

the best of treatment, that there is no intimidation meted out towards them, and that they received every help. Only from Mr. Lee, the king of the Communists, whom I kicked out of my office, might Mr. Holmes be able to obtain a different opinion.

Hon. J. Cornell: I thought the Communists were against it.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member is not obliged to answer interjections.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Bill is an honest attempt to bring about the better organisation of our industries, and to co-ordinate or consolidate the industrial ramifications of the State. If the Labour Bureau is given a little more power, its operations can be most effectively extended. Reverting to one of Mr. Holmes's interjections, I would point out that from the 1st July of this year to the 19th October, there were 2,361 engagements out of 4,004 registrations at the Labour Bureau, 1,012 of these being Government engagements and 1,349 being private engagements. From the 1st July, 1924, to the 19th October, 1924, there were 3,334 registrations, 1,770 engagements, 343 being Government and 1,427 private. For the 12 months ended the 30th September last there were 6,374 engagements, 1,554 being Government and 4,820 private, while for the same period in the previous year the number of engagements was 5,303, the Government engagements being 1,369 and private 3,934.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You told us that all Government men had to be engaged there.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. All Government employees were engaged at the bureau for two or three months, but they represent only about a fifth of the total number of engagements. It is in respect of the private engagements that the Labour Bureau will fill such an important position, if this Bill passes. When all the work is done at the State centre, it will obviate the continual agitations that arise from time to time on the part of people who have asked for the elimination of the private employment agencies. No great hardship will be done to these private people if the Bill passes. They have been placed under no great expense, and in many instances the business is treated as a sideline.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What does the State Bureau now cost?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot say offhand. It is the most economically run institution in the Government service. I am sometimes ashamed to find the officers there working so hard and at such high pressure, but it must be remembered that at other times of the year they do have a little relaxation. I have given careful consideration to the Bill from all angles. I am sure that if it is passed and the existing Government institution is enlarged in scope, though not necessarily at much greater expense, we shall have a bureau to be proud of, one that will give satisfaction to all concerned, and be of immense benefit to the State. I commend the Bill to the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 20th October, 1925.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read, notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills. :—

1. City of Perth.
2. Entertainments Tax.

- 3, *Entertainments Tax Assessment.*
- 4, *Western Australian Bank Act Amendment (Private.)*
- 5, *West Australian Trustee, Executor and Agency Co., Ltd., Act Amendment (Private.)*

QUESTIONS (2)—POLICE.

Grants or Rewards.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Who was the inspector, and who were the members of the detective force who received grants or rewards during the year ended June, 1921? 2, What amount was paid to each officer? 3, What was the nature of the special service rendered? 4, On whose recommendations were these amounts paid?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Chief Inspector J. Duncan, Det.-Sergts. Purdue, Doyle, and Manning. 2, (a) Chief Inspector Duncan, £100; (b) Det.-Sergt. Manning, £30; and (c) Det.-Sergts. Doyle and Purdue, £10 each. 3, (a) For what were considered by the Minister at that time as several meritorious services; (b), (c) for their efforts in connection with the murder of J. T. Don. (4) (a) By the direction of the Minister for Police; (b), (c) the Commissioner of Police.

Police Code.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: Who was the officer of the police force who was paid an amount of £100 for compiling a police code during the year ended June, 1922?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: Inspector M. O'Halloran. The amount has been considerably more than recouped by the sale of copies of the Code.

QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSION ON PRICES OF COMMODITIES.

Mr. LAMOND asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Royal Commission on Prices of Commodities to visit the chief centres in the North-West for the purpose of taking evidence?

The PREMIER replied: I have no knowledge of the intentions of the Commission, which makes its own arrangements.

BILL—RACING RESTRICTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—PRIMARY PRODUCTS MARKETING.

Reports of Committee adopted.

BILL—DAY BAKING.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—MUNICIPALITY OF FREMANTLE.

On motion by Mr. Sleeman read a first time.

BILL—LAND DRAINAGE.

Report of Committee adopted.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

Message from the Governor received and read transmitting the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1925-26, and recommending appropriation.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1925-26.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply to consider the Estimates of Expenditure for the year ending 30th June, 1926; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.43]: I desire to avoid as far as possible making any extended reference to the work and activities of the various departments, as I consider that this can be more satisfactorily done by the respective Ministers when the votes for their departments come up for consideration. I am pleased to say that the results of last year's operations were better than I anticipated. Instead of a reduction of the previous year's deficit by £33,083, as I expected, the actual reduction was £170,760. This improvement was due

to the revenue exceeding my estimate by £217,141. The expenditure was greater than the estimate by £79,464. The net result was a deficit of £58,398, instead of £196,075, as I forecasted.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I hope you will do as well this year.

The PREMIER: I hope so, too; but the task will not be quite so easy. There was an increase in the revenue, as compared with the estimate, of £217,141, the full details of which will be found in return No. 1 accompanying the Estimates. The increase was distributed over nearly all heads, showing a continued improvement in conditions of trade generally. The increase over the previous year is the more gratifying when it is recognised that, except as regards land tax, it was not the result of higher taxation. On the other hand, the super tax of 15 per cent. on income was reduced to 7½ per cent. It is estimated that this reduction of super tax was responsible for a falling-off of £24,000 in the collections.

Revenue and Expenditure.

As compared with the previous year the revenue increased by £515,851. The principal increases were: Taxation, £50,463; Territorial, £39,567; Departmental, £201,961; Fremantle Harbour Trust, £36,623; Metropolitan Water Supply, £14,519; Electricity Supply, £24,071. From Return No. 2 members will be able to compare the revenue for last year with that of the previous year. Although the expenditure was greater than was estimated, the excess was not large, the increase being £79,464. This was due principally to Railways (increased traffic), £41,760; Medical and Health, £11,044; Lunacy, in respect of which increased wages and improved conditions for employees were largely responsible, £7,378; Charities, representing increased payment to women, and unemployment, £8,686, and Premier's Department, for Royal Commissions, £9,286. Full information of the differences between my estimate and the actual expenditure will be found on Return No. 1. Compared with the previous year there was an increase of expenditure of £345,091. Of this amount, increased interest and sinking fund represented £262,587. Of other large increases the principal were Railways, owing to increased trade that was reflected in the returns, £54,380; Electricity Supply, due to increased

business, £20,577; Medical and Health, for increased subsidies to hospitals and increased wages and other costs, £15,338; Lunacy, due to the award to which I have referred, £8,272. There were also a number of decreases of expenditure, the full details of which will be found on Return No. 3.

Estimates for 1925-26.

This year I anticipate having to provide for an expenditure of £8,930,810, and to receive revenue from all sources amounting to £8,832,731. My estimated deficit for the year therefore is £98,079. There is no great change from that of last year. I expect to receive £451,285 more revenue than was received last year, and to have an increased expenditure of £490,966. The estimated expenditure, separated into three divisions, is as follows: Special Acts, £3,602,698; Governmental, £2,023,110; Public Utilities, £3,305,002. Increases under each heading are as follows:—Special Acts, £249,978; Governmental, £33,666; Public Utilities, £207,322. Practically the whole of the increase under Special Acts is due to increased interest and sinking fund. Of course it will be recognised that whilst we are carrying out a developmental land settlement policy and public works the interest bill must increase, and increase in proportion to the expenditure of our loan moneys from year to year. The increased contribution to sinking fund for the year is £12,071. The increase under Governmental only is £33,666. Here I would again emphasise, as many of my predecessors have done, that most of the free services come from this source. There are a great many free services involving large expenditure, and they are largely governed by circumstances over which Governments have no control. There is but little opportunity there for the exercise of economy or for reduced expenditure. Out of a total of £2,023,110 provided in this division, free services account for £1,237,144. These are made up as follows:—Education, £594,509; Medical, £196,855; Lunacy, £100,169; Charities, £102,685; Police, £211,102; Gaols, £23,620; Aborigines, £8,204.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is more than all your taxation.

The PREMIER: Yes. That total of free services represents £40,237 more than last year. In every one of those I have enumerated the expenditure necessarily increases

each year as the State expands and its population grows.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: More children, more expenditure, and the more children the better.

The PREMIER: That is so. This leaves us only £785,966 to meet all costs of general administration, which is £6,571 less than the expenditure of last year.

Medical and Hospitals.

I find it is impossible to further reduce the expenditure on free services, no matter how keen one may be in that respect. I have provided for the Medical Department a small increase on last year. In addition, that department will receive from the amusement tax £16,000. That is for the 8½ months unexpired period of the current financial year. The amount will be greater next year. There is no denying the fact that hospitals have been kept down during the last few years to the barest possible amount, but with the increased amount which will be collected from the amusement tax next year, and with the Treasurer providing an amount equal to that which was provided last year, the Medical Department should be able to overtake some of the arrears that have been such a worry to them for so many years past. Last year I was called upon to find more than was estimated for the Perth Hospital alone to the extent of £6,106.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was £28,000 all told.

The PREMIER: Yes, and there is on this year's Estimates an amount of £37,850 for the hospital. However, on further consideration I am afraid I shall have to reduce that to £35,000. I made a promise to provide £37,500, but subsequently I found that the hospital board had invested £2,500 in the Commonwealth loan. It was a little nest egg they had of which I had no knowledge. That was the sum they had held in reserve as the result of the appeal last year. Therefore, I think I shall be justified in cutting down the amount provided on the Estimates to that which I first proposed to let them have, namely, £35,000.

Mr. Mann: Have you made provision for a new observation ward?

The PREMIER: The hon. member will see what a very great increase has been made in two years. Last year it was £28,000, an increase of £6,000 on my esti-

mate, and from that it has gone to £37,850. In fact, the Vote for the hospital has almost doubled in a few years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But they were getting more than £22,000 years ago.

The PREMIER: Yes, but in view of the financial position of the State the hospital, like all other institutions, had to come down. But I am speaking of the Vote in recent years. However, the hospital is doing very excellent work and is not entirely a Perth hospital, but is a State institution receiving patients from all over the country.

Mr. Mann: Does the observation ward come under the hospital Vote?

The PREMIER: Yes. My estimate for the Medical department last year was exceeded by £11,044. I found it impossible to keep down to the estimate, because in this department more than any other there is need for increased services and increased expenditure. Of this increase for the Medical Department over my estimate, the hospital section was responsible for £9,000.

Education.

I have provided this year an increase of £9,046 for the Education Department. Members know that the demands of that department are continually growing, and that funds must be provided to meet them. This year's increase is due to the greater number of small schools. During last year 43 new schools were opened, 23 being on the group settlements. To-day 44 applications for schools are under consideration.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Thank God for them!

The PREMIER: Yes, it is an excellent indication of the progress the State is making, and we might well provide this money not in any grudging spirit. It is evident that the population is growing when we find the need so general for the establishing of new schools, mostly in country districts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Your Minister has been around a bit.

The PREMIER: Yes, that is so.

Mr. Mann: Is there any provision for mental deficient?

The PREMIER: No, there is not. The mental deficient, I think, will require a separate building. When the Loan Estimates are being prepared the question as to whether the time has not arrived when we should establish a separate institution for mental deficient will have to be considered.

Mr. Sampson: The Salvation Army is doing good work in that respect.

The PREMIER: Yes, but in addition it is for the State to make better provision than we have had in the past. Of course the Salvation Army is receiving assistance from the State in respect of that work. The Albany High School was opened in February last. This has helped to increase the expenditure for this year. Also additional trade classes at the Technical School are proposed. For the present year an additional £7,368 is provided for the Chief Secretary's Department, due principally to the Lunacy increase of £3,084, largely brought about by an award delivered during last year providing better working conditions for the employees, together with staff increases. And at the Hospital for the Insane provision is made for an additional medical officer, and also for a dentist. The State Children's Branch shows an increase of £2,189, principally due to payments to women on whom children are dependent, and also to outdoor relief.

Agriculture.

The vote for the Department of Agriculture shows a considerable increase, amounting to no less than £17,717. This is due in a measure to the establishment of the College of Agriculture and another experimental farm at Wongan Hills, and to the appointment of several additional experts. I hope the college will be opened for students at the beginning of the year. It is intended to establish other experimental farms in districts to be selected, notably one in the Esperance district. The fact that the agricultural vote shows a substantial increase is very gratifying. It is realised that the future of this State depends largely upon the development of our agricultural resources and, if we desire to make progress in that direction, it is necessary that the State should provide the money required for experimental farms and for expert officers. Members, in scanning the Estimates for this department, might conclude that there are more experts in it than are to be found in the Estimates of all the other departments put together, but I am sure they are all necessary and are all doing good work. Many of them have been supplying advice and information to people engaged in agriculture and, having regard to the vast strides made in this

direction during recent years and the development we hope and feel sure will take place in the immediate future, I consider the increased expenditure amply justified.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stubbs: They have revolutionised some of the districts.

The PREMIER: I think they have.

North-West Department.

There is a slight increase in the Estimates of the North-West Department.

Mr. Teesdale: Very slight, too.

The PREMIER: The increase amounts to £2,489.

Mr. Teesdale: It is so slight that you can scarcely see it.

The PREMIER: The member for Roebourne will realise that large expenditure for this department comes from loan funds. Some of the works I have in mind run into £30,000 or £40,000.

Mr. Teesdale: There is yet hope.

The PREMIER: There is not so much scope for expenditure on the requirements of the North from revenue as from loan money.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The hon. member says there is still hope.

The PREMIER: The requirements of the North, I fear, are much greater than I shall be able to provide for, but still the North will not be altogether forgotten.

Mr. Teesdale: I never squeak much, anyhow.

The PREMIER: I hope the people of the North do not feel that, because they are far away and few in numbers, they are overlooked.

Mr. Hughes: No, the closer you get, the less you get.

Public Utilities, Grade increases, Estimated Revenue.

The PREMIER: There are necessarily increases in amounts provided for many of the public utilities. As the State grows the demand for services provided by this division increases. The expenditure also grows, but much of it is offset by the increased revenue received. The railways cause the greatest increase, namely, £158,240. Then come electricity supply £17,269, tramways £12,638, and metropolitan water supply £6,506. The increase on the whole division is £207,322. Grade increases have again been granted this year

to civil servants who are above the automatic range. The amount of the increases is £5,688. The estimated revenue for the year under the various heads is as follows:—

	£
Taxation	1,322,500
Territorial	524,744
Departmental	1,413,822
Mint	18,000
Commonwealth	589,529
Public Utilities	4,806,475
Trading Concerns	157,661
Total	£8,832,731

As I have already stated, this total is £451,285 more than that of last year, and it follows virtually the same lines as last year's.

Land Tax.

As a result of the increased land tax last year, I expect to receive an additional £36,133. This, of course, will be entirely offset by the reduction in the railway freights, so that the increased land tax will not in any way augment the Consolidated Revenue. I know it was in the minds of some members that the Government were indulging in a little profiteering as regards the increased land tax and the reduction of railway freights.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There was a good profit from the railways last year.

The PREMIER: None of the profit came from this source. I do not want members to be misled into taking the estimated revenue from land tax this year, £150,000, and comparing it with the amount that was received in the year before the increase, and having in mind that the reduced railway rates amount to only £45,000, come to the conclusion that the difference goes into the Treasury. There are substantial reasons why the land tax receipts should be an increasing quantity each year. Had land tax been calculated on the old rates plus the 15 per cent. super tax then in existence, the estimate for this year would have been £86,250. The difference between £86,250 and £150,000, which is my estimate this year, is £63,750. The reduced railway freights represent £45,000. I do not want hon. members to conclude that the difference between £45,000 and £63,000 is profit to the Treasury. This is made up of

£38,750 increase in the rates of tax and £25,000 increase in unimproved values due to the revaluation that is taking place continually.

Mr. Thomson: The whole of the State has not yet been reappraised.

The PREMIER: No, and this will be an increasing amount each year. I am not prepared to say offhand what portion of the State has been revalued. A considerable portion has been revalued, but the officers are still engaged on that work.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nearly the whole of it has been revalued now.

The PREMIER: I think the officers are nearing the completion of their work; they have been engaged upon it for two years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: When they have finished they will have to start again.

The PREMIER: Yes, it will be necessary for them to start again, because the unimproved value will have increased in the meantime.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Anyhow, the amount received is ridiculously small compared with the income tax.

The PREMIER: That is so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is one of the scandals of the State.

The PREMIER: Even with the land tax doubled and the exemptions eliminated, my estimate of revenue from this source for the current financial year is only £150,000.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It should be doubled and this increased amount deducted from income tax.

The PREMIER: The land tax increases each year, principally because of revaluations and also because of the expiration of the statutory exemptions for conditional purchase lands. There is an area of conditional purchase land coming into taxation each year as the statutory exemption of five years expires. The receipts have also been augmented, the Taxation Department inform me, by the discovery of defaulters in past years and by reason of land settlement.

Other Revenue Items.

I expect to receive a greater revenue from probate duty this year, and also an increase in the amount derived from dividend duties tax.

Mr. Mann: Do you think more people are likely to die this year?

The PREMIER: I do not know how the responsible officers make up this estimate.

Mr. Sampson: Perhaps they consider it likely after contemplating the increased land tax.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether they have had access to the opinions of the medical fraternity who may be in attendance upon a number of our citizens, but they seem to anticipate an increase each year. It can only be a guess, and one has to be guided by the actual receipts during the previous year.

Mr. Richardson: There are a lot of people growing old each year.

Hon. G. Taylor: But they might not have any money.

The PREMIER: From income tax I expect to receive slightly more than last year. The reduction of the super tax by $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. means a loss of £35,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: Does not that represent the loss through the disappearance of the whole of the super tax?

The PREMIER: No, only half. There should be a fairly substantial increase in the collections of the Forests Department, but this is offset to a great extent by the increased amount that will be transferred to the reforestation fund. As a result of the developmental policy and the increased amounts advanced to settlers, collections by way of interest are naturally expected to increase. This is largely responsible for the increase under the heading of "Departmental." There are, however, fairly large decreases on other items under this head as compared with last year.

Public Utilities.

I consider that the public utilities should return £229,271 more than they did last year. As previously mentioned, the expenditure in this section is £207,322 above that of last year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are more profits.

The PREMIER: Yes. The net improvement is £21,949. When we have regard for the amount of money that has been expended in our public utilities, this cannot be said to be too much.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That includes interest, I suppose.

The PREMIER: Whilst I expect that public utilities should return £229,271 more

than they did last year, I estimate that the expenditure will increase by £207,322, and that the net improvement over last year will, therefore, be £21,949.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You gave me a shock at first.

The PREMIER: Against this has to be set an increase of interest on the additional capital invested in public utilities. The railways are responsible for the bulk of the increase in this division. The revenue from the railways is estimated at £3,500,000, as against £3,334,008 collected last year, or an increase of £165,992. If the season is favourable, we should be able to collect that additional amount. The position of the railways has fortunately been improving, and for some time the total collection each year has been in excess of that of the year before. The other increases are—electricity supply £14,133, tramways £7,582, metropolitan water supply £8,614, and metropolitan abattoirs £19,818. Practically all the public utilities show increased revenue as compared with last year. This is a healthy sign, more particularly as the revenue for the division last year exceeded my estimate. The result of these undertakings will be found on return No. 13, which is before members.

Loan Expenditure.

The loan expenditure for the year was £4,099,021, and for the previous year £3,936,833. The comparatively small increase was more than accounted for by the expenditure on group settlements, the increase concerning which was £301,342. As in recent years the bulk of our loan expenditure has been in connection with land settlement. Of the total expenditure amounting to £4,099,021, agriculture absorbed £2,288,907, including—group settlements £1,124,252, soldier settlement £598,649, Agricultural Bank capital £257,072, and assistance to settlers (principally Industries Assistance Board settlers) £192,710, or a total loan expenditure under these four headings of £2,172,683. Our railways accounted for £534,103, of which £159,130 is for the provision of additional rolling stock. Water supplies, etc., absorbed £650,295, and harbours £124,576. I think the enumeration of these items ought to go far to prove that the loan expenditure of the State has been made along wise lines, namely on agricultural development, rolling stock, water supply, harbours and rail-

ways, all of which should be highly reproductive before many years have passed, and tend to increase the general development and prosperity of the State.

Loan Indebtedness.

What is true of last year's loan expenditure applies also—I need not give the figures, for they have been given before—to the total of our loan indebtedness. It will be found that we have excellent assets.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: By Heaven, we have!

The PREMIER: We have excellent security for the money we have spent. The value of the money that has been expended in years gone by in various directions, which I have indicated, has been responsible for bringing the State into the condition in which we find it to-day, and is now worth many times over the amount that was originally invested.

Mr. Stubbs: That is good stuff.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The transactions on general loan fund for the year have been small. They have consisted principally of the inclusion of an amount of £1,231,300 in the loan of £10,300,000 that was floated by the Commonwealth for the States. That is to say, of this loan we received £1,231,300. The loan was floated at £98 10s. and the interest was 6 per cent. The cost to us would be in the vicinity of 6½ per cent.; £98 10s. at 6 per cent. and expenses works out at about 6½ per cent. at par.

The Minister for Lands: And every penny used for settlement.

