

duced to scotch a few unscrupulous persons. We maintain a police force that costs a lot of money, in order to deal with a few unscrupulous people.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Why not brand those few?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That has nothing to do with the point. Just as we keep an expensive police force for that purpose, so it is necessary to have the Bill for the protection of the wheat growers. Some mention of stealing wheat was made and some members seemed to be under the impression that the thefts took place at the stacks on the farms.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It takes place there too.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Unfortunately, a good deal of stealing has been from the stacks belonging to the wheat pool, considerably more than has come to light.

Progress reported.

BILL—POLICE OFFENCES (DRUGS).

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 25th October, 1928.

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

QUESTION—POLICE CONSTABLE CAMPBELL.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Police: 1, What charges were laid against Constable Campbell, and who laid them? 2, Who heard the charges? 3, What was the decision of the tribunal hearing the charges? 4, Was the decision carried out? 5, If not, what punishment was meted out to Constable Campbell? 6, Was the decision conveyed to Campbell in writing? 7, If not, in what way was the decision conveyed to him? 8, Is there any reason for the department's refusal to convey in writing any decision made by the tribunal trying him? 9, If so, what is the reason?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE replied: 1, (a) Disrespect of his superior officer and disgraceful conduct by the use of certain language concerning the Hon. J. M. Drew, Chief Secretary, and Mr. R. Connell, Commissioner of Police; (b) disrespect of his superior officer and disgraceful conduct by the use of certain language concerning Inspector O'Halloran. 2, A board appointed by Executive Council under Section 26 of the Police Act. 3, The board recommended that the constable be fined the maximum penalty provided by the Act, viz., £3, and ordered him to pay £16 16s. costs. 4, No. 5, He was removed from the force in accordance with Section 8 of the Act. 6, The recommendation of the board was not conveyed to him in writing, but in accordance with the usual practice it was conveyed to him by his district inspector and he perused the minute

in regard to same in the inspector's presence. 7, Answered by No. 6. 3, The recommendation of the board was communicated in writing to the solicitors appearing for ex-Constable Campbell. 9, Answered by No. 8.

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYED, SUSTENANCE.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Premier: What is the total amount distributed among municipalities, councils, and road boards generally, in the way of grants to absorb unemployed, for the six months ended 30th September, 1928?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Premier) replied: £74,467 15s

QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT, CASES LISTED.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Labour: What is the total number of cases at present waiting for hearing before the Arbitration Court?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR replied: Remitted to industrial boards, 5; no answer lodged by respondents, 6; answer lodged but no application made by applicant for settling of issues, 3; cases actually ready for hearing, 6; total, 20. Other application, interpretations, etc., 5; apprenticeship cases, 4; total, 9. Cases for industrial magistrate—complaints, 8. All adjourned at the request of the parties.

QUESTION—MIGRATION, COST.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Lands: What is the total cost to the State in respect of all classes of migrants, assisted, nominated and otherwise, for the year ended 30th June, 1928?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Minister for Lands) replied: £14,363.

QUESTSION—WELLS, NORTH-WEST, RECONDITIONING.

Mr. LAMOND asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: 1, What is the amount allocated for the reconditioning of

wells in the Nullagine, Marble Bar and Port Hedland road board districts, respectively? 2, How many wells in each district does the allocation apply to? 3, What amount of the allocation has been applied for by each of the boards during the past three years?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, For the Marble Bar Road Board—£300 in 1925-26, £150 in 1926-27 (the board stated this was sufficient), £300 in 1927-28; for the Nullagine Road Board—£380 in 1925-26 and 1926-27, £390 in 1927-28; for the Port Hedland Road Board—£300 in each year. 2, In Marble Bar Road District—30 wells for each year; in Nullagine Road District—38 wells for 1925-26 and 1926-27, 39 wells for 1927-28; in Port Hedland Road District—30 wells for each year. 3, The boards do not apply, but the money is paid over when it is known that it is required.

QUESTION—SPEED BOATS, REGULATION.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, Is he aware that speed boats, with open exhausts, are becoming numerous? 2, Is he in possession of information relating to regulations controlling this type of craft in the Eastern States? 3, If not, will he cause inquiry to be made with a view, if possible, to removing the nuisance created without affecting the sport?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, These boats being privately owned, no official figures are available. 2, No. 3, Yes.

QUESTION—HIGHWAYS OBSTRUCTED.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, Is he aware that complaints are numerous to the effect that inmates of the Old Men's Home are obstructing the highways between Nedlands and Claremont after dark? 2, If not, will he cause inquiries to be made with a view to preventing accidents and possible loss of life?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, No. 2, Yes, if specific complaints are received.

