Mr. Richardson: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN. Other people are contributing to it.

Mr. Mann: But are not they getting services commensurate with their contributions?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The other districts are not.

Mr. Richardson: That is so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: None of the outlying districts are getting services in accordance with their contributions, because the greater portion is expended in the centre of the city. The same thing will happen in respect of the proposed water board. The Government, some time ago, brought over a water supply engineer to advise them. That engineer counselled the adoption of a certain scheme. He said it could not be done all at once, but must be done by degrees. The Minister informs me that they have already acted on the advice of that engineer. If that is so, we may be able to get an increased water supply by degrees and so avoid a large increase in rates. If the metropolitan water supply board be appointed, the first thing they will do will be to raise a large loan, the interest on which will be a burden on the people for many years before the money is required to be expended. That is the general experience in respect of boards. They will want to make a splash in order to justify their appointment.

Mr. Mann: I do not know that the metropolitan members are wedded to the appointment of a board, so long as they can get an improved water supply.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have been making inquiries. My district is badly served with water. We have a main coming down from the hills, but we cannot get sufficient water from it. Recently there was a scheme for the sinking of a bore in the Melville Road Board district. The land for a reservoir was purchased, but the scheme was set aside. Why? In order that extra bores might be put down in Perth.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The residents in that district have some cause for complaint. While arrangements have been made in other parts nearer Perth none have been made in the district I represent. A large reservoir has just been erected to hold approximately 1,000,000 gallons of water. It was thought that this would prevent the shortage that has been experienced from time to time. The Minister now says that most of this water will be supplied to ships at Fremantle. A great difficulty in regard to the metropolitan water supply is the small pipes through which the water is reticulated. There are areas into which water has been extended, but the pipes are too small to carry the water. People who live in one part of the street cannot get water through the $\frac{1}{2}$ in. or $\frac{3}{4}$ in. pipes when others are using the water in another part of the street. An alteration cannot be effected at once, and when it is effected it will cost money. The metropolitan district is burdened with a capital cost of £2,000,000 upon its water supply, sewerage, and drainage works. Every person who lives in a house worth 15s. per week pays water, sewerage, and drainage rates, as well as municipal rates, amounting in all to 3s. or 4s. per week. In considering an advanced water supply scheme it is our duty to see that it is brought into operation by degrees so that this burden on the people is not unnecessarily increased. Not only would this principle apply to the supply of water but also to the reticulation of the water. At present no one can attend to that better than the experienced officers in the service, who have been accustomed to our works, and know where it is necessary to begin in making renewals in regard to reticulation. In discussing the question of a board to control the system, we must bear in mind the size of our population, and remember that it is very much smaller than the population of the other cities of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Davies: How long has the board been in existence in Melbourne?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The metropolitan water supply board of Melbourne has been in existence for nearly thirty years. The Government looked after the supply for some time, and then the Government control was replaced by the board control. There was a large population in Melbourne at the time, and the board comprises about forty representatives. It is a Parliament in itself. Such a board could not be created yet in our metropolitan area. We have many districts

but a small population, and the representation would not be on the same basis. The outlying districts would not get the same representation they obtain in Melbourne. The first thing to do is to ask the Government to carry out the proposed scheme by degrees, and each year to bring down the vote necessary merely to carry out the works that are required for the year. Something must be done for the future, as we cannot go on as we are doing. The people of the metropolitan area are dissatisfied not only with the quantity but the quality of the water they get. Sometimes at my own place I have to wait a while before the water comes, and when it does it is so red as to stain my hands.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you drink the water?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have nothing else to drink, but we first wait until it settles. I have drunk nothing else but Fremantle water during the last thirty years, and I do not think it has done me any harm.

Mr. Davies: It is notoriously bad.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Some people say it is bad, but I do not think I show any bad results from drinking it. Sometimes it is so badly coloured that it cannot be used for washing clothes, and people have to utilise the water in their tanks for this purpose. I suggest that the Government should make a start this year if possible by setting aside an amount on the Loan Estimates. After a few years when the work is carried out and when our population increases, it may be necessary to have some other form of control over the supply generally. I am sceptical about placing the control of the water supply in the metropolitan area in the hands of a local board, for I believe they would be inclined to raise money some considerable time before it was required, and further, they would not possess the experience necessary in the handling of such funds. The Government have been doing some work at Bickley Brook. That supply could be used in connection with the scheme that is to be carried out. Other arrangements have also been made. Several bores have been put down within the limits of the city, but unfortunately nothing has been done in Fremantle. It is not too late now to give an improved water supply, or to carry out the proposal which was instituted some few years ago. It was intended to put down a bore at Point Weylan. That was approved by the engineers, and would have served a portion, at any rate, of Fremantle; but this was not done. We shall, in all probability, have a shortage of water this year as we have had before. Great care must be taken with the scheme to see that we do not overburden our small population with too high a rate. This is one of the principal things we have to keep before us. Scores of people are paying drainage rates, but receive no benefit for them.

Mr. McCallum: How long will that go on?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Until the whole thing is paid for. It cannot be helped. There is some distance yet to go. In some cases

the surface water runs in the opposite direction, but it is claimed that owing to the contour of the country people on the high land contribute something to the water lying on the low land, and must pay their share of the cost. This has given rise to many complaints in the metropolitan area. The Minister has referred to Bayswater and Maylands. People in these centres are only too anxious to have their land cleared of water, but when it comes to a matter of paying it is a horse of another colour. When we were in office, farmers came from the country, and begged the Minister to extend the Coolgardie water supply into the farming areas. They agreed that they would pay anything if only the work were carried out.

Mr. Mann: It was the best thing you ever did.

Hon. P. Collier: It was one of the many good things we did.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They said it would be an insurance for them; no matter what it cost they should have it; but when it came to paying the rates that were imposed they objected.

The Minister for Works: Many are not paying now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That applies everywhere. People say they must have water but do not want to pay for it. There are some people who complain about having to pay 15s. per year in my district. I told them they were better off than I was when I had to pay 3s. a month, and carry in the water. Many of these water extensions are asked for, but cannot be given by the Government because of the small pipes that have been laid down. I made reference the other night to the Palmyra district in Bicton. The Minister said he would give further consideration to that at an early date. There are people living almost a stone's throw from the reservoir there. The trustees of the land, upon which a number of houses have been erected, and upon which soldiers' homes are now going up, have offered to guarantee the Government the outlay necessary. The Government say they are not in a position to find the money. It is useless for members here to talk to the gallery at all times. We must realise the difficulty that the Government have to contend with. When we were in office money was easier to get than it is to-day. I have no hesitation in saying that in spite of the attempt we made to develop the interior of the country it was impossible for us to borrow money to go on with the water supply scheme. We could not do it at that time, and if we could not do it then how would it have been possible for any Government to do it during the war? There were hundreds of miles of railways on which we had to spend nearly three millions of money to bring them up to the standard. Those railways drifted into a neglected condition after the present Minister for Works gave up the office of Commissioner of Railways.

The Minister for Works: Are you satisfied that they were decent then?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But nothing was done to them after the hon. member left that office. Not only the railways, but the rolling stock was neglected. The war has been a justification for the delay in regard to water supply, but the war is now over and money is likely to be cheaper. In fact, it has not been so cheap for many years. That being so, the time has arrived to take action in the direction of carrying out a water supply scheme. After that will be time enough to consider the question of the formation of boards of control.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [7.48]: The particular subjects of water supply, sewerage, and drainage are of importance to all metropolitan members. During the course of the debate, metropolitan members have been gracious enough to make reference to the electorate I represent. Sometimes I think that to deal at any length with this subject is like flogging a dead horse, but still we go on hoping, and for that reason I have given all the attention that it is possible to give to the subject by way of wading through the engineers' reports which deal with water supply, sewerage, and drainage, and I have come to the conclusion that the question as to where we are going to build our reservoir, or from where our supplies will have to come, can best be left in the hands of the engineers themselves. An hon. member to-night stated that one engineer was practically tied to the scheme he advocated before coming here. I have read that gentleman's report, and I do not think there is any ground for such an assertion. What we do know is that there is not an adequate water supply, nor a pure water supply. Whilst we may not be able to speak from the engineering point of view, we are justified in bringing this matter at all times under the notice of members of the Government. It is wrong in my opinion to blame the Minister for Works for the absence of an adequate water supply. The matter has been neglected not only in late years but for very many years past. The time was opportune some years ago for the commencement of, let me use that much worn phrase, a comprehensive scheme. But it has been delayed and delayed, until now, at the final moment, it is important that we should go right ahead with it. I listened with interest to the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), and he brought back to my memory many incidents which occurred years ago. I agree with him that we may be able to bring an adequate water supply to the metropolitan area, but it will also be necessary to re-reticulate in many instances for the simple reason that the reticulation is not good enough at the present time to carry a big supply. In that respect I am somewhat fortunate in my electorate in that a good portion of the electorate was adequately reticulated some

little time back and, in the event of our getting a new water supply, we would be able to carry it. I wish to refer to one or two statements made by the member for East Perth (Mr. Simons). A few weeks ago he took strong exception to some residents of Western Australia condemning their own State. Yet that hon. member told us to-night that Perth was a very dirty city. He told us further that it was waterless, and that the residents were practically eaten out by mosquitoes. It is up to the hon. member to bring this matter before the public in a different light. I am not going to say that Perth is a dirty or a waterless city, or that its people are eaten out by mosquitoes, because I do not believe either to be the case. Perth, taken all round, is just as clean and just as sweet a city as any other in Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It ranks second to Fremantle.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I have yet to learn that Fremantle is a city.

Mr. Munsie: It is only a suburb.

Mr. RICHARDSON: A small suburb of Subiaco. It is unwise on the part of the member for East Perth to make such statements as we heard from him to-day. We are endeavouring to get population, and if we talk as he did to-day, we shall drive people from our midst. I deny the statement he made—he referred also to “surrounding districts”—so far as my electorate is concerned. Subiaco is a clean suburb. We have a water supply—though I admit it is not adequate—and there are very few mosquitoes there. It is costing us a great deal to keep our suburb healthy and clean, and if we had a good water supply we might inveigle the Minister for Works into beginning sewerage extensions there. With the extensions, the cost to the residents would be cheaper than it is to-day. We are paying a great deal for inspection and cleaning work at the present time, but notwithstanding that, I am convinced that with an adequate sewerage system the charges would be less than they are to-day. In addition we would have a healthy and a cleaner suburb in every respect. The Minister referred to a small part of my electorate called Jolimont. I desire to keep this place under the notice of members and the public. Some 15 or 16 years ago there was not a drop of water on the ground at Jolimont and many working people built their homes there. By some means or other a storm water drain was taken through Subiaco and that drain stopped right alongside the little suburb of Jolimont.

