

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is probably correct, although whaling has been carried on in other waters around the Australian coast. There is nothing final with regard to the agreement mentioned by Mr. Angelo. Even if that were so it would not affect this Bill, which provides only for conditions which shall operate in respect to the industry that is conducted in the territorial waters of Western Australia. I agree with Mr. Angelo when he said it was our duty to see that we got as much as we could from this valuable asset. It is regretted that up to date there has been no Australian venture into this industry in recent years. The Point Cloates land station, which operated for some years, found employment for a large number of men. I am of opinion that the modern method of whaling by means of a factory ship is really the only economic method of carrying on the industry. It must be the most economic method of carrying on operations along our coast. If we take into consideration the very large catches of whales which various fleets have secured in the Antarctic in recent years, and the value of the product thus gained, we can see that it is a most valuable industry. As a State we should be very definitely interested in it, and take whatever steps we can to regulate it so that it may not be exploited to the extent it has been exploited in the past. That is the real object of the Bill, which I hope will be passed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 28th October, 1937.

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

QUESTION—HARBOUR DREDGING COSTS.

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the expenditure on dredging at the ports of Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, Albany and Esperance since 30th June, 1937? 2, The depth at each (a) at 30/6/1937; (b) at present? 3, The amounts contributed by each port out of revenue for interest payments for the year ended 30/6/1937?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Expenditure on dredging from 1st July, 1937 to 27th October, 1937:—Fremantle harbour, £1,251; Bunbury harbour (including overhaul of dredge "Governor"), £1,865; Geraldton harbour, nil; Albany harbour, nil; Esperance harbour, nil. 2, (a) Fremantle, 36 feet; Bunbury, 27 feet; Albany, 34 feet; Esperance, 25/36 feet at 550 feet berth; Geraldton, 30 feet. (b) Approximately as in (a). 3, The ports of Geraldton, Albany, and Esperance are worked by the Railway Department, but the cost of working is not separately recorded in the accounts. It is therefore not possible to say how much of the revenue earned is available for payment of interest after providing for working costs.

QUESTION—GRASSHOPPER PEST.

Bait on Railway Reserves.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has bait for grasshoppers been laid along railway reserves throughout the

Dalwallinu Road Board's territory? 2, By what method was the baiting carried out, (a) by hand or (b) by mechanical distributor? 3, Have any stock losses been reported as a result of such baiting?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, both on the railway reserve and outside by the local authority. 2, By hand. 3, A report has been received of the death of a mare, presumably from poisoning, on land outside the railway reserve.

QUESTION—HOSPITAL EXTENSIONS AND UNION LABOUR.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Health: 1, Have rural hospital boards contemplating extensions to their hospital buildings been advised that unless their contractors employ financial members of a union recognised by the Government they will not be entitled to receive assistance from the Hospital Fund towards the cost of such buildings? 2, If so, on whose authority? 3, Is provision made for this distinction in the Hospital Fund Act?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by 1. 3, No.

BILL—ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE REIGNING SOVEREIGN.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: As most hon. members are aware, the actual birthday of our present King takes place on the 14th December in each year. As a result of the birthday falling so close to the Christmas period, the holding of a public holiday on that date would doubtless have the effect of creating a great deal of dislocation in the intense business activities that are carried out in the two or three weeks immediately prior to Christmas. Early this year an attempt was made by the Commonwealth to obtain the co-operation of all the Governments of Australia for the purpose of fixing a uniform day in all the States for the celebration of the birthday of His Majesty the King. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain any unanimous agreement amongst all the Governments regarding a uniform date. The result is that the holiday has been observed on different dates in

the various States. The Government of this State hoped that it would be possible to have the holiday kept up here on a day other than the actual birthday of His Majesty without the necessity for passing a Bill through Parliament. After close investigation into the possibility of doing that, it was discovered that certain Acts of Parliament exist which lay it down that the holiday must take place on the actual birthday of the Sovereign. It was then decided to introduce a Bill so that the difficulties set up by those Acts of Parliament might be overcome. This Bill merely sets out that the Governor may by proclamation published in the "Government Gazette" declare that the holiday in connection with the birthday of His Majesty shall be observed on a specified date, irrespective of what any Act of Parliament may say regarding the date on which the holiday is to be held. Several weeks ago the Government of this State agreed that the King's birthday should be celebrated this year on Monday, the 15th November. That, doubtless, is the date that will be specified in the proclamation to be issued by the Governor in the event of this Bill becoming law. I think every member of both Houses of Parliament will agree that this small Bill is necessary, and that, as the result of that unanimous agreement, the Bill will have a smooth and quick passage through both Houses of Parliament. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.40]: I see no reason why the Bill should not be passed. I thought at the outset that it might be possible to arrange the date by proclamation, but as a proclamation cannot override an Act of Parliament I agree to the necessity for the Bill. I hope that when the proclamation is issued, the same date will be observed every year.

The Premier: Possibly all the States of the Commonwealth may agree to some other date, in which case we will fall into line.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That will be all right. If one date be unanimously fixed throughout the Commonwealth, the State, of course, should conform to it. This Bill will provide for the holiday on whatever day is fixed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [4.42]: This measure is an annual one. The Premier, when introducing it, told the House why it was necessary to continue the Act for a further period. The Minister, who also controls forests, gave information about the reforestation of sandalwood and the experiments made by the Conservator of Forests. Under the Act of 1918, provision was made that out of the revenue derived from sandalwood, three-fifths of the amount, if it did not exceed £5,000, should be credited to a fund for the reforestation of sandalwood. The Premier's explanation of the experiments and their failure caused me some concern, and I should like to crave the indulgence of the House for a few minutes while I explain why I feel so sorry about the outlook. When the Premier was speaking, I interjected that the sandalwood industry would soon be out of existence. The Premier did not agree with me, but I am going to endeavour to convince him that I am right. For many years the sandalwood industry played a very important part in financing Western Australia.

The Premier: In what currency?

MR. STUBBS: My recollection of Western Australia goes back to 1891. I used to make periodical visits to this State from Melbourne, and came into contact with the leading business men of Perth and Fremantle. Many business people in Perth derived a great deal of their income from their dealings in sandalwood with China. Two of the most prominent politicians in this State for many years controlled the sandalwood industry in the Great Southern, and gave me information that was of value in my business career and in my farming experience. It is a thousand pities that the experiments conducted by the Conservator were not confined to the Great Southern districts. True, a great deal of land that used to grow sandalwood in the Great Southern has now been brought under cultivation for crops and

the feeding of stock. Nevertheless, there are still 150,000 acres or more of land available, and many more acres are contained in the huge area that is reserved for forestry purposes. This land could well be utilised for the growth of sandalwood. There is no doubt that sandalwood grows three times as quickly in an area where the rainfall is congenial as it does on the goldfields. Everyone who has studied the industry knows that sandalwood is a parasite. Almost from the moment when it begins to rise above the ground, it derives its existence from hundreds of little threads not much thicker than cotton, which spread over a distance of a chain on all sides in an endeavour to find a host. These threads do not fasten to any root that has a rough surface, but will immediately batten on to anything that has a smooth roof. I have here a little diagram describing what I have just said. In this case the tiny fibres are making contact with the roots of a jam tree. Sandalwood sends out tentacles and these grip the roots of the jam. By this means the sandalwood tree feeds through the roots of the jam, or any other host to which it attaches itself. I understand there are about 50 varieties of hosts in this State upon which sandalwood exists.

MR. PATRICK: It likes jam.

MR. STUBBS: It likes jam or wattle in preference to anything else. On the goldfields there are very few of such trees, but in the Great Southern wattle and jam grow in abundance. Between 30 and 40 years ago scores of wagons were engaged in carting sandalwood from the Wagin, Katanning and Williams districts, to the seaboard, where it was shipped away to China. To-day anything in the shape of sandalwood in the Great Southern is looked upon as a curiosity, as is the case with a tree that is growing in the town of Williams. I do not think more than a dozen sandalwood trees can be seen anywhere in that area to-day. I wish to pay a tribute to the Conservator of Forests. There is no more enthusiastic or capable official in the State. He certainly jealously guards his job and does it well. I had a conversation with him recently. I told him what the Premier had said about the failure of the regeneration scheme that was put into operation some years ago. I understand from the remarks of the Premier that the depredation of rabbits and other pests has been responsible for the destruction of the

young trees that had been grown. There is an enormous area of suitable country in the big tract of land that is reserved for forestry purposes between Armadale, Beverley, Williams and Collie, which could be utilised for the regeneration of sandalwood. This area contains plenty of valleys of jam and wattle where sandalwood could be grown in abundance. Each year the sandalwood-getters on the goldfields have to travel further afield in order to obtain a living in this industry, and to-day have to work hundreds of miles away from the railhead. I do not think much money would be required to put my proposal into effect. Rabbits are not very bad in the Darling Ranges, and east of them, and would not be likely to injure the experimental plots. I hope the Premier will accept my suggestions in their true spirit. It is my job to give the benefit of my experience in this matter and to say what I have seen in the Great Southern. I want this industry to have a chance to get back to the condition when enormous quantities of sandalwood were produced from the Great Southern. Less than 30 years ago thousands of roots, some so big I could hardly put my arms around them, were hauled to the surface by stump-jump ploughs on the tract of land I was endeavouring to convert into a farm. That was at Wagin, some 17 miles west of the Great Southern. We hauled up thousands of big roots, but there are no trees left alive to tell the tale of what the position was in the years that have gone. As I have said, there are many thousands of acres of land on which sandalwood could be regenerated and grown to advantage. Another tree has produced an enormous amount of wealth for a few people. When I first visited the Great Southern, two men, the Strelitz Brothers operating at Fremantle, had made an enormous fortune out of mallet bark. How much of that bark is exported from Western Australia to-day? Some three or four years ago the Wagin and Narrogin Road Boards requested the Minister for Lands to throw open a number of reserves which, in years gone by, had been set apart for travelling stock. Those reserves are not now required by anyone. As a result of the establishment of railway communication and other transport services, they have outlived their usefulness. A good deal of the land on those reserves is of poor quality, consisting of ironstone gravel and scrub-country. Everyone who knows anything about mallet knows that it prefers ironstone gravel and rubbishy country to any

other class of country. The Minister for Lands was good enough to yield to the requests of the local governing bodies concerned and to throw open those reserves. In the course of a chat I had recently with the Conservator, he told me he was highly delighted with the growth of mallet in those particular areas. What has been done with mallet can well be done with sandalwood. I would ask the Premier to have a chat with the Conservator, and see whether some of the areas of forest could not be set apart for the conduct of experiments in the regrowth of sandalwood, especially as the climatic conditions there are so favourable for the purpose. There is no doubt the industry could be turned into a valuable asset for Western Australia. I apologise for taking up the time of the House, but would ask members to believe that in my judgment there is a great latent asset in the Great Southern for future generations. With the expenditure of a little money, now is the time to set about the regeneration of these two valuable timbers. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1. Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.

With an amendment.

2. Supply Bill (No. 2), £1,400,000.

Without amendment.

BILL—ROAD TRANSPORT SUBSIDY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.1]: I desire to support the second reading of the Bill, which is not at all contentious. I think it will be necessary for the Minister to see that the subsidies extracted from the local governing bodies are not large. I believe the percentage of the traffic fees to be deducted will be very small and will not have any detrimental effect on the revenue of

local bodies. As to the principle underlying the measure, it is certainly a good idea to encourage transport facilities where they cannot be afforded without a subsidy. At the same time, I would draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that many local governing bodies are not satisfied with the manner in which the traffic fees are allocated. Of course, I am aware that it is difficult to please all each year, but I would like some overhaul of the system by which the traffic fees are allocated.

MR. SHEARN (Maylands) [5.2]: I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. I listened attentively to the Minister when he made his introductory remarks and since then I have taken advantage of opportunities to make inquiries regarding the possible effect of the measure. As a result, I desire to support the Bill most heartily. It is being claimed in certain quarters that the application of the Bill will mean that certain authorities will be to some extent detrimentally affected. As the Minister pointed out, the object of the measure is one that should be viewed from a rather wider angle than that relating to one's particular electorate. For that reason, I do not for one moment share the opinion of certain people who entertain the idea that the Bill will detrimentally affect particular districts. In its general application, the measure is certainly commendable, and for that reason I shall support it. Like the member for Claremont (Mr. North), I hesitate to believe that the allocations made by the Transport Board to local authorities have been unduly influenced or unfair. Indeed, with some little knowledge of those allocations, I feel, on the contrary, taking all features into consideration, the board's allocations have been exceptionally fair and have at all times been consistent with the duty devolving upon the board in relation to the distribution of money at their disposal. I do not agree with the opinion that has been expressed in certain quarters; I feel there is ample evidence to support a contrary contention.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [5.5]: I also support the second reading of the Bill. I noticed in the Press recently some criticism regarding portion of the traffic fees paid in the metropolitan area being diverted to

country areas, particularly seeing that the latter had done nothing to secure that assistance. I would like to inform the House that metropolitan buses run as far afield as Busselton, Kellerberrin, New Norcia and many other centres outside the city and suburban areas. The revenue received from buses during the last three months would probably exceed £1,500 and possibly by the end of 12 months it will be in the vicinity of £7,000, derived from buses that go outside the metropolitan area. The Bill is an excellent one and will enable the Transport Board to subsidise feeder services to outer districts. There are many farming areas that were opened up in the days when railways were promised. I presume that the construction of railways in Western Australia has ceased for many years to come. Other methods of transport have improved out of sight. On the Mullewa railway, there are hundreds of farms that are situated to the westward 12 or 15 miles distant from the line. The idea of taking a small portion of the license fees derived from transport services in the metropolitan area to subsidise facilities for such remote places is highly commendable. I do not think I would be over-stating the position if I said that the total revenue from bus services would not be much less than £270,000 a year, and it is only fair—I certainly commend the Government for their proposal—that some of the isolated communities should be brought into touch with other centres by means of assistance from the Transport Board and from the metropolitan revenue derived from transport services.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [5.8]: In his introductory remarks with regard to the Bill, the Minister said that revenue from aircraft license fees might be utilised for the provision of landing grounds.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member reading from "Hansard"?

Mr. DONEY: Yes, Sir, from Vol. No. 10.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then he had better put the volume down.

Mr. DONEY: Is not a quotation permissible?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member knows he is not allowed to quote from "Hansard" for the current session.

Mr. DONEY: I am well aware of the fact, but I did not think, Mr. Speaker, you were

looking my way. However, I understood from the Minister's remarks that one object was to assist in the preparation of landing grounds by the utilisation of at least portion of the aircraft license fees. I believe it is not intended to assist in the establishment of the regular landing grounds, but rather is that assistance to be rendered in connection with emergency grounds along recognised air routes. I am putting up this matter on behalf of the people of Williams who wish to know whether the scheme at that centre could be assisted from this fund. On account of the fact that there is no reserve close to the township that could be used for such a purpose, it will be necessary at Williams to purchase a considerable portion of land from a farm handy to the centre. I know the amount that will be available from license sources for some years to come will be rather small, but nevertheless I wondered if the intention is to provide assistance for the purchase of grounds as well as for their preparation. Perhaps the Minister may be able to give us some information as to whether money is not available from a certain Federal source for such purposes. I do not know if any separate representations have been made to the Minister's department by the people of Williams, but if so, the Minister will perhaps have sufficient information on the point to enable him to reply to my query.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Board authorised to subsidise road transport.