The PREMIER: A further sum of £255,040 was included for us in the conversion loan placed on the local market by the Commonwealth on behalf of the States. The only other new moneys that were raised locally were represented in the amount of £106,051. The State did not approach the London market at all last year, and no loan has been placed in Britain since February of 1924. We have been able to carry on with the aid of the two millions that were raised in February of last year, and through the accommodation that has been provided for us by the Westminster Bank since then. The amount obtained in February of last year was raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

Loan Council.

The Loan Council has held conferences in Melbourne during the year, and all the States with the exception of New South Wales were represented. The Loan Council was formed because of the fact that interest had reached such a high level, owing to the competition between the States, that it was thought desirable to establish the Council with a view to eliminating competition and keeping the rate of interest within bounds. The loan conversions in Australia for the year, apart from new moneys, were very considerable. If we omit New South Wales, and include the Commonwealth conversion loan of £68,000,000, the conversions in Australia last year approximated £90,000,000. The details are as follows:—Commonwealth, £68,000,000; Victoria, £7,450,770; Queensland, £460,200; South Australia, £7,462,652; Western Australia, £5,022,305, and Tasmania £2,295,516. a total of £90,691,443.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was Commonwealth money.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was not due to the public.

The PREMIER: It was not all due to the public. In addition, it was estimated that new money for the year to be raised in Australia and in London was in the vicinity of £35,000,000, again omitting New South Wales. Satisfactory arrangements were made to finance the States pending the conversion of the large Commonwealth loan of £68,000,000. These steps obviated the necessity for the States being forced to go on the local market during the conversion operations. The conversions of the States attending the conference were also provided for. One of the loans arranged for had to be placed on the American market. This was done after the fullest consultation with the London financial advisers. The actual arrangements for the American loan were made by London financiers who always handle Australian loans. The £20,000,000 involved in the loan was allocated between London and New York. To New York was allotted £15,000,000 and to London £5,000,000. The terms in both places were practically the same, namely, about £99 10s. at five per cent. Our proportion of the loan was transferred to London to meet our overdraft. No restriction was placed by the Loan Council on the States going to the London market. It

might have been desirable to restrict our borrowings to Australia, but no State could agree to its borrowings overseas being restricted.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

The PREMIER: The order in which we might go was, however, mutually agreed upon, and this State was allotted first place. The decisions or recommendations of the Loan Council were not binding on any of the State Governments until they were agreed to.

Hon. G. Taylor: They have been agreed to?

Proposed State Loan postponed.

The PREMIER: Yes. With regard to the loan, members will have gathered from the cabled reports from London during the past few days, that we were just about to go on the market for a loan of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds, half a million of which was required for the redemption of the A.M.P. Society's loan falling due at the end of the year. The society was willing to renew the loan on terms which the Government did not consider satisfactory. We therefore decided that we would add that amount to the sum we originally intended to raise in London and pay the A.M.P. Society, because it was felt that the terms would be better in London than those asked for by the society.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How long has the A.M.P. loan been running?

The PREMIER: Not very long. Most of it is of recent date. The position in London is uncertain owing to the very sudden embargo placed by the Home Government upon loans being raised either for foreign countries or the Dominions.

The Minister for Lands: That is Empire building.

Mr. Teesdale: Wait until it is lifted. They want a little money for themselves.

The PREMIER: It would be unfortunate if the embargo continued for any length of time. I am in cable communication with the Agent General, and hope that the embargo will be lifted before long. Certainly, if it is not lifted, it will create a difficult situation for all the Australian States, more particularly for those that have signed the new migration agreement and entered into obligations in that respect. I feel sure that this is only one of the little hitches that occur from time to time, and that it

will be overcome without any difficulty before long.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the trouble will be in London. You will have to remit money there.

The PREMIER: If the London market were to be closed to us for any length of time, Australia would be forced to look elsewhere.

The Minister for Lands: And trade will go with it.

The PREMIER: Yes, trade follows the cash, I am afraid. We may be sure, however, that those responsible for the position in London are fully alive to that phase. Without having any information regarding the matter, I am sure there must have been some very good reason from their point of view, which, I hope, will be overcome shortly.

State's indebtedness.

The gross public debt as at the 30th June last amounted to £64,493,261, and our sinking fund to £9,985,031, so that our net indebtedness was £54,508,230. I will again emphasise what I and others have said in the past regarding our public debt. Although it looks much larger per head of the population than does the public indebtedness in other States, the reason for that is that we carry out many public services that are performed in other States by trusts, boards and local governing bodies.

Mr. Teesdale: But you have the assets.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: In addition to that we have lent a great deal of cash to people. I suppose it would amount to £14,000,000.

The PREMIER: Yes, in comparison with the other States, we lend a great deal of money.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we do.

The PREMIER: And Western Australia borrows for purposes for which Governments in the Eastern States do not borrow.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is so.

The PREMIER: There are trusts and boards that have extensive borrowing powers and in Victoria the money borrowed by some of the boards and trusts must run into millions of pounds.

Mr. Mann: There is the Metropolitan Board of Works in Melbourne, for instance,

The PREMIER: Yes, that is one. There is the Tramway Trust as well. The borrowings of those concerns do not appear in the public debt of Victoria, whereas money for such works in Western Australia does appear in our public indebtedness. Thus, it will be seen that it is altogether misleading to make any comparison between the debt per head of the population in this State and that per head of the population in other States.

Hon. G. Taylor: Unless you added the indebtedness of those boards and trusts to the State debt.

The PREMIER: And that would be very difficult to work out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And there would be no object in doing it because they have the assets.

The PREMIER: That is so. Our public utilities, which last year showed a surplus of £52,578, after meeting all charges including interest and sinking fund, are responsible for £32,290,890 of our public indebtedness. That means to say that, after providing for interest and sinking fund, our public utilities paid for themselves and showed a surplus of over £52,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: And the amount involved in those public utilities is £32,000,000 out of £50,000,000 odd.

The PREMIER: Yes, out of a net indebtedness of £54,000,000. In addition to that, the Agricultural Bank, Soldier Settlement, and the Industries Assistance Board account for a further sum of £10,171,117 and transferred properties, for £754,583. These alone account for a total of £43,216,590. That does not include any group settlement expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: That is over two million pounds.

The PREMIER: That is so. I could quote many other items, but I think I have given sufficient to indicate that our loan money has been wisely expended. The sinking fund to-day amounts to almost £10,000,000, and during the year the growth of the fund has been to the extent of £611,000. General revenue contributed to the sinking fund £236,742, and interest and discounts £380,918. There were small redemptions. Our deficit looks very small indeed when we consider the sinking fund provisions that have been made.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The rest of Australia is not doing as well.

The PREMIER: The whole of the rest of Australia put together is not doing what Western Australia has done.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Ours is a real sinking fund but in the other States the sinking funds are invested in their own accounts. That is a very different thing.

The PREMIER: That is so.

Agricultural Bank.

Dealing with the Agricultural Bank, the operations of that institution, including advances to soldier settlers, have again been large. Approved loans to bank clients amounted to £365,897, and to soldier settlers £309,012, making a total under those two headings of £674,909.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Those were loan approved, not advanced?

The PREMIER: That is the position. The advances actually made totalled more. Including approvals previously agreed to, the actual advances made were, to bank clients £353,639, and to soldier settlers £392,411, or a total of £746,050 actually advanced during the year. The extent of the bank's operations will be better realised when I say that since its inception, the advances approved to bank clients have represented £6,157,664, and to soldier settlers £5,855,178, or a total of £12,012,842. The advances actually made since the inception of the bank were, to bank clients, £5,347,986, and to soldier settlers £5,314,416, or a total of £10,662,402.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That does not include group settlers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Or the Industries Assistance Board.

The PREMIER: That amount covers only the two headings, bank clients and soldier settlers. The advances and interest actually outstanding as at the 30th June last were as follows: Bank, £3,549,687; soldier settlement, £5,291,756; or a total of £8,841,443. Last year I drew attention to the amount of the instalments and interest in arrears. For both the bank and soldier settlement the arrears at that time totalled the large sum of £1,089,774. On the 30th June this year the outstandings were: Agricultural Bank instalments (including butter and bacon factories), £409,798; interest, £170,724. There was due on account of the half-year ended 30th June last £38,656 under the heading of instalments, and £102,367 for

interest, but it would not be right to say that those amounts, totalling £141,023, were outstanding, because they were only just due. They are quoted for the sake of comparison. Then, on account of soldier settlement, there were no instalments due as at the 30th June, because we have not as yet reached the time when the soldiers will be called upon to repay their advances, but in respect of interest, there was owing at that date, £260,401. So that on account of the Agricultural Bank and soldier settlement combined, excluding the instalments and interest due on that date, there were outstanding, as at the 30th June last, £840,923.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have got back a considerable sum, though.

The PREMIER: Yes, a considerable amount came in. Comparing the position with that which obtained last year, the arrears actually due by bank clients have been reduced by £19,938, but, on the other hand, the arrears on account of soldier settlers have increased by £43,495, showing in all, a net increase of £22,557. Having regard to the fact that we had a good season last year, and that prices were favourable, I do not know that the position at this stage may be regarded as altogether satisfactory. Collections of interest and instalments between the 30th June and the 30th September, the first quarter of this financial year, have amounted to £122,298 on account of the bank, and £128,370 on account of soldier settlement, or a total for the first quarter of £250,668. That is a substantial amount.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is nearly half the interest on the six millions.

Industries Assistance Board.

The PREMIER: The operations of the Industries Assistance Board for the year have again been very large. The advances for the year ended the 31st March last totalled £1,161,263, and the collections for the last season, and equities in the wheat pool, amounted to £1,391,100. The balance outstanding as at the 31st March, before those collections were credited—I only mention this in order to give some idea of the extent of the operations of the Industries Assistance Board—was £2,603,239. At the 30th June the balance was £2,011,530. The total advances made by the board since its inception amount to £9,418,346, and the board's losses to date are set down at £227,-

721. I am afraid that if the board's affairs were wound up, we would have to be prepared to face a greater loss. The board was established primarily early in 1915, after the 1914 drought, in order to meet the position that arose through the failure of the crops. It has now become actually part of the Agricultural Bank.

The Minister for Lands: Mostly soldiers are on it now.

The PREMIER: The operations of the board are not confined to assisting settlers in distress. It really provides credit from season to season.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A great deal of the money was paid in land rents on land that was forfeited, so that it was not really a loss.

The PREMIER: I suppose a good deal of land was forfeited on which the land rents had been paid. The board could not now be completely suspended without seriously upsetting farming operations in the wheat belt. We shall be content to gradually reduce the number carrying on under the board.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are you still accepting new clients?

The Minister for Lands: No, only soldiers.

The PREMIER: If we take no new clients, the old ones will gradually clear off their indebtedness and the position should reach finality in the years ahead. What losses will occur, however, it is difficult to estimate. The amount standing on the books of the bank on the 30th June was £3,549,687, and against soldier settlers £5,291,756, making a total of £8,841,443. If to this sum we add what is due to the board, viz., £2,011,530, we get a total of £10,852,973. That is an enormous sum in one direction, but it shows the extent to which the State is interested in agriculture, and how far our future progress is bound up in that industry.

Group Settlement.

I do not intend to make a detailed statement regarding group settlement; I will leave that to my colleague who has charge of that department and he will refer to it when his estimates are under consideration. I should, however, like to mention one or two facts connected with group settlement in order to show that we are pressing on with the work. The expenditure last year was £1,124,252, and the total expenditure

since the inception to the 30th June has been £2,453,965. There have been established no fewer than 133 groups; the number of settlers is 2,238, and the total group population is 9,262. Of course to that total should be added the number of persons associated with group activities and who have moved to the districts because of group settlement. There have been erected 1,577 cottages, 59 schools, and three hospitals at the various groups, and an area of 31,852 acres has been cropped. As hon. members know, the new agreement has been signed and has been laid on the Table of the House. On the whole I think its terms may be regarded as very satisfactory. The Government have already put the agreement into force by arranging for the introduction of migrants. A cable message has been despatched to the Catterick Farm School for 40 families, and it is the intention of the Government, now that finality has been reached, to press on with the scheme.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The interest now is 1 per cent. from the inception of the scheme.

The PREMIER: Yes. There should be a substantial credit when it comes along. The interest will be 1 per cent. as against $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. which we were paying. We shall get a rebate on the amount already paid. The new agreement is retrospective to the date of the agreement which was signed by the Leader of the Opposition.

Wheat and Fruit.

As so much depends on agriculture, additional funds have been provided, and the staff of the Department of Agriculture has been strengthened. Experimental farms have been extended and expert advice is available. As hon. members know, the season last year was a record one, although in the earlier portion the prospects did not appear to be too favourable. However, a record harvest was obtained, the yield having been 23,887,367 bushels from 1,867,614 acres, an average of 12.8 bushels per acre. This average has been exceeded only once, in 1903-4, when 13.6 bushels resulted from the cropping of an area of 137,946 acres.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A very much smaller area.

The PREMIER: This wonderful increase has taken place in the comparatively short space of 21 years. The price obtained for

last season's wheat was as high as 6s. 8d. per bushel. This year there is an even greater area under crop. What the yield will be will, of course, depend upon the season. Fruitgrowers, too, had a successful year and obtained satisfactory prices. Here, again, there was a substantial increase. The fruit exported totalled nearly 100,000 cases in excess of the number exported in the previous year, the figures having been, for the year ended 30th June, 1924, 318,887 cases, and for the year ended 30th June, 1925, 403,283 cases.

Sheep and Wool.

During the earlier part of the year portions of the North-West suffered from lack of rain, but there came a heavy fall in May and there were further showers in June, so that the outlook for the pastoral industry at the present time is promising. The prices obtained for wool in the earlier part of the year established a record for the State. Since then, however, there has been a considerable drop in price. The Stock branch of the department has been rearranged and strengthened by the inclusion of a veterinary pathologist. This officer has been appointed for the purpose of investigating what is known as Beverley disease, and a laboratory has been established with a branch in the Beverley district. Those who are acquainted with the disease will know that it has assumed rather serious proportions, and has been giving stockowners some concern. The Government considered they would be justified in appointing an expert officer to devote the whole of his time to the investigation of the disease.

Hon. G. Taylor: Have you had a progress report from him yet?

The PREMIER: Yes, but he has not been engaged on his task long enough to permit of anything definite being done.

Dairying, Agricultural College, Light Lands.

In the dairying industry there is evidence of increased interest. Recently 2,200 head of cattle have been purchased and supplied to group settlers. Members will realise that this purchase has involved some expenditure. The cattle are considered to be of very good class and those who are qualified to express an opinion say that the

stock has been purchased on very favourable terms. It is intended that the agricultural college shall be open to receive students at the beginning of next year. In the meantime a good deal of work is being carried out in the way of equipping the college with buildings and apparatus. The Wongan Hills light lands farm was officially opened on the 16th May. The soil there is typical of many light lands in the State. The farm has been established for the purpose of demonstrating the methods by which these lands can be brought into profitable productivity. It is intended to establish other farms of a similar nature, including one in the Esperance district.

Gold Mining.

The mining industry still plays an important part amongst our State industries. The gold production for the year was valued at £2,060,298. The public have watched with a good deal of interest the boring operations that have taken place in the Wiluna district, where a shaft has been sunk to a depth of 300 feet and where some cross-cutting has been carried out. The lode has been reported to be of large size and of payable value. Altogether the district gives excellent promise in the way of providing a valuable addition to the mines of the State.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I have a letter here which is the first indication of the battle of the routes.

The PREMIER: There has been a good deal said about the route to be taken, for some time past, and the battle will become more intense as the weeks go by.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I received this letter only just now.

The PREMIER: There has also been a new development as the result of diamond drilling at the Golden Horseshoe Mine. This indicates that a large body of high-grade ore exists in a lode which had become poor in the higher levels, and the development is regarded by the mining authorities in Kalgoorlie as being one of the most important that has taken place in that centre for some years past. The exemption of prospectors from taxation on the sale of mining leases has stimulated prospecting, and liberal assistance has been given to prospectors through the Prospecting Board.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What did you do last year in the way of advances to mining?

The PREMIER: A substantial sum was advanced, and in every instance the money was given where it was thought there was a chance of success. In some cases the advances ran into thousands of pounds. The department, rather than follow the old practice of giving a little assistance to everyone that came along, decided that where the prospects were good and where the company or individual were prepared to take up either a new property or work an old one, decided to give substantial financial assistance. I do not know that anything out of the way has so far resulted from the assistance given.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should give enough if you give at all.

The PREMIER: That is so. It is not of much use giving a little assistance and then stopping, if there is a possibility of achieving success later on. I do not think the department has done that, although in one district complaint was made that insufficient support had been given. I do not think the facts justify the complaint; in fact I know that generous assistance was given in that particular instance.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the Minister said that £100,000 had been advanced.

The PREMIER: At present there are 65 parties comprising 111 men, receiving assistance from the department, and assistance under the Mining Development Act has also been granted to a large number of parties to open up and equip mines. The report of the Royal Commission on Mining has been forwarded by the Government to the companies interested in London, and the directors have been asked whether they contemplate taking any action on the lines recommended by the Commission. At this stage I do not wish to discuss the merits of that report, but I think I am justified in saying that it was in some respects of a startling character, and that it does warrant those concerned in the Old Country taking action to remedy some of the defects that were brought to light by the investigation. At present we are awaiting replies from the companies in the Old Country as to whether it is their intention to take any action. The Miners' Phthisis Act was passed in 1922, but was not proclaimed. It was brought into operation last month, and

medical examinations are now proceeding. Members will be aware that under the provisions of that Act miners who are found to be affected with tuberculosis will be compelled to discontinue working in the mines. There is an obligation on the Government, a natural obligation and one recognised by the Act, to find them employment at the ruling rates of wages if they are forced out of the mines. At the present time a departmental board is investigating the possibilities of other avenues of employment which might be open to those men. In any case, it is and will be the responsibility of the Government to see that the miners do not suffer because of their being forced to give up their employment through no fault of their own. There is an obligation upon the State to provide employment for them, or else sustenance. The recent amendment of the taxation laws has given considerable relief to prospectors, gold mining companies and syndicates. In effect, no prospector, syndicate or company is now liable for taxation until the whole of the capital expenditure incurred as from the 1st July, 1924, shall have been recouped out of profits.

Hon. G. Taylor: That alteration was made last year?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are there any signs of improvement?

The PREMIER: As I have stated, a considerable number of prospectors are out—111 altogether. Generally speaking, I know of nothing more that can be done in order to revive the industry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you want new mines, you cannot do more than look for new mines.

The PREMIER: That is so; and there should be a generous measure of assistance to those prepared to look for mines.

Timber Industry.

The work of the Forests Department has been active during the year, and the demand for local timbers has been steadily maintained. The value of timber exported during the 12 months is approximately 1½ millions sterling. The volume of exports is no greater than the average of the years 1909 to 1913, but the values show an increase of 50 per cent.; and those increased values are reflected in the revenue of the Forests Department. The forests have been

heavily overcut. The expenditure on reforestation is shown in the detailed scheme laid on the Table of the House recently. The cost of administration of the department is provided under the Consolidated Revenue Estimates. This cost is slightly increased, but is offset by the greater volume of business being handled.

Hospitals.

During the past two years there has been a considerable expansion of hospital activities, more especially arising from increasing settlement in the South-West and the agricultural districts. There is a demand for new hospitals. During 1923-24 eighteen new hospitals were opened, but still many areas are unserved. A number of proposals for new hospitals are in course of completion or under consideration. There has been a marked expansion of the work of the metropolitan hospitals, particularly the Perth Hospital—and this means requests for increased assistance. These requests have been partly met out of the Treasury. With the taxes I have mentioned, a greater amount will be collected next year, and the difficulties which the hospitals have experienced for so many years should thus be overcome. A Soldiers' Mental Hospital is now being erected at West Subiaco, as the result of an agreement between the Commonwealth and the State.

Mr. Sampson: Construction is actually in hand.

The PREMIER: Yes. The estimated cost is £45,000. The building, which will accommodate 70 patients, is being constructed on modern lines, and its completion is expected about May next. Provision has also been made for a juvenile section at the Claremont Mental Hospital, and the children there will be housed separately and have their own playground. This is a very necessary reform. Children have been housed with adults in the Claremont institution. There is also provision for the opening of another male block at Claremont to relieve the overcrowding. Another medical officer has been provided for, as well as a part-time dentist. The hours of the nursing and domestic staffs have been reduced from 52 per week to 48.

Mr. Sampson: Is there any decision in respect of the reception home?

The PREMIER: No. The hon. member left so many things undone in his depart-

ment that we have not been able to overtake them all yet.

Mr. Sampson: But a considerable period has elapsed.

The PREMIER: A site has been secured for a reception home at Point Heathcote.

Mr. Sampson: That was done 21 months ago.

The PREMIER: There are so many demands from all sources that one is hard put to it to decide which is more deserving than the other.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The member for Swan is attacking both you and me in regard to this matter, because he could not get the money for the establishment of the home from either of us.

The PREMIER: Let us do something each year. This year money is being found for the accommodation of soldier mental patients. Though I cannot say anything definite at this stage, I hope the receiving home will be an accomplished fact before very long.

Workers' Homes.