Mr. Underwood: Water has risen all over that area.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I know, but I desire to say of Jolimont that prior to the construction of the 6ft. drain—a man could work upright in this drain—there was not a drop of water on the surface at Jolimont. To-day we know that a number of people have had to leave their homes because the water has risen some 12 or 14 feet in the

lower-lying parts, and these people have been practically ruined. The matter was taken to the Supreme Court and the Government lost the case. I believe the decision of the judge was a good one, because the engineers stated that the water had been emptied there and had percolated through the lower parts where the houses happen to be. I have approached the Government with a view to getting compensation for the people who have suffered a loss, and the argument advanced has been that the Government are not responsible for the water lodging there, and that if they begin the payment of compensation there they will have to pay it to others in the surrounding districts where also the water has made its appearance. In my opinion that statement is misleading, for the reason that there is no storm water drain emptying itself at those other places. Therefore the two instances are not analogous and now that the Government have lost the case, they should immediately pay fair and reasonable compensation to those who have lost their homes. Referring briefly to the sewerage question again, we have in Subiaco one of the most congested areas to be found outside Perth and it has always appeared to me to have been a ridiculous proposition—and just for the moment I do not know who was responsible to take the sewerage system around our boundary into West Perth and suddenly stop right at the point where Subiaco is to some extent congested. I do hope that the Government in the near future will begin some little extension of the system. So far as the control of the system is concerned, I do not care whether the Government look after it or whether it is taken over by a board. It appeals to me, however, in this way, that the Government say they cannot find money for the work. If they are not prepared to go on with it, it is up to them to say "Try a board." I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle that if a board is formed we shall be likely to begin centralisation in Perth, and if it is a question of representation, it will be necessary for the Government to create that representation so that there may be no possibility of Perth assuming control of everything.

The Minister for Works: You do not seem to trust Perth.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Ten men can beat one at any stage of the scheme unless they happen to be abnormal. I do not wish to labour the question, but I do sincerely hope that the Government will at least take notice of what the member for North-East Fremantle has said: if they are not prepared to go on with the scheme in full, they should at least show that they believe in it, that they appreciate the requirements, and that they intend to commence a scheme which will develop as time goes on, so that in the present and for the future, there will be no doubt about an adequate water supply, no doubt about the sewerage scheme being extended, and no doubt about our low lying lands being drained.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [8.2]: Every metropolitan member who takes an interest in the question of water supply must have been disappointed at the manner in which the Minister placed these Estimates before the Committee to-night. We had expected to hear of the department's views regarding future policy.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We get that on the Loan Estimates.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes; it is always the next day.

Mr. MANN: I would be much better pleased had we heard something on that topic to-day. We know that an engineer of considerable skill came here from Victoria to inquire into the question of our metropolitan water supply—an engineer known to have been very successful in his State, and one who brought into existence there a very up-to-date water supply. That engineer came here and made a report on our metropolitan water supply. One would like to know the department's intentions with regard to that report; do they intend to adopt it in its entirety, or in part? We understand that it may not be possible to start at once a comprehensive scheme of water supply; but it may be possible, as suggested by the member for North-East Fremantle, to proceed gradually on a comprehensive scheme, instead of having continual patchwork; and a patchwork scheme is all that we have known up to the present. I do not expect the Minister to launch out on a large scheme immediately, but I suggest he should make a modest beginning, to expand as time goes on. In comparing our metropolitan water supply with that of Eastern States capitals, the best test is afforded by Brisbane. The capital expenditure on the metropolitan scheme of Western Australia is £1,119,000, plus £660,000 for sewerage. The corresponding Brisbane figures are about two millions sterling for water, and a lesser expenditure than ours on sewerage. The total working costs of the metropolitan scheme of Perth are £169,000, as against £166,000 in Brisbane. Last year our scheme had a deficit of £13,000, whilst the Brisbane scheme has carried on its operations for a deficit of only £8,000. True it is that the population of Brisbane is larger than that of Perth; but it is also true that the Brisbane scheme carries on at lower working costs than ours. Moreover, the Brisbane scheme's rating is on unimproved land values. Now, Perth citizens are paying 1s. in the pound for water, as against Melbourne citizens' 6d. in the pound, and Sydney citizens' 7½d. in the pound. The Perth sewerage rate is 1s. 1d. in the pound, as against 11d. for both Melbourne and Sydney. Our domestic rate ranges from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. as against 1s. in both Melbourne and Sydney, and 1s. 2d. in Brisbane. Our consumption per head is only 36 gallons, as against 55 in Melbourne, 45

in Sydney, and 55 in Brisbane. Thus it appears that the other capitals have better schemes than ours at just about half the cost of ours. The figures speak for themselves. In lieu of such conditions, surely it is time for us to consider a fresh basis of operations. Surely the department must by this time have decided upon the course they will take regarding Mr. Ritchie's report and suggestions. Indeed, it is understood that the department have adopted his suggestions, and that he has put forward a scheme whereby an economical service can be started, and can be extended as necessary. Yet the Minister told us nothing at all about that. He simply explained to us that we had to be content with what we got from the bores and Osborne Park. But suppose those bores cut out some time. Bores have been known to cut out in other places. We here would then find ourselves without any water at all in the metropolitan area. Now as to the Bickley Brook reservoir, my observation may not be quite correct, but I believe that that work costs something over £70,000, and that it holds a nine-days supply of water for the metropolitan area. The figure of cost I have quoted does not include the cost of land resumption.

The Minister for Works: The Bickley Brook reservoir did not cost £70,000, or £50,000. You are knocked out there.

Mr. MANN: We would like to know what it did cost. What did the land resumptions cost?

The Minister for Works: We do not know. We have not all the claims in yet.

Mr. MANN: It is understood that orchard lands of a value of £40 or £50 per acre have been resumed, the fruit trees having been chopped down. With such expenditure for resumption we get a reservoir which will supply the requirements of the metropolitan area for only seven or nine days.

The Minister for Works: I do not know where you got your information from.

Mr. MANN: At all events, the Minister has not informed us as to the cost of the reservoir. As to its utility, he has also been silent, apart from saying that the reservoir would assist supplies from Queen's Park. This is characteristic of a patchwork proposition. Far better would it have been to inaugurate a big scheme, and carry it out gradually, in such a way that we could increase its capacity each year as required. The metropolitan district, with its huge buildings, has to rely upon water supply for its safety; and meantime the residents of the metropolitan district do not get the supplies they need. I feel it my duty to bring this matter as prominently as I can before the Committee. The question of finance now stands in the way; yet I think nothing, really, should stand in the way of an adequate supply

of water for the whole of the metropolitan area.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [8.12]: It does seem strange just at the end of a very wet winter to hear so many people complaining about shortage of water. We are all agreed that water is a prime essential both in the city and in the country. In one of my little towns there is a pumping scheme, drawing water from the Hotham River; and at times the water is unfit for anything. There we are paying a water rate of 3s. in the pound. We were very pleased to lay the matter before the Minister when he recently visited the district. The hon. gentleman promised to look into the matter and see whether some alteration could not be effected in both the quality of the water and the cost of the administration. I recognise that in the present state of the finances it is very difficult for Ministers to find funds for a comprehensive water supply scheme. But people here are apparently quite willing to pay for water, if they can only get it, and I daresay country people will do the same, though I may remind hon. members of the fact that when our goldfields friends got their water supply scheme they said they could do without it. Last summer many of my constituents were compelled to bring water by rail over considerable distances, and then to cart that water. We are told that it is necessary for our people to work harder and produce more, but it is impossible for people to make the best use of their time if they have to cart water long distances for their stock.

The CHAIRMAN: This vote refers to metropolitan water supply. The hon. member will have his opportunity on the next vote.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.14]: I listened with interest to the criticisms directed at the Minister regarding water supply in the metropolitan area. No doubt there is considerable justification for that criticism. But, in criticising, one should take into account the position of affairs as it exists. We know that owing to war conditions the cost of material has been very heavy. I incline to the view that from the aspect of economy these extensions which have been delayed are well delayed. To say extensions of water supply should be delayed is to say something very unpopular, but, comparing the cost of reticulating to-day with the cost before the war, one must admit that there is every evidence in favour of delay. As regards the supply of water to the metropolitan area, I earnestly hope the Minister will carefully consider the claims of the Upper Canning scheme. Indeed, I know he is doing so. The Minister states that he has five survey parties out obtaining information for the purpose of that scheme. That seems to me to be the best indication of the desire on the part of the Minister to provide these necessary water supply facilities. When that evidence has been obtained and completed and a decision arrived at, I hope that decision will prove to be in favour of the

upper Canning scheme. Should that be the case, then in addition to the metropolitan supply, the outer suburban areas, including Kelmscott, Maddington, Kenwick, Cannington, and other centres, will be able to secure water supplies as well. If that be done, we shall see hundreds of acres of land which are now practically idle, being put to a profitable use. There are other places as well where there is a great need for a water supply. I refer particularly to Darlington, Parkerville, and Glen Forrest, as well as other places in that part of the hills district. If under any such proposed scheme, it was decided to tap the supply from the Mundaring Weir, it would be possible to provide for the requirements of the centres I have mentioned. Personally, I think that the Kangaroo Valley site in the Upper Canning, is the right spot for the scheme, and I believe, although I have no definite knowledge on the point, that the consensus of opinion as to the result of the work of the survey parties, supports me in that belief. It is not my intention to criticise the department. Unfortunately, in the centres to which I have referred there is no water supply at all. Now that prices are becoming more normal, I hope that the Minister will, to borrow a phrase which has been used once or twice before, come forward with a bold and comprehensive scheme which will be in the best interests of all concerned.