Mr. DONEY: With reference to paragraph (c), which relates to proceeds of license fees in respect of aircraft being granted in aid of the provision of landing grounds, can the Minister give me some information with respect to the Williams proposal?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There will be very little revenue from the Transport Board. I think I intimated previously that the board has in hand about £190, but the idea was to utilise that money not for the purpose of improving recognised landing grounds, but rather to improve roads in out-

back districts where landing grounds may have to be cleared. As to money being used from the petrol fund, many applications have been made during the year. The earliest came from Katanning and that was followed by an application from Dalwallinu. I presume the applications were made with the idea of getting in first, and no time was allowed for the Commissioner of Main Roads to go into the question. It is proposed to set aside next year an amount of from £5,000 to £10,000 for the purpose of subsidising, or providing, landing grounds, particularly in the outback districts. No provision has been made on the Estimates this year, but a policy will be formulated, and probably those who will be entitled to assistance will be those who have endeavoured to assist themselves. It would be wrong to allow the impression to be created that the Main Roads Department will simply hand out money on application. It will depend on how people locally make arrangements for themselves in respect to landing grounds as to what consideration they get from the Main Roads Department next year. Next year the Commissioner proposes to go into this matter. He will formulate a policy, set aside an amount and then the local authorities who have done something in this direction will be assisted.

Mr. MARSHALL: The discussion up to date has taken place on the score of subsidies for roads. If I interpret the Bill and this particular clause properly, it does not apply to any such thing, but suggests that the board shall have power to subsidise certain transport services.

Member: That is on land.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not suppose we shall be doing much in the way of making roads in the Milky Way. So long as we understand the position it is all right. I understood from the Minister's remarks that the expenditure authorised under the Bill was to be given to local authorities to maintain roads.

Mr. HEGNEY: As I understand the Bill the position is this: Suppose there is a transport system to be developed in the metropolitan area. Because of the inadequate support a particular transport service is getting, the Transport Board will have power to subsidise that system. Is that so?

Mr. Marshall: That is right.

Mr. HEGNEY: That is long overdue. I know of instances in the outer metropolitan

area where the Transport Board should have the right to help develop transport services to cater for those in scattered districts. Therefore, I support the clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1937-38.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 12th October, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Minister for Mines (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Minister).

Vote—Mines, £113,338:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [5.20]: I feel it a privilege to again have the pleasure of introducing the Mines Estimates, realising what the mining industry has meant, and is still likely to mean to the State. When introducing the Estimates last year I forecast that for this year we would probably top the million ounces, and if we did the actual revenue received in Australian currency would be equal to our peak year. I am still hopeful and confident that that prediction will be realised, although we are having one or two little setbacks in places where they were least expected. Be that as it may, I believe that by the 31st December we will have produced in Western Australia over a million fine ozs. of gold. I think it is worth repeating that in the peak period (1903) we produced 2,064,801 fine ozs. which were valued then at £8,770,719. With the premium on gold that has lasted this year, if we produce 1,000,000 ozs. we will just about equal that actual return in Australian currency. The average over the year will be a little over £8 15s., unless there is a considerable slump in the next few months, which I do not expect. For the present year (1937) the average produced for the first eight months was 80,437 fine ozs. If multiplied by 12 this will give 965,244 fine ozs. If £8 15s. is multiplied by that amount it will give £8,445,885. Every hon. member who has taken an interest in the mining industry or knows the conditions of that

industry, will realise that the last quarter of the year always provides the biggest output, so I am anticipating that we will reach the million ozs. One of the reasons for my making that statement is that since the end of the seven months of this year with which these figures deal, there have been two new plants established, and they are producing gold. There will be a third established very shortly, and I am hopeful that it will get two months' return during the year. The men employed for the first eight months of 1936 totalled 15,670. For the corresponding period this year the total was 16,331, giving an increase of 661 men employed. The men employed in mining for minerals other than gold at the end of 1937 totalled 912, making a total of 17,243. The dividends paid by mining companies this year to the 31st August totalled £774,139. It is interesting to observe the comparison of the output. The output of gold for 1936 totalled 846,208 fine ozs., valued at £7,373,539. Production for the first eight months of 1936 was 532,750 fine ozs., while for the corresponding period of this year the output was 643,496 fine ozs., or an increase of 110,746 ozs. this year over last year for the first eight months. I will give the value of gold produced for the same periods in 1936 and 1937. I was not going to quote the par value and the value with the premium added, but it might be as well if I did, in order to let hon. members realise what the increase in the price of gold has meant to this State. In 1936 for the first eight months the gold at par value would have been worth £2,262,477. The premium was valued at £2,361,999, which brought the actual value to £4,624,974. For the eight months of this year the par value was £2,733,398, and the premium £2,900,850, the total value being £5,634,248. That shows an increase including the premiums of £1,009,274 for 1937 as against 1936. I am hopeful that the output next year will far exceed that of this year. The tonnage figures are interesting. The tonnage treated for the six months ended the 30th June, 1936, was 1,139,963 tons, producing 393,423 fine ozs. For the first six months of the present year the tonnage treated was 1,417,904, which produced 474,723 fine ozs. The increase in the tonnage for the half year was 277,941 tons, and the increased gold 81,300 fine ozs. In

our peak year none of our mines had got to what would be considered a fair depth. They were down 500 or 600 feet on the Golden Mile. I do not think the deepest mine there at that date was 1,000 feet. I want members to realise that there cannot be a fair comparison between the quantity of explosive used in those days and that used to-day because much of the tonnage produced then was produced from oxidised ore. It was much easier to produce and not so much fracture was used.

Mr. Marshall: It was much closer to the surface.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. Our peak period for importation of explosives was in 1904. We then used 4,301,240 lbs. of explosives and in our leanest year (1930) we used only 1,141,500 lbs. For the 10 months of 1937 we used 4,292,250 lbs. This year, therefore, we will far exceed the quantity of explosives used previously. That is due to the greater depth of the mines and the necessity for using considerably more fracture. Let me now refer to the prospecting scheme. The total number of men assisted since the inception of the scheme in July, 1933—assistance includes rations, rail fares, loan of tools, and explosives—has been as follows:—

State scheme	2,902
Commonwealth scheme	2,759
Total	<u>5,661</u>

The total cost of the scheme, which includes assistance, explosives, petrol, oil, fares, supervisors wages, purchase of tools, purchase of trucks, water, freight and sundries, has been—

	£
State scheme	94,543
Commonwealth scheme	61,317
Total	<u>£155,860</u>

At present there are still on the scheme 596 men. Members might ask why the present number of assisted prospectors is apparently so small. A considerable number of the men have repaid the money received for sustenance, and are now working on their own account. I am safe in saying that out of the total number who went prospecting under the scheme, at least 2,000 are permanently employed in the mining industry to-day. Thus the scheme has had a beneficial effect in giving those men some outlook in life, and in providing permanent work in

the mining industry for a large number at reasonably good wages, apart from having given many of them a fairly good lift in life.

Mr. North: Some refunds have been made.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. The crushings reported by the assisted men have been as follows:—

	Tons.	Fine ounces.
State scheme	24,189	10,934
Commonwealth scheme	14,136	7,828
Total	<u>38,325</u>	<u>18,762</u>

At the present rate, the value of that production is £164,168. Men have repaid sustenance received to the following extent:—

	£
State scheme	17,272
Commonwealth scheme	9,363
Total	<u>£26,635</u>

Deducting repayments from the total cost of both schemes, the net cost is found to be £129,225, against which the prospectors have produced gold of a value of £164,168. Thus they have created wealth to the extent of £34,943 over and above the total cost. I do not know of any avenue that offers a young man down and out a better and brighter outlook than does prospecting under this scheme. Let me give some results of what men have achieved. I am aware that these are exceptional cases, and it is remarkable that so many good results have been obtained quite recently. The men concerned are on the prospecting scheme, and members will note that the places where good discoveries have been made are fairly well spread over the goldfields areas. Since the 1st June of this year, the following results have been obtained:—

- Cue, nine tons crushed, 46 fine ounces, valued at £400.
- Meekatharra, 56 lbs. produced 54 fine ounces valued at £472.
- Leonora, 162 tons produced 328 ounces, valued at £2,870.
- Mt. Monger, 8 tons produced 55 ozs., valued at £493.

Those four crushings produced gold of a total value of £4,335. There were two men who had been battling on their own for months and getting very little. They were joined by a man who was under the prospecting scheme, and up to March last they produced gold in about 12 months worth £9,000. Since the making up of these re-

turns they have had another crushing, which produced £3,000 worth of gold, making a total of £12,000 for that party. A report appeared in the Press a few days ago of success that had rewarded another party of prospectors, but whether they are assisted prospectors, I have not been able to ascertain. I am pleased at their success, irrespective of whether or not they are assisted men. It shows that there is still a chance for men who go out looking for gold. Three prospectors had been on the scheme since its inception. They had had three or four crushings which had not returned full wages, and only on one occasion had they paid anything off their sustenance. They were joined by a third man recently, and have produced $7\frac{1}{4}$ tons of ore, which averaged 78 ozs. to the ton, the total value being approximately £5,000. That find was made at Mulgabby.

Mr. Patrick: Where is that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The nearest railway station would be Broad Arrow, though people travelling by motor car would go via Kalgoolie. All told, the 14 prospectors to whom I have referred have, since January last, produced £21,335 worth of gold. That is something of which the State might well be proud. I emphasise that I cannot understand a young man who wants an outlook in life not accepting an opportunity to come under the scheme. I cannot imagine why a single man would sooner work under part-time or sustenance conditions at 30s. a week when there is an opportunity to get 15s. a week to go out prospecting. If these assisted prospectors get nothing, they repay nothing. They are given liberal conditions when they do find gold, and they have a chance of making something for themselves.

Mr. Patrick: Are there any vacancies under the scheme?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, we are prepared to take more yet. There have been many arguments and much criticism of sustenance and part-time work, but these results are better than those of 50 per cent. of the sustenance work we are doing.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Why do not you send more men out?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We cannot get them to go.

Mr. North: What is the youngest age?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have taken lads of $17\frac{1}{2}$, provided they are accom-

panied by an older man. I approved yesterday of a father going out with his two sons, one of them 19 and the other just over 17. The father is an experienced prospector; the boys could get no work, and why should they not be assisted to go out with their father on the chance of producing some wealth? I wish now to reply to a question raised by the Leader of the Opposition during the debate on the Address-in-reply. The hon. member said that the Mines Department revenue was £5,000 below the estimate, and that the Government could not blame the drought for that. He asked for an explanation of the deficiency. Our principal revenue is derived from territorial, particulars of which may be found on page 12 of the Estimates. We estimated to receive £42,300, and the actual receipts amounted to £41,838, a shortage of £462. In "departmental" we estimated to receive £16,300, and actually received only £11,274, a deficiency of £5,026. That is the item to which the hon. member referred. Let me explain first of all that it is most difficult to estimate the departmental revenue. More particularly was that so last year than it will be this year. I think we shall be able to get nearer to our estimate this year. As members know, the Estimates year by year are based on the results of the previous year, and on anticipations of what will happen during the current year. The greater portion of the sum mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition consists of exemption fees. If we had received for exemption fees the amount received in the previous year, the estimate would have been exceeded. But unfortunately the slump came, or a bit of a slump. Quite candidly, in some ways I was not sorry for that, especially having regard to the fact that the slump chiefly affected mining companies which in my opinion, as regards perhaps nine out of ten of them, should never have been floated at all. In the previous year mining propositions were floated, and efforts were made to sell them, and when they could not be sold exemptions were applied for. For those exemptions a fee of £1 per acre is charged. We anticipated a continuance of those payments; but, instead, the leases were forfeited, and so the revenue dropped. That, practically, is the reason for the shortage of £5,026. Now I wish to say a word or two on State Batteries. I do not intend to make a second speech on that aspect, and it is hardly pos-

sible to introduce the Mines Estimates satisfactorily without referring to it. The estimated value of gold production from State Batteries for the year ended on 31st December, 1936, was £563,000. The gross receipts from operations for the same year were £130,967. The State Batteries therefore got 23 per cent. of the total output to cover all operating expenses, and the producers of the ore got 77 per cent. of the total output as a return for their labour. In addition, the prospector received a subsidy of £16,064 towards cartage expense of ore, of which amount £12,416 was given at State Batteries and £3,648 at private batteries. It is anticipated that the record tonnages crushed for the preceding three years will drop slightly during the current year. The reason for that is that a good many of the leases which were sending fairly large tonnages to State batteries have since put up plants of their own; so of course we are losing the tonnages from that source. We do not anticipate picking up the loss this year. It is expected that there will be a decline in the average value of tailings during the year. During last financial year, in addition to £2,623 spent in working on repairs and renewals, an amount of £17,879 was spent from capital account on erection and reconstruction. Last November a further 5-head was put into operation at Kalgoorlie, making a total of 20 head. New 10-head batteries, replacing old worn-out plants, were erected at Laverton and Ora Banda; and the reconstruction of the Coolgardie plant was also completed. These are all first-class plants, having wood-gas plants as prime movers, and driving electric generators for the running of rockbreakers, pumps, etc., by motors. With the installation of tailing plants at Mt. Ida and Youanmi during the year, and the plant installed at Marble Bar in 1935, all batteries now have tailing plants, for the first time in the history of State Batteries. Of that fact we have reason to be proud. Although the State battery system has been in operation for 43 years, never before have all the batteries been equipped with cyanide plants for treatment of tailings. The presence of copper in the ore has precluded profitable treatment for a number of years at Marble Bar and Mt. Ida, but a considerable proportion of the tailings is now handled. During the last two years the Marble Bar tailing plant has produced £26,739 worth of bullion. During the past

year the preliminary work for increasing the Boogardie 5-head mill was carried out. This includes the erection of a new 1,200-ton-a-month tailing plant, which will treat approximately 10,000 tons of residues requiring removal in order to provide dams of sufficient size to suit the larger mill. It is hoped to recover sufficient gold from the residues to pay for their removal and also to meet half the cost of the new cyanide plant. I may mention that these tailings have already been treated, and so are to be re-treated. In connection with State batteries an amount of £1,600 has been spent on the erection of leading hands' quarters, and it is anticipated that £750 will be spent on suitable camps in remote districts where accommodation is not procurable. This action is being taken especially in connection with State batteries which do not run continuously all the year round. In those cases gangs of men go from one battery to another, cleaning up all the prospectors' ore at one battery and then going to another battery to clean up there. In many cases there is no accommodation for those gangs. Therefore the Government have decided, under the new agreement with State Battery employees, to erect suitable accommodation and camps for those men. It is interesting to give details of the operations of the State Batteries as a whole—

State Batteries.