The Workers' Homes Board this year are in a position to provide for the balance of applications, £15,000, and for prospective applications of £10,000 which had accumulated in November last. In addition, the board can provide £24,000 for further applications, thus furnishing a total of £49,000 for this financial year. In round figures, the board have at their disposal £50,000 for the erection of new homes this year. That, of course, is not a great sum, having regard to the extent of the State. Homes are now being erected in many country towns.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But not many houses are being built. I was hoping you would be able to provide a larger sum.

The PREMIER: What I have stated can be done by the board without any new money. I shall have to see if I cannot provide something on the Loan Estimates in addition.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, do.

The PREMIER: There is great need for more homes for the workers in this State.

Mr. Teesdale: Is there any chance of having one or two workers' homes built in the North?

The PREMIER: I am afraid the "willy-willies" in the North would render the sec-

urity doubtful. When I saw the photograph which the hon. member had of that long jetty with great gaps in it, I did not feel disposed to risk public funds on buildings in the North-West.

Public Works.

The Public Works Department, as hon. members know, has been most active during the year. The Busselton-Margaret River, Narembeen-Merredin, and Margaret River-Flinders Bay lines were handed over to the Railway Department, and the Esperance Northwards, the Piawaning Northwards, and the Lake Grace-Newdegate lines were under construction. Some of the latter have since been completed. A commencement has been made with the construction of the Dwarda-Narrogin railway, and preliminary arrangements have been made for the building of the Esperance-Salmon Gums line to Norseman. On this line a commencement will be made as soon as the rails are delivered. As regards drainage, surveys and investigations have been continued, especially in the Busselton district and on the group settlement areas. Drainage of Lake Thompson and the coastal areas between the Peel Estate and Bunbury is receiving the attention of the Government, who realise that the water-logged portions of the State cannot be developed until drainage works have been carried out. In the matter of water supply, there have been investigations as to the securing of water supplies by the use of rock catchments in agricultural districts, and other investigations of the same nature are in progress. The Government have authorised the provision of a supply to serve an area in the Wilgoyne district. A large scheme has been undertaken for the Kondinin district, the estimated cost being £44,000. Hon. members will agree that this is a considerable sum for an agricultural water supply. From this source it will be possible to reticulate water to a large number of settlers. During the year it was found necessary to renew sections of the goldfields water main. Five miles of 24in. pipes, and a further supply of 30in. pipes, have been ordered. These, when received, will relieve other pipes, which will be reconditioned, and we shall then have reserve pipes for maintenance. A number of extensions have been made from the goldfields main to the agricultural districts.

Main Roads, Dredging Operations.

The greatest activity of the Public Works Department has been shown with regard to roadmaking. I am afraid I shall have to ask the Minister for Works to go steadily with regard to road construction if the Federal money does not come to hand.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He has got £150,000.

The PREMIER: Whilst we use considerably more than the amount of the Commonwealth grant, many of the public are under the impression that the Federal Government are bearing the whole of the expense. The reason is that it is always spoken of as "the Commonwealth road grant."

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I have tried to explain it to the people, but they will not listen.

The PREMIER: Of course the State has to find pound for pound.

The Minister for Works: And also the cost of supervision and survey work. It is costing us £115 for every £100 it costs the Commonwealth.

The PREMIER: The work has been pushed on in very vigorous fashion, and the full amount was practically expended by the end of June. In fact, it is claimed that this State has put up a record in that connection. A considerable amount will be expended on road construction this year, as another sum of £96,000 is to be made available. In addition there will be an amount of £48,000 which is, I think, a free gift, and which has not to be subsidised by the State. The latter amount will be made available for the reconditioning and strengthening of roads. That amount is insignificant when we take into consideration the real needs of the State in regard to main roads. The Government consider that until legislation is passed along the lines of the Main Roads Bill, there can be no satisfactory solution of the great problem of reconstructing and maintaining main roads. During the year steady progress has been made with the dredging operations at Fremantle and with the wharves under reconstruction. Additional shed accommodation is being provided at that port. The works at Geraldton have also been proceeding satisfactorily.

Water Supplies and Sewerage.

The PREMIER: Before concluding, I desire to refer to the operations of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department. The capital expenditure involved in these undertakings, which amounted to £3,313,031 at the 30th June last, includes the year's increase of £534,825. The water supply in the metropolitan area was maintained during the past year with comparatively slight restrictions. The 30in. main from Mt. Eliza was completed to Nedlands in February and to Claremont in June. This should ensure adequate water pressures throughout the district extending from Nedlands to Cottesloe. A new service reservoir, having a capacity of 4,000,000 gallons, was completed at Buckland Hill in June last. The connecting pipe to the metropolitan system will be completed in a few weeks. It is anticipated that this reservoir will materially assist in maintaining satisfactory water pressures at Cottesloe Beach and North Fremantle. All the water supplied from the bores will be filtered and rendered clear before it is allowed to pass into reticulation. Material progress has been made with the construction of works approved for the purpose of augmenting the supply from the hills. It is anticipated that supplies will be available during the coming summer from Churchman's Brook by the end of October, and from the Canning River and Wongong Brook sections, in December. It is expected that these additional supplies, combined with the existing resources, will meet all the requirements for the summer. The urgent necessity for a large addition to the water supply in order to provide for future years, makes it imperative that the Wongong dam shall be completed as quickly as possible.

Railways and Tramways.

The operations of the railways for the past financial year have been satisfactory. They disclose a surplus of revenue, after meeting working expenses and interest, amounting to £158,398. This is an improvement compared with the preceding year of over £63,000, and it was obtained notwithstanding that freights were reduced to an extent of £45,000 per annum following the introduction of the amended land tax. Hon. members will recognise that while in

no case have railway rates been increased, there have been reductions in several directions. There was an easement in the rates on power kerosene. Further than that, starving stock taken from the dry areas were returned over the railways free of cost, while there was a reduction of 25 per cent. on the charges on fodder railed for the purpose of feeding that stock. Weekly tickets were introduced to enable passengers to travel between stations indicated on those tickets, as often as they desired. There have been numerous other minor reductions, but, as I have indicated, in no case were rates increased. Another factor that has to be taken into consideration when reviewing the results of the operations of the Railway Department is that as from the 1st January last there was an all-round increase in the basic wage of 6d. per day. That meant an additional £30,000 to the working expenses for the half-year during which the increase operated. Recently there has been another increase in wages which will involve the department in a further expenditure of £30,000. The financial results of the tramways show, after payment of working expenses and interest, a surplus of £8,221 as compared with £6,881 disclosed the end of the previous financial year. Thus there was this year an increase of £1,340 compared with the returns for the preceding financial year. That result must be regarded as very fair when we take into consideration the competition by motor buses that has developed during the past year or two. The earnings of the Electricity Supply Department exceeded the working expenses and interest by £10,097, or an improvement of £716 on the returns of the previous year.

Fremantle Harbour Trust.

As showing the general development and progress that has taken place throughout the State, I may point to the operations of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. Last year's working constituted a record. The gross tonnage of the ships using the port represented over 5,000,000 tons and the cargo handled amounted to 1,213,894 tons, or 231,556 tons more than during the previous year. Wheat accounted for a large proportion of the increase, there having been shipped 3,668,000 bags as compared with 2,642,000 bags during the previous year. On the other hand, the shipments of flour

for last year fell short by 4,000 tons compared with exports for the preceding twelve months. Considerable improvements at the port have been effected or are in hand. The dredging of the harbour has been practically completed to a depth of 36 feet at low water and good progress has been made in the reconstruction of Victoria Quay with ferro-concrete piles. The erection of two cargo sheds and a wheat shed is in hand, one electric gantry crane has been erected and three more are being constructed. The Harbour Trust are making extensive preparations for the handling of next year's harvest and at the present time the largest steamers trading to Australia can be handled at Fremantle without any difficulty.

Mr. Richardson: They will not come here now.

Mr. Davy: If they do, they are kept here successfully.

The PREMIER: We can take that statement as we like.

State's Financial Future.

In conclusion, I think it may be said that the State is in a thoroughly sound financial condition. Our relatively small population, with our immense territory, has much in the way of achievement to its credit. The State has encountered many difficulties, particularly of late years, mainly due to our position under Federation. Notwithstanding that, however, I think the State has turned the corner, and I am sure that the difficulties that we have surmounted in the past and which confront the people of the State at the present time will merely serve to stimulate our people to greater endeavours in the future. Of course we have many difficulties ahead of us still of a financial character, and it will be necessary for any Government who may be in office, to maintain great control over the expenditure of public funds. With that done, however, I believe that by the end of this year we shall have seen the last of our annual deficits. I am convinced that the State has entered upon an era of great expansion, progress, and development. I move the first division of the Estimates, namely—

Legislative Council, £1,423.

Progress reported.

[Return No. 1.]

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, 1924-25, COMPARED WITH THE ESTIMATE.

REVENUE.					
The actual amount received was	£	8,381,446	£		
The Treasurer's estimate for the year was		8,164,305			
Or a total net under-estimate of					217,141
EXPENDITURE.					
The actual amount expended was		8,439,844			
The Treasurer's estimate for the year was		8,360,380			
Or a net under-estimate of					79,464

DETAILS.

HEADS.	REVENUE.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Over- Estimate.	Under- Estimate.	Over- Estimate.	Under- Estimate.
	£	£	£	£
TAXATION—				
Land Tax		38,887		
Licenses		226		
Income Tax		28,642		
Dividend Duty		17,467		
Totalisator Tax	1,095			
Stamp Duty		4,108		
Probate Duty		3,115		
Commonwealth	1,082			
TERRITORIAL, ETC.—				
Land Revenue		10,109		
Mining	1,672			
Timber		17,087		
Law Courts		3,878		
Royal Mint		423		
SPECIAL ACTS—				
Interest			14,602	
Sinking Fund				581
Forests Act				27,922
Pensions				2,216
Residue				1,752
DEPARTMENTAL—				
Parliamentary				197
Premier		60		9,286
Colonial Treasurer		15,600		22,788
Minister for Forests		11,330		890
Minister for Lands, Immigration and Industries		1,921	12,768	
Minister for Justice and Police		1,688		2,211
Minister for Mines		701		117
Minister for Agriculture		5,510	6,164	
Minister for Public Works and Labour		6,364		365
Colonial Secretary		7,419		16,849
Minister for Education	623		7,548	
Minister for Public Health		845		11,044
Minister for North-West	122		2,886	
State Trading Concerns		9,320		
PUBLIC UTILITIES—				
Railways		14,008		41,760
Tramways	12,582		12,638	
Electric Works		12,867		15,731
Fremantle Harbour Trust		37,124		
State Batteries	10,984		8,066	
Water Supply and Sewerage		5,112	966	
Goldfields Water Supply		3,850	487	
Butter Factories	3,671		3,378	
Government Refrigerating Works, etc. (net)	5,455		3,064	
Aborigines Cattle Station	2,426		1,410	
Residue	788			323
Totals	40,500	257,641	74,577	154,041
Net under-estimates		£217,141		£79,464

[Return No. 2.]

REVENUE.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS FROM 1916-17 TO 1924-25 AND ESTIMATE FOR 1925-26.

Receipts.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.	Estimate, 1925-26.
TAXATION—	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Land Tax ...	42,431	63,388	34,182	46,415	57,791	42,540	79,983	71,449	113,367	150,000
Income Tax ...	90,667	98,501	226,560	271,338	334,320	320,874	390,003	502,385	478,642	500,000
Dividend Duty ...	105,554	109,462	183,062	144,748	244,969	177,005	189,057	216,895	237,467	250,000
Totalisator Tax ...	14,775	18,713	42,499	45,911	57,448	57,792	54,411	53,910	52,905	53,000
Stamp Duty ...	67,035	80,719	112,104	173,543	177,404	164,928	173,453	194,176	204,108	214,000
Probate Duty ...	40,963	38,710	40,329	121,951	42,406	76,817	45,997	66,989	68,114	87,000
Licenses ...	40,912	39,963	40,325	40,243	41,020	41,194	54,854	67,904	68,927	68,000
Total ...	402,337	449,456	629,061	844,197	955,358	881,159	987,558	1,173,568	1,224,036	1,322,500
DEPARTMENTAL—										
Land ...	282,223	257,368	300,604	330,740	342,362	338,729	311,380	330,234	334,109	335,000
Mining ...	20,547	19,291	17,643	24,056	24,108	22,929	19,830	17,376	16,328	18,000
Royal Mint ...	30,616	30,213	30,992	37,318	23,005	24,446	22,896	16,397	24,294	18,000
Timber ...	27,379	39,248	26,818	54,010	70,796	73,529	72,095	115,047	151,787	171,744
Departmental Fees, etc.	431,608	418,537	453,938	564,934	759,702	864,848	992,939	1,034,451	1,231,736	1,321,422
Law Courts ...	21,279	20,754	19,724	23,497	25,210	26,353	28,609	30,070	33,978	35,000
Harbour Dues ...	37,384	31,705	32,930	36,790	49,159	46,009	53,017	51,828	56,504	57,400
Commonwealth ...	594,467	599,239	585,668	598,273	593,834	589,767	583,186	585,723	589,134	589,529
Total ...	1,445,503	1,416,355	1,468,317	1,669,612	1,888,176	1,980,610	2,084,032	2,181,126	2,438,870	2,546,095
PUBLIC UTILITIES—										
Harbour Boards ...	87,355	85,168	106,287	157,637	185,470	173,188	168,223	224,850	262,124	264,000
Railways ...	1,878,434	1,828,853	1,878,753	2,275,426	2,688,611	2,805,335	2,886,370	3,189,894	3,334,008	3,500,000
Tramways ...	125,714	141,480	134,058	137,709	225,000	243,924	263,668	275,402	282,418	290,000
Batteries ...	61,200	69,355	57,876	49,067	69,467	57,663	56,691	39,235	17,816	21,925
Avondale, Harvey, Bucklands, and Yan- danooka Estates ...	26,675	29,346	19,529	14,865	12,020	7,543	4,943	2,966		
Water Supply and Sewerage etc. ...	404,737	379,925	371,615	361,583	402,354	406,151	416,633	424,835	441,062	451,000
State Dairy Farm... etc.	2,924	2,570	3,476	2,844	3,250	2,514	a	a	a	a
Refrigerating Works, etc. ...	30,651	27,542	28,726	32,138	35,735	40,615	43,918	32,120	24,069	47,050
Cave House, etc. ...	8,053	6,463	8,457	11,079	13,884	14,482	13,576	16,880	14,011	14,500
Electric Works ...	10,007	32,580	47,164	62,972	95,350	119,120	128,938	162,798	186,867	201,000
Butter Factories ...		15,771	19,189	18,717	27,548	17,756	17,187	17,310	13,329	17,000
Total ...	2,635,750	2,619,059	2,675,130	3,174,087	3,758,689	3,893,291	4,000,147	4,388,088	4,577,204	4,806,475
TRADING CONCERNS ...	93,417	137,666	172,343	175,605	187,342	152,047	135,755	122,313	143,342	157,661
GRAND TOTAL ...	4,577,007	4,822,536	4,944,851	5,863,501	6,789,565	6,907,107	7,207,492	7,865,595	8,881,446	8,832,731

a. Included in Departmental.

[Return No. 3.]

**STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FROM 1917-18 TO 1924-25, AND ESTIMATE
FOR 1925-26.**

Head.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.	Estimate 1925-26.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Special Acts	2,012,927	2,112,108	2,232,199	2,416,565	2,644,609	2,792,793	3,081,350	3,352,720	3,602,698
Parliamentary and Executive Council	11,597	9,520	10,111	11,350	11,423	12,258	11,855	12,568	13,357
Premier	1,744	1,796	2,154	2,044	18,185	15,522	15,420	18,738	12,800
His Excellency the Governor	1,549	1,807	1,935	2,343	2,227	2,166	2,356	2,399	2,314
London Agency	7,871	8,210	10,840	12,502	12,032	14,190	12,817	11,973	12,277
Public Service Commissioner	1,555	1,192	1,623	3,498	2,553	2,701	2,569	1,374	1,400
Government Motor Cars ...	1,868	4,459	3,006	2,590	1,703	2,193	1,053	3,947	5,068
Printing	36,085	38,216	54,749	78,688	71,881	68,270	63,389	62,875	62,970
Literary and Scientific ...	10,442	8,280	8,750	8,900	9,250	9,250	9,250	9,200	9,450
Treasury	11,150	9,946	12,627	11,067	14,909	14,677	13,882	18,169	18,307
Audit	8,946	9,023	10,337	11,597	12,618	11,701	11,830	12,772	12,797
Compassionate Allowances	4,892	4,167	4,425	6,480	4,964	2,509	3,976	5,425	1,789
Government Savings Bank	21,515	22,428	26,474	30,470	31,798	38,150	32,856	34,589	35,911
Government Stores	10,980	12,172	14,810	15,580	21,480	15,878	16,015	16,511	16,495
Taxation	18,001	21,040	25,404	33,872	14,488	13,200	13,635	14,341	14,031
Workers' Homes	3,112	3,230	3,515	4,048	6,047	11,386	12,853	12,014	12,843
Miscellaneous and Refunds	48,717	47,338	75,210	77,873	117,156	104,229	149,410	117,766	80,340
Lands and Surveys	46,326	44,703	59,816	90,182	108,192	101,056	100,897	82,963	80,496
Settlement for Soldiers ...	...	2,860	14,432	11,753	13,207	13,196	9,787	...	...
Agricultural Bank and I.A. Board	38,394	41,130	52,224	53,134	61,016	68,804	83,865	82,398	83,512
Group Settlement ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	8,401	9,866	11,780
Immigration ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	8,430	5,786	6,350
Council of Industrial Development	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,065	1,437	1,397
Mines, Explosives, Geological, etc.	60,030	57,302	63,957	73,551	67,010	67,817	63,002	61,481	62,507
Forests	11,220	10,873	12,962	16,129	16,439	15,246	15,835	17,816	22,758
Agriculture ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rabbits and Vermin	54,438	62,455	68,410	65,863	58,973	56,398	59,657	63,225	80,042
Stock ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Crown Law and Branches	69,597	59,069	71,760	87,186	73,077	76,819	82,334	80,715	85,265
Police	130,568	132,157	164,097	174,829	178,005	175,332	180,079	187,240	211,102
Public Works	98,702	104,615	116,488	123,988	93,587	70,042	87,220	89,538	87,528
Labour ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,335	5,251	6,860
Office of Colonial Secretary	32,297	27,322	27,655	37,718	234,814	232,277	227,110	223,584	29,846
Aborigines	9,422	12,447	6,134	10,423	10,244	6,108	6,623	6,899	8,204
Fisheries	4,726	6,277	6,438	7,146	6,377	5,789	5,414	5,465	5,763
Gaols	20,126	21,596	25,791	28,684	26,088	24,022	23,108	23,366	23,620
Harbour and Light and Jetties	27,087	19,587	21,985	22,479	22,073	20,466	20,213	21,696	22,352
Lithographic	4,718	4,885	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
Lunacy	60,533	64,578	80,146	97,422	89,840	87,847	88,813	97,085	100,169
Charities and State Children	88,411	90,485	113,352	88,281	93,563	95,626	97,523	100,496	102,685
Medical and Health	129,922	155,673	210,883	197,640	180,093	181,277	181,018	196,357	196,855
Education	353,793	366,054	414,330	490,160	656,026	563,183	580,548	585,465	594,509
Department of the North-West	...	...	...	270	2,942	20,989	21,813	19,005	19,316
Total, Departmental...	1,440,324	1,486,892	1,808,201	2,012,320	2,049,278	2,026,554	2,127,348	2,126,794	2,165,552
PUBLIC UTILITIES.									
Railways	1,454,650	1,572,107	2,006,823	2,427,075	2,337,391	2,210,851	2,307,380	2,361,760	2,520,000
Tramways	104,931	107,705	144,028	198,264	202,995	207,542	225,678	229,382	242,000
State Batteries	71,642	59,574	61,552	66,221	64,891	72,149	35,880	28,359	29,408
Water Supply	220,112	227,232	245,067	284,495	281,846	275,447	283,596	284,162	291,157
Yandanaoka	8,281	10,041	8,842	4,561	2,311	94	...	...	...
Refrigerating Works, etc.	19,078	19,059	20,505	24,238	27,707	24,967	24,558	25,070	31,585
Avondale and Harvey Estates	3,768	3,376	1,853	1,461	1,671	1,584	1,702	...	...
Tourists	6,415	8,476	10,985	13,115	14,176	13,841	14,412	14,610	14,602
Aborigines Cattle Station	5,610	5,219	8,079	11,814	12,030	10,560	7,643	6,074	7,578
Electricity Supply	20,488	28,297	43,019	83,088	95,784	91,557	116,154	136,731	154,000
State Dairy Farm	2,776	3,066	4,664	4,338	3,940	...	...	...	...
Butter Factories	16,666	20,537	18,620	26,503	15,073	16,433	16,807	19,068	16,266
Trading Concerns	40,669	...	8,440	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total, Public Utilities	1,974,984	2,064,729	2,586,383	2,145,173	3,059,815	2,925,025	3,033,819	3,099,196	3,300,596
Less Rebates, etc. ...	5,428,235	5,683,729	6,626,783	7,574,058	7,753,702	7,744,372	8,242,518	8,578,710	9,074,846
Total	5,328,279	5,596,865	6,531,725	7,476,291	7,830,242	7,612,856	8,094,753	8,439,845	8,930,810

a Includes transfer from Miscellaneous.

b Includes £45,071 for loss on operations Royal Commission Control of Trade.

c Includes Registry, Friendly Societies, Messengers' Exchange, and Observatory, and Labour Bureau.

d Included under Printing.

e Includes Tourist and Publicity.

f Included in Lunacy.