The Minister for Works: You give me the money and I will do the work.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth) [8.17]: I was glad to hear the Minister say that we would have a better water supply during the present summer. It is necessary that we should have a better supply, although I cannot agree with the member for East Perth (Mr. Simons) that the suburb which I represent is in the dirty condition he says East Perth is in at the present time. I would suggest to the Minister that the metropolitan members who have been meeting and discussing this matter together, with a view to helping to find a solution of the present difficulty, have only been actuated by a desire to assist him in that direction. If the Minister were to express his willingness to meet those members in conference, it might be good for all concerned. It could do no harm. In any case, we are not against the department, nor are we working against the Minister.

The Minister for Works: I do not care if you are against the department. If you can do any good or show us where we are wrong, I shall be pleased.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister spoke in resentful tones about the metropolitan members this evening.

Mrs. COWAN: There was a good deal of comment on the point at election time and it is well known that some people are not satisfied that the scheme favoured by Mr. Ritchie is the best that could be adopted. That is a matter, however, for the department to consider, and I have no

doubt they will thoroughly investigate that question. In reading through Mr. Ritchie's report, I was struck by the fact that he did not seem to be quite satisfied regarding the way details of the scheme had been presented to him, inasmuch as he found it necessary to look around for himself and supplement the information provided. Perhaps that again is a matter more for the department than for ourselves. It makes one feel, however, that a conference with the Minister on the subject would be of advantage and would make everyone more satisfied. I would like to see a board take over the responsibility of inquiries in every direction in connection with these matters, and then to carry out, if possible, what was decided upon. It would be a good thing if we were to have an inquiry concerning the metropolitan water supply scheme generally. Some people favour the Mundaring Weir proposal, and others favour the Canning scheme. It appears to me that the Canning scheme is the one that presents greater advantages for the people of the metropolitan area, not only on account of the good water which can be obtained from that source, but on account of the way in which the reticulation can be managed.

Capt. Carter: Let the board decide that question.

Mrs. COWAN: If such a scheme were decided upon, it would leave the Mundaring scheme for the benefit of the country districts. It we could have a separate administration looking after the water supply for the metropolitan area, and allow the country districts to have an organisation to look after their particular interests, I think more satisfaction would be given to both sections of the community. If there is to be any repetition in the city of the conditions that existed last year, when they were particularly bad, there will be trouble for metropolitan members and other members as well, because the people will raise their voices in no uncertain tones.

The Minister for Works: That is one reason why there should not have been wild statements made here to-night.

Mrs. COWAN: I hope I have not made any wild statements during the course of my remarks.

The Minister for Works: No, you have not.

Mrs. COWAN: I do not know why a board should necessarily be inferior to the present system in regard to the management of the water supply for the metropolitan area. There will always be grumblers, no matter if the Government continue in control of the water supply services or if a board is in control.

Hon. P. Collier: There are even people who are dissatisfied with the present Minister.

Mrs. COWAN: I believe that if they had had a board in Melbourne earlier in the history of the water supply of that city, the condition of affairs which arose some time ago and which necessitated its appointment,

would not have been recorded. I want the Minister to realise that the meetings which have been held by metropolitan members were only for the purpose of assisting him in overcoming the present difficulties. We would be quite willing to be guided and helped by him, and I trust he would find us willing to aid him in arriving at a solution of what is, at present, a very great difficulty in connection with the metropolitan area.

Hon. P. Collier: This is quite a mutual admiration society.

The Minister for Works: In any case, these are the only courteous words that have been spoken to-night.

Mr. DAVIES (Guildford) [8.23]: Reference has been made to the assistance rendered by the Government to local governing bodies. I want to thank the Minister for the assistance he has rendered to the local governing bodies in my electorate. They were hard up against it, like other local governing bodies, owing to the drainage problem. Some reference was made to this aspect by the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter) and he referred to the rising tide of water in his electorate. If it is any comfort to him to know, I do not think it is a question altogether of the water coming from the bores and running into Herdsman's Lake. I would like to point out to that hon. member that the water is rising throughout the metropolitan area from Midland Junction to Fremantle.

Capt. Carter: I am glad to get your expert opinion on this subject.

Mr. DAVIES: It is not expert opinion.

Capt. Carter: Nor is it the correct explanation.

Mr. DAVIES: It is right. Whatever may be the cause, however, I hope the Government will recognise the fact that something must be done. The Minister for Works fully realises his responsibilities in that regard. To-day close to the Maylands and Bayswater areas, there is to be seen in course of construction, a drain that will afford relief to the people in those parts. It is hard to see houses put up some years ago, at a cost of from £500 to £800, now surrounded by water. No one would seriously think that those houses had been constructed in a swamp. Nothing of the kind was done. That shows that, in common with the position at Leederville and Subiaco, water is rising throughout the whole metropolitan area, practically from the Darling Ranges to the seaboard.

Capt. Carter: I admitted that fact, but I said that the bores were a contributory cause.

Mr. DAVIES: Millions of gallons of water are brought from the Darling Ranges for local consumption and I presume that also increases the water level in the metropolitan area. There must be some other cause, and it has been stated that the large number of trees which have been cut down

in the metropolitan area have resulted in less evaporation, causing an adverse effect upon the water soakage problem. I am not an expert and will not express any opinion on that theory, but the fact remains that this is a serious problem in the metropolitan area. It should be the duty of the Minister in charge of this department to let hon. members know what is being done. Regarding the assistance rendered to local governing authorities, it seems absolutely out of place and somewhat of a disgrace to the administration in Western Australia, that we should find bailiffs in possession of local authorities' premises. I have been informed, and I repeat it with all seriousness, that one local authority was placed in a most invidious position. A Chinaman was found in charge of the local town hall. He stood at the doors, collecting rates from people who came along because he had taken action against those local authorities and until his judgment had been satisfied, "Johnny Chow" was in charge. I should like to state at once that that incident did not take place at Midland Junction.

Mr. Clydesdale: Where was it?

Mr. DAVIES: It may have been in South Perth.

Mr. Clydesdale: No chance there!

Mr. DAVIES: In any case, that position has arisen. I believe the bailiffs were put in the West Guildford Road Board office. In that instance, however, they had the decency not to put a Chinaman in charge.

The Minister for Works: Who got them out of their trouble?

Mr. DAVIES: I am pleased to say that the Minister did.

The Minister for Works: Not the Minister; the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: You are making the Minister blush.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister has received a good deal of criticism this evening, and while we may criticise him on some points, we should give him some meed of praise for the manner in which he has come to the assistance of local governing authorities. I know something about this matter, because I accompanied the representatives of the road board to the Minister. I know the courtesy with which he met them and the great assistance he rendered. These people are very thankful to him. Another question, which is certainly of grave importance, has been referred to, that is, the question of handing over public utilities, such as the water supply, sewerage and drainage, to a metropolitan board. Although not necessarily new, the question of change of control to a board should be seriously considered by Parliament before any such appointment is made. Here is a case in point. In some parts of Western Australia a few years ago the Government used to administer road districts prior to the appointment of a local road board. The Government used to control those districts from Perth. To-day, the Public Health De-

partment control country areas where there is no local health board. The time has arrived, as suggested by the member for North-East Fremantle, when the question will have to be seriously considered as to whether the Government should hand over control to a board or continue in control themselves. When the last Labour Government were in office, they purchased the Perth tramways, and maintained them under the control of the Government, rather than hand them over to a local board or to the municipality. To-day the question arises, when we are again forced to ask whether, in view of the wealth of detail which it is necessary to go into, these services can be attended to by a Minister. However capable a Minister may be, and the Minister for Works is undoubtedly a capable administrator, it is beyond the power of any one man to sit in Parliament and conduct business in this Chamber, to go to his office and attend to his departmental duties and, at the same time, give that strict attention to the wealth of detail necessary for the successful carrying on of these public utilities. The only objection raised to the appointment of a board is that touched upon by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), who has occupied ministerial office and had years of Parliamentary experience. He said the board would swamp the outlying districts. But would it not be possible to frame a measure which would safeguard the smaller municipalities? Could it not be provided that Perth and Fremantle, and each of the smaller municipalities, should all have equal representation on the board?

Mr. Clydesdale: Then the city would be swamped.

Mr. DAVIES: I am coming to regard these problems from the national standpoint, rather than from the viewpoint of individual districts.

Hon. P. Collier: The discussion of a board on these Estimates is somewhat out of order.

Mr. DAVIES: The discussion has been permitted to other members, and it is rather late to draw the line now. It is of great importance to the metropolitan area that the question should be fully discussed. On the subject of grain elevators the other night we considered the voting power of the shareholders. While individual shareholders were limited to 5000 shares, the prospectus of the company provided that a shareholder with 5,000 shares should have only the same voting power as a small shareholder. There should be no difficulty at all about the representation. If this is the only objection to be raised to the appointment of a board, further consideration should be given to such appointment. Unlike other parts of the metropolitan area, Guildford has no complaint regarding the quality of the water supply.

The Minister for Works: You get Mundaring water exclusively.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. The supply is somewhat restricted in the summer time, but that

is due, not to the smallness of the main, but to the fact that the reticulation pipes, which were put down when the area was only sparsely populated, are not capable of carrying sufficient water to all who require it.

The Minister for Works: Reticulation is the trouble all round the metropolitan area.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, and the remedy requires heaps of money. Reference has been made to the officers in charge of the Drainage Department. They are not known to me personally. The drain between Bayswater and Maylands is being constructed by departmental day labour. I wish to pay a tribute to the men carrying out that job, and to the engineer in charge of the work. For the construction of the drain in the Bayswater area the local authorities called tenders. The department tendered, and I am pleased to say won by hundreds of pounds, showing that the men in charge of the department are highly capable engineers. It is due to the Minister and his officers that I should make that statement.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [8.35]: In the summary of the public utilities will be found these figures: Public working expenses £111,276, interest charges £64,613, sinking fund £14,052, total cost £189,941. In regard to our Estimates and our deficit, what we require to consider is what is done in a country district when a man has to deal with a heavy load on a bad road. Of course he unloads. This is a good opportunity for the Government to unload this utility. Other cities have tried metropolitan water trusts, and this city could try it. It should be incumbent on such a trust to attend to the water and keep up the public parks and reserves. We shall always have complaints to the Government while they control; the metropolitan people and their representatives will take up specific cases and go to the Government for redress. Here is a public utility enjoyed by the citizens of the metropolitan area. They are in a position to float loans and fix rates and charges to meet their obligation. Taking over this utility, those people could apply to their representatives direct, with the assistance of the ratepayers and the Government. It would be a move in the right direction to let those people have a say in the control of the administration of the utility they wish to enjoy.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They do it now, through their members in this Chamber.