Output since inception to 31st August, 1937.			
Tons of ore milled	.. ..	2,130,946.69	
Value of production at par—			£
By amalgamation	.. ..	6,388,764.99	
„ sands	.. ..	1,222,999.14	
„ slimes	.. ..	265,266.11	
„ residues	.. ..	9,353.37	
			<hr/> 7,886,383.61
Gold premium—			
By amalgamation	.. ..	1,077,854.18	
„ sands	.. ..	341,686.00	
			<hr/>
Total Australian currency	.. ..	£9,305,923.79	
Tons of tin ore milled	.. ..	81,786	
Production—			£
By black tin	.. ..	93,833.96	
„ residues	.. ..	572.20	
			<hr/> £9,399,329.95

It will be seen that the prospectors sending ore to the State batteries represent approximately the fifth largest mining production in Western Australia. I should draw attention also to the production of tin at Greenbushes. There has been much activity

in the Geological Branch of the Mines Department. As Minister for Mines I want to commend that branch for the good work done by it. I am sorry that not more of the work was done in the past, as it would have been in the interests of the mining industry and particularly in the interests of prospectors. Had a thorough geological survey of the country been made in years gone by, prospectors could have been saved years of useless labour and given a chance of producing gold much earlier than proved to be the case. I am aware that some people do not believe that geological survey work has much value.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It must be of value.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, of very great value.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The doubts are about the geophysical work.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Nevertheless, I have heard numbers of men criticise geological surveys. In reply let me say that the Mines Department has been fortunate enough to secure a geologist, and that he has been stationed full-time south of Yilgarn. He has made a complete survey of that district. He has put up a fairly lengthy bulletin on the prospects of that district, advising the line of reef not by using geological terms but by taking a prominent land mark, known to everyone in the district. He tells prospectors that if they take a direct line from a certain dam 11 miles away and prospect on that course, it is their best chance of finding gold in that district.

Mr. Stubbs: But he cannot see underground.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He knows the possibilities, although there is no gold showing on the surface. That line of country has been walked over for 10 years without being tried. Prospectors took notice of the bulletin and went on the line, with the result that there are 27 leases being worked on that line to-day, three of them giving fairly good results. Therefore I say that geological work is particularly desirable in the interests of prospectors, as well as of the mining industry in general. I may say that in the early days prospectors discovered that greenstone country was the most promising and therefore did not miss too much. Since the introduction of the last Mines Estimates till now there has been advanced from General Loan Fund and from Commonwealth Assistance to Metalliferous

Mining a total of £13,765. I am pleased to be able to say that during last year there has been repaid on account of those advances a total of £4,416 5s. 4d.. The advances, therefore, have certainly justified themselves. I have told the bright side of mining in Western Australia, but in the winning of that wealth we have undoubtedly sacrificed a considerable number of lives. Strange to say accidents, like many other things, tend to run in cycles. We get a period free from fatal accidents, and that period is usually followed by three or four equally favourable periods. But the number that has latterly met with fatal accidents is anything but what I would like to see it. We must bear in mind, however, that there are 17,000 men employed in mining for gold and other metals and it is not possible for operations in the industry to be carried on without a certain number of fatalities happening. Accidents will always occur, no matter how careful we might be. The average number of men being withdrawn from the mining industry because of either silicosis plus tuberculosis or silicosis advanced is becoming less and less. I want members to realise that at the present time we have probably 2,000 men still working in the mining industry who, at the very first laboratory examination, were certified to be suffering from silicosis early. Naturally there are still a fair number also who were there prior to the examinations. We must expect a fairly high number to be withdrawn each year, but strange to say, there are two cases that I know of—there may be more—that in the second examination held in this State were men who were returned as suffering from silicosis advanced whilst still working in the mines. In the case of one of those two men no one could tell that there was anything wrong with him unless, of course, he started to walk upstairs or began to run. Then the shortness of breath would tell its tale.

Mr. Stubbs: Should he not be told?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He is told every year. If in the next year a man is found suffering from pneumoconiosis or silicosis early, he is notified and if a man is suffering from silicosis plus tuberculosis, he is withdrawn from the mine altogether. That is compulsory, and it is done in the interests of the health of his fellow-workers. Taking everything into consideration we have a good deal to be thankful for in the revival

of the industry in this State. I do not know what our position would have been but for the revival in mining. There has been a wonderful increase in the production of gold, but unfortunately the industry has paid fairly dearly for it. I am hopeful, however, that with the new method of wet treatment instead of the dry treatment and the roasting of ore the conditions underground will be greatly improved and the risk being run of the contraction of silicosis either in the early or advanced stage will become less. I say that for the reason that in my opinion, and from experience gained in working underground, one has to be exceptionally careful with the amount of water that is used. If a man were working in an end driving in a level or putting up a rise or sinking a winze and after firing was 200 yards away, it would be necessary for him to keep his candle on the side so as to maintain it alight. This was because of the dust that came from the bottom.

Mr. Stubbs: But such conditions have been improved.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, because of the alteration of the method in treatment. At the time to which I was referring they wanted the air as dry as possible because if the ore got wet it affected the treatment.

Mr. Fox: In some mines only.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Machines are not permitted to be used to-day unless they are water-lined. Firing can be done 20ft. away to-day and there will not be any dust, because the ground is kept damp. Previously it was not possible to see 10 yards ahead because of the dust and, as I have said, to maintain a candle alight it had to be kept on its side because of the dust that would settle on it and extinguish it. After firing in the end arose the danger to the individuals, but with the present method and the use of water-lined machines and the improvement in the ventilation, I think I am right in saying that the danger is considerably reduced.

Mr. Marshall: And stopping down.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and the abolition of rising as far as it is practicable and which to-day is being done. With regard to present-day conditions, both Government and workmen's inspectors are carrying out excellent work in the interests of the health of the men. Twelve months or more ago, instructions were is-

sued that wherever there was any doubt regarding the carrying out of their instructions with regard to health or ventilation matters, and it was discovered that the companies had not given effect to such instructions, the inspectors were to report the companies concerned, and in each such instance the company was proceeded against. I wish to utter a warning to the men themselves. Inspectors have gone to faces underground where quite up to date Venturi plant had been installed, and found that no air had been turned on. No doubt the men, being unaware of the fact that the inspector was underground, had turned off the air because they did not like a draught. When an inspector catches them doing that, they will be summoned as well, not only in their own interests, but in that of other men. The only way by which dust can be settled is to secure a current of air, and, particularly in a dead-end, the only way to achieve that is by means of the Venturi. Wherever that convenience is provided it is up to the men to use it and allay the dust nuisance. I have much pleasure in submitting the Mines Estimates to the Committee.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [6.10]: It has been most pleasing to listen to the introduction of the Mines Estimates, and I agree with the Minister that the State would be in a somewhat deplorable condition, from an industrial standpoint in particular, were it not for the revival in the goldmining industry. It has provided employment for a large number of men who could not have secured work in any other sphere. That is beyond doubt. While we live and labour under a system in which gold is so essential, we can speak with enthusiasm with regard to the revival of this industry. I have no intention of breaking the Standing Orders, and shall not, therefore, touch on the State Batteries and their activities until we reach the appropriate item, but I certainly do not intend to pass over that phase too lightly, although the Chairman of Committees has already warned me that there is no Vote for State Batteries in these Estimates. I agree with the Minister that his action in formulating a scheme for the assistance of prospectors and to help young men to go out in search of gold was a gesture on the part of himself and the Government that has

been generally appreciated. That action provided a wonderful opportunity for many young men who otherwise had no prospects whatever in view. Many of them had been sent to compounds, such as Black-boy, and other similar institutions, where they received a pittance that was not sufficient to keep body and soul together for any length of time. While the prospecting scheme does not provide a luxurious existence for those participating, it has afforded them an opportunity to regain their self-reliance and to engage upon operations of value to the State. It has certainly placed those men in a much better position than if they had remained in the circumstances obtaining when the Government took office. It was delightful to listen to the outline of results achieved, and we can certainly look for better results still. As the Minister indicated in his remarks, members who are not conversant with the work of prospecting for gold may gain the impression that, seeing that prospecting has been engaged in for many years, upwards of half a century, it would be hopeless to expect anyone who followed in the wake of the pioneers to make further discoveries. While it is true that, since the revival of the goldmining industry, the majority of the bigger mines that are operating are those that were discovered many years ago, it is also true that in the same districts there is every possibility of new discoveries being made, particularly small ones, which in themselves would be of untold advantage to the prospectors. There is always the possibility of making a fortune in one little dab, although that type of discovery does not lead, as a rule, to the establishment of a goldmine.

The Minister for Mines: But those dabs are very nice for the men who discover them.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, and any such discovery inspires others to further efforts.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is true that many of those who go out prospecting imagine that unless they get into virgin country they are not apt to make any discoveries of importance, but as the Minister has pointed out in his speech, one can never say beyond a pick's point exactly where there may be a well-defined ore channel of payable gold. I want prospectors to realise that fact, because

almost every day there are prospectors discovering very profitable propositions. Speaking of prospecting generally, the young men who have gone into it have been removed from a position of positive hopelessness to one in which they are filled with ambition and hope. Some hope in vain, I will admit, but one never knows, and it is the uncertainty of the game that lures one on for years. I hope that finally most of these young men will be well rewarded for their efforts, because if they are rewarded the State will be rewarded. That move was a wise one, and I congratulate the Government. Reverting to gold-mining itself, while I agree with the Minister that we have very competent inspectors—Government and workmen's inspectors—I feel that I must make some reference to what might be called the leniency exhibited on the part of inspectors when companies are initiating developmental policies. It may not apply to the Golden Mile where there are many shafts down and much has been done to ensure that the ventilation provided is good. But unfortunately our inspectors, in order not to hinder, hamper or retard the development at some of our big mines, allow them to go on without knowing fully what is actually to be done in regard to systematic ventilation. So it is that when they get down to a depth the ventilation is anything but good, and to rectify the position at that stage becomes a very expensive proposition. I would point out to the Minister, who knows it very well, and to other members of the Committee, that ventilation is one of the most important factors in the health of the goldminer. Unless we have a down draft, as it is referred to, it is inevitable that the men will swallow gases and dust to such an extent that their lives must be shortened. I suggest that the time has arrived to amend our Mining Act and to provide for systematic developmental work so that we can be assured that there will be ample ventilation in all big mines in the future. While it is very pleasing to refer to the revival in the mining industry, to the very profitable industry that it has proved to be to this State, and to the development that has been an offshoot from goldmining, when we review the position we see that it has taken a fairly big toll of life. I was surprised that the Minister did not continue with the programme he adopted when the system of examinations commenced and were

to take place from year to year. Even if we cannot get the results of an annual examination throughout the mining belt, the information that could be made available to the Minister would be of immense value to hon. members. Unless we get that information we cannot tell whether proper ventilation and sanitation of our mines is in existence. While we should not do anything to discourage goldmining, we should do everything possible to protect the health of those individuals who find it necessary, through economic pressure, to earn their livelihood by mining. We owe that to those individuals. It is very pathetic to look back over the history of goldmining in this State and see the enormous number of men who have died young and who have left young families and widows who have had to go to work to rear those families—that is, until 1925, when compensation was introduced. None knows better than the Minister the misery and sickness caused by virtue of neglect in our mining laws, so far as those employed in the industry are concerned. If there is any time when a demand should be put upon the companies in this regard I suggest it is at this juncture when gold is bringing an enhanced price compared with the standard value. We might reasonably ask the companies to adopt the most humane attitude and see that their mines are well ventilated and that the sanitation is as nearly as possible perfect. In speaking on a Bill dealing with reservations, I made reference to the fact that our Act could be renewed to some advantage. There is quite a lot of matter in that Act that could be repealed and a lot of new matter that might be included for the benefit of prospectors, miners and the companies. I have always held the view that anyone accepting tenures under the Mining Act of this State should be obliged to give effect to the covenant under which those tenures are issued, but I am sorry to say that there are many to-day who adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude, and while they have in their possession P.A. tenures and reservations the covenants and conditions under which they are granted are honoured more in the breach than in the observance. The matter should be so policed that those to whom the tenures are granted should be obliged to work the propositions or revert them to the Crown so that others might make use of them. While gold is at the price it is we should see that every foot

of auriferous country is in occupation as far as it is possible for the Minister and his officers to ensure it. It would be astounding to know the area of land held under certain tenures with definite covenants placed on them that are not being worked. I would suggest to the Minister—and this proposal is not a new one to the Chamber because I have advocated it before—that he make it possible by an amendment of the Act, or do it through administration if possible, though I do not think it can be done in that way, for inspectors, when information is brought to them that anyone is holding land under the Mining Act and is not complying with the covenant that is imposed upon the tenure, to call upon the lessee or the reservation holder to show reason why his land should not be forfeited. The Minister knows as well as I do that it is quite within the law for a person who requires a block of land held by a second party to make the necessary search under the Act, and if he finds the land is not being worked he can apply for a forfeiture. I do not know that such conditions are imposed upon reservations, but I am not now dealing with reservations; I am dealing specifically with leasehold and prospecting area tenures. It is within the rights of an individual to apply for a forfeit, but there is a reluctance on the part of most men to apply for the forfeiture of a block of land held by another, for the man who applies for the forfeiture is not too popular with the rest of the community. I know of one man who applied for a forfeiture of a couple of leases, and he was referred to by many in the community as a professional jumper. Any experienced man, be he an inspector of mines or simply a man well versed in mining, can easily tell, by going to a lease or prospecting area and having a look at it, whether the holder of the land has worked it within the preceding week or two. So I suggest to the Minister that if an inspector of mines is informed that there is a block of land which has not been worked for weeks or months, the inspector should visit the block; and if that statement is confirmed by his own observation he should be permitted under the Act to notify the holder of the land to go before the board and show reasons why that block should not be forfeited. Assuming that the inspector made a mistake in his estimation as to whether the block had been worked, still the

lessee has the safeguard afforded by defending his title to the land. It would not be taken away from him on the mere say-so of the inspector, for, as I say, he would be entitled to the safeguard provided by proving that he had worked the land. But, if a block has really not been worked, it is easy for an experienced man, by observation, to say that it has not been worked. If the Minister cannot effect this improvement by administrative act, I suggest to him that he take occasion to amend the Mining Act. That Act is largely obsolete and its provisions require classifying. Also I think that all our tenures granted under the Act could well be reviewed; and the different forms of mining should be set out in their respective classes. It would then not be so difficult to follow them as it is to-day, where all these tenures are jammed into one division of the Act. Many of the sections in the Act ought to be repealed outright and the measure brought up to date in the interests of all concerned. The Minister, if he can find the time, should call upon his officers to assist him in making important amendments to the Act, and so modernising it. I agree with the Minister again in regard to these—I am agreeing with him quite a lot to-night—geological surveys, but I disagree with him respecting the aerial surveys and the geophysical surveys. This, I think, is the first time it has ever been announced in this Chamber that a geologist has gone out and surveyed auriferous belts and advised prospectors as to the possibilities of those belts. In the past it has been done, but only after different belts of country have been discovered by prospectors.