[Return No. 4.]

STATEMENT SHOWING ANNUAL SURPLUSES AND DEFICIENCIES OF CONSOLIDATED
REVENUE FUND, ALSO ANNUAL AGGREGATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 1900-01
TO 1924-25.

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Annual.		Aggregate.	
			Surplus.	Deficiency.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
Balance, 30th June, 1900 ...	£	£	£	£	£	£
1900-01 ...	3,078,033	3,165,244	...	87,211	12,372	...
1901-02 ...	3,688,049	3,490,026	198,023	...	123,184	74,839
1902-03 ...	3,630,238	3,521,763	108,475	...	231,659	...
1903-04 ...	3,550,016	3,698,311	...	148,295	83,364	...
1904-05 ...	3,615,340	3,745,225	...	129,885	...	46,521
1905-06 ...	3,558,939	3,632,318	...	73,379	...	119,900
1906-07 ...	3,401,354	3,490,183	...	88,829	...	208,729
1907-08 ...	3,376,641	3,379,006	...	2,365	...	211,094
1908-09 ...	3,267,014	3,368,551	...	101,537	...	312,631
1909-1910 ...	3,657,670	3,447,731	209,939	...	...	102,692
1910-1911 ...	3,850,439	3,734,448	115,991	...	13,299	...
1911-1912 ...	3,966,673	4,101,082	...	134,409	...	121,110
1912-1913 ...	4,596,659	4,787,064	...	190,405	...	311,515
1913-1914 ...	5,205,343	5,340,754	...	135,411	...	446,926
1914-1915 ...	5,140,725	5,706,541	...	565,816	...	1,012,742
1915-1916 ...	5,356,978	5,705,201	...	348,223	...	1,360,965
1916-1917 ...	4,577,007	5,276,764	...	699,757	...	2,060,722
1917-1918 ...	4,622,536	5,328,279	...	705,743	...	2,766,465
1918-1919 ...	4,944,851	5,596,866	...	652,015	...	3,418,480
1919-1920 ...	5,863,501	6,531,725	...	668,225	...	4,086,705
1920-1921 ...	6,789,565	7,476,291	...	686,725	...	4,773,430
1921-1922 ...	6,907,107	7,639,242	...	732,135	...	5,505,565
1922-1923 ...	7,207,492	7,612,856	...	405,364	...	5,910,929
1923-1924 ...	7,865,595	8,094,753	...	229,158	...	6,140,087
1924-1925 ...	8,381,446	8,439,844	...	58,398	...	6,198,485

(Return No. 5.)

SYNOPSIS AND BALANCE SHEET AT 30th JUNE, 1925, AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

—	1921.		1922.		1923.		1924.		1925.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Dr.										
Westminster Bank, Ltd.	1,805,000	0 0	...	...	735,000	0 0	210,000	0 0	b	
Commonwealth Government ...	27,837	6 9	118,600	0 0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sinking Fund ...	7,742,692	0 11	8,358,982	5 9	8,744,353	9 5	9,331,624	0 0	10,017,509	12 5
General Loan Fund ...	369,167	14 6	2,230,318	10 0	740,675	0 11	2,046,097	11 6	571,425	6 7
Australian Wheat Board ...	...	...	400,000	0 0	400,000	0 0	...	...	...	...
Government Savings Bank ...	5,918,475	4 3	5,801,447	5 6	5,951,382	17 9	5,967,586	12 8	5,978,002	8 0
Insurance Companies Act, Deposits ...	245,000	0 0	260,000	0 0	265,000	0 0	260,000	0 0	275,000	0 0
Trust and Deposit Accounts generally ...	2,457,095	11 6	2,478,958	6 0	2,959,122	16 9	2,937,335	11 7	2,918,238	18 11
	18,565,387	17 11	19,646,286	7 3	19,795,534	4 10	20,752,643	15 9	19,780,176	1 8
Ca.										
Investments ...	14,642,912	5 4	15,256,334	3 2	15,774,801	2 1	16,226,637	6 5	16,890,165	1 8
Stores on hand ...	792,007	3 0	932,140	16 10	822,836	0 1	810,263	12 11	801,794	8 3
Treasurers' Advance, and other Advances ...	a 524,871	0 5	453,772	8 6	204,948	7 6	214,642	17 0	281,560	11 8
Cash in hand—										
Treasury ...	4,507	5 5	5,888	6 2	10,065	16 4	4,128	1 11	...	...
Wheat Certificates ...	41,965	5 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
General Account ...	351,680	18 7	393,977	5 3	478,860	6 0	614,894	6 0	811,664	9 4
Government Savings Bank Account ...	154,770	9 11	141,410	3 8	126,016	14 5	476,508	2 4	516,703	16 10
Fixed Deposits with Bank ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern States ...	76,320	9 10	490,813	3 5	143,585	19 10	197,439	18 11	28,100	16 5
London ...	10,556	15 2	83,354	18 8	6,857	15 3	6,780	17 10	12,164	8 1
Remittances and Drafts in transit ...	...	...	48,371	8 10	5,075	6 2	2,064	2 9	2,866	17 3
Consolidated Revenue Fund ...	686,725	11 4	1,418,860	6 4	1,824,224	5 9	2,058,382	15 1	58,397	9 2
Deficiency Account ...	1,279,051	13 5	421,363	7 5	301,363	7 5	141,363	7 5	403,509	17 10
Sundry Debtors, etc. ...	...	...	...	...	97,690	4 0	4,538	8 2	2,248	11 2
	18,565,387	17 11	19,646,286	7 3	19,795,534	4 10	20,752,643	15 9	19,780,176	1 8

a Includes £191,500 temporarily advanced for redemption of Debentures and Treasury Bonds.
 b £2,340,000 incorporated with General Loan Fund.

[Return No. 6.]

STATEMENT SHOWING RECEIPTS FROM COMMONWEALTH FROM 1909-10.
TO 1924-25.

Year.	Payment per Head, 25s.	Special Payment to W.A.	Interest on Transferred Properties at 3½ per cent.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
1909-10 ...	703,723a	...	Nil	703,723
1910-11 ...	569,578a	...	Nil	569,578
1911-12 ...	365,614	232,265	40,648	638,527
1912-13 ...	382,591	222,554	30,465	635,610
1913-14 ...	400,855	212,751	27,358	640,964
1914-15 ...	403,772	203,127	24,388	631,287
1915-16 ...	398,076	193,544	24,485	616,105
1916-17 ...	386,008	183,974	24,485	594,467
1917-18 ...	386,779	174,350	38,110	599,239
1918-19 ...	391,809	164,696	29,163	585,668
1919-20 ...	414,068	164,937	29,268	598,273
1920-21 ...	419,448	145,287	29,099	593,834
1921-22 ...	418,966	135,738	29,063	583,767
1922-23 ...	428,193	126,038	28,955	583,186
1923-24 ...	442,269	116,301	27,153	585,723
1924-25 ...	455,155	106,589	26,391	588,135
Totals ...	£8,966,904	2,372,151	409,031	9,748,086

a Surplus Revenue returned.

[Return No. 7.]

LOAN AUTHORISATIONS AND FLOTATIONS.

						£	£
Authorisations to 30th June, 1924	...	...	...	...	...	64,811,662	
Do. 1924-25	...	...	...	...	...	5,834,431	
Total Authorisations							70,646,093
Flotations—							
General Loans	...	...	...	...	...	38,578,253	
Local Debentures	...	...	...	...	...	5,627,826	
Local Inscribed Stock	...	...	...	...	...	7,759,108	
Treasury Bills	...	...	...	...	...	1,263,631	
Treasury Bonds and Inscribed Stock under Deficiency Acts	...	...	...	...	...	5,861,003	
Commonwealth Advances	...	...	...	...	...	6,213,782	
							65,303,603
Balance available for Flotation							5,342,490
Actual Loan Indebtedness—							
Gross Debt on 30th June, 1924	...	...	...	...	...	62,765,782	
Flotation during year—							
Treasury Bonds (includes £255,040 issued for Redemption and £335,000 conversion)	...	...	...	...	...	839,838	
Local Treasury Bills	...	...	...	...	...	224,340	
Inscribed Stock (Local)	...	...	...	...	...	1,293,360	
Local Debentures (£3,600,000 conversion)	...	...	...	...	...	3,617,000	
							68,740,420
Less Redemptions—							
Debentures, Loans, 1878, 1881-4 (Crown Agents)	...	...	...	...	...	6,200	
Treasury Bonds	...	...	...	...	...	252,900	
Treasury Bills (£3,100,000 converted to Local Debentures)	...	...	...	...	...	3,153,059	
Commonwealth Advances (converted into Treasury Bonds and Local Debentures)	...	...	...	...	...	835,000	
							4,247,159
							64,493,261
Less—							
Sinking Fund (as on 31st March)	...	...	...	...	...		9,985,031
Net Indebtedness, 30th June, 1925							54,508,230
Net Public Debt per head of Population on 30th June, 1925							
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1924	...	...	148 2 2
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1923	...	...	148 7 6
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1922	...	...	142 9 6
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1921	...	...	137 1 0
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1920	...	...	*124 15 11
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1919	...	...	119 7 3
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1918	...	...	116 7 0
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1917	...	...	118 0 8
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1916	...	...	116 5 5
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1915	...	...	109 19 9
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1914	...	...	101 12 10
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1913	...	...	94 4 11
Do.	do.	do.	do.	1912	...	...	85 17 2

* NOTE.—Compared with the previous year, £2 16s. 11d. of the increase is due to an adjustment in the figures of the population at the Census.

[Return No. 8.]

LOAN FLOTATIONS, DEBT AND EXPENDITURE ON 30th JUNE, 1925.

Works and Services.	Flotations.	Actual Indebtedness on Works.	Actual Cash spent.
	£	£	£
Railways, Tramways, and Electricity Supply	22,196,787	21,699,573	21,243,210
Harbours and Rivers	4,856,225	4,761,303	4,463,660
Goldfields Water Scheme	2,903,078	2,876,182	2,689,824
Water Supply Generally	2,629,565	2,624,761	2,663,229
Sewerage	1,324,162	1,323,241	1,343,895
Erection of State Batteries and Treatment Plants	328,335	328,059	311,017
Development of Goldfields	1,848,377	1,822,951	1,788,386
Development of Agriculture	4,004,369	3,973,369	^a 3,562,048
Agricultural Group Settlement	1,618,381	1,618,381	2,453,984
Assistance to Settlers	2,283,054	2,283,054	2,506,256
Agricultural Bank	2,799,308	2,799,308	2,473,640
Telegraphs	276,724	219,394	269,308
Roads and Bridges	718,105	689,272	629,817
Public Buildings	1,104,874	1,094,720	1,097,054
Immigration	63,752	63,752	^b 56,392
Workers' Homes—Working Capital	553,244	553,244	525,500
State Hotels	81,869	81,869	75,761
State Steamships	503,254	503,254	478,630
State Saw Mills	258,968	258,968	238,764
State Implement Works	149,716	149,716	143,271
South Perth Ferries	24,447	24,447	12,967
State Milk Supply	4,590	4,590	4,496
State Brickyards	42,620	42,620	37,742
State Quarries	19,500	19,500	25,087
State Fish Supply	3,286	3,286	3,162
Crawley, Dalkeith, and Harvey Estates, Aborigines Stations, Savoy House, Purchase of Land at Nedlands, and Purchase of House for Residence of Agent General	123,761	123,761	103,502
Stores and Stock Suspense Accounts	146,589	146,589	175,500
Miscellaneous	120,319	120,233	143,075
Wyndham Freezing Works (Working Capital)	387,115	387,115	286,014
Fisheries	12,208	12,208	11,807
Land Settlement for Soldiers	6,088,087	6,055,507	7,078,054
	57,474,669	56,664,227	56,895,032
Redemptions ... ..	...	810,442	...
Cost of Raising ... ..	...	...	2,287,947
Balance General Loan Fund	1,708,310	1,708,310	...
	59,182,979	59,182,979	59,182,979

^a Includes £717,877, expended at Wyndham Freezing Works. ^b An additional amount of £398,912 was expended upon Agricultural Immigration from Development of Agriculture.

RECONCILIATION WITH PUBLIC DEBT (RETURN No. 8).

	£
Indebtedness as above	56,664,227
Local Inscribed Stock, issued under Agricultural Bank Act, for conversion of Mortgage Bonds	1,566,000
Issues under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Act	5,861,103
Issues under Insurance Companies Act, 1918	270,000
Treasury Bills under Loan Act 1923 issued for payment of arrears of interest	131,931
Gross Public Debt	64,493,261

LOAN EXPENDITURE FOR 1924-25 COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEARS.

Undertakings.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.	1921-22.	1920-21.	1919-20.	1918-19.	1917-18.	1916-17.	1915-16.	1914-15.	1913-14.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Railways, including Land Resumptions	534,103	501,988	519,567	323,290	145,724	75,760	154,720	181,304	246,904	350,855	520,344	1,080,010
Tramways—Perth Electric	26,571	67,615	72,057	95,835	34,419	27,473	7,239	5,073	20,445	33,528	22,909	16,026
Electric Power Station	60,681	31,717	87,781	184,346	18,783	17,890	25,380	23,500	61,033	63,170	140,865	69,648
Fremantle Harbour Works	56,437	37,891	42,729	49,009	40,089	51,855	40,345	42,449	40,004	53,704	106,055	69,142
Fremantle Dock and Slip ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14	1,291	1,808
Harbours and Rivers generally	124,576	101,122	77,414	42,632	72,245	50,322	23,003	42,485	72,854	55,510	58,014	21,800
Sewerage—Perth and Fremantle	114,798	39,762	47,190	21,348	10,436	...	...	15,167	11,059	47,268	120,473	140,582
Water Supply	635,497	305,003	153,667	100,231	194,172	49,115	46,636	53,080	65,426	118,275	127,809	191,528
Development of Goldfields	85,731	84,221	64,018	43,530	43,902	52,581	10,152	10,661	10,820	19,142	67,263	50,059
State Smelter, Ravensthorpe ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	78,987	90,000	...
Development of Agriculture	100,026	74,941	91,952	58,692	79,075	112,807	150,421	156,083	169,483	165,727	79,271	156,762
Assistance to Settlers	192,710	441,546	400,000	74,074	31,095	5,458	80,000	478,170	...	199,890	602,110	...
Agricultural Group Settlement	1,124,252	822,910	506,803	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Land Settlement for Soldiers	598,640	778,603	958,132	983,014	1,527,604	1,947,772	233,310	...	...	...	...	...
College of Agriculture	15,508	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Immigration	7,148	16,229	11,209	8,278	12,024	6,205	1,807	1,107	2,352	4,640	16,065	69,218
Steamships ... ..	...	...	6,658	200,000	10,000	14,591	...	...	409	141,065	...	5,907
Workers' Homes Working Capital ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saw Mills ... ..	...	...	...	...	38,863	...	...	...	...	...	97,500	278,000
State Hotels	1,424	2,831	3,108	6,858	5,056	2,767	1,703	117	214	511	29,069	126,416
Agricultural Bank—Working Capital	257,072	204,027	266,410	13,510	151,825	118,285	73,948	25,000	93,165	172,235	271,812	506,888
Agricultural Implements Works	7,500	...	...	...	30,029	15,772	...	...	1,292	4,827	18,436	43,070
Brickyards	7,500	...	141	...	705	1,326	1,165	20	...	547	11,507	13,710
Ferries ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,974	2,000
State Fish Supply ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	131	3,013	...	...
Public Buildings	91,140	83,505	18,680	41,440	21,063	10,602	21,570	17,536	40,961	81,004	81,004	44,166
Roads and Bridges	92,606	77,744	34,331	12,566	32,121	14,719	4,231	2,473	2,557	6,152	5,026	6,107
Perth-Fremantle Road Reinstatement ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	639	7,663	21,198	...
Purchase of Plant and Stock (Suspense Account)	30,500	30,000	10,000	...	50,000	...	...	...	...	...	55,000	...
Fremantle Road and Railway Bridge ... ..	...	...	...	10	...	1	79	108	2,482	4,622	1,582	...
Sandries	25,140	23,280	13,892 ^a	9,710	7,841	3,089	2,262	1,720	2,679	2,738	5,225	17,662
Wyndham Freezing Works—Working Capital ... ..	...	...	14	80,000	...	100,000	100,000	...	...	...	...	...
Fisheries ... ..	...	...	...	32	5,870	6,904	...	...	...	...	...	...
Urgent Minor Works throughout the North-West	1,714	5,708	2,070	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purchase of Site at Point Heathcote for Mental Home	7,068	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	4,090,021	3,936,833	3,238,299	2,454,925	52,530,404	2,663,320	1,040,786	1,054,178	855,183	1,584,642	2,521,808	2,013,010

^a Includes Loans to Local Authorities for erection of Country Hospitals, etc., £8,057.^b Exclusive of Loan Suspense Expenditure, £30,107.^c Exclusive of Loan Suspense Expenditure, £33,003.

[Return No. 10.]

PUBLIC DEBT AND SINKING FUNDS.

Loan.			Sinking Fund as at 31st March, 1925.		Remarks.	
Year.	Amount.	Maturity.	Rate per cent.	Accumulation.		
LOANS CARRYING SINKING FUNDS.						
Inscribed Stock.						
1899-1915 ...	£ 998,353	1934	1	£ 797,716 6 8	Controlled by Crown Agents. Stock issued for conversion of Debentures.	
1896 ...	1,500,000	1935	1	728,416 9 4		
1897-1900 ...	3,500,000	1935	1	1,510,138 1 9	G.S.R. Purchase.	
1897 ...	1,100,000	1936	1½	866,388 8 2		
1896 ...	2,500,000	1927	3	2,623,088 19 9	Coolgardie Water Scheme Loan.	
1900-1902 ...	680,000	1935	1	234,646 7 6		
1902-1905 ...	2,600,000	1935	1	834,883 4 5		
1907-1908 ...	2,000,000	1947	1	443,388 17 4		
1909 ...	1,445,000	1955	½	127,652 3 3	Issued for redemption on £1,876,000 stock; balance taken from Sinking Fund.	
1910 ...	1,342,000	1955	½	110,108 13 6		
1911 ...	1,650,000	1955	½	202,999 1 0	Sinking Fund represents premiums paid on Assurance Policy for redemption of principal amount of 5 per cent. Stock issued for purchase of M.S. "Kangaroo."	
1912 ...	1,000,000	1960	½	67,571 18 1		
1912-1914 ...	6,000,000	1962	½	336,736 12 9		
1916 ...	140,000	1936	3½	47,197 10 0		
1920 ...	1,500,000	1940	½	9,227 6 10	Issued for redemption of Local Stock; £172,407 was taken from the Sinking Fund.	
1922 ...	914,798	1940	½	17,605 17 3		
1923 ...	504,441	1965	½	4,376 14 2	} 1,019,193 13 8	
Local Inscribed Stock.						
1911 ...	1,922,305	1926	½			
1912 ...	370,790	1932	½			
1913 ...	297,045	1934	½			
1915 ...	78,185	1935	1½			
1913 ...	309,130	1933	½			
1914 ...	1,566,000	1964	½			
1922 ...	723,220	1928/38	½			
1922 ...	164,950	1927/32	½			
1923 ...	306,345	1928/33	½			
1923 ...	126,349	1933	½			
1923 ...	755,000	1943	½			
1923 ...	225,400	1929/34	½			
Treasury Bonds and Inscribed Stock.						
1919 1925 ...	2,916,360	...	½	...	Under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Act; currency is maintained up to thirty years.	
Local Debentures.						
1918 ...	697,000	1927	½	3,698 1 3	Redeemable by Annual Drawings; Controlled by Crown Agents.	
1919 ...	106,603	1940	½			
1872-1888 ...	25,100	...	1			
39,964,374						

[Return No. 10—continued.]

PUBLIC DEBT AND SINKING FUNDS—continued.

Loan.			Sinking Fund as at 31st March, 1925.		Remarks.
Year.	Amount.	Maturity.	Rate per cent.	Accumulation.	
Various ...	BALANCE OF DEBT. 24,528,887	Various	...	£ s. d. ...	Consisting of Local Inscribed Stock (£734,326), Debentures (£4,824,224), Inscribed Stock London (£8,580,761), Issues under the Treasury Bonds Deficiency Acts (£2,944,743), for which Sinking Funds have not commenced, Treasury Bills (£1,263,631), which carry no Sinking Funds, and Commonwealth Advances (£6,181,202).
Total Debt	64,493,261	Accrued Fund	Sinking	9,985,031 6 6	
Previous year's totals	62,765,782	...	...	9,373,571 10 0
Increase on year ...	a 1,727,479	...	...	611,459 16 8

a Consisting of—

Treasury Bonds ...	£	839,938
Local Debentures (£3,100,000 conversion) ...	3,617,000	
Local Inscribed Stock, 4½ and 6 per cent. ...	1,293,360	
Treasury Bills ...	224,340	
	<u>5,974,638</u>	

Less—

Treasury Bonds redeemed ...	£	252,900
Debentures, London, redeemed ...	6,200	
Treasury Bills (3,100,000 converted) ...	3,163,059	
Commonwealth Advances (converted) ...	835,000	
	<u>4,247,159</u>	
Net Increase ...	<u>£1,727,479</u>	

[Return No. 11.]