Mr. HARRISON: I am aware of that, and I am aware that while it is under the control of the Government undue pressure will be brought to bear on the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You ought to say that!

Mr. HARRISON: I admit I have done my best in respect of the goldfields water scheme. Contrast the condition of the householder in the metropolitan area and of the householder in a country district. The member for North-East Fremantle has told us that in his elec-

torate water is costing 1s. per thousand gallons.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not say that. I referred to the rate.

Mr. HARRISON: Well, take it on the rate. In the country districts we are rated at 4d. per acre which, under the administration of the present Minister, has been reduced to 3d. We have a £5 holding fee for domestic purposes.

Hon. P. Collier: All this is distinctly out of order.

Mr. Mann: You are getting a fair deal in the country.

Mr. Clydesdale: And, what is more, you are getting water.

Mr. HARRISON: So are you in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Clydesdale: No fear!

Mr. HARRISON: Well, if you are not getting it, you are not putting up the capital to expand the scheme. Yet you have every facility for borrowing money. If the Government are not working fast enough for you, why not get a trust which will work faster and give you the necessary supply? It would be a good scheme for the Government to unload and the citizens to take up.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If they did that in your district you would quickly unload.

Mr. HARRISON: We had to make provision for ourselves until the goldfields supply was made available. I myself have had to cart water for 10 miles. However, that has nothing to do with the Estimates.

Hon. P. Collier: Nothing you are saying has anything to do with the Estimates.

Mr. HARRISON: The people of the metropolitan area could get this question satisfactorily attended to by direct representation, and would then know where their money was going.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [8.40]: I thank hon. members for their criticism, especially those who have referred in terms of praise to the administration; not so much as applying to myself, but as a recognition that those who work under me try to do the right thing. The debate is a somewhat difficult one to reply to, because so many views have been expressed. When some of the members who have spoken have gained a little more experience of Parliamentary life they will wonder why on earth they allowed their tongues to run away with them. Reference has been made to the control of the water supply by a board. Unfortunately my tongue is tied in respect of that question, because I am under instructions from the Premier to call, at the earliest opportunity, a conference of the local authorities concerned and discuss the question with them, so that I may focus their views and place them before him and Cabinet for consideration.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I hope you will give the general taxpayers a voice in the matter.

Capt. Carter: Will hon. members be admitted?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I wish the hon. member would keep quiet! I am trying to speak carefully, for I recognise the importance attached to the words that I utter, because I am the Minister in charge. I have no yet had an opportunity to call this conference, nor even to consider how it should be called and conducted. However, hon. members can rest assured that it will be done thoroughly, and that no wild cat schemes of individuals will cut much ice with me. The member for East Perth (Mr. Simons)—I am sorry he is not here; he is usually away when replies are being made to his rash statements.

Hon. P. Collier: I will convey your reply to him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He talks about my pride in my doings and our being successful in everything but water. He made a statement which I said was a dirty statement. I repeat that. Any member who casts an aspersion of that sort on the people of the district, is false to his position.

Hon. P. Collier: I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not going to withdraw.

Hon. P. Collier: That will be for the Chairman to decide.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Minister ought to withdraw.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Withdraw what, the word "dirty"? The word has been used here ad nauseum.

The CHAIRMAN: You were applying it to an honourable member.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: All right, if that is what you call him, I will withdraw.

Hon. P. Collier: I am not going to permit the Minister to insult any hon. member on this side of the House. He must withdraw in a proper and dignified way.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have done so.

Hon. P. Collier: I am speaking to the Chairman, and I ask the Chairman to get a withdrawal in a proper way.

The CHAIRMAN: I certainly am not satisfied.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Tell me what I should say.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask you to withdraw the remarks in which you referred to the member for East Perth as dirty.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Certainly.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will proceed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I thought it was rather bad taste for an hon. member to refer to any portion of the metropolitan area as being dirty in the way the member for East Perth did, a gentleman who has always been telling us that we should boost up this country. Yet he is telling the world that we are a dirty people, that we have mosquitoes all over the place, and that insanitary conditions prevail. I have not the slightest doubt that even the Leader of the Opposition will be able

to place full value on the remarks of that hon. gentleman. He referred to the Mundaring Weir, and several other members have also referred to it. I have to repeat some remarks I made in this connection last session. If those members who have been investigating the water supply of the city had got the papers, they should have been able—

Capt. Carter: We have not been able to get C. Y. O'Connor's report.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Has the hon. member applied to me for it? If the hon. member had had the courtesy to let me know that he was alive, and if he had done anything more than give voice to the abuse that he has done this evening, which he perhaps thinks is quite the proper thing, I might have been able to assist him.

Capt. Carter: We have not got anything out of you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has not asked for anything.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Minister is doing the drainage at Herdsman's Lake, anyhow.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I knew very little about these members or what they were doing until I heard them here to-day. They have not held any communication with me. Not one of them has spoken to me about the matter. The attempt of the member for Leederville to bluff the question aside is not worthy of a member of this House.

Capt. Carter: To what matter are you referring?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If members had had the papers, and so far as I am concerned they could have had the whole of them, because we have nothing to hide, they would have found that the professional engineers, men who know their business, men who are not amateurs guessing at things, stated that the extra supply we could get from the Mundaring Weir would be only one million gallons per day. In order to get that extra million gallons of water, we would have to incur a large expenditure for mains, which expenditure would go very far indeed towards the cost of the Canning scheme. Further than that, Mr. Ritchie dealt fully with the question of utilising the Mundaring supply, and if members had read and digested his report, they would know his opinion. Mr. Ritchie put the Mundaring scheme on one side as being simply a makeshift, because he knew, as we know, and as members here should know, that the whole of the supplies from the Mundaring scheme will have to go eastward in the next two or three years. We send over five million gallons a day through No. 1 pumping station, and only two million gallons a day reaches Kalgoorlie. The whole of the balance is absorbed en route. The main feeding Kalgoorlie at the present time has almost outlived its usefulness, and we shall have to give consideration to the question of the enlargement of that main. When the main is enlarged every drop of water which can be got from the Mundaring scheme will go eastward and will not come down to the city at all. It seems to me, too,

that the member for East Perth, the hon. gentleman who is not in his seat at present, not being a professional man, was exceeding the privileges of even a member of Parliament, when he referred to the officers of the State as men who had not the energy or ability to deal with the scheme. If that member, or any other member, is really of that opinion, there is only one honourable course for him to take, and that is to move in this House for the appointment of a Royal Commission or a select committee to inquire into the qualifications of these men charged with the responsibility of carrying out this work. To come here with this idle sort of persiflage and accuse men of standing, men whose lives have been devoted to their work, of lack of energy or ability—well, I am not allowed to use the language I should do to describe the action. Do members know that we have had engineers connected with the Works Department and the Water Supply Department who have gone to the other side and have received salaries double, and in one instance, treble what we could pay them, and that they were men who were considered to be not above the average of our officers? Why should there be this pulling down? Do members want to appear in the public eye as being high and mighty people, or is this the only way in which they can draw attention to their existence, namely, by trying to pull down men who are working honestly and honourably in the service of and for the good of the State? The member for East Perth said that Subiaco could not be sewered because of the lack of water. If the hon. member had paid any attention to the remarks I made, he would have known that, not lack of water, but lack of funds was the reason. Sewers for Subiaco would cost nearly £200,000 and it would cost another £250,000 to connect the houses and instal the closets and the rest of the fittings. I say to-day, with the mayor of Subiaco here, that Subiaco cannot support an expenditure of half a million of money at the present time. Even if it could, we have not got the money, so what is the use of the hon. member talking in that light and airy fashion about serious matters which must be fully and carefully considered. The member for Leederville said the metropolitan parliamentary committee was the nucleus of what would eventually prove to be a useful body. I sincerely hope this is so, and if any assistance can be rendered by any of my officers, or any of the papers in my department, they are welcome to such assistance, and if they think the Minister can be of any value to them, he will be at their service also. I cannot say more than that. I am perfectly willing to give assistance to anyone who is desirous of assisting Western Australia, but I have no time for people who are always trying to pull down instead of to build up. The hon. member spoke about Nedlands. There are some parts of Nedlands where the people will never be able to get a good supply of water. Why? Because their contour is

higher than the service reservoir in King's Park, and how is it possible by means of gravitation to get water to run to a level higher than the source? The hon. member may not know that a lot of land around the city has been cut up, and pipes have been put down by land speculators so that they could advertise the land as having water laid on. They have in some instances connected up about 50 blocks with a $\frac{1}{2}$ in. pipe. If one tap is open, other people cannot get a drop of water. This is how a lot of these complaints originate. A few people are served by a small pipe and others come along and draw off it, and the result is they cannot get water, and the time of this House is taken up owing to these operations by speculators and profiteers to sell their land. I do not think that Parliament can be brought much lower than that. The hon. member is very good in putting up cases like an Aunt Sally to knock them down again for cocoanuts and various other trifles. Amongst other things, the hon. member claimed that there were five cases of diphtheria in Mount Hawthorn traceable to the pan system. All I can say is that if the hon. member honestly believes that, he should indict the local authority. If the local authority be the city of Perth, let him indict it. If the city of Perth is carrying out the pan system properly, no diphtheria would be caught from the pans. Twenty five years ago I was chairman of the health committee of the city of Perth and with Tom Molloy and men of that type, I used to go round and see that the business of the night men was properly carried out. Let the hon. member follow these carts around—

Hon. P. Collier: Go on! There is some thing for you to do.