The Minister for Mines: But the geologist went out before the prospectors were there.

Mr. MARSHALL: At all times the geologist has been a wonderful asset to the prospector, because he can go to the prospector and render him guidance. I heard one prospector say that when a geologist came along and told him where there was gold, he, the prospector, would always leave it there. Of course I am not going to accept that as being entirely authentic. I suggest to the Minister that it is a really good move to have field geologists out making geological surveys and advising prospectors as to the possibilities of the surveyed areas. Of course no geologist can tell us where

gold is, for if he could he would not be a geologist.

The Minister for Mines: He would no longer follow his occupation as a geologist.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. I suggest to the Minister that it is a very good proposition, and I think the money would be well spent, because that form of survey would be of untold advantage to the prospectors, more particularly the newer ones who do not yet understand the scientific side of prospecting. Now I wish to make reference to the large number of accidents that have taken place in the goldmining industry. I am not now taking into calculation those unfortunate men who have met or must meet an early death because of their protracted service in the industry, but I am going to refer to the fatal accidents and serious accidents that frequently take place in the industry. It is true that the Minister has given generous attention to the Mines Regulation Act, but earnest as has been the desire to prevent accidents, I am in the unfortunate position of having to admit that fatal and serious accidents are increasing enormously. I believe I could point out the reason, but I do not intend to do so tonight. I suggest that the Minister should have an independent investigation made by a competent person in the more important centres to see whether the reason for the increase of accidents could be ascertained and recommendations made for their prevention. The present sacrifice is far too great, and I feel that something more drastic must be done than has been attempted to date. The increase in the number of fatal and serious accidents is awful to contemplate. If a man meets with an accident that causes him to lose a fortnight's work, it is recorded as a serious accident, but the report of the Under Secretary for Mines shows that it was only by a miracle that quite a big percentage of those who suffered serious accident were not killed outright. Unless this good fortune continues, we can expect a far heavier toll. The figures in the departmental report for last year show that the number of accidents in mines, excluding coal mines and quarries, was—

			Fatal.	Serious.
1935	..	..	30	953
1936	..	..	38	1,406
-	Increase	..	8	453

The Minister must agree that such an increase is altogether too great. Bearing in mind that we have tightened up the Mines Regulation Act and that we have what I consider to be the finest team of inspectors we have had for years, the accident rate has increased alarmingly. Side by side with these figures, members should understand that hundreds of men employed in the industry are doomed to an early death in consequence of diseases peculiar to the industry. While it is advantageous to the State to have gold produced in large quantities, if the accident rate is to increase in this ratio, I am afraid I shall be called upon to adopt a different attitude to the industry. On page 22 of the report is given the death rate from accidents per thousand men for the last five years as follows:—

1932	..	..	..	1.96
1933	..	..	..	2.06
1934	..	..	..	2.25
1935	..	..	..	1.93
1936	..	..	..	2.28

Considering that the number of miners seriously injured increased by 453 in the 12 months, a proportion of which accidents might easily have been fatal, and considering the number of men who must die from diseases peculiar to the industry, we are able to appreciate the toll that the industry is making. I ask the Minister to take cognisance of the figures and endeavour to have an investigation made with a view to lessening the causes of this heavy loss of life. I regret that the Minister did not give some idea of the number of men rejected for work in the industry annually on account of having contracted disease. That would have assisted us to understand the full measure of the sacrifice being made. I will leave the matter there hoping that the Minister will take action along the lines I have suggested. I have never made an attack upon the medical fraternity. Whenever I have had occasion to refer to the medical profession, I have always spoken in eulogistic terms because I appreciate the humane and honorary services rendered to society year after year. In the main I still hold that view. I esteem our doctors for their professional capacity as well as for their humanitarianism and for their wonderfully generous treatment of the sick and injured. Tonight, however, I am constrained to speak of one

doctor who, I think, should be relieved of his position because, unfortunately, he is evidently a man addicted to alcoholic beverages and does not render the services expected of him. The first information obtained by me was at Wiluna when the Kalgoorlie laboratory officials last visited that centre. The doctor in charge made the usual summons for men to attend the unit for examination on a certain morning. Although all the men were present at the appointed time, the doctor did not arrive that day. I do not suppose there was any crime in that, but it confirms what happened at a later stage. A man named Hall was examined at Wiluna and was rejected for work in the mine, but when he was examined some six weeks afterwards at the Big Belt mine, he succeeded in getting into the industry. There might be some reason for that known to the doctor, but the two instances, combined with other information that the doctor was indulging fairly heavily in alcoholic beverages, indicated to me that he did not appear to be competent to do his work. The Minister knows the next case to which I intend to refer. It had a very pathetic termination. There was a first-class engine driver in Meekatharra named Rigatti. The engineer knew it was necessary for this man to be examined hurriedly, and approached the doctor with a view to the examination being made at once. He informed me that the doctor was then all nerves, and trembling from the effect of liquor. I am not particularly concerned about that. The examination took place, and to the amazement of all concerned the doctor's certificate was not left at Meekatharra. The engineer was unable to fill this man's place. The man was a first-class driver, as was necessary in the case of a first-class engine hauling and lowering men. One must be highly qualified before being allowed to take charge of a first-class engine. This man's services were almost indispensable. A telegram was sent to the doctor asking where the certificate was, and the doctor replied that the certificate was at the union office at Meekatharra. A search was made there, but the ticket was not discovered. The engineer rang up the doctor, who told him there had been a mistake, and that the certificate had gone to Kalgoorlie for comparison with the previous examination, and might not be returned for some weeks. The engineer appealed for a permit for this man to be allowed to work. No one can work in, on or about a mine without a

certificate. The doctor told Mr. Ross, the engineer, that in no circumstances was he to employ Rigatti. I wrote to the Minister concerning the case, and received a reply which, to my surprise, did not do the Minister justice. I do not know whether he signed the minute in haste, or overlooked the substance of the matter in question. The Minister knows about the letter, because I interviewed him on my arrival in Perth. The doctor had no authority to prevent Rigatti from working. The Minister is the only man who can do that. Under no section of the Act or regulations can a doctor prevent a man from working on, in or about a mine. A doctor can prevent a man from taking charge of a first-class engine which is hauling or lowering men, if he does not think the man is physically capable of doing the work. Rigatti was prevented from working on, in or about the mine. I interviewed the Minister when I arrived in Perth and emphasised this action of the doctor. I pointed out that the doctor had no authority to take that action. The engineer knew the law, and had to fill this man's place. As a consequence, Rigatti lost his job. His certificate was returned three weeks later, marked "To be reviewed in three months." Unfortunately the man had lost his job meanwhile. Before I could get him the three weeks' compensation to which he was entitled, and make application for compensation under the Third Schedule, this man, who had been messed around to such an extent, committed suicide. The doctor who was responsible for interfering with him and his position on the mine ultimately caused his death. I respectfully suggest that a medical man who is habitually dabbling in alcoholic beverages should not be retained in his position. I do not know whether any other complaint has been received by the Minister regarding this doctor. If the miners in my electorate do not get a better medical practitioner, I will express my views emphatically in this House. There is no doubt Rigatti committed suicide. He should not have lost his job in the first place. He lost it because of a blunder on the part of a doctor who, I understand, is seldom sober. I protest emphatically against such a state of affairs. I had known the deceased for 25 years. He was a fine fellow. Because he was messed about by the doctor and was in ill-health, he took his life. Properly speaking, he was not entitled to compensation, but through the generosity of

the Minister, he was going to get three weeks' compensation as an act of benevolence. The Minister did not prohibit him from working on the mine, and therefore was not legally compelled to pay compensation. The doctor had no authority to prevent him from working on, in or about the mine. I now wish to make some reference to the pulling up of the Horseshoe railway. There is an enormous deposit of manganese at Horseshoe. If the line had been retained, and linked up with the main system, at the price at which manganese stands to-day the company would probably have developed the deposit and a nice little town would have sprung up. As it is, we have these huge hills of manganese lying there with not a soul within miles of them in place of what we might have had, a flourishing town. This has occurred through lack of vision on the part of the Government in pulling up the line. This is probably one of the best deposits of manganese in the world. Because of its isolation, due to lack of vision on the part of the Government, this deposit lies there untouched. Yet we wonder why we do not progress. The attitude I adopted when the Government proposed to interfere with that line has borne fruit. I said then it was a stupid thing to touch the railway.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That did not prevent the line from being taken up.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course not.

Mr. Sampson: Then how did it bear fruit?

Mr. MARSHALL: Manganese is now worth about £2 10s. a ton, and had the line still been there, the deposits could have been worked. Under Standing Order 123, I claim the indulgence of the Committee to read a question I asked this session, and the answer given to me. If you, Mr. Chairman, will give me permission, I will say what I have to say on this subject. I am entitled to claim the indulgence of the Chamber in this matter before I proceed.

The CHAIRMAN: If the questions and answers are connected with the mining industry, the hon. member will be in order in reading them. The matter has not been debated in the House.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, Sir. The questions and answers referred to the ex-Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. Calanchini. The Minister, I consider, has been inconsistent, and also lacking in his duty, in not taking notice of the attitude of the ex-Under Sec-

retary. My questions addressed to the Minister for Mines were—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the fact that Mr. Calanchini, Under Secretary for Mines, within three days of going on leave accepted positions on several boards controlling various mining propositions in Western Australia?

(2) If so, will he assure the House that official recognition will be taken of the position, and action taken under Section 8 of the Mining Act?

The Minister's replies were as follows:—

(1) Not officially—only by a newspaper paragraph.

(2) If the position is as stated, in view of the fact that Mr. Calanchini has virtually given up his office, and is on leave prior to retirement, no such assurance can be given.

I shall never stand for preferential treatment. The law that is good for the humblest individual must also be good enough for persons in higher positions. I do not wish to cast any nasty innuendoes regarding Mr. Calanchini's activities, but his action in accepting positions on several boards of directors implies that all has not been well during his term as Under Secretary for Mines. I do not know how it came about that Mr. Calanchini should quit his office on the 18th of the month to go on long-service leave and that three days later, on the 21st of the month, it should be published that he had accepted positions on various boards of directors of certain groups of mining companies in Western Australia, unless the transfers of shares and interests in those propositions were of an especially rapid character, as must have been the case for them to be accomplished within a period of 48 hours.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That is no reflection on Mr. Calanchini's integrity.

Mr. MARSHALL: Under the Mining Act the Under Secretary for Mines is a mining warden, and Section 8 of that Act forbids any warden to hold any interest in any mining property within Western Australia. The answer to my second question implies that Mr. Calanchini's term of office does not finish until his period of leave of absence terminates.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It does not, either.

Mr. MARSHALL: If Mr. Calanchini is entitled to violate Section 8 of the Mining Act, other officers of the Mines Department are entitled to break it. I will not have one individual treated strictly within the four corners of the Act and another individual,

holding a higher position, excluded from the operations of the Act. Whether Mr. Calanchini held shares in those companies before he left his office I do not know, but I consider that the Minister is under an obligation to find out. I do not wish to go further into the matter, as my doing so might re-open old sores, a thing I have no desire to do. However, on the face of it this looks very bad. What is worse is that the Minister for Mines will not take action. He has said that he will not. I only wish the Minister had been equally generous on certain other occasions—for instance, when Mr. McLeod asked him to prosecute some poor unfortunate wretches for illegal squatting on Crown lands. There was no unwillingness on the part of the Minister for Mines to harass those poor wretches on the dole, with wives and little ones. They were prosecuted for breaking the Act. But here is a man holding high office who is excluded from the operation of the law.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: Do you know for a fact that he does hold shares?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know it for a fact, but here is a cutting from the "West Australian" of Tuesday, the 21st September—

Mr. M. Calanchini Joins Local Boards.

One cannot get on a board without holding shares. One must be a shareholder to sit on a board of directors.

Member: That is not necessary.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am very doubtful as to that. However, all I have to go on is what has appeared in the Press. The paragraph continues—

Mr. M. J. Calanchini, who recently retired from the position of Under Secretary for Mines after 42 years of service—

He had not retired at all. He could not retire until his long-service leave was up.

—has joined the de Bernaldes group, taking a seat on the local boards of some of the companies controlled by Commonwealth Mining and Finance, Ltd., Great Boulder Mining and Finance, Ltd., Anglo-Australian Gold Development, Ltd., and Meekatharra Gold Mines, Ltd.

I do not know what the Minister has done to ascertain the facts. But I know that if I were in his place I would have had searches made of share registers. If the Minister were in my position and I were in his, I would have given him a reply stating that such action had been, or would be, taken. The matter should have been put in the

hands of the authorities for investigation. If I had got sufficient information to warrant my taking action, action would have been taken. I do not know what the Minister has to say in reply to that. He may have a reply. If so, I shall be glad to hear it.

The Minister for Mines: You will hear it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister may hear something more after I have heard his reply. At present I am dissatisfied with the reply given by him already that he would not take action because the man had virtually retired. He does not retire until his time is up. Until then, he must not hold any interest in any company. I will now leave the matter at that, and await what the Minister has to say. In conclusion, in speaking on these Estimates I have not touched on the State Batteries. I propose to do so when the Vote is reached. I am not altogether satisfied, but I admit that the Rip Van Winkle of the department has awakened.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [8.19]: First I wish to refer to the great increase in the number of fatal and serious accidents that have taken place in the mining industry. I have read most carefully the report furnished in connection with those accidents, my object being if possible to discover whether there was any definite cause for the increase in the number of fatalities. I thought that perhaps the greater depths of the mines was a contributing factor, but I find that the ratio of fatal accidents in the deeper mines is no higher than that in the comparatively shallow mines. I read carefully the list of causes assigned, and it seems to me that some of the fatal accidents were just sheer bad luck, that in some instances it was a matter of carelessness, and that in at any rate one instance the cause of the fatality lay in having an uncertificated man doing a job for which he had neither authority nor qualification. In order to make a comparison with the position in the industry in other parts of the Empire, I wrote to the Mines Department in South Africa and received in reply a copy of the annual report for last year. I also wrote to the authorities in Victoria, that being the other State of the Commonwealth where gold mining operations at depth are carried on to any considerable extent. I found that in South Africa the rate of casualties per thousand was practically the same as that experienced in our own mines. I refer, of course, to the white miners. The death rate

applying to Kaffirs and other coloured workers in the South African mines was just slightly higher than the rate in this State. On the other hand, I found that in Victoria, where the mines in some instances are down 3,000 feet, although over 9,000 men are employed in the gold mining industry, the total deaths from accidents there was only five. I do not know the conditions under which mining is carried on in Victoria, but that matter is worthy of investigation, perhaps along the lines suggested by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). If that investigation were carried out, we might be able to ascertain conditions that operate there that are not present in our system of mining, which would enable this particular phase to be improved. There is no doubt the percentage of fatal accidents is jumping up by leaps and bounds. During the year before last there were 30 fatal accidents, and last year there were 38. If we can judge by the experience of the last three months, there will be considerably more than 40 men killed in the industry during the current year. There is one other matter I desire to mention. I dealt with it when discussing last year's Estimates. I refer to the facilities and equipment supplied to the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie. Most members know that that institution plays a very important part in the development of mining in this State. They are aware of the high standard of efficiency that is evidenced in the management and working of our mines, and that is due to a great extent to the tuition gained at the School of Mines. I have not visited the institution during the last three months to ascertain if any appreciable improvement has taken place. I had the honour of opening the Diesel engine room, which was provided out of funds made available from the Youth and Motherhood Endowment Scheme. At that time very little improvement had been effected either with regard to the materials supplied or the accommodation available. The machinery shop there would not be passed by any factories inspector. There are unguarded belts and overhead pulleys that would not be tolerated in an ordinary factory, yet students are expected to work there in order to acquire knowledge to enable them to participate successfully in the conduct of mining operations. The room in which the internal combustion class is held has to accommodate 69 students, although it is not really capable

of providing room for 30 students. Such conditions place both the instructor and the students at a great disadvantage, seeing that the latter cannot get close enough to the teacher to enable them to see what is being explained. It is most difficult for any student in a group of 50 or 60, standing 20ft. or so away from the instructor, to appreciate what he is explaining or even to catch some of the statements made by him. The class in surveying is quite large and, as members know, that branch is most important in connection with mining operations. Only one theodolite is available for a class of 18, and the instructor told me that that was totally inadequate and fair neither to him nor to the students, who, under such conditions, could hardly be expected to attain a high degree of efficiency. I would like to hear from the Minister whether any improvement has taken place in connection with the institution. I feel sure he realises, as we all do, that the School of Mines deserves great credit on account of the students who have passed through it. Not only are ex-students of the school occupying very important positions in the mining industry here, but also supervisory positions in every mining field throughout the world.