SINKING FUND AND INVESTMENTS.

ANALYSIS OF FUND.

	£
Contributions from Revenue	6,278,280
Interest on Investments	3,479,704
Discounts on Purchases, less Brokerage and Expenses	1,127,775
	10,885,759
Less utilised for Redemptions	900,728
Total of Fund, 31st March, 1924	£9,985,031

INVESTMENTS.

Maturity.				Rate.	Nominal Value.		
					£	s.	d.
Western Australian Stocks	1935			3 per cent. ...	1,430,929	7	9
	1936			3 per cent. ...	452,316	12	2
	1927			3 per cent. ...	927,069	5	4
	1935			3½ per cent. ...	1,460,388	17	7
	1927-1947			3½ per cent. ...	522,871	15	11
	1935-1955			3½ per cent. ...	1,023,921	14	3
	1940-1960			3½ per cent. ...	96,867	19	7
	1942-1962			4 per cent. ...	1,018,850	15	7
	1930-1940			5½ per cent. ...	445,106	16	7
	1930-1940			6 per cent. ...	251,600	0	0
	1935-1945			5 per cent. ...	241,136	15	5
Western Australian Debentures ...	1935-1965			4½ per cent. ...	272,944	16	4
	1939			4½ per cent. ...	8,295	0	0
Total					£8,153,199	16	6
Other Stocks—Crown Agent's Investments					797,716	6	8
National War Bonds, 5 per cent., 1927					552,000	0	0
Victoria, 4½ per cent.					130,721	1	6
New South Wales, 5 per cent.					295,018	10	0
Payments on Assurance Policy towards redemption £140,000					47,197	10	0
Cash					9,178	2	0
Total Sinking Fund					£9,985,031	6	8

[Return No. 12.]

SINKING FUND AND DEFICIT.

Year.	Contributions.	Interest and Discount (less Brokerage and Expenses).	Total Accretions.	Redemptions.	Increase in Sinking Fund.	Deficit on Year.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1911-12 ...	245,274	136,148	381,422	7,500	373,922	134,409
1912-13 ...	244,555	153,756	398,311	7,700	390,611	190,404
1913-14 ...	250,100	140,558	390,658	7,900	382,758	135,411
1914-15 ...	258,792	126,193	384,985	8,200	376,785	565,817
1915-16 ...	265,457	206,842	472,299	12,755	459,544	348,223
1916-17 ...	280,883	239,445	520,328	7,600	512,728	699,757
1917-18 ...	306,782	237,405	544,187	9,300	534,887	705,743
1918-19 ...	319,101	257,457	576,558	8,400	568,158	652,014
1919-20 ...	319,692	386,628	706,320	12,200	694,120	668,225
1920-21 ...	342,277 ^a	460,761	803,038	10,300	792,738	686,725
1921-22 ...	322,130	416,066	738,196	9,600	728,596	732,135
1922-23 ...	242,319	351,879	594,198	183,307	410,891	405,364
1923-24 ...	225,649	377,471	603,120	10,600	592,520	229,158
1924-25 ...	236,742	380,918	617,660	6,200	611,460	58,398
Totals ...	£3,859,753	3,871,527	7,731,280	301,562	7,429,718	a 6,211,783

^a The Actual Deficit on 30th June, 1925, was £6,198,485, the difference being due to a credit balance of £13,298 at the commencement of the period included in the return. ^b Includes £21,375 by Trading Concerns.

[Return No. 15.]

RETURN RELATING TO RAILWAYS.

	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.
Number of miles open ...	3,539	3,539	3,539	3,555	3,629	3,733
Capital Cost of Con- struction and Equipment of Lines open	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan ...	17,211,977	17,318,344	18,073,088	18,297,240	18,810,711	19,620,070
Revenue	850,377	851,636	862,515	862,962	827,333	798,050
	18,062,354	18,169,980	18,935,603	19,160,202	19,638,044	20,318,120
Working Expenses ...	2,009,823	2,427,075	2,337,391	2,210,851	2,307,380	2,381,760
Interest Charges ...	690,618	716,398	756,737	788,244	787,221	813,849
Total Annual Cost ...	2,700,441	3,143,473	3,094,128	2,979,095	3,094,601	3,175,609
Gross Revenue ...	2,275,426	2,688,611	2,805,335	2,886,370	3,189,894	3,334,008
Surplus ...	...	...	...	...	95,293	158,399
Deficiency debited to Con- solidated Revenue, being burden on Taxpayers ...	425,015	454,862	288,793	92,725	...	...

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, estimated to be £126,000

[Return No. 16.]

RETURN RELATING TO TRAMWAYS.

	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment ...	619,874	654,047	779,081	850,965	912,089	932,317
Working Expenses ...	144,028	196,264	202,996	207,542	225,678	229,362
Interest Charges ...	28,223	29,767	35,524	40,419	42,843	44,835
Total Annual Cost ...	172,251	228,031	238,520	247,961	268,521	274,197
Gross Revenue ...	187,709	225,000	248,924	263,668	275,402	282,416
Surplus ...	15,458	...	10,404	15,707	6,881	8,221
Deficiency ...	...	3,031	...	...	...	...

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, estimated to be £2,272, nor payments to Local Authorities £7,910.

[Return No. 17.]

RETURN RELATING TO ELECTRICITY.

	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	437,362	456,274	530,997	754,921	800,227	864,128
Working Expenses	43,018	83,088	95,784	91,557	116,154	136,731
Interest Charges	19,643	20,644	24,684	26,475	37,261	40,039
Total Annual Cost	62,661	103,732	120,468	118,032	153,415	176,770
Gross Revenue	62,972	95,350	119,120	128,937	162,796	186,867
Surplus	311	...	...	10,905	9,381	10,097
Deficiency ... ..	...	8,382	1,348	...	...	...

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, estimated to be £2,074.

[Return No. 18.]

RETURN RELATING TO METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE,
AND DRAINAGE.

	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	2,054,913	2,182,403	2,277,802	2,426,376	2,777,080	3,313,032
Working Expenses*... ..	95,090	111,276	113,550	114,678	123,302	124,756
Interest Charges	63,633	67,167	74,504	81,638	96,093	104,389
Sinking Fund	13,353	14,052	15,167	16,222	18,004	20,205
Total Annual Cost	172,076	192,495	203,221	212,538	237,399	249,350
Gross Revenue	155,996	181,376	194,145	204,935	221,867	236,386
Deficiency	16,080	11,119	9,076	7,603	15,532	12,964

*Includes Interest and Sinking Fund on debentures, £33,510.

[Return No. 19.]

RETURN RELATING TO GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

—	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	3,013,437	3,039,232	3,044,178	3,056,926	3,099,816	3,154,727
Working Expenses a	116,938	130,898	132,502	131,381	132,450	131,457
Interest Charges	97,679	99,098	86,448	79,223	74,211	75,579
Sinking Fund	80,255	80,645	43,448	6,059	6,459	7,356
Total Annual Cost	294,872	310,641	262,398	216,663	213,120	214,392
Gross Revenue	180,464	195,975	187,122	182,109	170,748	171,850
Deficiency	114,408	114,666	75,276	34,554	42,372	42,542

a Includes interest on Debenture Capital.

[Return No. 20.]

RETURN RELATING TO OTHER HYDRAULIC UNDERTAKINGS.

—	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	201,505	231,500	295,837	397,984	394,745	400,350
Working Expenses	33,939	42,321	31,456	29,388	27,844	27,949
Interest Charges	8,416	10,027	12,509	19,248	20,401	20,951
Sinking Fund	4,798	5,055	5,508	7,805	7,822	7,951
Total Annual Cost	47,153	57,403	49,473	56,441	56,067	56,851
Gross Revenue	25,126	25,003	24,888	29,589	32,220	33,726
Deficiency	22,027	32,400	24,585	26,852	23,847	23,125

[Return No. 21.]

RETURN RELATIVE TO OTHER UTILITIES FOR 1924-25.

Utilities.	Capital Cost, etc.	Working Expenses.	Interest Charges.	Total Annual Cost.	Gross Revenue.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fremantle Harbour Trust ...	2,212,818	...	87,784	87,784	240,124	152,340	...
Bunbury Harbour Board ...	458,576	...	20,554	20,554	22,000	1,446	...
State Batteries ...	402,998	28,359	14,105	42,464	17,816	...	24,648
Aborigines Station ...	28,211	6,074	900	6,974	1,574	...	5,400
Albany Cold Stores ...	20,915	651	937	1,588	...	...	1,588
Government Refrigerating Wks. ...	...	5,767	500	6,267	3,225	...	3,042
Perth City Markets ...	51,849	867	1,000	1,867	1,589	...	278
Metropolitan Abattoirs ...	86,817	14,916	3,194	18,110	15,182	...	2,928
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs ...	15,547	2,869	682	3,551	3,099	...	452
Butter Factories ...	7,963	13,068	485	13,553	13,329	...	224
Tourists' Resorts ...	22,522	13,094	1,005	14,099	14,011	...	88
Total ...	3,308,216	85,665	131,146	216,811	331,949	153,786	38,648
Estimated Sinking Fund ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30,300
Net Surplus ...	...	...	...	...	...	£84,838	...

[Return No. 22.]

ESTIMATED CASH POSITION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE, 1926.

Items.	Estimated, 1924-25.		Balance.	
	Receipts.	Payments.	Deficiency.	Surplus.
	£	£	£	£
Bunbury Harbour Board ...	22,000	...	...	22,000
Fremantle Harbour Trust ...	242,000	...	...	242,000
State Batteries ...	21,925	29,408	7,483	...
Aborigines Cattle Station ...	3,500	7,578	4,078	...
Government Refrigerating Works ...	3,900	5,565	1,665	...
Butter Factories ...	17,000	16,266	...	734
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs ...	2,900	2,878	...	24
Metropolitan Abattoirs ...	35,000	21,613	...	13,382
Perth City Markets ...	1,550	876	...	674
Metropolitan Water Supply ...	245,000	131,262	...	113,738
Goldfields Water Supply ...	172,000	131,827	...	40,173
Other Hydraulic Undertakings ...	34,000	23,068	...	5,932
Railways ...	3,500,000	2,520,000	...	980,000
Tramways ...	290,000	242,000	...	48,000
Electricity Supply ...	261,000	154,000	...	47,000
Caves House, etc. ...	14,500	13,068	...	1,432
Albany Cold Stores ...	200	650	450	...
	£4,806,475	3,305,002	13,676	1,515,149
Net Surplus ...	...	...	£1,501,473	...

RAILWAYS.—STATEMENT SHOWING TONNAGE AND EARNINGS ON GOODS CARRIED.

Class of Goods.	1920-1921.		1921-1922.		1922-1923.		1923-1924.		1924-1925.	
	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal ...	270,227	10·71	246,227	9·97	214,274	8·46	199,761	6·82	212,940	6·60
Ores and other Minerals ...	347,448	13·78	322,748	13·06	404,745	15·97	504,245	17·23	560,951	17·64
Wool ...	15,886	·62	16,626	0·79	16,134	·64	15,896	·54	15,242	·48
Hay, Straw, and Chaff ...	100,802	3·99	99,462	4·03	111,500	4·40	116,102	3·97	113,593	3·57
Wheat ...	299,483	11·87	367,637	14·88	323,399	12·76	458,381	15·66	567,419	17·85
Other Grain and Flour ...	128,019	5·07	132,866	5·38	134,233	5·30	162,591	5·55	159,946	5·03
Firewood ...	475,434	18·85	464,781	18·82	499,886	17·86	455,345	15·55	423,293	13·26
Local Timber ...	497,345	19·72	443,396	17·96	454,138	17·92	549,570	18·78	596,810	18·75
Imported Timber ...	4,547	·18	2,280	0·09	8,759	·15	5,052	·17	4,835	·15
Fruit and Garden Produce ...	50,907	2·07	54,007	2·19	61,938	2·44	59,388	2·03	59,362	1·87
Fertilisers ...	87,849	3·48	95,081	3·89	112,326	4·43	123,119	4·21	147,481	4·64
All other goods ...	243,659	9·66	220,747	8·94	257,754	10·17	277,852	9·49	319,438	10·05
Total ...	2,521,256	100·00	2,469,753	100·00	2,534,113	100·00	2,927,512	100·00	3,175,749	100·00

Class of Goods.	1920-1921.		1921-1922.		1922-1923.		1923-1924.		1924-1925.	
	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal ...	£ 129,815	8·61	£ 129,895	8·19	£ 114,760	7·02	£ 104,891	6·49	£ 108,142	5·23
Ores and other Minerals ...	87,170	5·78	87,691	5·67	99,298	6·08	118,084	6·18	125,447	6·07
Wool ...	41,286	2·74	47,684	3·03	48,561	2·97	53,220	2·79	60,274	2·43
Hay, Straw, and Chaff ...	67,047	4·44	70,615	4·49	79,543	4·87	83,865	4·39	85,261	4·13
Wheat ...	168,594	11·05	222,284	14·13	188,911	11·56	283,798	14·86	349,253	16·90
Other Grain and Flour ...	71,667	4·75	77,419	4·92	75,739	4·64	90,579	4·74	91,811	4·45
Firewood ...	50,272	3·38	60,553	3·21	51,070	3·13	51,146	2·68	44,146	2·13
Local Timber ...	319,656	21·18	299,587	19·04	311,946	19·10	384,711	20·14	404,200	19·56
Imported Timber ...	2,302	·15	1,735	0·12	2,913	·18	3,402	·18	3,322	·16
Fruit and Garden Produce ...	60,966	4·04	64,081	4·07	74,892	4·58	71,519	3·74	71,062	·44
Fertilisers ...	28,803	1·77	30,405	1·93	34,791	2·13	40,885	2·14	51,193	·47
All other goods ...	485,160	32·16	492,422	31·80	551,186	33·74	624,023	32·67	632,551	3·03
Total ...	1,508,658	100·00	1,573,801	100·00	1,633,595	100·00	1,910,123	100·00	2,066,892	100·00

TRADE, PRODUCTION, POPULATION, Etc.

	1912-13.	1913-14.	1914-15.	1915-16.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.
Railway Revenue ...	£2,047,823	£2,382,922	£2,163,790	£2,217,250	£2,004,148	£1,970,333	£2,012,811	£2,463,136	£2,913,611	£3,054,258	£3,150,037	£3,465,297	£3,616,426
Railway Mileage ...	2,854	2,967	3,332	3,332	3,425	3,491	3,539	3,539	3,539	3,539	3,555	3,629	3,733
Wool exported ...	£964,938	£907,368	£817,630	£1,278,168	£1,420,291	£535,819	£1,952,141	£3,937,106	£2,388,119	£3,202,145	£3,232,500	£4,237,152	£3,736,300
*Wheat produced (bushels)	9,168,594	13,831,350	2,624,190	18,236,353	16,103,216	9,305,787	8,845,387	11,222,950	12,248,080	13,904,721	13,857,432	13,920,271	23,837,397
*Hay produced (tons) ...	255,751	278,585	156,932	395,172	236,989	267,163	250,014	379,025	264,244	368,720	457,371	368,122	448,625
Gold produced ...	£5,493,072	£5,478,932	£5,195,732	£4,903,206	£4,361,693	£3,924,197	£3,580,650	£2,637,932	£2,425,852	£2,385,753	£2,204,257	£2,185,563	£1,891,810
Timber exported ...	£985,808	£1,142,280	£808,392	£442,014	£310,983	£274,280	£332,980	£465,734	£1,187,223	£1,040,840	£997,454	£1,367,718	£1,477,907
Coal produced ...	£150,184	£153,374	£187,575	£140,388	£182,852	£192,248	£219,260	£311,731	£393,424	£404,521	£372,130	£365,567	£371,152
Other Minerals (exported)	£195,764	£215,819	£169,094	£155,213	£189,124	£275,856	£247,691	£218,067	£199,394	£75,534	£143,898	£140,153	£151,896
†Number of Sheep ...	4,596,958	4,421,375	4,456,186	4,803,850	5,529,960	6,384,191	7,183,747	6,697,951	6,582,965	6,506,177	6,664,135	6,595,807	6,396,564
†Number of Cattle ...	808,294	834,285	863,835	821,043	863,930	927,086	943,847	830,644	849,803	893,108	939,596	958,764	891,564
†Number of Horses ...	147,829	156,836	161,625	163,008	169,730	173,151	180,094	174,919	175,664	180,334	181,159	181,944	175,110
Area of land selected (acres)	1,408,108	998,851	502,551	808,590	285,640	547,583	611,135	1,469,684	1,728,455	1,924,129	1,830,270	1,836,083	1,584,963
Area of land leased (acres)	21,170,037	8,622,438	7,855,984	3,175,594	9,845,516	20,393,357	39,571,708	19,178,124	20,354,785	23,641,868	7,605,229	20,389,232	20,899,952
• Area of land under cultivation	6,717,226	7,320,533	7,548,768	8,056,374	7,822,549	7,587,820	7,562,716	7,325,519	7,583,272	7,704,242	8,305,232	8,896,204	9,099,933
*Area of land under crop (acres)	1,199,991	1,537,923	1,867,547	2,180,456	2,004,944	1,679,772	1,605,088	1,628,163	1,804,986	1,901,680	2,274,698	2,323,070	2,710,856
Tonnage Shipping, Inwards	2,767,270	3,881,304	2,366,855	2,491,537	2,548,339	1,094,000	2,122,439	2,660,040	2,843,470	3,231,392	3,166,116	3,097,386	3,480,000
Tonnage Shipping, Outward	2,755,500	3,375,282	2,794,822	2,492,375	2,557,986	1,102,295	2,111,694	2,659,302	2,825,536	3,231,366	3,037,046	3,101,166	3,429,000
Exports, including Gold ...	£8,846,039	£10,415,095	£5,352,140	£8,040,484	£14,683,027	£5,507,335	£10,922,675	£16,068,790	£12,258,639	£13,628,883	£11,105,220	£14,123,289	£14,632,183
Exports, excluding Gold ...	£4,549,126	£5,429,954	£3,662,276	£4,795,057	£5,562,966	£3,607,385	£5,927,471	£12,619,962	£10,440,617	£10,647,324	£9,858,726	£11,766,689	£13,976,719
Imports ...	£9,598,745	£9,727,472	£8,301,280	£8,933,000	£9,335,010	£7,649,233	£8,023,990	£12,368,331	£14,839,241	£12,037,779	£19,777,679	£14,844,145	£16,075,446
Savings Bank's Deposits d	£3,716,184	£4,551,878	£3,743,135	£3,640,374	£3,523,351	£3,606,075	£4,416,782	£9,045,930	£6,142,766	£5,276,218	£5,321,610	£5,896,912	5,799,113
Savings Bank's Withdrawals d	£3,684,046	£4,000,834	£3,878,854	£3,828,187	£3,471,959	£3,549,293	£4,123,161	£5,936,575	£6,223,806	£5,571,830	£5,380,578	£5,904,923	5,904,585
Excess of Arrivals over Departures	5,293	3,711	6,892	6,14,116	6,12,063	6,2,754	7,488	6,795	6,1,077	1,557	3,132	7,374	2,749
Population ...	313,394	323,206	321,440	318,048	306,297	308,232	319,636	330,172	333,644	340,059	348,119	360,352	368,027

* Season ended 28th February.
Departures over Arrivals.

† Year ended 31st December.

‡ As on 30th June.

• Area cropped, cleared, fallowed, ringbarked, etc.

¶ Including Perth Tramways.

• Preliminary figures liable to revision.

d Not including School Savings Bank.
e Exclusive of premium realised on export sales.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1. Water Boards Act Amendment.

2. Permanent Reserve A4566.

Without amendment.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 6th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [7.42]: I suppose we should be grateful to the Minister for Works because he has shown a little more merit regarding his taxation proposals than has the Minister for Water Supply. I notice that the Legislative Council has passed a Bill imposing taxation amounting to 2s. in the pound on the unimproved land held by a farmer. While it is true that a maximum is provided of 1s., no service is rendered under that Bill, such as is rendered to the citizens of the metropolitan area. The Premier has dealt with the water supply question in the metropolitan area during the course of his Budget Speech this evening. He indicated what was being done to improve that supply for the citizens here. The supply of water from the hills scheme will be of great advantage to the city, because it will enable abundant magnificent water to be placed at the disposal of the residents here. Of course they will have to pay for it. I understand from the Minister for Works when he introduced the Bill that interest is to be charged on the money expended on the construction work, which is a proper thing to do. Millions of pounds will be spent on water supply during the next few years, and interest will be charged on the money as against construction costs during the period when the works cannot earn anything. The Minister has indicated that that money will be added to the cost of new works. There is a difference between the Bill now before us and the Bill that was passed by the Legislative Council after it had gone through this House. There is a limit to the charge that can be imposed by regulation. It is provided that the Minister may charge water rates, but the regulations must be submitted not only to us, but to the Upper House. They can be discussed in both Houses of Parliament and, if disallowed by either House, the Minister cannot charge the increased rate.