Mr. A. Thomson: A parliamentary "perk"!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I leave that, and come now to a matter to be treated with great seriousness. The Government have had various schemes submitted to them during the last 20 years by the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Lawson, Mr. O'Brien and men whose ability is respected in other parts of Australia and should be respected here. The Government, however, felt that if they could obtain an engineer of repute to go through the various schemes and give an unbiased opinion, it would be a very wise course to adopt. We secured the services of Mr. Ritchie from the Premier of Victoria as a great personal favour to our Premier. We invited him here and paid him his fee, and he attended to his work. Yet to-day I have heard attacks made on that gentleman, by members forsooth, who profess that they do not agree with this, that and the other. What are the qualifications of those amateurs who have been attacking the officer lent to us by the Premier of Victoria, a man who came to us as our guest, to give us the benefit of his experience? In view of these attacks, is

it likely, when we want other men of experience to help us, that they will come? It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest; it is a bad sort of host that throws dust and dirt at a guest who came to help and advise us in our time of need. The hon. member referred to the Jolimont court case in which the Government are involved. That matter is sub judice. This Chamber should not be made the scene for advocating either one side or the other when a legal case is pending.

Capt. Carter: You know I was referring to my district.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That makes no difference. The hon. gentleman seems to forget that he has two responsibilities, one to his constituents who elected him, and a greater responsibility to the State of Western Australia, one of whose representatives he is by virtue of the votes cast for him at Leederville. It is not right that he should allow matters of interest to his own district to overshadow the duty he owes to the State, any more than he has a right to take advantage of his membership of this House—he has not done so to my knowledge—to introduce matters affecting his own private concerns.

Mr. Simons: No one has any rights here according to you. We are all interlopers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not responsible for what the electors send here.

Mr. Simons: The electors who sent you assumed a great responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The electors who sent me here have been good enough to return me for five-and-twenty years, and after I had left them for five or six years to take the management of the railways of this State, they were good enough to ask me to go back again. When the hon. member can show a record like that, he will be a good man.

Mr. Simons: They sent me first in my youth.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I intend to deal with bores now. The hon. member spoke of three bores at Osborne Park.

Mr. Richardson: There are plenty of them here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know that the member for Leederville has to study his constituents somewhat. Probably I study mine, but I have not allowed my constituents to place me in such a ridiculous position as I should feel I was in if I had put forward the argument that the water from the bores had affected the level of Herdsman's Lake.

Capt. Carter: No. 2 bore ran for eight weeks.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know of a No. 4 bore which would run for three years, if it had a chance, but it is not a water bore. The engineers have informed me that with that quantity of water coming out of the bores, not more than 10 million gallons would have escaped by the time they were shut

down. If 50 million gallons had escaped it would not have raised the surface of Herdsman's Lake three-sixteenths of an inch.

Capt. Carter: It would probably be more than that. No. 2 bore ran for eight weeks and No. 3 for a fortnight.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course I must accept the hon. member's word, and assume that the officers of my department have been telling me tarradiddles. I have letters in my possession from people stating that when Herdsman's Lake is drained it will take so much water away from the moist land around it that they will not be able to carry on their business, and that they propose to ask for compensation from the Government.

Capt. Carter: Possibly.

Mr. Corboy: It is probable.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What the Government are to do in these circumstances, I do not know.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Now you are to be liable for damages for taking away the water, and equally liable for leaving it there.

Mr. Simons: Whose officer recommended the draining of Herdsman's Lake?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition can best answer that question, but I believe that 10 or 12 years ago someone suggested that this place should be drained by cutting a tunnel through the hills. The decision to have the work done was made by the Premier, and I presume he had the right to make a decision of that sort. He found me the money, and told me to get on with the job, and I am now doing so. I have to thank the member for North-East Fremantle for the practical suggestions he made, and wish him to know that they will be attended to. The member for Subiaco referred to Jolimont in a temperate and decent manner. I have to thank him for his remarks. The member for Perth said he was disappointed with my speech. I am equally disappointed with his. He did not tell us much, and what he did say did not add very much to the debate. I would ask those members who belong to the committee of inquiry of metropolitan members whether they have read the 23rd annual report of the Metropolitan Water Supply Department.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Don't say anything that may cause a split in the party.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not mind about that. I conclude that the thoroughness which has evidently actuated their investigations has caused them to read, mark learn and inwardly digest that report. And yet we have the hon. member telling us that the Bickley Brook reservoir cost £70,000, and what is more, he believed it.

Mr. Clydesdale: He is the only one who did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If he will turn to page 18 of the report he will find that the capital expenditure on the Bickley Brook reservoir to June 30, 1921, was £27,680. Speaking from memory, I do not think the total expenditure on the reservoir would exceed £30,000. What

the compensation for the land will be, I cannot say. I have no control over the conscience or the feelings of the people who have laid that they wish to be compensated for. If this committee will take this report and, having taken it, read it carefully, they will find in it all the information they desire or require in the course of their investigations. The member for West Perth said that some people thought Mr. Ritchie, the visiting engineer, was not satisfied with the facts placed before him. He certainly differed in some details with our engineers, but in the main he approved of their suggestions. In regard to the surveys and investigations generally, we are carrying out what Mr. Ritchie desires. Until the ground work has been done, what is the use of framing a policy? We cannot spend money without knowing the basis on which we are to work. The Canning supply is really an important step in the chain of supplies that we shall have to use for the water requirements of the metropolitan area in the years to come. The most material thing that can be done is to construct a channel or pipe line through which the water can be conveyed to Perth, but this work must be done simultaneously with the damming of the necessary amount of water. When the main reservoir becomes too small for the needs of Perth, the Wongan Brook, some six miles further along, will require to have its water impounded and brought down so that the water may be conveyed to the same service pipes. Sufficiently large pipes will have to be put down to enable them to carry the extra supply of water. The surveys show that some of the conclusions that were arrived at by our officers and which were questioned by Mr. Ritchie, were correct, but in other directions the conclusions were not correct. It may be some 12 or 18 months before the necessary data can be got together for the joint consideration of Mr. Ritchie and our engineers. The expenditure of a million and a half pounds will add from 2s. upwards to the rates of the people in the metropolitan area, and being faced with so serious a question, no Government, no matter what the clamour may be, would move in this direction until they were assured that everything was satisfactory. I do not say that the Government should sit down and do nothing in the meantime. Members may rest assured that we are not standing idle, but we have to be careful in what we do, and there is no work that requires so much care and consideration as that connected with the water supplies of the people.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Other hydraulic undertakings chargeable to revenue, £42,321; Perth City Markets, £1,269—agreed to.

Vote—State batteries, £63,450:

Mr. HERON (Mt. Leonora) [9.13]: I notice that tenders are being called for the leasing of State batteries. Knowing the

requirements of the prospector, in the direction of crushing facilities, I trust the Minister will further consider this matter. Occasionally we hear of men who crush for the public and give them a fair deal, but at other times such is not the case. In my own district the crushing facilities are altogether inadequate, and the people have had to depend on private enterprise. At no time has the prospector in the Lawlers district received the same consideration as the prospector in other districts where public batteries are in operation. The lowest cost to the prospector for crushing in a part of my district is 12s. 6d. a ton; even at that rate, no satisfactory arrangement has been made in regard to the sands. Seeing that the mining industry has declined, now is the time for the Government to do everything to assist the prospector, and not to retard him. On the road to Lawlers there is now a very promising show upon which the people working it have recently had a good development. In sinking, they cut a new shoot, and their last crushing of some 60 tons went about $4\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. to the ton. According to the latest report I have had from the district, they have about 80 tons at grass now, and expect that parcel to go even better than the last crushing. Therefore every encouragement should be given to the prospector. The opinion is held in some quarters that there are no more good shows to be opened up, but I do not think that way. At Darlot, I saw by the Press, a good find had been made. I trust the department will continue to help the prospector by means of public batteries. Two years ago there was no battery at all in the Lawlers district; but a party of prospectors were game enough to back their opinions and put their work into one of the mines, also going in for a five-head battery. They crushed some stone for themselves, and some for the public. They proved the show far enough to induce a company to take it over, and a ten-head battery is now working there. The party who in the first place had the lease have gone on now to another property, and erected another five-head battery there with good results. Thus a little assistance affords every chance of an old district looking up again. I hope the Minister will reconsider the decision to lease the public batteries, which policy must prove disastrous to the prospector.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.16]: I can quite understand your haste, Mr. Chairman, to put the vote through; because nobody in this House can take any interest in these Estimates. One cannot expect the acting Minister for Mines to know anything about the subject, although his intentions are good. Previously I expressed the opinion that these Estimates should not be discussed in the absence of the Minister, who is now in Java or in Singapore. The Minister's irresponsibility amounts to, I might also say, don't-care-a-damn.

The Colonial Secretary: That is not correct.

Mr. TROY: The position is just as you expressed it, Mr. Chairman, in trying to get the vote through. Mining is merely a side line. I do not feel disposed to discuss the question of the public batteries. Suppose I gave the wisest advice, what could the acting Minister do? Can he tell us what the real Minister will do upon his return?

The Colonial Secretary: Do not you think that whatever you put forward will be laid before the Minister?

Mr. TROY: No, I do not, after all these years. The Minister would not bother his head about my suggestions, although he might feel a little incensed at my criticisms, if somebody draws his attention to them. I do not know what the Government were doing to let the Minister in charge of this department go away on such a trip as that to the Straits Settlements. Why did not they send the acting Minister? As a matter of fact, the Minister for Mines is about the last man I would send anywhere on a trade mission. If I wanted to send a good fellow, an excellent host, and the man to tell a story and laugh heartily, I would send the Minister for Mines. But what experience has he had in trade? What qualification has he for his present mission? Some people may say it is bad taste to express such an opinion in the Minister's absence; but he should be here. He went away on his mission without Parliament being consulted. We heard he was going. We heard he was not going and did not want to go. Then we heard that he might go, that the Premier wanted him to go. At last he went, as was inevitable. There can be no satisfaction whatever in any member discussing these Estimates with the Minister absent. I appreciate the acting Minister's interest; but inasmuch as he has had no mining experience and has never come in contact with the working of the Mines Department, and merely takes an honorary interest in that department—

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for Mines will refute these observations when he comes back from Singapore.

Mr. TROY: He may. I do not think he will bother about "Hansard." In fact, I do not think he will bother about anything. As regards the public batteries, he is going to lease them if he possibly can, unless a great outcry should be made. He does not want to be worried with them. Therefore he says, "Get rid of them as quickly as you possibly can, and let somebody else worry with them."

Mr. Mann: Do not you think the Minister for Mines has too much to do with all his departments?