Mr. Marshall: Without doubt they are wonderful boys.

Mr. STYANTS: Everywhere the diploma of the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie is regarded as of high merit. I trust that sufficient material and increased accommodation will be provided, so that there will be a reasonable chance of maintaining the high standard of the past.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [8.27]: I congratulate the Minister upon having initiated the prospecting scheme, and we must all be pleased to know of the success that has attended many of the young prospectors. I agree with the Minister that the scheme has provided admirable openings for many youths who were formerly unemployed. The trouble in the metropolitan area now is to get experienced prospectors to accompany inexperienced men to the fields.

Mr. Marshall: That is a point that should be kept in mind.

Mr. FOX: That is so.

The Minister for Mines: Then why do not those men apply? When applications were called for a hundred, we received 74 for supervisors but only 25 from boys, and

we take them from 17 to 21 years of age.

Mr. FOX: A number of applicants did not get an opportunity to go out. I have visited the Mines Department on several occasions to see if other groups were to be made up, but so far nothing has been done. I am not referring to the boys but to men who have had no experience. I have done a fair bit of prospecting myself and I am in as good a position to judge as some officers of the Mines Department. I can say with confidence that any young fellow from 18 to 20 years of age who makes application should be sent out. No matter where you go, there are a number of old prospectors and mining men who are prepared to give the new chum the best information at their disposal.

Mr. Marshall: They will go out of their way to supply information.

Mr. FOX: What was the position of men who came here from the Eastern States in order to go out prospecting? The conditions here are altogether different from those obtaining in Victoria and, consequently, those men were practically new chums to our conditions. Nevertheless, the whole of the goldfields were opened up by men who had little experience of the conditions in which gold-bearing ore occurs in many places in Western Australia. Therefore I think that it is wrong on the part of the Mines Department not to give those young fellows who make application an opportunity to go out prospecting simply because they have had no experience or cannot find a man with the necessary experience to go out with them. These young fellows are to be commended for being prepared to go out when they know so little about prospecting, and I believe it would be in the interests of the State if the Minister could offer encouragement to them and send them out if they are willing to go. I hope the Minister will give attention to that because nearly every week I have a number of young chaps asking me to assist them in the direction of going out prospecting, but the Mines Department will not permit them to go unless they have experienced prospectors with them.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [8.31]: I should like to say a few words on this subject.

Mr. Marshall: Where did you get your mining knowledge?

Mr. McDONALD: I know as much about this subject as the hon. member knows about many of the subjects he discusses. Mining is not the monopoly of the member for Murchison. It is a matter of very great importance to the whole community and it is a source of great satisfaction to everybody in the community to find that the mining industry has been such a help to this State during a difficult period. In fact, if it had not been for the revival of the mining industry, and the increased price of gold, it is difficult to estimate exactly what great hardships would have been entailed on this State. Just because the mining industry is a matter of the utmost importance to everybody, I want to say a word or two about it although from two aspects only. We are compelled to spend a great deal of time in this House discussing the position of industries which are passing through very bad times, such as the farming industry, but it is also desirable to spend a fair amount of time in discussing our most prosperous industry, namely the goldmining industry, in order to make certain that we shall get the best that we can for the State out of that favourable industry. The scheme of using prospecting as a means of absorbing unemployed men, and particularly unemployed youth, appeals to me as being one of the best ideas we have developed in connection with the mining industry, and we cannot take too strenuous measures to induce young men to go out into those areas and see what they can do in the mining fields. Some time ago I received from a machinery merchant, and I expect every other hon. member did, a circular in which he put forward an idea which I consider well worthy of consideration, although he would no doubt receive a benefit from any sales that might result from the adoption of the scheme. He said that there appeared from the records of the department to be a number of abandoned mines. I think he said there were 3,000. At any rate, there were many hundreds.

The Minister for Mines: There are many more abandoned shows than that.

Mr. McDONALD: He said there were many abandoned properties which have been excellent gold producers and as to which records in the department will show how much has been won from them. They have been producers of gold and there is reason to suspect that they may still be producers of gold. The suggestion was that

under the prospecting scheme, those prepared to go out might be given rather more money—perhaps not a great amount; it might be £100—to enable them to buy machinery to work those shows. The men could then go on those properties which have been proved gold producers and start to work and probably make a success of them. As a result of the success achieved, they would be able to repay the money advanced. On the point of experience, when dealing with a shaft, I understand we would need men with still more experience than when we were dealing merely with a surface show. It may be possible for the department to devise some method by which experienced men could join with inexperienced men in a kind of partnership. In the Mining Act we have clauses dealing with mining partnerships and setting out the rights and obligations of the members of such partnerships. It might be possible for these prospectors to go out on a definite basis as to what their legal rights and liabilities were. The experienced man, for instance, might get two shares for the one share of the inexperienced man. Supposing they borrowed £100 or £150 from the department and were lucky enough to make money, they would all know exactly where they were, and the experienced man would have some incentive in bringing with him into the show a man who had not had previous experience on the fields. The other aspect is one that I touch on with diffidence, because I do not pretend to be able to advance any practical suggestions. We know that in England at the present time a fear has been expressed by many that the prosperity induced by armaments manufacture is going to be of short duration and will be succeeded by a slump. Our prosperity in the mining industry would also be succeeded by some degree of hardship if there were a fall of a serious nature in the price of gold and the consequent abandonment of some shows and the displacement of many men now finding employment in the industry. I do not know whether it is possible—but I would like to hear the Minister on the subject if he thinks it a topic he can speak upon—to devise some safeguards to meet circumstances which might be occasioned by a fall in the price of gold. I do not know whether the companies can be induced to

put aside reserves which would keep them going if gold became a less payable proposition, or whether there are other means by which difficulties occasioned by a fall in the price of gold could be averted and the industry stabilised. It is beyond my capacity to say.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Shows like Wiluna would not fail easily.

Mr. McDONALD: Perhaps not. But it would add to the difficulties of the State if the mining industry, through a fall in the price of gold, became restricted. I do not know, but I am inquiring whether it is possible in this period of prosperity to provide some safeguards to absorb these men and maintain them in employment if there should be a recession in the price of gold.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.38]: The reason I am rising to speak is to correct the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox). He pointed out that encouragement to lads to go into the goldmining areas—that is, lads who were in difficulties in respect to employment—had been initiated by the Minister. I want to pay the Minister all possible credit for the manner in which he has encouraged lads to take up this work, but as a matter of fact, the initiation of work for boys prospecting on the goldfields was due to the previous Government. We must not fail to remember that the late Mr. Scaddan was responsible. It might not be considered of very great importance at this stage, but I think it will be agreed that it is sufficiently important that we should not forget so readily the thoughtfulness and the wisdom of a man who did so much for the goldmining industry in the long period during which he was Minister. I listened with great pleasure to the introduction of these Estimates by the Minister for Mines. It is indeed gratifying to know that the industry continues to advance. I hope that every possible encouragement will be given to it because, when all is said and done, Western Australia not only owes a great deal to the goldmining industry, but will continue to receive very great help from that industry. I appreciate the annoyance the Minister has felt over the disinclination of many young single men to be prepared to take up prospecting work even when assisted by experienced men. Of course, for an inexperienced man to go into prospecting under any other circum-

stances would be exceedingly unwise. There are young men in the metropolitan area who are afraid that once they get out of the radius of the tramlines a kangarilla, or some other mythological animal, will bite them. I hope the Minister will maintain his attitude, because, after all, if a single man, being physically fit, is not prepared to go out and undertake this work, he does not deserve the consideration that otherwise he would receive. I was gratified at hearing the remarks of the Minister on that point, and I think it is a sad commentary on those young men who refuse to accept an opportunity which, I understand, would possibly lead to considerable advantage to themselves. So, as I say, I hope the Minister will maintain his attitude, which is so well justified. I repeat that I for one will not forget the splendid work done by the late Hon. John Scaddan, who was one of the best men we ever had in the State, especially from the mining standpoint and from the standpoint of the betterment of his fellow-men.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [8.42]: I fully appreciate that this is the most important Vote to be discussed on the Estimates. I was pleased to hear the remarks of the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald), because I am afraid that if we do not take every available opportunity to place the mines on a working basis while the price of gold is so high, we shall have very little chance of continuing those mines if the price of gold should fall. We know there are mines working to-day which will have very little chance of continuing in those circumstances, for they are only just paying now. Those mines certainly deserve encouragement to make what provision they can for the future. Also we might turn our attention to doing whatever is possible to open up any other mining propositions that are available. It is true there has been some falling off in the overseas support given to the mining industry. One has only to look at the share lists published in the Old Country to realise that. I do not pretend to be able to advise the Committee of the reason for it. When the Minister introduced his Estimates, I thought he might have told us something about what is being done at Yampi Sound, but evidently he did not think it was of sufficient importance to bring before the Committee. Last session I asked

for certain papers, and I read extracts from other papers that had reached me. The Minister seemed to be very much annoyed when he replied to my request for papers. However, when I did get them, they revealed to me a very undesirable condition of affairs at Broome. This is the only opportunity I have to mention this, except I do it by moving a substantive motion. The granting of time to the holders of the leases up there was acquiesced in by the Minister. This happened from time to time, and further applications for extensions were received from the company. I notice by the file that the mining warden at Broome was asked to advise as early as possible his decision on a case he had heard at Broome, a case in which an extension of time to the company was opposed. He was asked to let the department know his decision as early as possible, and his reply, as shown on the file, was to the effect that his decision might go any way. It seemed pretty clear to me from the warden's message that he was simply awaiting an instruction from the Minister or from the Under Secretary. The Minister can see that message on the file. If that is the kind of decision we get from our mining wardens, I can only say that such decisions are very dangerous. The warden had heard the evidence, and should have been able to decide on that evidence whether or not he would be justified in granting that extension the company asked for. Instead of that, his message said that his decision might go either way. As I say, all that he was doing in that message was asking the Minister whether or not he required him to give the company the extension of time asked for. Since then the Minister stated that it was not Japanese capital developing that show.

The Minister for Mines: Not at that time.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But I can produce a document showing that the Agent-General in London had said that it was Japanese capital developing the deposit, and that no other capital was available for the purpose. I think action might well have been taken by the Minister or the Under Secretary on the score that a false declaration was made in evidence to the warden at Broome. I feel sure the person who signed that declaration knew what was going to be done, and that there was not going to be English capital and English machinery brought out.

Member: Who was the person who signed it?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know. You saw the papers, as well as I did. I really think that some action should have been taken in that regard. I should like the Minister to tell us something about Yampi. Are we to expect a development of that ore deposit, or is the company simply playing with it? If it is possible to develop Yampi, I do not think there will be any better opportunity than that which is offering to-day. We should see that the promises made by the company are fulfilled. I do not believe they are being fulfilled. I have heard of no machinery being taken there, excepting a few horses to ascertain to what depth the ore goes.

Mr. Coverley: The drilling is finished and the drillers have returned to the city.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Is there any machinery up there?

Mr. Coverley: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is time we insisted upon the company carrying out the promise that was made. If the Minister has the information, I want him to tell us what is being done, and whether he considers the company is honouring the obligations entered into when the extension of the leases was granted. Any number of other people would be willing to work those leases, and I think they should be given an opportunity if the company does not propose to work them. The Minister knows what was in the papers that were tabled. If I had had time last session I would have asked for an inquiry into the conduct of the company, more particularly into the evidence submitted to the mining warden when the application was made. It was almost instantly contradicted, and it was contradicted by the Agent-General when the Minister cabled him for further information. One other matter I wish to refer to and that is the question raised by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) relating to the Under Secretary for Mines becoming a member of the directorate of a very influential company interested in mining. I am not going to put myself into the position of a judge to say whether that should be done or not. It is perfectly true, as the Minister knows, that no warden may have any interest in any mine while acting in his official capacity. There was an instance of a man being dismissed from office for having done that. Until the Under Secretary for Mines finishes his leave, I contend that he is an officer of the Government.

His office is that of Under Secretary to the department, and by virtue of being Under Secretary, he is warden for the State.

The Minister for Mines: He is only warden for goldfields outside proclaimed gold-fields areas.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He is a warden for the whole of the State except where wardens have been appointed for certain districts. I wish to contrast the attitude of the Minister to the Under Secretary with the action taken by the Minister for Lands with an official of the Agricultural Bank who had applied for long-service leave. Because he joined a private company before his leave had expired, the Minister for Lands refused to pay him for his long-service leave.

Mr. Lambert: Who was that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Action was taken in another place to give publicity to the case. I do not know what happened eventually, whether the official was paid or not.

The Minister for Lands: I know that the action taken there was very stupid.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is not the only stupid thing the Minister has done.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know that that official should have been prosecuted?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine his remarks to the Estimates.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: All I am doing is making a comparison. If the official in that instance acted wrongly the action in this instance must be wrong, more particularly as the Mining Act definitely lays down that the occupant of the position shall not become interested in any mining company. I have nothing to say against Mr. Calanchini personally. I think he has been one of the best officials the State has had, but it was very indiscreet of him to take the other position until he had severed his connection completely with the Government service. It is up to the Minister for Mines, who rather evaded the point in his reply to the member for Murchison, to give us some information. Ministers of the Crown, members of Parliament and officials are often blamed unjustly for certain things. Suspicion is created in the minds of some people, though I am not one of those who entertain suspicion. I do not mind what a man does. I am satisfied that the majority of people are not dishonest. Still, there should not be differential treatment. If the Minister for Lands was right in the action he took

regarding the Agricultural Bank official, the Minister for Mines must be wrong. If, on the other hand, the Minister for Mines is right, the Minister for Lands must have been wrong.