That does not appear in other Acts. I must confess that I myself found it a little inconvenient on one occasion when the Upper House said, "We have the water, but you shall not have the money." They rejected the regulation.

The Minister for Works: It can place one in a very awkward position.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. Of course a regulation rejected means merely that you cannot collect the difference between the existing legislation and that which was rejected. No Parliament should refuse to grant the Government sufficient to complete the legitimate requirements of the scheme; but if the Government raise the rate too high, then Parliament is justified in challenging it. The Minister does ask for a considerable increase in the rate. He asks to be permitted to increase his charges from a maximum of 1s. to a maximum of 2s. in the £ on the annual rateable value of the land. If he applies the rate on the unimproved capital value of the land to-day he may tax the land 2d. He now asks to be permitted to increase this to 4d. It means 100 per cent. increase under each heading. Still, as compared with the other water proposals of the Government applying to the people in the agricultural areas it sounds fairly moderate, although in fact it is a very high rate, and a tremendous increase on the existing rate. I think there was a loss of £16,000 on the system last year. Of course there ought not to be a loss on the system, any more than there ought to be a profit. I understand the Minister is charging the maximum rate now. Therefore he must have some increases in rates, or the Treasurer must make good the loss. There have been losses over a number of years, but none so high as that of last year. There has been a good deal of expenditure, and I suppose a good deal of new revenue also from the additional number of houses. Then there are bound to be increases in costs due to increases in all the necessary purchases of the department. Moreover, the wages of the men employed in the department have been increased, as wages generally have been increased. I agree with the Premier that it is largely the fault of the Federal authorities, with their high Customs tariff which has to be met in the workers' cost of living by increases in his wages. Moreover, the worker will have to pay these increased water charges just as other people will have to do. Then, in addition to the

rate under this proposal, the Minister increases his sewerage and storm water rates. Here again, I commend the moderation of the increases to the Minister for Water Supply. At present the sewerage and storm water are included under one head at 1s. 6d. on the annual rateable value, or 3d. on the unimproved value. The Minister proposes to add 5d. to the annual rateable value of 1s. 6d.

The Minister for Works: No, it is 1s. 6d. for the two combined, now. That 5d. merely brings the sewerage rate to 1s. 6d.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The two are now to be separated. Under the one heading 1s. 6d. is the maximum. The increase in the sewerage rate if charged against the annual rateable value of the land will be 5d., or 1s. 11d. in all against the joint maximum of 1s. 6d. to-day. Under the clause dealing with storm water the Minister may charge five-sixths of a penny in the pound on the capital unimproved value, making the maximum 3½d. as against the existing 3d. That is a very moderate increase. It would be interesting to know why the Minister selected five-sixths of a penny.

The Minister for Works: It is an accepted percentage.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But I understand this always has to be fixed by regulation.

The Minister for Works: That is so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know that some additional charges must be made, but I do not know that the Minister need jump the rate up too quickly, as he is doing when he lifts it from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 11d.

The Minister for Works: That is the maximum.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And it cannot be imposed at the sweet will of the Minister.

The Minister for Works: Worse luck.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, very good luck. The Minister will not be able to collect another penny for long unless Parliament agrees to his regulations imposing the rate. Probably for the time being he will impose the rate while awaiting the sanction of Parliament, and so he might get some slight advantage. So, after all, we are not engaged in very serious work when dealing with this measure. The work is not nearly so important as that we were engaged in when dealing with the taxation under the goldfields water

supply scheme as applied to agricultural districts or with the taxation under the Water Boards Act as applied to the agricultural districts. The metropolitan area must have an adequate water supply, and the metropolitan area will have to pay for it. I hope that by the time the additional charges for the new scheme are imposed an increase in population throughout the State and a simultaneous increase in Perth following on the establishment of secondary industries in Perth, will enable the added cost of the water to be spread over a great many more people than we have at present.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You yourself when over here expected that the charges would have to be greatly increased.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and I repeat it.

The Minister for Works: The satisfactory feature of the position is that the figures relied upon in your time are relied upon by the experts to-day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, that is very satisfactory. I am glad it is so. I hope the Minister will not endeavour to induce Parliament to pass regulations that will give him greater revenue than is necessary to cover the actual cost of the water supply and the other services performed by the department. The scheme should be managed as economically as possible in order that people may get the best services for their expenditure. I should be glad if the department could be taken over by the people themselves. Surely they could manage their own water supply, just as well as we in Parliament can manage it. The supply of water to Perth, except so far as the State has become responsible for money borrowed in respect of the work, is of no very great concern to us. Still we have to manage the scheme and so we must do the best we can. I do not know what my friend the ex-Minister for Works did to make the path of my friend the present Minister for Works so very easy in his first year. I do not know whether the people of Perth thought that by grumbling and appealing to the ex-Minister they would get further consideration. I suppose they refrain from worrying the present Minister for Works because they know it is of no use approaching him.

The Minister for Works: Because the goods have been delivered.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Because of that feeling the present Minister for Works is left in peace.

The Minister for Works: The goods have been delivered. The people have to find the money; that is the trouble.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The goods are those that were there when the Minister took office.

The Minister for Works: No, they are not; the foundation was there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There has been nothing to add to the quantity of water that was available. The new reservoirs throughout the metropolitan area were practically built before the Minister took office. The Osborne Park filter bed had to be restored, owing to an unfortunate happening there.

The Minister for Lands: The one at Cottesloe was not started.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But in 19 months the Minister has had time to do something. For the most part the position to-day is much as it was when the Minister took office.

The Minister for Works: You are entirely wrong.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know of any additional supply.

The Minister for Works: We shall have three if not four million gallons per day of decent water from the hills.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But that is not yet available.

The Minister for Works: It will be in six or eight weeks' time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is due to the fact that the scheme was started and the pipes provided for. My only regret is that the ex-Minister for Works did not have the easy time at the hands of the people that the present Minister has experienced. If they know the Minister as well as I do, they will not trouble him about a matter of this sort.

The Minister for Works: They know he does the work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In Committee we shall ask the Minister to justify the additional rate provided. I hope that the people of the metropolitan area will derive some comfort from the fact that this measure will not impose the rate, but will only make possible the rate with the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.2]: It is rather unfortunate for the Minister for Works that almost every Bill he has intro-

duced has meant giving the Government the right to impose higher rates. I congratulate the Minister on the instructive manner in which he introduced the Bill and explained the necessity for the Government having power to increase the present rates. With the ever-increasing cost of material and wages and the need for giving the metropolitan area an adequate supply, an increase in the rates seems inevitable. The Premier, when delivering his Budget Speech to-night, referred to our indebtedness and to the large amount of sinking fund that had to be provided. He went on to point out that while our debt per head of population appeared to be very large, in reality it was not so large in comparison with that of the other States, because quite a large number of general utilities such as water supply and sewerage, which here are controlled by the Government, in the other States are vested in a metropolitan board of works. That has been one of the planks of the Country Party for years—to give the people control of their own utilities. I am a strong believer in that principle, and I was pleased to see the statement of the Premier, in reply to a deputation some time ago, that if the people of the metropolitan area desired to obtain control of their utilities such as the water supply, he was quite prepared to give it favourable consideration.

Mr. Richardson: I wish he would do it.

Mr. THOMSON: It is up to the people of the metropolitan area to do as many of the country districts are doing—take control of their water supply. So long as the Government have control of such utilities, they will carry on and, if there is any surplus, it will go into Consolidated Revenue. If the local authorities of the metropolitan area had control of the water supply and provided a sinking fund, the time should come when the reservoirs and mains would be paid for and the undertaking would become an asset to the people. In course of time they should be able to reduce the rates. While the water supply is run by the Government and a profit can be made, naturally the Treasurer, with so many calls and having to face so much development work in the country, is loth to give up any surplus revenue coming his way.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It would be a unique experience to make a profit out of the water supply.

Mr. THOMSON: It is quite possible to do so; it is done in other places. If the

people of the metropolitan area had control of their water supply—

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They would have to carry the loss that the Government are making.

Mr. THOMSON: The object of the Government is to make the metropolitan people pay for any loss incurred, and rightly so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: However much Perth might want a board to control the water supply, the suburban people do not want it.

Mr. THOMSON: That is a debatable point. In the Eastern States where the municipalities and shire councils have representation on the metropolitan board of works and have a say in the matter, such control has proved effective.

Mr. Sampson: At a conference held in Guildford some three years ago, it was said it would be better if the water supply were under a board.

Mr. THOMSON: Under such a system the local authorities would have a say in the levying of rates and in the general administration, because they would have a representative on the metropolitan board of works. Under the present system the local authorities have to knock at the door of the Minister. One reason why Labour members occupy the Treasury benches to-day is the failure of the previous Government to provide an adequate water supply for the metropolitan area. It was a burning question, and it seriously affected one or two of the metropolitan electorates. I strongly favour the water supply being handed over to the metropolitan people. They are the right ones to administer it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: As a metropolitan member, I am just as bitterly opposed to it.

Mr. THOMSON: It is a matter of opinion.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You realise there is a difference of opinion. You may see it one way from Katanning; I see it a different way from the metropolis.

Mr. THOMSON: I view it as a matter of principle. I am asked to vote to give the Minister power to increase the rates for the metropolitan water supply, sewerage and drainage.

The Minister for Lands: Last week I was asked to vote similarly in regard to country water supplies.

Mr. THOMSON: That is correct.

The Minister for Lands: Then what difference does it make?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If you had not voted that way, the country would have had no water supplies.

Mr. THOMSON: If we had a metropolitan board of works, the question would not come before Parliament and we would not be asked to impose increased charges on the people of the metropolitan area. They would control their own business; these things should be managed by the people directly concerned. As the local authorities would have direct representation on the metropolitan board of works, it would be their function to see that charges were as low as possible and that the people got their water supply at the cheapest possible rate.

The Minister for Lands: They get it at the cheapest possible rate now.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not contending that they do not. We know there has been a deficit under the charges that are being made. The Minister for Works says it is his desire to increase the rates; he must do that if the people are to have a proper service. There are people in the metropolitan area who are contributing to a storm water rate, but receive no benefit from the works. It would be interesting to know whether the metropolitan people are being charged for the cost of draining Herdsman's Lake.

The Minister for Works: That is under a different department.

Mr. THOMSON: I take it they do not have to shoulder that responsibility.

Mr. Richardson: That is a national undertaking.

Mr. THOMSON: It was a most serious thing for the State.

The Minister for Lands: How do you know?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It was undertaken by the Government that you supported.

Mr. THOMSON: I had no more to do with it than had the Honorary Minister.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, you had.

Mr. THOMSON: I had nothing to do with the instructions to carry out that work. We were informed that it would cost about £30,000.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Your votes kept the Government in office.

Mr. THOMSON: Probably the present Government do some things of which their supporters disapprove, and yet their votes keep the Government in power.

The Minister for Lands: Herdsman's Lake does not come under this Bill and you cannot discuss it.

Mr. THOMSON: Quite a large number of mistakes have been made, and we regret them. Those who pay the piper should be entitled to direct representation on a board controlling these works. I commend to the attention of the Government the proposal to hand over the water supply to the people of the metropolitan area to be administered by a board as in Victoria. Such a scheme would be more advantageous to the people concerned and, as the Premier pointed out, the indebtedness per head of the population of the State would appear a little better than it does at present.

The Minister for Works: What about all the country districts doing the same thing?

Mr. THOMSON: I am quite agreeable.

The Minister for Works: A lot of them will not; Narrogin, for instance.

Mr. THOMSON: I am pleased to say that, through my instrumentality and thanks to the sense of responsibility on the part of the people of Katanning, we have control of our own water supply. That should be the position in every district. The Government are going to impose upon the people charges sufficient to pay the interest and sinking fund upon their water supplies.

The Minister for Works: The country people are objecting.

Mr. THOMSON: There are some who view the matter from a different angle. It is in the interests of local authorities to control their water supplies, and see that the charges are kept as low as possible. When the reservoirs and heavy mains have been paid for through interest and sinking fund, the consumers of the water will then have to pay only the actual cost of the water. I am not going to oppose the second reading of the Bill. It is probably necessary that the Government should have power to levy increased charges, owing to the expenditure involved, but I urge upon the people of the metropolitan area to take advantage of the suggestion that they should come together and see if they cannot control their own water supplies.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [8.17]: One or two questions have been put to me in my neighbourhood regarding the increase in the price charged for water.

The Minister for Works: This is an increase in the taxation for water.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am speaking of the authority it is proposed to give to the Minister to increase the rate by 100 per cent.

One of my neighbours showed me his water bill the other day. The amount in question was £1 1s. 3d. for storm water. He asked me, as a member of Parliament, if I understood what this was for. He said his block was not connected with any drainage system, that in fact the water drained from the footpath into his garden and soaked through at the back of his place. He had no idea why he had been charged this amount. I presume it is much the same sort of thing as appertains in the country when a man is charged for water, though he may not be using any that comes from the pipe line.

The Minister for Lands: That is done all over the metropolitan area.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The small householder or landowner in Perth or suburbs has to pay whether he gets any benefit or not. The local council and the Government seem to vie with one another in annoying him in petty ways. A little while ago the local authority in question said with a great flourish that they were going to reduce the rates. They did so, but increased the valuations, so that people are paying more than they did before. The bill for £1 1s. 3d. also contained a charge of 2d. for interest. I do not know why that was put on, because the bill had only just come in. I should like the Minister to explain what the storm-water item in this case means, and what the ratepayer gets for the money. Is he, like others, paying for facilities that are provided in another part of the city?

Mr. Richardson: You have storm water drainage in West Perth.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: All the water runs into the sand at my place.

The Minister for Lands: The water has to drain somewhere into a lower part.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It then finds its way into the sea. That system of drainage does not cost the Government anything. I presume there is some reason for the increase of 100 per cent.

The Minister for Works: The storm-water rate is not increased.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, but I would like to know what we are getting for the storm water rate. It has been said there is a difference of opinion in regard to the water charges in the country districts. In Victoria there was a difference of opinion regarding the many kinds of water schemes that were established, but the difficulty there has been overcome. I have in mind cities in the Old Country, where all kinds of faci-

ties are provided by the people, and controlled by the representatives of the people. Not only have the facilities been provided at comparatively low cost, but those in control have been able to make profits and have provided certain facilities free. Glasgow, for instance, is a model city from the municipal point of view.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [8.22]: I should like to have an assurance from the Minister that those parts which are not going to benefit for some years by this scheme will not be charged any increased tax. I understand that it will be some time before Fremantle gets any benefit from the scheme.

The Minister for Works: Who told you that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is my information.

The Minister for Works: It is wrong.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is said that two years must elapse before Fremantle gets any benefit.

The Minister for Lands: Fremantle has had an advantage already from the reservoirs and in other directions.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There has been no noticeable difference in either the quantity or quality of the water supplied. The quality is, to say the least, rotten. Only a week or two ago I had to bring up from Fremantle a supply of water for the Government Analyst to analyse. He agreed that it was not very nice, but assured me that it was an algæ growth, a vegetable matter, that was in the water, and that it was not harmful. I want an assurance that before the rate is increased we shall get an extra supply from the hills.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [8.23]: I have been a member of this House for many years and have taken notice of the agitations that have occurred over water supply questions. I have told the people of Fremantle frequently that if they want an improved supply they must be prepared to pay extra rates for it, and that any requests for additional supplies must be met with the imposition of additional charges. In the Fremantle district large sums of money have been expended during the last few years. Many of the old pipes have been removed, and 2ft. 6in. pipes have been substituted. Two new reservoirs have been

erected, and new pipes have been put in both through North Fremantle and Cottesloe. Expenditure of this kind cannot be incurred without increased cost to the rate-payers. The people of central Fremantle have always laboured under the delusion that they had a small supply of water. When they had the opportunity to take over the gaol supply they refused to avail themselves of it. I anticipated that there would be an outcry against an increase in the rates when the time came to provide additional water facilities, and I warned the people some time ago, as I have said. The suburbs of Fremantle have been short of water up to last year, but last year I heard no complaints, because the larger pipes had then been laid. The people of Fremantle forget that the increase in their business, and the increased value given to their properties, have been brought about entirely through the building up of the suburbs surrounding them. Some people seem to think that the position to-day, in the matter of charges, ought to be the same as it was 30 years ago. Very often it is these people who make the most noise. I have been down to Fremantle with the Leader of the Opposition when there has been a general outcry, particularly from the local council, with regard to the charges imposed for water. I will admit the water is not very good. People used to say that the position was no better then than that it was many years before. I told them that I had lived for 30 years in Fremantle and had never drunk any water there except tap water. I pointed out that the only difference between them and me was that they had put poison into their water and I had drunk mine neat. Considering that I have never had a day's illness all the time I have drunk this water, it must be fairly pure and good if it is not spoilt by adulteration. The outskirts of Fremantle are now receiving an improved supply, and the town of Fremantle has had its full supply for some time. Formerly, when Fremantle was drawing off its water, the outskirts had to go without. That difficulty has now been removed, but this has led to considerable expenditure. The expenditure was initiated by the previous Government, but the people were warned by the ex-Premier that the rates would have to be increased, and that for a period of two years the proposition had been a losing one. The cry then was that the people wanted the water, and were prepared to

pay for it. Those who are grumbling to-day at the prospect of paying an increased rate are those who always had the water, while the other people who had none have been paying for it and helping to keep down the rates for the others. To-day, the people outside will have their water as well as those within a certain area. The rate may be a fraction higher than it was. It will not need to go to the full extent at first, but will increase by degrees. A good deal depends upon how the population increases. The proposed rate is the maximum that can be charged until Parliament is asked to reconsider the matter. The people have asked for these extra facilities. The ex-Premier told them in North Perth that the expenditure would be three millions of money before the work was completed, and that interest and sinking fund would have to be found for that outlay. If more water is supplied, those who use it must pay for it. I warned the electors of North-East Fremantle, prior to the starting of the works, what the result would be, and they understood that if they were to get more water, they would have to foot the bill.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [8.30]: As one who had experience in the early days of the inauguration of the Water Supply Department, I want to extend my sympathy to all Ministers who have handled the operations since I first started them 21 years ago. In those days a board had attempted to administer water supply matters and it was superseded. It was what might have been a disagreeable task on my part, to take over the control, but what would ordinarily have been a disagreeable task was made almost pleasant by the general unanimity of opinion at the time that administration by the board had not been satisfactory.

Mr. Thomson: But that was a private company.

The Minister for Lands: No, it was not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That was many years before. Board control could be improved upon, but I do not say that the old board was as representative as we could get at the present time.

Mr. Richardson: That was the whole point at the time.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At the same time we did have board control in those days representative of the chief interests, and the experience was that the board did not give

satisfaction. There was great unanimity of opinion behind the Government when a Bill was introduced to take control of the metropolitan water supply work and place it under the Minister for Works. Shortly afterwards it was my pleasing duty to introduce a proposal to bring the Mundaring water westward. There was a good deal of opposition at the time on the part of Kalgoorlie, because they were under the impression that the expansion of the goldfields—I am sorry that their anticipations have not been realised—would tax the capacity of the Mundaring reservoir to its fullest extent. They considered that to take any water to the metropolitan area or to take it west, would be detrimental to the interests of Kalgoorlie and the gold mining industry. At that time I was the representative of the Kalgoorlie constituency in the Legislative Assembly. I was convinced, however, and the expert officers were satisfied that the needs of Midland Junction and Guildford were so acute that the only way of meeting the difficulty was to bring water down from Mundaring. When that work was started, the district was not part and parcel of the metropolitan area. After some years of experience in the administration of the work, it occurred to me, as Minister, that it would be more convenient and generally would be better if, seeing that the Mundaring supply had been extended beyond the limitations of the original scheme, those portions including Guildford and Midland Junction, were included in the metropolitan district and became a part of the district under the metropolitan supply scheme. When that was done, it made things a little easier for administration purposes. At the same time, I did not anticipate when I did that, that we would be saddled with a proposition such as may arise under the Bill now before us. The Bill simply proposes the amount outlined in Section 94 of the Act. It is true that the operations under Section 94 can be made easy, or difficult, from a financial point of view, by the administration of Section 93 which gives the Minister power to declare separate rates for separate districts. In fact, the power is made mandatory. I am under the impression, however, that we have a uniform rate throughout the several districts to-day and one has to anticipate that under the provisions of the Bill those conditions will continue. I want to point out to the Minister the need for exercising consideration when he decides on the rating outlined in Section 93 of the Act. The Guild-

ford district will not gain anything whatsoever from the expenditure in connection with the metropolitan scheme. As a matter of fact, the needs of Perth in the direction of an improved water supply have really been made available against the interests of the water supply in the Guildford district. The Minister may not realise the position, but I can assure him it is so. The Guildford district has been affected because the mains have been increased in size to take the water through Guildford to Perth and on to Mt. Hawthorn. At the same time, the subsidiary, or service, mains in the Guildford district have not been increased, with the result that the volume of water going through the district, has not, as in the past, backed up the water and forced through the pipes supplying subsidiary, or service, mains in the Bassendean, Guildford and Midland Junction areas. Under the existing conditions the volume of water shoots through to Mt. Hawthorn and the water supply in the areas I have referred to, is really worse than before the extension of the Mundaring water supply through to Perth. Thus it is that the benefit to Perth has been detrimental to the Guildford district.