Mr. TROY: Yes. In speaking on the Mines Estimates I referred to that fact. The Minister for Mines is also administering the Railway Department, a losing concern, the greatest trading loss this country has at the present time. Yet he can go to conferences

over East, to bowling matches in Tasmania, to that conference in Adelaide of which I forget the purpose—

Mr. MUNSIE: Exchange of monkeys between the zoos.

Mr. TROY: And then he is Minister for Industries, and Minister for Police, and a thousand other things. I have not risen to discuss these Estimates, because there can be no value in the discussion; I have risen merely to express the opinion that the Minister controlling the Mines Department ought to be relieved of his other duties, and ought to get some consideration for the department administering an industry which is on the decline, and which ought to be looked to because it is of great value to this country. Without the gold-mining industry, this country would have been nowhere; and nobody can tell me, nor will I believe, that the gold-mining industry is dead. This country is one auriferous belt from Kimberley in the north to Ravensthorpe in the south. But it requires a Minister really controlling the Mines Department to encourage and help the industry. He should show interest in it. The Minister now in charge of these Estimates has no possibility of doing that, because he is not personally interested in, or personally associated with, the mining industry. I am not reflecting on the acting Minister for Mines at all. In his department he is all right; he looks after the Colonial Secretary's Department, and is always there giving it his personal attention. As for the Minister for Mines himself, I do not think he is capable of that, because he is too fond of pleasure. These remarks will not make me popular with him, if his attention is drawn to them. However, in the past, when the Minister for Mines was associated with this party, I always expressed my opinion concerning his utter irresponsibility. Undoubtedly the Minister has confidence and ability. He ought to give the Mines Department some attention. As for the leasing of the batteries, I do not want to see it happen. If it does happen, there will be a serious outcry in the country. Let me remind the acting Minister of this, and ask him to use his influence not to allow the batteries to be leased, to be "selected." The prospector will be nowhere then. At St. Ives, that new field which boomed a few years ago, the Government had to erect a public crushing plant. That is the one practical means of assisting the mining industry, and the Minister who sacrifices or loses the State batteries will be doing the industry an injury of which he knows the result. The Minister has made up his mind that he will not put the batteries in order. But he must do it, or give up his job. If he allows the State batteries to be scrapped, or to fall into disrepair, he will hear about it in this House. If necessary, I will move the adjournment of the House. I know that in some places tenders to lease the public batteries are being called. In other places the Minister is allowing the State batteries to fall into disrepair. It is due from members

representing the mining industry to make a protest in this House. I shall not be found wanting in that respect, and I shall do it in the country and shall rouse every mining newspaper in Western Australia about the way in which the mining industry has been neglected by the Minister. I have no reflection to cast upon the officers of the department, who are among the most capable officers in the country. I have never failed to obtain from them the greatest attention and courtesy. In fact, the department is run by its officers; and that is a happy thing for the industry. They are men of goldfields experience, and know goldfields conditions and goldfields wants. In that respect we are very fortunate indeed. They are officers with the broader vision, and with practical experience, and interests. Were it not for that, God help the mining industry!

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [9.30]: I do not know whether the acting Minister for Mines can supply certain information regarding the report of the Mines Department, but I would ask him to enlighten me on one or two matters if it is possible for him to do so. The report states that there was a loss of £800 on the milling of ore. The Estimates show that the actual expenditure in connection with State batteries was £66,221 and the actual revenue was £69,467. On those figures, the batteries have shown a profit during the past year. I would like the Minister to inform me what are the average charges per ton for ore dealt with at the State batteries. I understand that the charges vary, but the Minister should be able to tell us what the average charges amount to. I would like him also to explain the treatment that is meted out to customers of the State batteries regarding the gold premium. I understand that with regard to the clean up over the plates, the prospectors get the whole of the gold bonus. There is also a system whereby the Government get back so much out of the sands after treatment. Will the Minister inform the Committee what treatment is extended to the prospector regarding the gold won from the sands at the State batteries? I ask for this information for two reasons. I want the statement to be placed on record to refute evidence before the Royal Commission appointed to investigate tributing in Western Australia, regarding the treatment meted out to customers at the State batteries. The mining industry has been assisted to a great extent by the establishment of State batteries. They were started for the purpose of treating free milling ores, or oxidised ores. The prospect of treating sulphide ores is looming up. With the member for Mt. Magnet, I am sorry that the Minister for Mines is not present while we are discussing these Estimates. We recently passed the Mining Act Amendment Bill which dealt with tributing. That measure has passed both Houses but has not yet been assented to. I submitted a minority report in connection with the Tributing Commission, in the

course of which I urged upon the Minister the necessity for amending the Mining Act in order to give him power to enforce the provisions of that legislation. I believe something in that direction will have to be done. Although I do not know whether the information is correct or not, and time alone will show, I have been told that one of the companies treating gold ore in a large way on the tributing system, have notified increases, not of the milling charges, but of the haulage charges and one other charge as well. When the question of the legality of increasing charges in view of the amending legislation, was under discussion, the representatives of this particular company said that the new tributing laws meant a loss of £800 per month to them. That may be true, but even so, they are still making a profit of approximately £16,000 per year, in which case this particular company is not doing too badly.

Mr. Marshall: A profit of £16,000 a year is hardly enough for the poor unfortunate wretches.

Mr. MUNSIE: I realise that if the mining industry is to be given a fair deal, the Government will have to take some drastic action regarding the treatment of ores. It was suggested before the Royal Commission that there were enough treatment plants already and that those in existence could not be kept going under existing conditions. I admit that such is the case, but if the existing treatment plants are not prepared to give a fair deal to the men who supply the ore for them to treat, it is up to the Government to see that those men do get a fair deal. If it cannot be achieved in any other way, the Government should go to the extent of purchasing one of the up-to-date plants and do the work for the tributers and prospectors. I believe the State Batteries system will have to be extended, not only in the outlying districts where there is a possibility of getting free milling ore, but to the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts as well, unless those controlling the existing plants are prepared to be reasonable. That is all I ask these people to be. I contend that the legislation we have recently passed gives them a fair deal. It is up to the Government to see that those people give the prospectors and tributers a fair deal and that the Government give those who happen to be customers of the State Batteries a fair deal as well. I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government have discussed the question of purchasing a plant for treating sulphide ores. If the acting Minister is not in a position to give information on that point, I trust he will impress upon the Minister for Mines the importance of that aspect when he returns to Perth. If something is not done in connection with the matters I have referred to, I will have to bring the subject under the notice of the Minister myself, in order

that the interests of the mining industry shall be conserved.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.37]: When the general discussion on these Estimates was in progress I refrained from speaking because I felt much as the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) feels, regarding our present position. I felt then as I feel now, that it is more or less a waste of time to indulge in any extended comment or criticism on the Mines Department, in view of the absence of the responsible Minister. I dislike very much making any observations of a derogatory character regarding the Minister for Mines in his absence. However, it is not the fault of members of this Chamber that that Minister is not present. I claim that the whole attitude of the Government, and the Minister for Mines included, seems to be one of neglect and indifference, so far as the mining industry is concerned. When we find that the time of the responsible Minister, who is in control of the second most important industry in the State—in value of the natural product, it comes next only to agriculture—is taken up with a number of other departments as well, we realise the attitude of the Government, towards an industry which lifted Western Australia from obscurity to affluence. In addition to controlling the Mines Department, the Minister for Mines has control of that great and important spending department, the Railway Department, and the Departments of Industries, Forests, Shipping, and so on. This indicates that when it comes to a question of the distribution of portfolios the Mines Department, in the estimation of the Government, comes a long way down. The expenditure in the Mines Department regarding the assistance to mining generally and the assistance to prospectors, compares favourably with any sum spent in recent years. I do not complain of that aspect. That, however, is not sufficient. I believe that what is lacking to-day is the personal touch of the Minister, and that first hand acquaintance which a Minister should possess of the districts and the industry over which he has control. The Minister for Mines has been in office for more than two years. I think I am correct in saying that, with the exception of two trips to the Murchison, the Minister has visited no portion of the goldfields districts except Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

Mr. Mann: He went to Leonora as well.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. I believe, however, that at least once a year during the recess, the Minister for Mines should make it his business to travel throughout the distant mining areas, throughout that great belt of auriferous country from Westonia to Leonora, Laverton and Wiluna and out beyond those centres. The duty should be undertaken by the Minister so that he may meet the prospectors and the

men who are battling against the difficulties of the industry in the backblocks, and discuss with them first hand their difficulties and their requirements. A Minister whose knowledge is confined to head office matters, cannot possibly, no matter how willing and anxious he may be to assist the industry, render that assistance unless he goes around and discusses matters concerning the industry with the men out back.

Mr. Teesdale: We have never had a Minister for Mines in the North yet.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I dislike to refer to the period when I was in control of the Mines Department, but during that period I visited every mining camp in Western Australia from here to Wiluna, the North Coolgardie goldfields districts, and everywhere else. I made it my duty to travel to the most remote camps wherever there were 20 men or more. I travelled 150 miles to 200 miles away from the railway, and I consider it is the duty of the Minister for Mines to do that. The Premier understands the value of the personal touch with the people who are working in the agricultural areas. There is not a week that passes but what the Premier is moving around among the people engaged in the agricultural industry. By that means he gets to know the people and their requirements, a knowledge which cannot be obtained otherwise. Perhaps that is the reason why the agricultural industry has attained such prominence and is able to enlist so much sympathy and assistance in comparison with the mining industry. The only way that any Minister for Mines can do justice to the industry is to visit the different mining centres and to be relieved, in addition, of the other portfolios, which the present Minister for Mines holds. If agriculture is sufficient to warrant the time of one Minister being devoted to it wholly, mining should demand the same attention. More particularly is that the case to-day, when the industry is languishing. In the prosperous days of the mining industry it was not perhaps, so necessary, but to-day it is essential that the hand of friendship should be extended to that industry. The industry is in need of fostering, and the Minister should devote the whole of his time to that industry and its requirements. It is impossible for any Minister for Mines to do that if he is allotted four or five other departments as well. Without offering any further criticism of the department, however, I wish to enter my protest against the manner in which the Minister has been neglecting this industry. The present is the third occasion during the year that the Minister for Mines has absented himself from the State. He went to the Eastern States shortly after the Christmas holidays. Later on he paid a visit to Adelaide to discuss questions affecting the importation of animals for the Zoological Gardens. Now we find he has gone on a trade commission to Java and Singapore and elsewhere. Surely the Government could have found some

other Minister to make that trip rather than allow four important departments to be loaded on to another administrator for a period of seven or eight weeks!