Mr. Marshall: Both of them might be wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot see how both could be wrong in the particular matters under discussion, though both might be wrong in some things.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What was the differentiation in the treatment?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There was differential treatment.

The Minister for Lands: It was just treatment.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then the Minister must have been over generous.

The Minister for Lands: I should have gone further. I should have prosecuted that man.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If that is so, I want to know what the Minister for Mines is going to do about his official.

The Minister for Mines: If you wait and give me a chance, I will tell you.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am always pleased to listen to the Minister for Mines because, in contrast to his confrere, he is always very good-natured. Members listened with pleasure to the presentation of his Estimates, and though he might criticise us at times, his criticism is accepted in the spirit in which it is given. I should be glad to have some information regarding Yampi, because we have a right to know what the company is doing.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.57]: I would not have participated in this debate but for the remarks of the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson). The hon. member chided the member for South Fremantle because he praised the Minister for Mines for having initiated the prospecting scheme. I recall when the late Mr. Scaddan was Minister and controlled the Mines Department. I was one of a deputation that waited on him. In connection with the prospecting scheme, the Tramways Union was the first organisation to subsidise its men to go out prospecting. Ten or 12 men left the trams and the union provided money to subsidise them while they were prospecting, though the department also helped them by providing tools and giving other assistance. At that stage the

prospecting scheme as we know it to-day had not been developed. True, some young men had obtained assistance to the extent of 7s. a week to go prospecting, but Mr. Scaddan considered they were not a good type. He said they would have to put a bush in the middle of the track to enable them to find their way back. Anyhow, the scheme fell through, and at that time there was no attempt to organise prospecting under a system of supervision such as the present Minister for Mines has inaugurated. Many men now prospecting were in Blackboy Camp in my electorate and many of them were in Hovea, in the electorate of the member for Swan. He was not long in influencing the then Premier and the Minister to get them out of Hovea.

The CHAIRMAN: That is getting away from the Mining Estimates.

Mr. HEGNEY: The prospecting scheme was implemented by the present Minister, and many of the men who were in camp went prospecting.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite in order.

Mr. HEGNEY: I give a denial to the statements of the member for Swan. He does not know anything about the matter. The statements of the member for South Fremantle are in accordance with the facts.

Mr. Sampson: The member for Middle Swan should withdraw that remark. In effect he tells me I was lying in what I said. That is not compatible with what one would expect of the hon. member.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.1]: Before discussing the Estimates I should like to know whether it is competent for me to move that the member for Swan be given 24 hours in which to explain what he meant by any statement he is likely to make. I should be pleased to move in that direction.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member would not be in order in doing that now.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that I can break much new ground in dealing with these Estimates.

Mr. Thorn: Then why waste time?

Mr. LAMBERT: During the last 20 years I have spoken extensively on the mineral wealth of Western Australia. I wish, when there is money to be allocated for exploratory work in this State, the Minister would impress upon the Federal Government that whilst ground geological

work may be useful in opening up our mineral wealth, that geophysical work and aerial surveys will serve no useful purpose in this State. We have every known mineral deposit here. It is absurd that the Federal Government should persist in permitting glorified picnics to be held, and equipping a body of men to carry out geophysical and aerial surveys in the centre of Australia, in parts of the country where there is no hope of finding anything.

Mr. Needham: Would a geophysical survey help the manganese deposit?

Mr. Marshall: There is no need for that; the deposit is already there.

Mr. LAMBERT: The whole thing is unsound and represents a waste of money. Our own responsible officers, however, are starving for funds for research, for ground geological work, and for work in the chemical branch. The money that could be made available to them, however, is being wasted on work in Central Australia.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Is not our own Minister on the committee which directs this work?

Mr. Doney: The new senators will change all that.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know and I do not care who is on the committee.

Mr. Patriek: Some of the money has been spent in this State.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, but only spent in inaccessible places. There are certain ores which will be of no economic value for the next 10 or 15 centuries. If there is any money to be spent in locating ore bodies in Western Australia, the Minister should, instead of setting up a semi-Federal department, which provides picnic parties for people who are supposed to be carrying out geophysical and aerial surveys, make that money available to the central office. Reference has been made to some of the officers of the department. I have had long experience of them. I shrink to think that any of our officers would have their judgment influenced in the slightest degree, even if, after retiring from the service, they knew they were going to be linked up with some concern that was directly interested in the industry. The suggestion is a regrettable one. There may be just a trace of doubt in the minds of some people, and they may continue to doubt. The records of our officers show them to be honourable

men and to have performed a genuine service to the country during the time they have held office. At the head of the Government Laboratory is that distinguished scientist, Dr. Simpson. He and his staff are at all times prepared to do everything they can to ascertain the commercial value of any particular mineral. That department is starving for funds. That its usefulness is not greater is due to the limited funds placed at its disposal. We have minerals in this State whose commercial value should be determined, and yet the Federal Government lays it down as a formula that funds provided by them shall be expended in the centre of Australia. The whole thing is ridiculous. I may remind the Committee that it was only recently, after the Japanese had shown a slight interest in some iron deposits at Yampi Sound, the Federal Government saw fit to suggest that there should be a stock-taking of the iron deposits of Australia. If the Federal Government were to discharge what is their one function in this respect, and explore Australia's mineral deposits, it would have an immediate effect on the economic life of Australia. The Federal Government should carry out survey work of that description. The time is more than ripe for a survey of all the known valuable mineral deposits. Otherwise we may find ourselves short of those minerals in a time of national emergency. But to send flying machines to the centre of Australia to ascertain whether minerals are to be found there, or to send a geophysical survey party to the centre of Australia, is of doubtful value, especially in view of the small amount of money available for highly efficient and highly paid officers to determine the most advantageous commercial utilisation of our mineral deposits. I do not purpose dealing with the many mineral deposits which are commercially utilisable. I have dealt with that subject on so many occasions that I am tired of it. I was heartbroken some time ago at the result of the large subscription raised by our people during the depression, the largest local subscription on record. On the pretext of having to pay a miserable thousand pounds in interest, the Government destroyed the prospects of an undertaking which might be worth a quarter of a million of money to the people of Western Australia. Such events rather discourage people from taking interest in Western

Australian development. In fact, the moment a person attempts to exploit some resource here and turn it to commercial account, he is called everything that is black and vile. Western Australia is not to be opened up by the tinkering and meddling of members of Parliament or Governments, but by individual effort. There are possibilities in avenues of activity which can be developed by the individual efforts of men of knowledge and vision who are prepared to sacrifice time and enjoyment.

Mr. Tonkin: And then they get the least out of it!

Mr. LAMBERT: History will record that also. I do hope there will be appreciation of the officers of our Government departments. I have had a long knowledge of Mr. Calanchini and also of the present Under Secretary for Mines. Everyone in that department, from the head down, is only too ready to lend to the people of Western Australia knowledge which in other avenues would probably earn four or five times as much as the salaries paid to the officials. It is not my purpose to deal, in the general discussion, with details of prospecting schemes and who is responsible for them, and the State battery system. Under one or two heads I may hope, later, to offer fruitful criticisms and suggestions to the Minister.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [9.17]: First I propose to deal with the various matters mentioned by the member for Murchison. I have a note of four of them. Consideration will certainly be given to all those matters. Personally I think the hon. member's first suggestion to be impracticable, unless inquiry should throw a different light on it. I refer to inspection of and reports on mining leases that are not being worked. I agree with the hon. member that under our Mining Act it is rather difficult to follow the various methods of obtaining titles. Titles are obtainable to a claim, or a prospecting area, or a mining lease.

Mr. Marshall: There is also the alluvial claim.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. One has to read through two-thirds of the Act before one is satisfied that at last one has found a reference to some of those titles. That difficulty may be overcome by means

of a consolidating measure. The next subject raised by the hon. member had reference to the medical officer of the laboratory. I have listened once already to the hon. member's criticism of that official. I listened to the hon. member again this evening. I have had various inquiries made. On the previous occasion when the officer visited the Murchison and other districts, there was one complaint of his over-indulgence in alcohol. Our then Chief Inspector, Mr. Phoenix, travelled with the doctor on that occasion. Mr. Phoenix is, and all his life has been, a total abstainer; and he assures me that he never saw that official in any way under the influence of alcoholic liquor. On the last occasion, when a complaint was made in connection with a man's certificate. I heard again what the hon. member had to urge. After he wrote to me and came to see me, I did not sit down and do nothing. I made inquiries from the Government inspector. I also made inquiries from various other people. I have come to the conclusion that the only way I can convince myself is to go out with the official myself the next time he goes out. All the people whom I have questioned concerning him say that they have never seen him in the slightest degree under the influence of liquor. Whether he has been or not, I do not know. I do not know, either, that the member for Murchison has ever seen him under the influence of liquor. The hon. member knows only what other people have told him.

Mr. Marshall: The incidents indicated the position.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. There is an explanation. I took serious exception to the doctor from the laboratory officially making appointments with men to be at certain places for the purpose of examination, and then neglecting to attend. I had inquiries made, and pretty strong comments were forwarded. I had to regard the explanation I received as satisfactory. If I had been similarly situated, I would have done what the doctor did. As to the certificate, the doctor made a mistake, and he has admitted that quite candidly. On the other hand, the doctor said he made that mistake in the interests of the man himself.

Mr. Marshall: He did, too; the man is buried now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know it is a deplorable case.

Mr. Marshall: At any rate, that is what happened.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am afraid the hon. member has developed an obsession regarding that matter.

[*Mr. Hegney took the Chair.*]

Mr. Marshall: There is no obsession about it at all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The laboratory doctor was not the only one who examined the man. Another doctor examined him, and he supplied a certificate setting out that the man was entitled to an invalid pension and that he was totally incapacitated for work on any job under any conditions. I do not think it is much good going on with that case, but I will make definite inquiries to ascertain what really is the position with regard to the doctor. I want hon. members to realise that that doctor is not a State official. Neither I nor the Government had anything to do with his appointment. We have no power or control over his appointment. He was appointed by the Commonwealth. We have nothing to do with the doctor at the laboratory at Kalgoorlie, nor with the doctor who goes about with the travelling unit. What we can do amounts to very little, unless we convince the powers that be that have control over those officials.

Mr. Marshall: That is the unfortunate part of it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Three members mentioned the question put to me regarding the position of the Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. Calanchini, and the answer I gave. The member for Murchison asked me if my attention had been drawn to a certain statement in the Press regarding Mr. Calanchini, and my reply was that I had no official knowledge of the matter, apart from the statement published in the Press. I definitely state that I made all possible inquiries that I could reasonably make. I have been positively assured by everyone with whom I discussed the matter, including Mr. Calanchini himself, that he has no interest in any of the companies, nor has he accepted a position as director in connection with any one of those companies. The first he knew of it was when he read the statement in the Press. That is the explanation of that matter, and I will not pursue it any further. My attitude towards Mr. Calanchini now, even if he were still in the office as Under Secretary, is that he has no interest in any of the mines, nor is he a director of

any of the companies. That is my definite information. If any member can place before me any proof to the contrary, I shall certainly take some action, but I shall not take action on mere supposition arising out of a Press statement. All the evidence I can get is that Mr. Calanchini is not interested in any of the companies, nor is he on any of the directorates. That disposes of that matter. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants) referred to accidents in the mining industry, and made a comparison between South Africa and Western Australia. If the general accident rate in South Africa is higher than in Western Australia, we should be exceptionally pleased with the supervision exercised in this State.

Mr. Styants: The death rate is about the same with regard to white miners.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: From an accident point of view, there is no comparison at all.

Mr. Marshall: But you cannot compare South Africa with Western Australia.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course you cannot compare them.

Mr. Marshall: Nor can you make a comparison between two mines in this State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, and it is impossible to compare the likelihood of accidents on mines on the Rand in South Africa with that applying to mines worked in Western Australia. Such a comparison would be futile. In South Africa, there is a definite line of reef running upwards of 40 miles in length, and mine after mine adjoining each other works on a similar ore channel or ore body, although the values are not always the same. Sometimes the values are a little richer; sometimes they are a little poorer. The formation of the reef is not more than 6ft. wide and averages about 4ft. 3in. The line of reef drops steeply on the underlie. On the other hand, in Western Australia we are working lodes 16 feet wide, or even more. At the Big Bell, over 1,100 feet, at the 250ft. level the lode is 83 feet wide.

Mr. Styants: How does that make it more dangerous?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In that mine the men are working with 83 feet of lode overhead on the vertical, whereas in South Africa the average width of the lode is 4ft. 3in., with a solid wall on either side. That shows that it is impossible to make a comparison between the risks of accident in

this State as against those applicable to mines on the Rand.

Mr. Marshall: And there are many other factors. There is the system of mining, for instance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The system has to be different. The men could not work in South Africa as we do here.

Mr. Styants: That does not get away from the fact that deaths are occurring.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I am pointing out that there is no possible ground for comparison, and we are to be complimented if the number of accidents here is not greater than that occurring among white miners in South Africa. Of course, I do not say we should not do everything possible to prevent accidents from happening, and I believe we are doing that. Nevertheless, while there are mines there are sure to be accidents. Whatever we can do to minimise such possibilities, should be done.

Mr. Styants: What about Victoria?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member mentioned Victoria and stated that they were mining there to a depth of 3,000 feet. That may be right; I do not know.

Mr. Styants: That is in their report.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That may be right, but I do not know of one mine that is working at that depth.

Mr. Styants: There is one in Bendigo.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There may be a mine there that has been worked to that depth. I believe there is one that goes down to 6,000 feet. I am not saying that our accidents are not too numerous.

Mr. Styants interjected.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Men have fallen off ladders. By some extraordinary coincidence, in three cases in succession, the men fell down shafts. There was no explanation as to how or why they fell. The fatalities were inquired into by a coroner, but it could not be found out how the accidents occurred nor could any suggestion be made. It is a thing, I suppose, that cannot possibly be avoided, but that is no reason for us not to do all that is possible to prevent accidents. With regard to the School of Mines I endorse all that Mr. Styants said about the good work it is doing and the overcrowding. All of the machinery is now in the engine room and the whole of the lecture room is available for lecturing purposes in connection with that particular branch. I do not know what progress has

been made in the matter, but I do know that provision has been made for an extra school-room and for the facilities for which they have been asking for years. There is no doubt that the place was overcrowded. Following the numerous requests that came to me I saw the rooms in connection with the mining classes, and although I did not see the lecture room while the class was in session, I could tell that the accommodation was not sufficient for the number of students. The lecturer of the department said that if we could not get the money to meet both their requests he would particularly like the lecture room, which would relieve the position in all the other classrooms. I do not know how far the building has proceeded, but approval has been given for the erection of both rooms. With regard to the remarks of the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) I have had not only one circular but five or six circulars from the firm to which he referred. I invited them to come along, and they have met me on two or three occasions and discussed the proposition. It all means money, and I tell the hon. member that we have to be pretty careful in regard to that method of assistance.