Mr. Sampson : That is because the resistance has been removed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is my theory. I cannot say if it is correct, but I imagine that is the explanation. The fact remains that the supply is not as good now as it was. That statement can be verified by numerous consumers in the Guildford and Midland Junction districts. I admit that the difficulty can be overcome by the Minister enlarging the mains in the various streets. We have inch mains in some of the streets and they are totally inadequate for the present consumers. They were put down when there were only one or two houses to be served, but with the increase in the number of houses in some of the streets and in the population, the existing provisions are totally inadequate. Even if the Minister raised money and increased the expenditure by providing more mains, they would not draw upon the water supply that is now being made available for Perth. Thus, Midland Junction and Guildford will get no benefit from this expenditure at all. At the same time they may have to pay taxes as proposed in the Bill. I am assuming that the Minister may adopt the precedent, or custom, of making it a uniform rate for each district.

Mr. Davy: A uniform rate will not mean the same amount of tax to be paid.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I admit that. I can quite understand the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) arguing that if we in Guildford are a little magnanimous and pay towards the extension of the water scheme in Perth, the Perth rate will not be so great.

Mr. Davy: The man in West Perth will pay a lot more than the man in Guildford because the capital value of a property in West Perth is very different from the capital value of a property in Guildford.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so, but that has no bearing on the point I am making.

Mr. Davy: That is where you get the difference in the rates.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not think the Minister is limited to that. This influence would be brought to bear on the Minister in striking a rate, but it would not be the sole influence. The Minister will take into account the enormous expenditure that will be involved. The Minister for Lands said it was possible that the expenditure would amount to £3,000,000. That would involve a bigger liability upon the ratepayers. If that is so, surely the liabilities should be borne by those people who will benefit from the expenditure of that huge sum of money. It is not equitable to say that a resident of Guildford who will not benefit, should be taxed to the same extent as people in Perth where they will receive an adequate supply.

Mr. Richardson: We have been paying but not getting the water, while you have been paying and getting it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. The hon. member would be correct in assuming that, if we had been taking the water and preventing him from getting a supply in Subiaco. He is asking the people of Midland Junction to make a sacrifice now and contribute towards the cost of something that Subiaco will enjoy and which the people at Midland Junction will not enjoy.

Mr. Richardson: We have been sacrificing for years, during which we have wanted water, while you have been getting it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That may be true.

Mr. Richardson: Now we want you to do a little bit of it yourselves.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Why should that be done? If Wyndham has no water supply, is that an argument that the residents of Subiaco should contribute towards providing one? The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) asked for a water supply for that centre. Could it be argued that because Katanning was without a water supply, that the Subiaco people should contribute to provide that town with a water supply? It would be just as logical to argue that way as to argue now that the people of Midland Junction and Guildford should contribute towards the cost of the metropolitan water supply, because Subiaco has been hampered in the past.

Mr. Richardson: If we do not pull together in the team, we will get nowhere.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I can understand the member for Subiaco desiring to include Guildford and Midland Junction in the scheme, but I cannot see how he can argue that question along equitable lines. It cannot be argued that it would be fair to tax the people of Guildford unless the supply of water in that district is improved. The only way by which that improvement could be effected would be to increase the size of the service mains. That my point is sound is demonstrated by the position regarding the sewerage and storm water drainage activities. No one would argue that because there is a storm water drainage scheme for Perth, that the people of Guildford should contribute towards it. Because there is a sewerage scheme in Subiaco, people at Guildford should not be called upon to pay.

Mr. Richardson: But we have not got it yet.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The member for Subiaco will not argue that the people of Midland Junction should contribute towards what Subiaco wants.

The Minister for Works: The whole of the people in the metropolitan area within the sewerage area will have to contribute.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, but we are not within the water supply area. Therefore, it is not fair to ask the people of Midland Junction to contribute on the same basis as people in Perth who will benefit directly. It would be wrong on my part to oppose the second reading, for the people have been justifiably agitating for the water.

Mr. Richardson: Certainly you have spoken against it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. If the whole of the Act were under consideration I could do something in respect of Section 93. But for obvious reasons the Minister has limited his Bill to amending one section of the Act. I cannot interfere with that, because I should be doing something that would injure the people of Perth. There is no question that West Perth, Subiaco, and East Fremantle are in dire need of a more adequate water supply. I want to encourage the Minister to assist them to get their requirements. I congratulate the Minister on the activity he has displayed in regard to these works, and I know that, having incurred liabilities, and still incurring liabilities, he wants power to secure an adequate return to pay his administrative costs and interest and sinking fund. What I am doing is appealing to the Minister that when striking his rate under Section 93 he will take into consideration the fact that he has power to discriminate. The Act says that he shall strike a separate rate, an indication to him to take into consideration the facts of each district before striking the rate. I want him, when striking that rate, to take into consideration the facts I have now placed in "Hansard," so that the people of Guildford shall not be called upon to carry a burden that it would be distinctly unfair to impose upon them.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle—in reply) [8.47]: First of all it is true, as the Leader of the Opposition said, that this scheme was actually in hand before we took office, the difference being that we now hope to tap three sources of supply this summer, whereas the original intention was to tap only one. Instead of relying on Churchman's Brook for this summer's supply, we have thrown out a pipe line to tap both Wongong and Canning by pipe head dams, and so increase the supply this year by 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 gallons per day. That will help carry the heavy expenses out there and will materially improve the supplies for the city. Having got the pipe line out there, if further suitable streams can be found it will be easy to tap them by pipe head dams, and so we shall be able to increase the supply of the metropolitan area very materially. As to the point raised by the member for Avon regarding those who are to pay

storm water rates, let me say it is only the function of the Government to put in the main drains. The natural contour of the country will permit of subsidiary drains coming into the main drain. Only those within the storm water area will be charged the storm water rate. The function of linking up the smaller drains is the function not of the Government, but of the local authorities, and their neglect to put in their part of the drain is not the fault of the Government.

Mr. North: The same thing applies to sewerage?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. We accept the whole function of sewerage.

Mr. North: But you are not charging the rate at Cottesloe.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Oh, no; you are right there. As to the point raised by the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson), I will look into it. But if I have to segregate every section of the metropolitan area and find out which will be benefiting by the new scheme, then each part of the new scheme will have to finance its own obligation. So I will have to see whether Guildford, drawing its supplies from Mundaring, is a paying scheme. Guildford will have to pay its own share of the capitalisation of the Mundaring scheme. It is a question whether Guildford is paying its way or whether Perth is not carrying Guildford. It may be that there is a big loss at Guildford and that Guildford is not meeting its share of the capital expenditure on Mundaring.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You do not think that is so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have substantial reasons for thinking it is so.

Mr. Davy: And with the same rate it may be paying less per thousand gallons of water.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But those with the higher valuations get the bigger supply, according to their valuation. Carried to its logical conclusion, the point raised by the member for Guildford will mean that instead of the scheme being treated as a whole, we shall require to have each district capitalised according to the costs of supplying that area, and each will have to carry its own financial obligation.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That can be determined from the books.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When it comes to sewerage, the sewerage of

Subiaco is very costly, and is going to result in substantial financial loss. Whether we are to say to Subiaco, "You have to carry that on your own," or spread it over the whole of the system, is a question of policy yet to be decided. But it will mean that some parts of Subiaco could be sewered much cheaper than other parts.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: These are four districts definitely appointed and set out in the schedule of the Act.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have been so interwoven lately that it is almost impossible to say that any one district can be entirely separated for all purposes from the others. As for Guildford, I will look into the point raised before any rate is struck. But it will have to be done to see whether Guildford is able to pay its own way. It may be that there has been substantial losses in supplying Guildford, and that other parts of the metropolitan area have had to carry those losses. If so, Guildford will have to carry its own share of the expenses at Mundaring. The position at Fremantle has been wrongly stated by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). I had a letter from the municipal council of Fremantle and in reply I pointed out the exact position. Fremantle will get water from the hills just as soon as will Perth. The main will be tapped on the other side of the Swan river and the water will be taken straight down to the Melville Reservoir. The big main going to Fremantle will lead into Melville, and so we shall have the water linked up on both sides of the river. The people of Fremantle asked that they should not be charged rates until supplied with the water. Apparently they think that Perth should be made to carry all the initial costs of bringing the water down from the hills, and that they should not participate in that until the water reached Fremantle. It would be just as fair for me to ask Perth to carry that cost as it would be to make the people of Fremantle pay the extra cost of taking the water on from Perth to Fremantle. The people of Perth could say it was no concern of theirs whether the water went to Fremantle or not. The whole scheme must be treated as one, and Fremantle must have the water just as soon as it gets to the city. The supply in Fremantle is anything but satisfactory. It is only bore water and the consumers are now paying 1s. for the water they once got for 6d. Before Christmas

the whole of the three streams I have mentioned will be tapped and we shall be bringing into the city 4,000,000 gallons of hills water per day to supplement the existing supply. It is essential that authority be given for these additional rates. They will not be imposed until the water is here. The department say that the maximum asked for in the Bill will carry them on until Wongong is completed, which will take approximately six years. When we come to shift over to the Canning, the position will have to be reviewed, because the 2s. rate will not then meet the heavy expenditure on the Canning scheme. It is satisfactory that we are still assured that the figure supplied to Sir James Mitchell when Premier, namely, 2s. will carry us right up to the completion of the Wongong reservoir.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [9.0] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is for a special purpose. It aims at providing a special fund to assist in the eradication of the dingo and the fox—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Another special tax!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: And any other animal or bird which may be brought under the Act by proclamation or which may be called vermin by proclamation and for the destruction of which funds might be available. The development of the State, particularly its sheep-carrying capacity, is very much retarded because of the prevalence of the dingo in the settled areas as well as in the areas yet to be settled. The dingo has become such a pest and such a danger that there is a general demand by our settlers for a measure of this description in order to give them means to overcome the difficulty. I think I may say that the pastoralists, the graziers and the agriculturists, the men now

carrying stock and those hoping to be able to carry stock, are asking for this measure. One can express nothing but the deepest admiration for the old settlers who opened up the large pastoral areas in face of the dingo difficulty. It has been said that the dingo in the old days was not the obstacle to settlement that it is to-day, but it is well known that the dingo was in evidence in all the pastoral areas with the exception of a few favoured localities. When we consider the damage that this pest has done and can do, we are filled with the deepest admiration for the enterprise and perseverance of the old settlers who largely developed the pastoral industry of the State. To-day, not only is the dingo a pest and a danger to settlement, but it is accompanied by its brother, the wild dog, which has become wild by leaving townships and by being abandoned by blacks and others, and has joined the dingo in the wild life and developed a new species. That species is probably more dangerous, and more cunning than the dingo, and is probably responsible for greater losses to the settlers. Our pastoralists succeeded very largely because they concentrated upon the destruction of the dingo. Being dependent upon their flocks and herds, they concentrated to protect them, and by such concentration and effort they were able to achieve a great deal. In the last few years the pastoral industry has extended beyond the Murchison to the East Murchison, to Lake Way and beyond, and even as far as the eastern goldfields in what is known as the north-eastern goldfields area. To-day all that country is being fenced and supplied with water in the hope and expectation that it will carry large flocks of sheep in the near future. The settlement of the north-eastern goldfields area is now largely undertaken by pastoralists from South Australia who have the advantage of a fair amount of money and are able to fence their properties with vermin-proof fencing, though at very high cost; but that cannot be done by the greater number of pastoralists who have assumed the responsibility of developing the sheep areas of this State. It is a pity they have not the financial resources and that they cannot fight the dingo by providing vermin-proof fencing. In my electorate in the East Murchison district, east of Sandstone, it was impossible to carry sheep five years ago. The young men who went out there within the last ten years were up against an apparently hopeless proposition and for years were un-

able to market a lamb. By industry and perseverance, however they have caused a considerable diminution in the menace, and are now carrying sheep on areas where it was impossible to do so a few years ago. The manager of Dandaraga Station told me that he calculated they had killed 100 dogs a month over a term of 12 months. That was about seven years ago, and I believe what he told me was a fact. That area has been largely cleaned up, but owing to the breeding up of dogs in the outside areas, there will be recurring attacks from time to time, and this measure is necessary to protect those districts. In what is known as the new wheat belt, that great area of country extending from Mullewa between the Wongan Hills and Midland lines and east of the Wongan Hills line, and in the great belt extending north and south of the Eastern Goldfields railway and east of Northam and the Great Southern railway, there is being carried to-day but a very small number of stock, largely due to the fact that the dingo is such a destroyer. It is impossible for the settlers in those parts to carry the stock they otherwise would. I admit that one of the difficulties also is the lack of water, but even if they had water supplies they would be unable to carry sheep unless they shepherded their flocks. They are unable to concentrate their efforts on the destruction of the dingo because they are mainly engaged in the raising of wheat. If they were dependent on the raising of stock and concentrated their efforts on the destruction of the dingo, they might succeed as well as the pastoralists further east and north have succeeded. Their efforts, however, have been devoted to the cultivation of the soil, and consequently they have not the time at their disposal to combat the wild dog. It is a great loss to the country that millions of acres of country producing abundant feed in both summer and winter—in summer there is the stubble and in the winter there are the grasses—should be carrying only a few thousand instead of millions of sheep. In order to build up the country and give the settlers an opportunity to carry stock, a fund is necessary to tackle the dingo problem in an efficient manner. It is remarkable that throughout Australia, despite the ceaseless warfare against the dingo, the pest is increasing. On some of the stations in my electorate dingoes had not been known to attack sheep for 15 or 20 years until the last few years when the dogs have come

in again. I attribute the prevalence of the dingo to-day to the rabbit invasion, because the large numbers of rabbits that have come into this country and have bred up there have provided an abundant food supply for the dingo and increased the fecundity of the animal. Owing to the ample and continuous food supply and because the settlers have provided water supplies where previously none existed, the conditions are favourable to the breeding up of the dingo and the wild dog, as well as the fox which, unhappily, we have and which is already causing considerable trouble. Let me give a few figures taken from the "Australasian" to illustrate the disastrous effects of the dingo in New South Wales. The article was written by "Bendleby," who is well known in Western Australia and whose name, I think, is sufficient guarantee of the accuracy of the statements. It says—

The following specific instances of sheep numbers on properties in the West Darling district, before and after the dingo invasion, will indicate the disastrous effects of the pest—

Station.	Before.	After.
Momba	490,000	No sheep.
Lanzawirra and Sturt Meadows	80-100,000	No sheep.
Yancanilla	160-170,000	34,000
Grassmere and Cuthera Warra	25,000	No sheep.
Morden	60,000	4,650
Tarella	40,000	No sheep.
Wonnominata, Nundore, Pack-saddle	80,000	No sheep.
Touzo	15-20,000	1,600
Yantara	60,000	No sheep.
Salisbury Downs	80,000	No sheep.
Bootra	30,000	2,908
Yandama Group	53,000	No sheep.
Quinyamble	20,000	No she

Mr. Thomson: Was that all in one year?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, that was over a term of a few years. The dingo invasion occurred about 1914 and that is the result on the stations mentioned.

Mr. Thomson: It is astounding.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), in speaking on the subject last year, gave some more remarkable figures. The same thing is likely to happen in Western Australia. The pastoralists in the North are fully seized of the necessity for this measure, and, I think I can say, are, for the first time, unanimous in regard to its introduction. I do not think there will be any opposition to it, because the settlers have unanimously asked for it as a result of their experience of the last few years. Western Australia carries only six million sheep. If

by this measure we can raise a fund sufficient to encourage the destruction of dingoes, within a few years we ought to see every stock-raising part of the country carrying sheep, in fact, every part of the State carrying stock that is capable of doing so, under good farming conditions. It is deplorable to go through the eastern wheat belt and see the large quantities of feed that are cultivated into the ground. This means considerable expense to the holders of the properties, and represents a distinct loss to the State. This feed, instead of being ploughed into the ground, ought to be fed off to stock, which, in turn, should be a source of revenue to the farmer and to the State, as well as adding to the meat supplies of the people and the wool production of the country. I hope, if the Bill is passed, and the work is taken up in an active manner, we shall be able in a few years to effect a marked change in the present position. A Bill has now been passed to provide water supplies for the country, and that measure and this one should be the means by which settlers will be able to carry large numbers of sheep, and the country will be put to the use for which it is suited. Provision is made in the Bill for the raising of funds at the rate, in the case of pastoral leases, of an amount not exceeding 1d. in the pound, and upon all other holdings of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound on the unimproved value.

Mr. Thomson: That is the maximum?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Thomson: What do you propose to levy at the beginning?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: On the data that has been supplied by the Registrar, I am informed that this rate will bring in about £34,000 a year. That will be a pretty substantial sum, when compared with the amount already expended by the Government on vermin boards in an endeavour to eradicate pests. The assessment will be on the lines followed by the Commissioner of Taxation under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act. The Commissioner will collect the amount when he is collecting the land tax. This will make for economical collection, so that very little of this fund will be lost in the gathering. The fund will be utilised only for the purpose for which it will be raised.

Mr. Sampson: Is it intended to levy a rate in districts where there is no evidence of the pest?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Sampson: Throughout the whole State, including road boards and municipalities?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. The money that is collected will go to a central fund. Payment will then be made to the vermin boards on the certified statement of the chairman and secretary of such board. Last year the department paid £3,000 for dingo scalps, and I understand that 9,000 dingoes were destroyed. The bonus paid outside the South-West was 10s. per head. An additional amount was provided for vermin boards in areas that were called buffer areas, such as the Wiluna Road Board and the Lower Blackwood areas.

Mr. Thomson: You will still have the local vermin boards?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. They are necessary under the Rabbit Act. The Bill provides funds for the purpose of eradicating dingoes and foxes, and any other vermin that may be declared such.

Mr. Thomson: That will mean additional responsibility?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. On dogs destroyed in the South-West area an average rate of £2 a scalp was paid last year by the vermin boards. The Bill will relieve boards of the necessity for raising funds which are now raised for the destruction of dogs. Nearly the whole of the rate now levied by the vermin boards is used for the purpose of destroying dingoes. That levy will be no longer necessary, because the fund set out in the Bill will cover it.

Mr. Angelo: Will the Government subsidise the contributions?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The total unimproved value of land in the State, less the metropolitan area, is approximately £14,000,000. This includes pastoral areas, £2,630,000, and farming areas £11,000,000. It is hoped by this levy to raise, if the maximum rate is struck, an amount of £34,000. The department will continue to contribute to the fund for the destruction of dingoes as heretofore. There will be no exemptions in regard to persons liable for the payment of this levy, except in the case of persons who can satisfy the department, and the Chief Inspector of Rabbits, who administers the Rabbit Act, that their holdings are fenced with vermin-proof fences, and that the fences are maintained as such.

Mr. Angelo: Would that apply to groups or only single individuals?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It will apply to groups if they can satisfy the department along these lines. I think that in cases where a settler goes to the trouble of fencing his property with vermin-proof fencing, he ought to be exempt from the levy, because he has done what is expected of him. He should not be called upon to pay a tax when he has incurred the necessary expenditure for his own protection.

Mr. Sampson: Surely this would not apply to the Canning or Gosnells road boards.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It applies to all agricultural areas. The only areas that are exempt I will mention later. A number of scalps that we paid for in the department came from places adjacent to the South Australian border, at Eucla. As our bonus will probably be greater than the South Australian bonus, it is necessary to provide a penalty in this Bill, to prevent the possibility of trafficking in scalps. There is an inducement to trappers to take scalps into an area where the highest bonus is paid. We are providing a penalty of £50 in the case of any person found trafficking in scalps. The present Rabbit Act applies to all portions of the State, except the South-West, where the administration comes under the Vermin Act, 1918, which embodies the Rabbit Act, 1902. This Bill is an amendment of the Vermin Act of 1918, and repeals the Rabbit Act of 1902, the Vermin Boards Act of 1909, and the Vermin Board Amendment Act of 1915. It will be read with the Vermin Act of 1918. The Bill also provides that the Vermin Act of 1918 shall apply to the whole State. It now applies only to the South-West. Because of this the road boards and the vermin boards in other parts of the State outside the South-West come under two separate administrations. In the South-West the road boards automatically become vermin boards, but in the areas outside the South-West, and under the Rabbit Act the vermin board is independent of the road board. This has led to much inconvenience and lack of efficiency. The Bill will apply to the whole State, and the road boards in other parts of the State will automatically become vermin boards as they do in the South-West. The Bill also provides that timber leases shall be rated. It has been brought under my notice that in the South-

West, where the dingoes are a great pest, the timber leases, which cover a large area of the country, constitute breeding grounds. It also happens that when mill sites are abandoned and the population moves on, the people leave their dogs behind. These dogs join with the dingoes and the pest becomes more acute. The Bill provides that, in addition to the rating of pastoral and agricultural areas, timber areas shall also be rateable.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are no grazing rights in timber leases. The dogs will not eat the trees.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not right that large areas of land should be held without any responsibility attaching to the holders. These areas become breeding grounds and a source of danger and loss to the community in general.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are Crown lands.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They are timber leases.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You would not tax a mining lease.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A mining lease covers only a few acres, but a timber lease may extend over 20,000 acres. Under the Act of 1904, a mining tenement would be exempt, just as town sites and municipal areas are exempt. It is a different matter with timber leases, and I have felt it incumbent on me to include these areas amongst those that should be taxable.