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you think John would have missed that trip?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know the Government would have had some difficulty in selecting anybody else for the trip. To-night the Colonial Secretary is doing his best, but we cannot expect him to know anything about the public batteries. All he can do is to listen to the comments made and pass them on when the Minister for Mines returns, if indeed that Minister will then trouble to give any attention to them. To-morrow night we shall be engaged discussing the Estimates of the Railway Department, a department which has a greater influence on the finances of the State than all the others put together; and again will the Estimates be in charge of a Minister not actually in control of the department. We cannot expect better financial results when the departments are administered in this lackadaisical fashion. I join with the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) in entering an emphatic protest against the action of the Government in leasing the State batteries. Had it not been for the services rendered to the prospectors by the Government batteries in years gone by, the industry could never have attained the importance it did. Government batteries have been the backbone of the industry in outlying districts. Now it is proposed to lease them to private individuals, who cannot be expected to have the same consideration for the life of the districts in which the batteries are situated as would the Government. I have received one or two complaints from outlying districts of the manner in which the batteries have been leased; I have been informed that the prospectors in the district had no intimation from the Government of their intention to lease the batteries. It was not advertised locally, and in consequence the people in the district had no opportunity for making their views known to the department before the battery was leased. The first they knew of the change was when some private person informed them that he had secured a lease of the mill. I know that happened in at least one district. It is a wrong method to pursue. When the Government decided to lease the batteries it ought to have been done openly and sufficient notice given to the local residents, so that they might have an opportunity for either voicing their protest or tendering for the battery. Apart from that, looking at the year which has just expired, it is seen that the financial returns from the Government batteries appear to have been more favourable than in some of the years that have gone. The loss on milling for the year was only £8,000. I remember that during one year while I was in office the loss amounted to £15,000, and that for a number of years it was approximately £9,000 or £10,000. So, financially considered, there is no reason for the departure in policy contemplated by the Government. I can only

think the change is being adopted for the reason that it will save the Minister trouble. If that is the attitude, or if it is being done to save expenditure in maintaining the batteries in a proper state of repair, it is a false policy. Instead of our having something in the nature of a revival in outlying districts, those districts will still further depreciate, until outside of Kalgoorlie and Boulder the extinction of the industry will be brought within measurable distance.

Mr. Mann: Would you favour the local prospectors taking over the batteries as a co-operative concern?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am afraid it would never work. The prospectors do not agree too well in that kind of venture. Their lives and calling and temperament do not lend themselves to amicable co-operative achievement. It would be much better for the system to continue, as in the past, under direct Government control. I hope the Minister will seriously consider that aspect before taking definite steps.

Mr. Mann: Would not the co-operative scheme be preferable to leasing the batteries to strangers?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think the prospectors would get on very well in a co-operative scheme. If the Government batteries are leased I am certain it will result in many men, who have clung to their respective districts through adverse times and circumstances, abandoning the calling altogether. The prospector is very suspicious of many of those who lease batteries and crush for the public.

Mr. Chesson: He has good reason to be.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that. Many men have got their first rise on the ladder of wealth through holding crushing plants and, while ostensibly crushing for the public, actually crushing the public. There are such things as leakages in connection with crushing plants, which the unfortunate prospector is unable to prevent. Consequently, he is very suspicious, and if he finds himself at the mercy of some who might procure a lease of these batteries, he may come to the conclusion that it is not worth while hanging on any longer, and so will give up his calling. In consequence, isolated districts where Government batteries exist will suffer considerably and the industry will be seriously affected.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [9.53]: I hope the Government will reconsider the leasing of public batteries. The public batteries have opened up some of our most flourishing out-back districts. If they are to be leased to private persons, there will be a big outcry in the back country. As run by the Government, the public batteries are giving general satisfaction. The prospector can crush either by the ton or by the hour. Many are getting their stone crushed for about 4s. per ton, as against the 13s. per ton charged by private enterprise. The only complaint I have heard of the public mills is in respect of the treat-

ment of tailings, the contention being that the 3s. deducted for this service is excessive. I have had experience of cyaniding and I, too, think the charge is excessive. However, taking the public mills all round, they are giving general satisfaction. Two years ago a public mill was established at Cue. Practically it has been running continuously ever since. It is no exaggeration to say that, but for the establishment of that mill, Cue would have been closed down to-day. The cry out-back is for an extension of the system of Government mills rather than for their leasing. At Ready's they are carting their stone 40 miles into Cue. The people out there are clamouring for a public mill. Rather than lease the public mills, it would be very much better for the industry if the system were extended. Any small loss directly sustained would be more than compensated indirectly. I hope the Government will reconsider their decision to lease the public mills.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley—in reply) [9.56]: I regret that the Minister for Mines is not here to reply to the various criticisms. I can attest his active interest in the mining industry and his attention to the administration of his department. The figures in the mining report for the past year demonstrate that the Government are endeavouring to assist mining, realising that assistance is necessary. As was pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, mining is going back and unless an endeavour is made to assist it, it cannot be long before most of the mines will have closed down. I assure hon. members that the Minister for Mines takes a very active interest in the administration of his department. A good deal has been said about the leasing of State batteries. The amount on the Estimates this year for the maintenance of State batteries is only a little over £1,000 less than it was last year. It is true the Minister for Mines has decided to lease the batteries.

Hon. P. Collier: All of them?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not necessarily all of them. His intention is to lease the batteries wherever the conditions are favourable to so doing. The lease will contain clauses calculated to protect those who are taking their ore to the batteries, and the batteries will continue to be worked on conditions similar to those which obtain to-day. The provisions laid down in the leasing agreement will have to be strictly complied with. That being so, there cannot be any very great harm done.

Mr. Munsie: Do you think the man who leases one of those batteries will consider anything but what he can make out of it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He will be entitled to make a certain amount out of the crushing, but his charges will be strictly limited. It is not likely that the Minister for Mines will lease any of the batteries without first imposing precautionary restrictions. I will see that the different points

mentioned by various members are brought under the notice of the Minister on his return. The member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) stated that the Minister would not trouble to read "Hansard" to ascertain what had been said. I do not want him to read "Hansard"; I have given instructions to the officials of the department to make special notes of the different matters mentioned and bring them under the notice of the Minister on his return. I have no doubt that, when they are brought under his notice, he will give them the necessary attention. I have been acting as Minister for Mines only since his absence, and I therefore cannot be expected to go into detail regarding the various matters which members have mentioned, and with which he is so well acquainted. Questions were asked regarding the charges for the treatment of ore and the realisation charges. These charges, of course, vary. A question was asked as to whether the premiums on gold won from sands were paid to the owners. I am unable to give the information, and I do not know whether the Minister himself would give it. He might or he might not.

Mr. Munsie: I see no reason why he should not.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Has the hon. member asked for it and been refused?

Mr. Munsie: No. I have seen statements published in the Press that the Government were giving the bouns to certain of those who had had sands treated, but I do not know how much. It was stated before the Royal Commission that the Government colared the whole of the bonus in respect to the sands.

Mr. Chesson: They are paying it.

Mr. Munsie: I want the Government to refute the statement.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will endeavour to get the information.

Mr. Munsie: I hope the Minister will have the information published in order to show that the Government are allowing those who own the sands to claim the bonus.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The statements made regarding the Minister for Mines and the interest he takes in the industry were not justified. From my knowledge of the Minister, he gives every attention to his office.

Mr. Lutcy: He has not the time to give the industry the attention it deserves.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That might be so; he certainly has not the time while he is away.

Mr. Lutcy: Or when he is here.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That has nothing to do with me. I could not prevent the Minister from going away. He has gone away for a very good cause, and I have no doubt that he will do much good for the State by opening up in the Straits Settlements markets which are so absolutely essential to the welfare of our primary industries.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—State dairy farm, £3,855—agreed to.

Vote—Cave House, including caves of the South-West, etc., £12,766:

Mr. JOHNSTON: Is it the intention of the department to repaint the Cave House? Members who were there recently were shocked to find a good Government building in a most dilapidated condition and depreciating in value for the sake of attention.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have had this matter under consideration for some time. We have estimates for the painting. Quite a large amount of work is needed. An additional dining-room is necessary and small additions to the accommodation would cater for a large number of visitors and recoup the expenditure. Owing to the lack of funds, however, we cannot proceed with the work, and the same reason accounts for the painting being held up. I hope it will be possible to carry out the work before the winter sets in.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Yandanooka estate, £3,000; Sale of Government Property Trust Account, £130,067—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with an amendment.

BILL—BANK HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

On motion by Mr. Troy, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 6.

In Committee.

Hon. G. Taylor in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 16:

Mr. TROY: I move—

That the proposed new paragraph 4 be struck out.

This provision was introduced to override a judicial decision as to the right of the Taxation Department to tax the profits arising from the sale of a property as a going concern. The member for Katanning quoted the evidence, and it is therefore unnecessary for me to refer to it. The taxation of profits arising or accruing to a person from the sale of any business as a going concern should not be deemed income within the meaning of the Act, because it is a tax on the assets of the individual.

The Premier: The clause does not say that; so far as such profits are derived from the sale of stock in trade.

Mr. TROY: A person may build up his stock and plant in the course of business. That may apply to the person who builds up a good flock of sheep, and when the property is sold such stock brings a good price. That person, however, is taxed, not on his income but on the assets from which he created his income. It would be utterly impossible for the individual taxpayer to deduct all the labour, costs and expenses incurred in bringing his property up to the state when he sold it. Because he is enterprising the Taxation Department taxes him upon his assets.

The PREMIER: We are not overriding the judgment of any court. The judgment which has been mentioned by the hon. member was given under the law as it is to-day. Sometimes Acts of Parliament are found to be faulty as a result of a judgment of the court. This clause has no connection with any judgment given up to date.

Mr. Money: Why has it been put in?