Mr. Marshall: Experience shows it would not be wise.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, we have to be careful. If we could spare the money we might entertain certain of those propositions. The records I gave to-night indicated that moneys loaned in this way amounted to £13,000, and £10,000 has been paid back. Five thousand pounds was lent to one company—not an English syndicate or a rich company, but practically a local company with local directors, and the directors working the show themselves and managing it themselves. The money advanced to them has been repaid. The bulk of the remainder was utilised in assisting small men with pumping plants and compressors. In many instances a party goes out to work a show which is in an oxidised zone. They can work fairly easily with a hammer and drill, but when they have worked off the oxides they get into the sulphide zone. That zone might be quite payable if they could put in a couple of jack hammers, but it would not be possible to make it pay working by hammer. There are several instances in which we have assisted in that direction by providing sufficient money to allow such men to buy a compressor and a couple of

drills. There are two or three applications before the department at the present moment for similar assistance. But from the conversations I have had with the firm in question and from the letters I have received, it appears to me that if we co-operated on the lines on which those people desire us to co-operate they would have just as much say in selecting the show and the men to be assisted, as the Mines Department. But we cannot allow that to happen. They are not expert miners. They might listen to all kinds of good stories told by the owners of leases as to the possibilities of those shows, but I do not think they are practical enough to know whether there is a reasonable chance of success. I will say this for them, that are prepared to provide the greater part of the cost of the machinery on credit on bills from the parties. They have put up the proposition that they are prepared to find machinery that will cost £600 if the Government would back the men in putting up £50 deposit. They are certainly prepared to take risks, because they believe that it would do good to the mining industry of this State. I am not wanting to discourage them. If we had had the money there are some instances in which we would have assisted after reports from the officers of the Mines Department. With regard to the second suggestion of the member for West Perth as to how we might stop a slump in the event of a fall in the price of gold, I have to admit that that thought has never crossed my mind. I hardly know how I could start an investigation in order to find out what would be the best thing to do. So far as it is possible we are in pretty close touch with the best sources of which we know to find out what is likely to be the position in the future, and whether there is any likelihood of a serious slump in the price of gold. From all the information we can get, I must say they cannot see any; and personally I do not think they will for a considerable time to come. But there are mines working to-day that are thoroughly well equipped, mines that have equipped themselves through the increased price of gold, mines that, if gold were to go back to normal, could still continue working and show a profit. Yet had gold been at its normal price, those mines would have had no hope whatever of putting in the complete equipment they have put in.

Mr. Patrick: They did it out of profits?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. There are two or three of them, but one in particular. They have taken the opportunity thoroughly to equip their properties with up-to-date machinery, and if gold were to come back to normal to-morrow they could still continue to work and show a profit. Any encouragement I can give to any company to do the same while the price of gold is so high will certainly be given. I do not think that either Wiluna or Big Bell could do any more than they have done to get their machinery right up to date. And that is quite irrespective of what the Government might ask them to do. So I do not know that I can give the hon. member much information in that regard. As to the statement by the Leader of the Opposition in respect to Yampi Sound, I have to confess that I do not know anything about the telegram to which the hon. member referred. I do not remember it. I am not saying that it is not on the file, but really I do not know anything about it, do not even remember having seen it. I think the question the hon. member asked me was in regard to the declaration that was sent about the opposition to the application for extension at Yampi Sound. But if that was what he was talking about I want to tell him that the declaration had nothing at all to do with me, nor with the promoters or principals of the present company. So far as I know, that declaration has been proved to be absolutely correct, not incorrect. Long before the Leader of the Opposition asked that the papers should be laid on the Table of the House, I made the definite statement in this House that if machinery was purchased, irrespective of where it was purchased, Japan had to find the money for that machinery. I made that statement on behalf of Brasserts, because they informed me that that was the position. And certainly Brasserts found the first £100,000, and not a penny of it was Japanese. But the total money that has been spent on machinery has been Japanese. Brasserts' own words to me were, "We have an agreement that they are prepared to take up to a million tons of ore per year for 45 years. But do you think I am going to take their word without a guarantee? And the only guarantee I can arrange is to tell them that they must find the money for the machinery." That

is what is being done. I know that a great deal of machinery has been ordered, although none of it is yet at Yampi Sound. But members must realise that it is not more than nine months ago that they had the definite contract signed and completed, and since that time, as members know, there has been a race for arms; and so, if you order the smallest quantity of machinery from overseas, particularly from Great Britain, you have very little chance of getting the order supplied on time. I know that the engineer in charge of the erection of that plant ordered machinery over nine months ago, and got a certain amount of it. He negotiated and got the tenders accepted for the supply of it, but in two cases the contract has been cancelled because the successful tenderers cannot supply the steel. And of course we all know why, namely, because it is wanted for armaments. There is a purely British firm with all English capital which has erected a plant in Kalgoorlie, a very fine plant too. That plant was to have started work on the first of next month and would certainly have started on the first of next month if they could have got the necessary machinery. That machinery should have been landed here last March, and it is now said that it will be impossible to land it before the first week in January next. So there is great difficulty in getting machinery at this period, irrespective of what the conditions might have been before. This purely British company cannot get their machinery before the first week in January next. I do not think that anything else was mentioned in the course of the debate, other than some remarks by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert). He usually comes in and blows off and then goes out again. I want to reply to some of his statements, merely for the information of hon. members. He was very definite in his statement that aerial and geophysical surveys were an absolutely wilful waste of money. What is his authority for saying that? Who is he to say such a thing? Has he ever had experience of an aerial survey? Has he ever seen a photograph from an aerial survey, and would he know what it was if he did see it? Personally I do not think he would.

Members: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Still, he said that all this was a wilful waste of

money and if the Commonwealth had the money to spend, well let them spend it, but of course on his own pet mineral in Western Australia.

Mr. Lambert: My pet mineral?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, your pet mineral, but you would not have them spend money on anything else at all. I do not look upon the hon. member as being an authority in point of either geophysical or aerial surveys. I am not pitting my knowledge against his, but I will pit the knowledge of the Government Geologist (Mr. Forman) and of Dr. Simpson, the man he praised so highly, against that possessed by him or by me. Both those gentlemen, and particularly Mr. Forman, whom I regard as being one of the leading geologists in Australia—

Mr. Lambert: That is not geophysical.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Will the hon. member allow me to say that that compliment has been paid to Mr. Forman by the highest geological authority in Australia.

Mr. Lambert: But that is not geophysical.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Will you hold your tongue for a minute?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister will address the Chair and the member for Coolgardie-Yilgarn will keep order.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: My information is that the Western Mining Corporation has presented to the department the aerial survey of over 100,000 square miles of auriferous country in this State.

Mr. Lambert: Not worth two bob.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is the expert again. If he walked into the survey branch to-morrow and saw the photographs, he would not know what they were.

Mr. Lambert: Tell us what they are worth.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The two leading experts who advise me say that those photographs are to-day worth not less than £10,000 to this State.

Mr. Lambert: It is very easy to pull your leg.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not as easy as pulling the hon. member's leg to the extent of leading him to believe that he knows everything, whereas he knows nothing. The hon. member might have known a good deal in his young days, but he has lost such knowledge. I realise that I am getting old, but the hon. member is at least ten years older than I am. The hon. member also referred to the geophysical survey. There

again I am not an expert and I do not know, but there are at least three important mining companies in Western Australia that say they never had advice that could have assisted them so much as that of the geophysicist in the recent survey.

Mr. Lambert: Did they get a shilling's worth of mineral?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: One mine in this State would have been closed down but for the geophysical survey revealing something that the company and the geologists did not know existed.

Mr. Lambert: And the name of the mine?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member can go to my office and get it. I will not quote the names of individuals or mines in a matter of this kind. The company paid for the information and is entitled to it, and I say good luck to the company. I think the hon. member had something to do with a geophysical survey on one occasion and that is why he is so bigoted against it. A geophysicist came out some years ago to examine the lead mines. Of course science is improving year by year. That geophysicist was recognised by a large number of leading mining lights to be the most up-to-date in the world. He was brought out at fairly big expense, but when he got to the lead mines, he was handicapped by the fact that the salt water difficulty had not been overcome and was just as great an attractor as the lead ore. Therefore the geophysical survey was useless under those conditions. Because it panned out so on that occasion, the hon. member thinks geophysical survey work is the same to-day. Let me inform him that the geophysicists could go over a salt lake with a bed of salt 10 feet deep and locate a lode 300 feet below.

Mr. Lambert: Could we get a psychologist on to them?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A pity we could not get a psychologist on to the hon. member. I thank members for their kindly reception of the Estimates. Evidently they believe with me that if there is one industry for which the Government should do something, it is the mining industry that means so much to this country.

Item, Salaries and Allowances, £55,873.

Mr. MARSHALL: I referred to the Under Secretary for Mines having accepted a position on various directorates and, by so doing while holding that position, had committed

a distinct breach of Section 8 of the Mining Act. Some time ago I asked the Minister certain questions. To-night the Minister's statement was definite and emphatic. Strange to relate it was not definite or emphatic when he answered my questions on the 14th October.

The Minister for Mines: I did not then know that the notice in the Press was not right.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is a point that requires explanation. I am not doubting Mr. Calanchini's honesty, probity, integrity or capacity. I compliment him on being a very capable man, one who knew his work and understood the Act he administered particularly well. On the 18th September he left office to begin his long service leave. On the 21st September an announcement appeared in the Press showing that he had broken the law he administered by accepting positions on directorates covering groups of mines that came under the administration of the Act. No reply was published to the statement in the "West Australian." Mr. Calanchini did not deny it. Although still a servant of the State, and although he had acted in defiance of the Act for the administration of which he was responsible, he did not take an opportunity to say that the Press statement was contrary to fact. My questions were asked on the 14th October, or approximately three weeks after the publication of the statement. The Minister in his reply indicated that although Mr. Calanchini had broken the law, he did not propose to take action.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that.

Mr. MARSHALL: His reply was that if the position was as stated by me, in view of the fact that Mr. Calanchini had virtually given up his office, and was on leave prior to retirement, the assurance I asked for could not be given. I do not know that any good purpose can be served by arguing the matter any further. This may, however, be a warning to other officers to protect their probity if their characters are in jeopardy as the result of false statements appearing in the Press. No one can take me to task for observing breaches of any Act by any public officer concerning whose position we have some jurisdiction. If the Minister can assure me that Mr. Calanchini does not hold the office that he is said by the Press to hold, I shall be satisfied.

The Minister for Mines: If he does hold it, I cannot find anyone who can say that he does.

Mr. MARSHALL: The gentleman in question knows that he cannot have an interest in any mining proposition in Western Australia whilst he is in his present office.

The Minister for Mines: He should know that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Is it possible that Mr. Calanchini did not know of the publication of this statement? If he did know, why did he not repudiate it, and say that he did not hold that particular position? The Minister's reply was not what I would have expected of him. I do not wish to do him an injustice. He now says that he is assured Mr. Calanchini does not hold the position in question. That assurance will suffice.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Medical, £37,061—agreed to.

Department of Public Health (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Minister).

Vote—Public Health, £41,748:

Mr. Cross: Give the Minister a chance, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Everyone heard what I was saying when putting these votes.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [10.6]: I am not blaming you, Mr. Chairman, for having put the Medical vote through. I knew that the Medical and Public Health votes came next, and was looking for my papers. At the same time, the Minister for Lands was asking me to report progress. I did not hear you put the Medical vote, but it has now been put and passed. As Minister for Public Health, I am a little disappointed with this vote. I am sorry I was not able to get more money, but am still hoping to do so. I believe that the expenditure of public money on preventive health work is better than expenditure on the building of hospitals and the treatment of people when they become sick.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It is the same everywhere.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH: A Public Health Minister has always a difficult job because he cannot show other than in records and figures anything in pounds, shillings and pence for the money he has

spent. If we can show in figures and records that we are doing good for the rising generation and for future generations, the money will be well spent. There are now 25 infant health centres and 37 sub-centres. Although it is not on the Estimates, I have been able to get sufficient money from the Treasurer for the opening of an infant health clinic at Geraldton, and hope to get another established later on. I wish to refer to the infantile paralysis scare. At a medical conference in Adelaide which many of our leading medical men attended, and where every State of the Commonwealth, as well as the Federal Government, was represented, the whole matter of infantile paralysis, which was then raging in Victoria, was discussed. Means of combating the disease were discussed. It will be remembered that under the jurisdiction given me by the Health Act I issued a proclamation declaring the disease to be a dangerous and infectious one. I did not do that off my own bat. Besides the Commissioner of Public Health, seven doctors, four of whom had attended the Adelaide Conference, were co-opted as a council of advice by the Public Health Department of this State. They put up definite recommendations as to what should be done to prevent, as far as possible, the spread of infantile paralysis to Western Australia. The Commissioner of Public Health and I discussed the first suggestions made by the doctors, and came to the conclusion that one at all events of their proposals was absolutely impracticable and unworkable. The doctors themselves admitted this afterwards. Therefore the question was referred back to them, and a second meeting was held to discuss it all over again. As a result a second proposal was agreed to. Some people have said to me that the regulations made are quite easily broken. I admit that. As regards the second proposal, we were prepared to pay for what was required to be done. However, I wanted to be sure that if a child left Victoria to come to Western Australia and developed infantile paralysis on the journey, I would have somewhere to quarantine that child on landing at Fremantle. Accordingly I asked the Federal Government for permission to use the quarantine station of this State for that purpose, Western Australia paying the expenses of persons quarantined. To that request we received a blank refusal. The Federal Government would not allow us to use the quarantine station. They said

that what was good enough for New South Wales was good enough for Western Australia. What New South Wales had done up to that period was to draft a form to be signed by a member of the British Medical Association certifying that any child under the age of 16 years who was crossing the Victorian border into New South Wales had not been in contact for 21 days prior to the crossing of the border, with anyone affected by the disease. The British Medical Association had circularised its members instructing them not to sign any such certificate, because it was impossible for the doctor to know whether the child had been a contact within 21 days. Still, that certificate, in the opinion of the Federal Government, ought to be good enough for us. It was not good enough for me, though. When we could not obtain the use of the quarantine ground, we took a risk. We did something. We issued a regulation that every child coming to this State from the East by boat or air or rail must be segregated for a period of 21 days as from the day of departure. I am pleased to say that there has been no appearance of the disease in this State. I do not say the regulations are to be credited with that fortunate result; but the precautions that we took were, in my opinion, highly necessary. Further, the Government decided to purchase two iron lungs, in case of an outbreak in Western Australia. They have been purchased. I hope they will never be required. However, they are useful instruments in relation to respiratory diseases. Many other diseases besides infantile paralysis can be effectively treated, and the patient considerably helped, by the use of iron lungs. We have had some nasty things said to us about the attitude we have adopted towards children under 16 years of age, but in the interests of the Western Australian people we are prepared to put up with that. Next as regards the North-West medical service. It is only fair that I should give the Committee certain information. Most hon. members, and especially North-West members, know that we have nationalised the medical service as far down as Port Hedland. I can only say that I am sorry we are not in a position to nationalise the medical service throughout Western Australia.