Mr. Angelo: The Crown will contribute towards the funds and the timber licenses should bear their share.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Any person, whether he grows stock or not, will be brought under the measure. There are many people who are not growing stock. It was represented to me, when a measure of the kind was first mooted, that a stock tax ought to be levied.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who suggested that?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I set my face against it. The person who is raising stock to-day has been fighting the battle for years in the endeavour to make the country safe for the person who will carry stock in the future. Since this measure is designed to enable all persons to carry stock where it can be carried, it is only reasonable that every man should contribute towards the funds.

Mr. Teesdale: Did you find the general opinion in favour of an acreage tax or one on the unimproved value?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The general opinion is in favour of a tax on the unimproved value.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell. No, it is not.

Mr. Teesdale: There is great opposition to it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Striking a levy would not be fair under any circumstances.

Mr. Angelo: It would be penalising the stock owner.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Exactly. Under the existing Act, any bird or animal declared vermin must be so declared throughout the State. It has happened that animals which do damage in one portion of the State are protected in another part, and have not therefore been declared vermin. I would instance the quaggas which do such a lot of damage in the South-West. As they are protected in other parts throughout the whole State, they could not be declared vermin in the South-West alone. The same applies to euros which are protected throughout the whole State, although they are a pest in the Kimberley districts. There is no possibility under the existing Act of declaring them vermin. In the Victoria district the emus are a pest, whereas in the southern portions of the State they are not a pest. However, it is not competent under the existing legislation to declare emus vermin in any one part of the State unless they are declared vermin throughout the whole of Western Australia. The Bill provides that any bird or animal may be declared vermin in the portion of the State where that bird or animal causes damage.

Mr. Teesdale: Are euros included now?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They can be included by proclamation. The Bill merely provides for dingoes and foxes. The Bill will provide power for vermin boards to charge interest on overdue rates. Thus, vermin boards will be given the same powers as are conferred upon road boards. Vermin boards may obtain an overdraft from a bank on which interest must be paid. It is only reasonable, therefore, that if the boards have to pay interest, the ratepayers, who neglect to pay their rates, should be charged interest on their overdue rates.

Mr. Thomson: Will the board be able to give discount on account of rates prepaid?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a matter for local administration. Under Section 74 of the Vermin Act, the Minister or the board may erect vermin fences and rabbit-proof fences and may improve existing fences or alter, maintain, repair, or renew fences. In such cases any mortgage arranged has to be given to the Agricultural Bank, although the advances were not made by the bank under the parent Act. The Bill provides that the mortgage may be given to the Minister or the board as the circumstances warrant. I have explained the objects of the measure and I hope members will realise the value of the powers that will be exercised under it. I hope they will realise the value of the services to the producers, particularly those engaged in primary production. If it can be shown to me that the Bill will impose penalties upon any section that should not be called upon to carry them, I will not close my ears against any reasonable suggestions. I urge hon. members, particularly those representing the agricultural constituencies, where the farmer is dependent upon wheat growing, to support the Bill because it is framed in the interests of their constituents. Those producers will have to pay the levy, but if the work to be done under the Bill will be so much to their advantage, then whether the amounts necessary are paid by the Government or the settler, it must come out of the same pocket in the end. The farmers in the wheat belt are entirely dependent on the wheat-growing industry and we cannot say how long that industry will be a profitable one. We know that land is not put to its best use until it produces every commodity it is possible to get from that land. It is regrettable that large areas in the wheat belt have not carried a large number of sheep. If the Bill is agreed to, one means will be provided by which that difficulty will be overcome and the proper exploitation of our lands will be made possible.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: More than half the sheep in the State are on farms.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I know that, but it must be agreed that the farming areas could carry many more sheep. The sooner the agricultural areas carry the number of sheep that they should carry, the better it will be for the farmer and for the State. Some

objection may be raised to the fact that a levy is being struck, but if hon. members will only calculate the value of merely 100 sheep on a farm, and realise what those sheep mean to the farmer in keeping the fallow clean, in mutton supplies and in wool, they will realise that the levy is an infinitesimal matter compared with the advantages to be gained. The great majority of the people in the wheat belt are convinced of the necessity for carrying stock and they have asked for the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Message from the Council having been received notifying that it had agreed to the bill with an amendment, the message was now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Delete the word "repealed" in the last line and insert in lieu thereof the following words: "Amended by striking out '1925' and substituting '1926.'"

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the Bill was introduced the object was to make the Bill permanent, thus fixing the money available for the reforestation of sandalwood. The Legislative Council amended the Bill so as to limit it to 1926 as they did not agree with the proposal to make it permanent.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should not agree to that. Why let them dictate to you?

Hon. G. Taylor: Send the Bill back! It is not right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would be better if the Bill were a permanent one, but there is considerable controversy regarding the reforestation of sandalwood. Trials are now being made. No one knows what the result of the investigations will be and doubt has been expressed whether it is possible to successfully carry out the reforestation of sandalwood.

Mr. Thomson: Some maintain that it cannot be grown.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: From the speeches made in the Legislative Council, it

would appear that that opinion is held by some hon. members there.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The money was voted specifically for the reforestation of sandalwood.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At any rate, we have had only 12 months experience. I regret that the whole question of forestry comes up for discussion under the Bill. While forestry is necessary for the future, agriculture is also necessary and we have railways through forests that provide no traffic because the timber has been cut out. On the other hand, agriculture will provide traffic for the railways. We should not dedicate forests if that particular country will be of more benefit to the State by being used for agricultural purposes.

Mr. Teesdale: They are pretty long dated crops on forest lands.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. I supported the Premier when he moved the Bill which deals only with sandalwood. The amount paid into the Treasury for the purpose of sandalwood reforestation is £5,000. We were told that the Forests Department had advised that that amount was as much as could be spent for a year or two. We also had the assurance that if necessary the vote would be increased. There is no justification for requiring the Bill to come before members annually. If it took all the revenue from sandalwood to successfully reafforest sandalwood, I am sure the Minister would make it all available.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am surprised at the complacent way in which the Minister for Lands accepts this amendment from another place. This is a question of finance, and by amending it another place is interfering with the financial proposals of the Ministry.

The Minister for Lands: This does not prevent the money from coming in; it only says that the Bill shall be for one year alone.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why has the Minister changed his attitude towards another place? Why does he not stand up against the amendment? He would have the unanimous support of the House in refusing to allow another place to interfere in finance.

If this had happened when I was on the Treasury bench the present Minister for Lands would have been full of resentment if I had dared to propose to accept any direction from another place on a point of finance.

The Minister for Lands: This has no bearing upon finance.

Mr. Marshall: Would you seriously combat this amendment if you were over here?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Certainly I should not allow another place to dictate on a question of finance. I do not think the Bill should be the subject of an annual discussion. We are getting £9 per ton royalty on sandalwood, whereas only a few shillings are required to plant trees that in course of time will produce another ton of wood. I do not know why another place will not see that we ought to have the difference permanently paid into Consolidated Revenue. The royalty has risen from 5s. to £9. Surely then the general revenue of the country should permanently benefit and we should not have to discuss this question at each session of Parliament.

Mr. THOMSON: I hope the Committee will support the Minister. I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition. I favour the House retaining control of the funds; we should have opportunities to discuss this matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The funds would go into general revenue.

Mr. THOMSON: And we would have no say at all. There is some doubt whether reforestation will be satisfactory, and under the amendment the matter could be discussed each year. Originally it was not anticipated that the revenue would increase so greatly, but the State should receive the benefit of the increase.

Hon. G. Taylor: If the funds go into revenue, we shall have an opportunity to discuss the matter each year on the Estimates.

Mr. THOMSON: Some members might think that more than £5,000 should be expended on reforestation. I am not so keen as are some members on opposing the rights of another place. The members of another place were elected—

Mr. Teesdale: To block everything done here.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not agree with that.

Mr. Teesdale: They seem to practise it a good deal.

Mr. THOMSON: When some questions have passed this House, members have said,

"Thank God, there is a Legislative Council to block them."

The Minister for Lands: You complained last year.

Mr. THOMSON: I complained that the Council did not block the proposal to increase the land tax. I support the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In a general way I am in accord with the Leader of the Opposition, but we have to abide by the law as amended. I am afraid that until some members of Parliament get more sense than they have, it will be difficult to amend the Act. There is no necessity for requiring the Bill to be brought up every year. If the amendment had meant a decrease of revenue, I would have opposed it. Another place has granted the request of the Premier, but wishes to consider the Bill again next year. There will be no reduction whatever in the funds.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 13th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [10.6]: This is the first time since I have been in Parliament that we have been asked to proceed with business after the delivery of the Budget Speech. The Government are not satisfied with having got through a good deal of business—

Mr. Marshall: I was here one morning and you forced me to speak at 2.30.

Mr. Teesdale: You were never forced to speak.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Anyhow, we are now asked to consider the Bush Fires Act Amendment. The Act is of the utmost importance to the State; it is of far greater importance to-day than when it was passed in 1902, because now the country is fairly well settled and we have millions of acres under crop. We need to be exceedingly careful to do what is just and right and fair. The Act was intended for the protection of landholders and in considering any amendment, we must exercise the utmost care. The Minister stated that under the measure fires may be lighted for the protection of a build-

ing or a stack between certain hours of the day during the close season. I do not object to that so long as the Minister insists upon the fire-breaks being adequate, but it should be made quite clear that the person availing himself of the privilege granted under the Bill will be responsible for any damage done should the fire get away. He is responsible at present, but there will be a great deal more danger in lighting a fire during the close season than at other times. People who take advantage of this privilege may be unable to pay for great damage, and great damage may be done. Recently an action was brought by one farmer against another farmer to recover damages caused by a fire getting away from clearers and he was successful. The fire-break must be adequate to ensure safety. If a fire were approaching a haystack or building now, it could be ploughed around and a fire stick used to protect the property from damage. Clause 5 dealing with fire-protected areas is a beauty, owing to the powers it is proposed to give the Conservator of Forests. Why not be content with the powers given under the Forests Act? I ask members to consider this proposal very carefully. Under it we shall be handing over to the control of the Conservator such portion of the State as may be defined and set aside as a protected area, and this House will have no opportunity to decide how great or how small the protected area shall be. I know this provision will apply principally to the South-West lands. If the Minister agrees, the enormous area from Albany to Perth will be made a fire-protected area. That will be the request of the Conservator of Forests. Then the Conservator, having got the Minister to ask the Governor to agree to publish a notice in the "Gazette"—

The Minister for Lands: I am going to move to strike that out.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What, the whole lot?

The Minister for Lands: No, the reference to the Conservator of Forests.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I shall not agree to that. The Conservator of Forests will be king. I can only suppose that the Minister, having introduced the Bill, desires to have that clause.

Mr. Thomson: He will actually be paid for putting a fire in.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Conservator of Forests will be king.

The Minister for Agriculture: He is king now.

Mr. Thomson: He will be more so.

Hon. G. Taylor: You cannot crown him twice.

The Minister for Agriculture: He is already a monarch.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is proposed to give the Conservator very great powers. If it is a fire-protected area, no one will be able to make any fire within the area. Under the Forests Act one cannot shoot a bird, carry a gun, light a match, light a pipe, pull a bush, or boil a billy. If this proposal be agreed to, although one may own the land—it may be freehold property inside a protected area—he will not be able to burn off without obtaining the permission of His Highness the Sultan of Forests. I do not think the House will agree to such a clause. An owner would not be able to make a fire on his own land unless he complied with the conditions laid down by the Conservator. The Conservator might impose any sort of conditions he liked. If the House were foolish enough to agree to this clause, the Conservator could say to a man who desired to clear a block of land, "Very well, you have to clear a chain or two chains around your property without the firestick. You will not be able to use explosives." If the man who is grubbing a tree dares to light his pipe, there will be trouble. If the Conservator gets this power, he could and would compel the owner to cut the trees up and cart them away to a sufficient distance to make a substantial fire-break, because the great danger to the forest arises from the burning bark on the standing tree. It blows a long way. When you get a fire up to 40ft. in height the flaming bark travels a long distance. The Conservator would say to the Minister "If your group settlers wish to clear their land, they will have to cut up their trees into small pieces, cart them away, and plough a chain of ground all around their blocks." Does the Minister expect this House to place the Conservator over him? The Minister is elected to this House by the people to control, amongst other people, the Conservator. He asks us to give the Conservator power to dictate to him and tell him what he is to do. This House will not do it.

The Minister for Lands: I hope not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then why does the Minister bring down this Bill? Anyone who sets fire to the bush on any land that he owns at any time of the year will be liable to a penalty of £50. If it had been a wheat marketing Bill, no doubt the penalty would have been £500.

The Minister for Agriculture: When you do a thing you should do it well.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: So that there would be no necessity to ask for any increase. Are we going to give the Conservator power to say whether land shall be cleared or not? I do not know whether the Minister thinks the Conservator ought to have power to go upon the land owned by another person, put a fire out, and charge the owner for doing it. Does the Minister think that the landowner can be about all the time to see that people do not set fire to his timber, although he may do his best to prevent a fire? If an employee of the Conservator accidentally lights a fire on forest land and it passes on to private land, the Conservator can put the fire out on that private land at the cost of the owner, although the owner may want the fire and may not be prepared to pay for it to be put out. The matter of expense is to be determined by an officer of the Department of Lands and Surveys appointed by the Minister.

The Minister for Lands: The Bill does not say that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is what it means. We are going too far with legislation of this kind. Why should it be imagined that the man on the land is a national nuisance when, in fact, he is a national asset? Every Bill that we have passed is a disadvantage to the farmer, although we are told it is to his benefit. Under this Bill the farmer would certainly be under the control of the Conservator to an extent that is altogether unreasonable. I am surprised the Minister should have brought it down.

Mr. Thomson: I think he, too, is surprised.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Another part of the Bill says that no person shall be relieved from responsibility for damage done. Although the Conservator may approve of the firebreak and of the precautions that have been taken, he wishes to have the right to collect from the owner of the land damages on account of injury done to his forest.

The Minister for Lands: If any damage is done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This part of the Bill applies only to the Conservator's section and not to that of anyone else. That is wrong. It will be found in a few years that, unless the bush is cleaned up by fire, there will be such a conflagration as will destroy the greater portion of the young timber. I was in the tuart country last year. A tremendous fire had gone through it. I hear that as a result of the fire there is now a fine growth of young tuart trees, which would never have occurred if this particular fire had not got away. This is nature's way of re-stocking the land. The Conservator thinks otherwise, and I suppose he should know better than we do.

The Minister for Lands: He does not think otherwise.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He thinks that fires are bad.

The Minister for Lands: He says uncontrolled fires are bad.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister asks this House to do something it ought not to do. I do not know if this is a party measure, but it is clear that the Minister intends to amend it. Members should consider it from a non-party point of view. The Act covers the whole State, and may be applied to our wheat lands, as it undoubtedly will be if sandalwood is found within ten miles of a farm. If the Bill does pass the second reading, I hope some of its clauses will be struck out in Committee. I do not know why the Minister brought down a Bill which takes certain powers out of the hands of the Government and passes them on to the Conservator. I do not know what will happen to the farmer when he is called upon to pay the various taxes that we are passing, and has to face all the restrictions that are being imposed upon him. It will be mighty hard for him to avoid committing some offence for which he will be liable for punishment.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [10.25]: I hope the Minister will not hurry through with the second reading.

The Minister for Lands: I am prepared to adjourn the Committee stage for a week.

Mr. THOMSON: Most members anticipated that the usual custom would be followed, and that after the Budget was delivered the House would adjourn. Since I

have been a member this has always been the custom. Very few members came prepared to deal with these Bills. Probably an amendment to the Bush Fires Act in certain directions is essential. The first provision in the Bill will legalise that which is already done by owners of broad acres for the protection of their own property such as their homes, their haystacks, their wheat-stacks, etc. They obtain this protection by burning off around their properties and making fire-breaks. I should like to see an amendment whereby some uniform time of year is appointed for burning off in a particular district. There has been grave dissatisfaction with present methods of arriving at the dates upon which burnings shall take place. My district suffered severely last year through a fire that got away from an adjoining district. It is estimated that the loss was fully £100,000. A personal friend of mine had for years been breeding up a certain class of sheep. He had 300 stud ewes, for which he would not have accepted £5 a head, and he lost them all. The adjoining road board had a date for burning off different from that of the other board. I attended the Great Southern inter-district conference at Albany. One would naturally have thought that the matter of fixing dates for burning off would have been discussed, and some unanimous decision arrived at. The great difficulty was to secure unanimity. In the original Act it is laid down that the Governor may, by notice in the "Gazette," declare the time of year during which it shall be unlawful to set fire to the bush within any district or part of the State mentioned in the notice. In the Great Southern a conference was recently held, at which the majority of members agreed on the 15th February as the burning-off date. One of the boards decided that it would have to be about the 1st March. However, this was the first time that a disastrous fire brought about a certain amount of unanimity. While Tambellup, Kojoonup, Woodanilling, and Katanning agreed to fix a date, Gnowangerup fixed a later date, although the people in part of that district are opposed to the later date. It is essential that some districts should be earlier and some later.

The Minister for Lands: And some should have no time fixed.

Mr. THOMSON: Possibly that is so. The most economical way of clearing land is to set the fire stick to the bush. I would

like to see an amendment agreed to giving the Minister power to call a compulsory conference in given areas, so that a definite period might be fixed. The existing conditions cause a good deal of trouble and inconvenience in some districts. For that reason I trust the Minister will not force the second reading through at this stage. Then there is the clause that makes the Conservator of Forests all-powerful. I am prepared to admit that it is essential the Conservator of Forests should have considerable power in view of the money he is spending on reforestation, in consequence of which our forests should be protected. We do not want our plantations to be swept by bush fires caused by the carelessness of other people. At the same time, I object to placing in the hands of the Conservator of Forests the powers that are embodied in the Bill.

The Minister for Lands: If you read the first part you will see that that is not so.

Mr. THOMSON: It is provided in the Bill that the Governor may by notice declare any part of the State to be a protected area. I take it that the protected areas will be those over which the Conservator of Forests has control, otherwise there would be no need to include the Conservator of Forests in the Bill. There is a penalty of £50 provided if a person starts a fire on any land without the permission of the Conservator of Forests or the officers acting under his authority.

The Minister for Lands: That will not be in the Bill when it is passed.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not want to see the Bill dealt with hurriedly.

The Minister for Lands: The Bill has been here for over a week.

Mr. THOMSON: There are other hon. members who desire to deal with this matter, and I for one did not imagine that it would be discussed this evening, but thought that the House would adjourn when the Budget Speech had been delivered. Another clause in the Bill enables the Conservator of Forests or his officers to enter upon any land where a fire has started and do what they consider necessary to extinguish the fire. If a fire occurred on my property, an officer of the department might deem it reasonable to set fire to the rest of my crop in order to protect his forests.

The Minister for Lands: We are not likely to set fire to the bush if you have a crop there.

Mr. THOMSON: This power is to be exercised when a fire gets away on a man's property. It is astounding how that sort of thing happens. The owner of the property may desire to deal with the fire in another way, but the departmental officer may insist on destroying the rest of the crop in order to save his trees. I do not think the Minister realises the powers that are to be vested in officers under the provisions of the Bill. Another clause provides that the owner can be compelled to pay for the damage to the forest. That is a very drastic power to provide.

The Minister for Lands: I will postpone the Committee stage for a week.

Mr. THOMSON: In those circumstances I will not debate the Bill further.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [10.37]: There are some provisions in the Bill with which I am not in accord. The Bill was printed before I had an opportunity to alter those clauses. I am in accord with some of the views expressed by the Leader of the Opposition and told him beforehand that I agreed with his contention regarding the powers vested in the Conservator of Forests. It is my intention to amend the Bill and provide for the power being vested in the Minister or someone acting with his authority. As to the other matters referred to, the position is, as the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) interjected, that many thousands of pounds have been spent in reforestation. So far as I can gather, many of the owners of property do not think there is any harm in setting fire to the bush adjoining forest lands. They do so in order to make the feed grow, with the result that there is a possibility of the State losing a considerable sum of money in damage done. For instance, at Ludlow there is a pine plantation of many years standing. Suppose some person were to set fire to the bush adjoining that plantation. Consider what the result would be. It is only natural that the Conservator of Forests should hold it advisable to have power to protect those plantations from fire. However, in my opinion, the man who would not put out a fire without payment is not worth considering. As I say, the Bill was printed before I had an opportunity to look over it, but it is my intention to have that provision struck out in Committee. I will defer the Committee stage so as to

meet the convenience of members, but we want to have someone in control and under the existing Act there is a doubt as to whether we have the necessary power. Of course we have power to frame regulations exempting certain districts and fixing the time when the burning off shall take place. The general custom has been to suit each district according to the season and the requirements of the settlers. It is now desired to get uniformity in that direction, but in view of the widely varying conditions in widely separated districts, it is very difficult to achieve that uniformity.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 21st October, 1925.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY DINING CARS.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Chief Secretary: What is the amount received by the Railway Department for rights to operate dining and buffet cars generally, and the sum received in respect of the goldfields dining cars particularly?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: replied: The total amount received as rent for the dining