The PREMIER: Because it provides for the future. We discovered from the Newman case that the Act was faulty and we are trying to amend it. We are not taxing property under this clause. We do not propose to tax property or capital under it.

Mr. Money: What is stock in trade?

The PREMIER: Such things as are seen in Boan's window. If a storekeeper buys £1,000 worth of goods and sells them for £2,000, he has made £1,000 profit and should be taxed upon that. The man who buys that business for £2,000 and makes a profit of £500 is only taxed on £500. If he buys £1,000 worth of goods and puts them on his shelves, and sells his business as a going concern, and makes £1,000 profit on the goods on his shelves, that profit is not taxable. The clause only refers to goods on the shelves for sale.

Mr. Money: It would include a flock of sheep.

The PREMIER: There are other things besides sheep. If a man sells his store and makes a profit on the goods he should pay income tax. Livestock and other goods disposed of in the ordinary course of trade would bear a taxable profit.

Mr. Durack: If the station is sold in one lump?

The PREMIER: The goods were intended to be sold in the ordinary course of trade, but a man may have done better by selling in a wholesale fashion. If the hon. member increased his stock by 1,000 calves he would show that additional stock as worth £2 a head. If in selling his station these calves are taken into account at £5 a head, he should pay on the difference between £2 and £5.

Mr. Durack: What about breeding stock?

The PREMIER: On the whole of the stock on his place that is either bred and sold, or

bought and sold. If he makes £1,000 profit he should pay tax on that. I do not see why such profits should not be taxable. The object of the man who sells stock to another in a wholesale fashion is to escape taxation on the difference between the £2 and the amount actually received. If he sells at £9 and is not taxed on the £7 profit he makes, the State loses something that it is entitled to.

Mr. Durack: If he is a trader he should pay.

The PREMIER: The hon. member contends that if the first trader sells at £5, and the other trader who buys sells at £9, there should be a tax on the £4, but not on the difference between the £2 and the £5.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There would be under this clause.

The PREMIER: Yes, but it is intended there should not be any tax.

Mr. Durack: This is the value allowed by the taxation Department.

The PREMIER: Yes. If the stock dies the owner is allowed to deduct £2 per head from his income tax. If he sells he should pay on the difference between the £2 and the amount the stock realises. By this clause we are not taxing property but merely profits.

Mr. DURACK: Take the case of a stock breeder. In his return he shows so many head of cattle, say 5,000. They are regarded as his capital, from which he breeds. The increase in the following year is perhaps 1,000 head. It is admitted that he pays tax on the 1,000 increase. He is not taxable on the breeders, but he is taxable on what they produce from year to year. In other words, the Taxation Department say to the stock breeder, "Go on increasing your herd and making profits, and we will not tax your breeders. But immediately you sell your breeders, we will tax them. We will see that you do not get out; stay there; immediately you sell out we will tax you on your capital." The figure of £2 represents merely something fixed by the Taxation Department. Stock breeders do not agree that that is the value. If the Government say to me that if I sell out my whole herd, the difference between what the Taxation Department say the herd is worth and what it realises is taxable, I cannot agree with that. Cattle converted into bank notes are still cattle.

The Premier: On your argument, if you sell cattle one at a time it is still capital.

Mr. DURACK: If stock breeders were trading in the sale of stations, that would be taxable. But they are not trading in the sale of stations.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I think that if the Premier had used last night, on my amendment to include goodwill, the arguments he has used to-night, he would have been on much better ground than he is in this instance. The clause will not be of much value unless we have in it some provision such as I suggested last night. Say the capital

a man has at the beginning of the year is a certain amount, and at the end of the year is £1,000 greater; then that extra £1,000 is income. Increase of capital in a year is income for that particular year. I know there are people who escape taxation by calling certain things transfers of capital from one direction to another. My only objection to the clause is that it does not go far enough, and that it can be evaded, particularly if the judiciary, in considering any case brought under this provision, discover that Parliament rejected that clause with regard to goodwill.

Mr. MONEY: I do not think two members of the Committee interpret the clause alike. If we cannot interpret the provision, how is the ordinary layman non-legislator going to interpret it? I fail to understand the reason for the new clause; the Premier has not yet informed the Committee why it should be inserted. Under the present Act all income arising in Western Australia, from whatever source, is taxable. In arriving at the taxable income we have to fill up a long form, and if our stock-in-trade increases in value during a year we pay on that increase. I am a little suspicious that behind this new clause there may be some intention to make a grab at capital. The present Act being so very wide, why is this new provision wanted? If I buy shares at 3s., and in a year's time the shares are worth £3, I realise that I must pay on the difference in value. It is still capital whether the value of such shares go up to £3 or go down to 3d. If the value increases, the capital increases accordingly; if the value goes down, the capital decreases. I cannot see the object of this clause. It is so worded that I am afraid the Commissioner of Taxation will use it for the purpose of taxing capital as income. Increases in stock are taxed as capital and deduction for decreases in stock are also allowed, as it is realised that that is decrease in capital. In spite of what the Premier has said, I do not understand the position. I think the clause has been placed in the Bill for the purpose of getting over the position which arose in consequence of the High Court decision. I oppose the clause because we do not understand it in view of the wide scope of the Act and because I think that the Commissioner of Taxation will interpret it as enabling him to take the percentage of capital which was not intended. It deals with capital and not income.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I cannot understand the member for Bunbury; I cannot follow his arguments. He says he cannot understand the clause but to me it is perfectly clear. He says he believes it is an attempt to tax capital and that the present Act is wide in its scope. The scope of the Act is certainly wide but the decision of the High Court has had the effect of placing

a restricted interpretation upon it. The court has held that profits on the sale of a business do not constitute income but accretion of capital. I have no doubt that the court was right in its decision upon the Act as it stood. As the Premier has explained, it is for Parliament to say whether the Act, as interpreted by the High Court, shall be amended so as to make profits on the sale of a going concern amenable to taxation. Undoubtedly, the clause is intended to tax capital as interpreted by the decision of the High Court. It is absurd to say that the profit made on the sale of a business is not income when it is agreed that the profits made on the retail sale of goods do constitute profits. What is the difference between the sale of all the goods in one transaction and the sale of goods to the same value, day by day, from a taxation standpoint?

Mr. Willecock: The same applies to transactions in mining shares.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Most decidedly. There is no shred of argument in support of the contention that such profits are not taxable income. When this Parliament says that the profits made from the sale of goods constitute income and should be taxable, the court will have to interpret it in that way. It is only a fair thing that taxation should be paid on profits made. The trouble is, I do not believe the provision will achieve the purpose the Premier has in view; instead of placing a reasonable selling value on the goods, the vendor will value them at the price at which he bought them, and will add the difference to the goodwill. Why should not a man pay on his business profits? I am afraid that under the provision some, indeed a great many, will escape, while the few will be caught. I will support the clause, but I hope the Premier will consider tightening it up in a way that will preclude evasion.

Mr. TROY: It has been pointed out that the provision is inequitable and unfair in its incidence, that some will be caught while others escape. If a big business firm in Perth sells out, who can trace its profits? It is bound to escape. I want to see the clause struck out. The Premier ought to reconsider the whole question and bring down a provision that will find general favour with the Committee.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	..	..	18

Majority against .. 8

AYES.	
Mr. Angelo	Mr. C. C. Maley
Mr. Cbeeson	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Durack	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Troy
Mr. Latham	Mr. Money

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Boyland
Mr. Broun
Mr. Carter
Mr. Collier
Mrs. Cowan
Mr. George
Mr. Lutey
Mr. H. K. Maley
Mr. Mann

Mr. McCallum
Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Munsie
Mr. Plesse
Mr. Simons
Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Underwood
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Mullany

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I wish to move a proviso.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I think I am in order.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Mt. Magnet moved that the clause be recommitted for a certain purpose—the further consideration of paragraph 4—and that purpose has been served.

Mr. Troy: On a point of order, I moved that the Bill be recommitted for the further consideration of the clause, not the paragraph. The best authority for that is the Notice Paper.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood that the hon. member specified the paragraph. If I misunderstood him, I must permit the member for Katanning to proceed.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to paragraph 4—“Provided that the words ‘live stock’ shall not apply to the breeding stock used in the business of a pastoralist or farmer.”

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.7 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 1st December, 1921.

Bills: Auctioneers, report	...	...	...	...	Page
Grain, 2a.	...	...	...	...	2030
					2030

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

BILL—AUCTIONEERS.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—GRAIN.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [4.33]: A proposal of this description has been before the country for some years. The farmers throughout the length and breadth of the State have desired that the bulk handling system should be adopted, and repeated inquiries have been made from time to time regarding the systems in vogue in other parts of the world. During the regime of the Labour Government, an advisory committee was appointed to inquire into the subject, and the hopes of the farmers of this State were raised by the report of the committee, which strongly urged on the Government the necessity for bringing in a measure at an early stage of the history of wheat growing in Western Australia. The system had been advocated by individual members of Parliament prior to that, the great object being that by the early introduction of a bulk handling system, we would start off with facilities which would expand with the further development of the wheat areas, and in conjunction with which the railway rolling stock could be easily adapted. It was better to inaugurate the system then, rather than at a later stage when production had increased and a large amount of rolling stock would have to be converted. These conditions practically apply to-day. I firmly believe that Western Australia is still in its infancy regarding the quantities of wheat it is capable of growing and will eventually grow, and it is not wise to put off from year to year, as we have been doing, the inauguration of the bulk handling system. The longer we postpone it, the greater will become our difficulties in altering our existing arrangements, and the greater will be the amount of rolling stock requiring to be converted. The advisory committee, to which I have referred, strongly urged the necessity for inaugurating bulk handling, and the Government in power had a Bill prepared and were about to submit a scheme to Parliament when they went out of power. Then the war intervened and the farmers had to carry on under very great stress owing to the cost of bags. As a result of this, the question of bulk handling has impressed itself more and more upon the notice of those engaged in the industry, until to-day the farmers throughout the wheat areas are clamouring for the installation of an up-to-date bulk handling system.

Hon. J. Duffell: The price of bags is fast approaching normal again.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The price of bags has a direct bearing on the question as to whether any saving to the farmers can be effected by the inauguration of bulk handling. If the price of bags becomes very low, the saving to the farmers will not be great; in fact, it might become a negligible amount. The lower the price of bags, the less will be