Mr. Marshall: Now you will have Opposition members on their feet!

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I do not know that I shall. The scheme is that

the doctor gives his services and sends in his bill, but does not collect one penny-piece. Whatever he collects goes to the State. We pay each of those North-West doctors a salary of £1,000 a year. We stipulate that they shall stay in the North not longer than two years—a highly necessary precaution. We have endeavoured to secure, and up to date have succeeded in securing, young doctors holding very high degrees. For the aerial medical service especially we want to attract the very best men obtainable. Therefore we are offering young doctors £1,000 a year; and if they stay two years and have proved satisfactory we pay them six months' salary to enable them to go abroad and secure the latest medical knowledge, subject to their signing an undertaking to return to Western Australia to practise. That, I submit, is a step in the right direction. As regards the present position I may quote the following official information—

North-West Medical Services. Since the inception of the new arrangements, the total debits in respect of professional services rendered by the full-time doctors amounted to £7,635. Of this amount, £5,787 has been collected, representing a collection of 75 per cent. of the total debits. There are, of course, other debits still on the books, some of which will be collected; so that the 75 per cent. above referred to does not represent the ultimate figure. Prior to the new arrangement being inaugurated, a certain amount of money was expended by way of subsidy, and the annual cost of these subsidies was £2,634. For the year ended 30th June last the actual cost to the State of the new system was £2,616, so that the materially improved service has been rendered at no cost to the State.

That is at all events a very fine start towards nationalising the medical profession. Being in control up there, the doctors, as elsewhere, are supposed to have, and do in fact have, a regulation fee; but most hon. members are aware that doctors work on the principle that those who can pay must pay for those who cannot. An operation for which a man in the North who had money would have to pay from 60 to 75 guineas is now available to the people there on the same scale as fixed by the British Medical Association for such an operation performed in the metropolitan area. The people in the North are obtaining medical services at the same cost as rules here in the South.

Mr. Warner: They could not have got that otherwise.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There is not the slightest doubt about that. The doctors were charging double although they were not collecting the same proportion of their fees. The inauguration of the scheme has prevented much of that sort of thing.

Mr. Welsh: And it is much appreciated.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: We know that. In the department I have many letters from people in the North congratulating the Government upon their decision to inaugurate this scheme and expressing appreciation of the improvement in medical treatment available since its inception. I have much pleasure in submitting the Estimates.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [10.21]: I have not much to offer by way of criticism of these Estimates. The Minister and his department are to be congratulated on the manner in which their various activities have been administered. There is no doubt about the enthusiasm of the officers in carrying out their work. I am very pleased at the action of the Minister in agreeing to subsidise the cost of diphtheria immunisation in country districts. That cost had formerly to be borne by the local governing authorities, who felt the burden considerably owing to the distances doctors had to travel. For some reason the British Medical Association decided that a certain rate should be paid per mile for travelling time. While the doctors were prepared to do the work of immunisation at £2 2s. per hour, they had to be paid £7 7s. per hour when travelling to carry out that work. I cannot understand why such a charge should be levied. It costs between 7d. and 8d. a mile to run a motor vehicle, and there does not seem to be sufficient reason why a doctor should receive 1,000 per cent. more for the time occupied in driving about in his car than he gets for doing the actual work of immunisation. The Minister's decision to assist the local governing bodies by contributing 50 per cent. of the cost should meet the position, but I suggest to him that he should take up with the B.M.A. the question of the exorbitant driving allowance that has been fixed. There is one other matter to

which I shall refer briefly. To-day I asked the Minister the following question:—

Have rural hospital boards contemplating extensions to their hospital buildings been advised that unless their contractors employ financial members of a union recognised by the Government, they will not be entitled to receive assistance from the hospital fund towards the cost of such buildings?

The Minister replied in the negative. Only a few hours ago I sent this wire to the secretary of a hospital in the country—

Have you been advised that unless only financial members of union employed on hospital additions you cannot participate in distribution of hospital fund?

To that I received the following reply:—

Yes. Contained specifications contractor will employ union labour.

That is not as explicit as it might be, but it indicates that in the specifications prepared by the Public Works Department a clause was included making it compulsory upon the contractor to employ financial members of the union. In reply to my question, the Minister said definitely "no." In reply to my wire, the secretary of the hospital committee said definitely "yes."

Mr. Fox: But he did not say "yes."

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The first word in the telegram is "yes."

Mr. Marshall: It says he "will employ," not "must employ."

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The contractor must comply with the terms of the specifications, which are prepared by the Government. The specifications were not prepared by the local hospital authorities.

The Minister for Health: They would be foolish to prepare their plans and specifications, seeing that they can get them from the Public Works Department.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I suppose 90 per cent. of the plans and specifications for additions to country hospitals are prepared by the officers of the Public Works Department, and who could prepare them better? The departmental officers prepare plans and specifications for hospitals throughout the State, and they know much more about such requirements than anyone else, so far as I can judge. Provided the amount of money available is placed before them, they can prepare plans in accordance with the funds available. It has been the practice to provide a certain proportion of such money from the hospital fund, in

order to assist in the erection of additions to hospitals. In some instances the Lotteries Commission has provided 50 per cent., the local people 25 per cent. and the hospital fund 25 per cent.

The Minister for Health: We do not recognise the Lotteries Commission in the matter at all. We contribute on the basis of fifty-fifty with the local people.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: And that is much appreciated by them. The justice of making a contribution from the fund is also recognised by them, but injustice may be done in certain districts if it is insisted that only financial members of a union may be employed by contractors. I ask the Minister to ascertain on whose authority the specifications include a provision that union labour only must be employed. It is possible that in a small country town the local contractor would be prepared to put in a tender for the construction of additions to the hospital. It may be that he does not approve of the principle of employing union men, or if he did, it might not be possible for him to secure them in every instance. It is an abrogation of the principles embodied in the legislation under which the hospital fund has been levied and raised, for the present or any other Government to declare that the hospital board or committee in any country centre shall not be allowed to participate in the distribution of that fund unless something is done that the legislation does not provide for. I suggest to the Minister in all seriousness that he take up this matter with the Public Works Department and, if instructions have been issued for the insertion of such a clause in the specifications, that he have that altered without delay.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [10.30]: I do not want any misunderstanding or any misconception as to where I stand. The policy of the Government is preference to unionists. That is very definite. We stick to it. We stand by it. We will fall by it if we have to. But I still say "no" in answer to the question of the hon. member even after having heard the telegram read by him. You cannot read the first question without reading the lot and there is no stipulation in any contract or specification, nor has there ever been a notice sent out from the Health Department which controls the money raised by

the hospital tax. There is nothing in the Hospitals Act in the way of a provision for this distinction.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: If I produce the specification with the clause to which we object in it, will you have it cancelled?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No, I will not.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Yet you say there is nothing in it.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I say quite definitely that there will be many contracts let for small jobs throughout the State where neither the contractor nor any of the men working for him will be members of a union. It may be impossible to get unionists there; but if there is a member of a union out of work in a particular district, he has to get preference on the job over another man who is not a member of the union in that district.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Well, it is a wicked thing when everybody has to pay that tax.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There is nothing in the Hospitals Act in connection with the control of the money for that purpose. I am asked whether it is provided for. It is not provided for in the specifications of all Government contracts issued from the Public Works Department. I would not mind saying, although I do not know where the district or the hospital is to which the hon. member has referred, that the hon. member has got hold of one of those old specifications which the Government did not even know about.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I received it in the last ten days.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Well, if preference to unionists is specified, I say that this Government will stick to that through thick and thin.

Miss Holman rose to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: Which item does the member for Forrest propose to discuss?

Miss Holman: Am I not able to speak generally?

The CHAIRMAN: No, the Minister has replied.

Miss Holman: Then I will speak on the first item.

Item, Commissioner of Public Health, £15,418.

Miss HOLMAN: I have listened with interest to the Minister in introducing this

vote. I was sorry that more money had not been provided for the public health services of the State. I congratulate the department on the work that is being carried out. The Commissioner of Public Health who is in charge has a great deal to do, but I would like to see more being done. For instance, country hospitals are not getting as much as they would like from the department. I have three hospitals in my electorate and there is the possibility of more being erected. The department has to approve of any request being made by the country hospitals. The country hospital committees are deserving of great credit for the work they do, but I think that the Government on occasions could do more than give the part the Minister has mentioned. There is a hospital at Dwellingup and that hospital has been the recipient of many letters of congratulation from the department for the work done there. But they are requesting extra assistance and I hope that the Minister will be able to give it. The amount of honorary work done by members of hospital committees in the country is unlimited. It is of the greatest value to the State and I consider that the Minister might occasionally give extra consideration to those hospitals. The Commissioner of Public Health of course has to approve of the requests and sometimes the amounts asked for have been considerably reduced. The particular hospital I mentioned asked altogether for £300, but that was reduced to £100. So far we have not been able to get the department to give the £50 moiety; it is desired to give only £25. These people are absolutely unable to raise the money necessary. They have been complimented on their collections which stand at £124 per bed per annum and I hope that the department will give special consideration, not only bare justice, but special consideration to requests from country hospitals that are so deserving of everything we can do for them.

Mr. CROSS: I notice that one item included under this heading reads "Medical officers, dentists, and nurses, school hygiene." I notice also that there is a small increased expenditure provided for here for another officer. I do not know whether that provides for an increase in the dental staff, but what I wanted to ask the Minister was whether it was proposed to grant any increased expenditure towards the upkeep of

the new dental hospital. From certain information which has been given to me I understand that the Superintendent of the hospital is experiencing considerable trouble over the financial position. There has been difficulty in getting certain moneys that are required. It is beyond doubt that that institution is doing a great deal of good in the State. It is quite unfair that a department like that, which is so necessary in the community, should be starved for money, particularly in its early stages. I would like the Minister to assure us that the hospital will be given sufficient funds so that the superintendent and his staff can devote the whole of their time to their profession and not have the additional worry about securing of funds with which to carry on.

Item, Contingencies, £26,330.

Miss HOLMAN: I notice that there is an increase of £1,081 in this item, and that the travelling dental clinic is mentioned. I would like to ask the Minister exactly how far the provision to extend the clinic has gone. I do not think there is any necessity for me to labour the need for such a clinic because one has only to read the Public Health Department's report containing that of the senior dental officer to see what he thinks about it. Many organisations throughout the State have been continually asking for this clinic. I would like also to ask the Minister whether consideration has been given to the suggestion of Dr. Stang, the Senior Medical Officer of schools, with regard to the provision of a permanent educational holiday camp for children.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: In reply to the two hon. members who have asked questions, I do not know whether the member for Canning knows that in the last two months the subsidy to the Dental Hospital has been increased by £550 per annum. I have received a letter of congratulation on that score. The hospital is being treated reasonably well at present. As for the travelling dental clinic, that was one of the unfortunates, but I am hopeful that we shall be able, with the amount provided by the Lotteries Commission, to get sufficient to have a van on the road as soon as possible. While we are one of the poorest States of the Commonwealth, we are expected to do more than any of the other States are doing in these matters. I do not know where the money is to come from.

I saw in the "West Australian" a picture of the magnificent van for mothercraft teaching in Victoria. But I can say that the Government of that State did not find one penny towards that outfit; it was all donated from various sources. But if we in this State ask the organisations to provide £100 per annum towards the running of a dental clinic, we get refusals every time.

Miss Holman: Look at the population they have in Victoria!

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, and look also at the revenue they get. It will be found that the Government of Western Australia provides far more than any other State Government for these services. I cannot say when the travelling dental clinic will be on the road, but while I am Minister for Public Health, apart from the infant health centre, the very next thing that will be done from any moneys I can get will be done for the establishment of that travelling dental clinic, because I believe it is one of the best services that can be supplied. Unfortunately we are not in a position to employ as many dentists as we would like to employ, and until we get the travelling clinic going, we shall not be able to supply as complete a service as we would wish.

Mr. McLARTY: Under this item there is the Nurses' Registration Board. In view of the difficulty that country hospitals have in obtaining the services of trained nurses, I should like to ask the Minister whether there is any possibility of additional training schools being created. Under existing conditions, the country hospitals cannot obtain full staffs. I wondered if the Minister could formulate some plan whereby nurses could be partly trained in country hospitals. It appears there is a shortage of trained nurses throughout the Commonwealth, and that it is likely to continue. It might afford some satisfaction if we could know what promise the future holds in that regard.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: That matter has been seriously discussed by the Trained Nurses' Association, the A.T.N.A. and the department itself. The result is that we have got three new country hospitals.

Mr. Doney: Could you name those three?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Not at the moment. They are three new ones. I realise the difficulty there is in getting trained nurses, for there is a serious short-

age. If we could but get them, we ourselves would employ 23 additional nurses. For six weeks we advertised in the principal daily newspapers in three of the Eastern States, but we are still something like 26 short in this State. But I am not going to try to push the training of nurses to an extent that would lower the standard of the nurse that is fully trained. Whatever hospital is recognised as a training school, it must be able to turn out the nurses trained just as efficiently as they are trained in recognised schools to-day.

Mr. SAMPSON: I should be glad if the Minister would advise me as to the hours the probationary nurses work and the payment they receive.

The Minister for Health: There is no trouble about getting trainees, none whatever.

Mr. SAMPSON: Perhaps the Minister will explain why they do not become qualified nurses.

The Minister for Health: Because we have not sufficient schools.

Mr. SAMPSON: Is it not possible to train any more?

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: Would it not be possible to train some nurses in private hospitals?

The Minister for Health: Not on your life!

The Minister for Employment: Why not put some of these questions on the Notice Paper?

Mr. SAMPSON: I should like the Minister to say whether there is not any private hospital where training could be undertaken. This shortage of nurses is very serious and, since nurses are continually leaving Western Australia, our position is likely to be worse rather than better. Is it possible for the Minister to give some information? In a number of comparatively large hospitals it should be possible for probationers to become qualified.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am not in a position to say whether there is any private hospital capable of being turned into a training school for nurses. I do not know the conditions. Personally I do not think that anything of the sort will ever happen.

Mr. Sampson: Something must be done.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The member for Swan began his remarks by inquiring as to the conditions and hours of

nurses. The pay and the hours are better in Western Australia than in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Marshall: And now what are they?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Nurses work 48 hours a week, and probationers, I believe, 52 hours, though I am not sure of the latter figure.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 2nd November, 1937.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

- 1, Main Road Act Amendment.
- 2, Main Road Act Amendment Act (1932) Amendment.
- 3, Jury Act Amendment (No. 1).