BILL—ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.*Leave to introduce.***THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**

(Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [4.40]: I move:

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.41]: Is the Minister asking for leave to introduce a Bill to amend an Act already in existence, an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament? If so, the Order of Leave does not appear to me to give power to amend that Act. I consider that that Act is practically dead. I may be wrong. Perhaps no legal gentleman would support me in that idea.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Ministry would be very glad if you were right.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No, this is not a party matter at all. In my opinion the Act to which I refer has done its duty. It was passed to give power to a board having the Chief Justice as chairman, a board to alter the electoral boundaries of the State. That power was in the hands of Parliament, and was delegated to a Supreme Court judge and two others. They reported to us the amended boundaries, and we rejected them. That Act, I think, then completed its task. I should like the Minister to tell me whether that is so, because, if it is not, the Act is still in existence, and I imagine that any alteration of our electoral boundaries must be made under that Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are going to amend that Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is not the Order of Leave asked for. We have an Act of Parliament that has been in existence since February, 1923, an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. If that Act is the law to-day, one would think it would be necessary to alter the boundaries of our electorates in accordance with that Act. But the Minister has moved for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. We already have such an Act on the statute-book. The Minister is not asking for leave to amend that Act to enable provision

to be made for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. He is asking for leave to do something for which there is an Act already in existence. I am not opposing the motion for leave.

The Minister for Works: Then why do you not wait to see what is in the Bill?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No. When the Minister asks for an Order of Leave to do something he must not go beyond the Order of Leave. The Order of Leave in this instance is to do something, for which there is already an Act on the statute-book. Whether that Act on the statute-book is really alive and operative, I do not know. It appears to me it is not. We have two or three lawyers amongst the members of Parliament, and they say I am quite wrong. However, that does not convince me altogether. If this proposed Bill is going to repeal that existing Act, leave ought to be asked to repeal Act No. 10 of 1923 and to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. I am not opposing the granting of the Order of Leave, but I think I am justified in making those remarks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The title of the Electoral Act, 1907, is "An Act to regulate Parliamentary Elections." That Act repealed an existing Electoral Act and several sections of the Constitution Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have read out the title of Act No. 10 of 1923. It is an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. We are now asked to grant leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to make provision for the better representation of the people of Western Australia in Parliament. It is exactly the same title.

Mr. Latham: Yes, the title is exactly the same.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is exactly the same in essence. I think we ought to go on sound ground in the matter.

The Minister for Railways: I think the motion is quite in order.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS

(Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton—in reply) [4.45]: The Notice is in order. Bills are introduced in different years with practically the same name as others introduced before. There is a Land Act Amendment Act of a certain date.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This is not an amending Bill. Is it to be one?

Hon. G. Taylor: We would have to alter the Order of Leave. There is no doubt about that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It will be an amending Bill. I am at a disadvantage in this matter, for the Premier gave notice to introduce this Bill.

Hon. G. Taylor: You can let it go as far as I am concerned, if you think it is all right.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not want to have this matter postponed. The Premier intends to move the second reading on Tuesday next. I think the House is prepared to deal with it as soon as possible in order to avoid delay. I understand this is entirely in order, and may be allowed to go unless the hon. member takes exception to it.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.47]: Notwithstanding the opinion expressed by the member for Mt. Margaret I think that the Act already on the statute-book is very much alive. I also think the intention of the Premier is to amend it, although he does not say so in this Notice.

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He desires to amend the Act and to bring about a redistribution of seats. I hope there will be no delay in this. I want to give the Premier every opportunity to make his proposals to the House, and I hope that leave to introduce this Bill will be granted so that on Tuesday the second reading may be moved. Let us have a redistribution of seats as soon as we can get it. It is already late in the session to deal with it. When we do come to deal with it we should have a Bill to provide for an alteration in the boundaries. It will be take some little time to discuss it. I do not want the matter delayed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think Standing Order 261 covers the position. It says that every Bill not prepared pursuant to the Order of Leave, according to the Rules and Orders of the House, shall be ordered to be withdrawn. The time to raise the point will be when the Bill comes before the House.

Question put and passed.

On motion by the Minister for Railways, Bill read a first time.

BILLS (2)—REPORTS OF COMMITTEE.

1, Water Boards Act amendment.

2, Profiteering Prevention.

Adopted.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Navigation Act Amendment.

Passed.

2, Police Offences (Drugs.)

Transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1928-29.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the previous day; Mr. Panton in the Chair.

Department of Public Works and Labour
(Hon. A. McCallum, Minister.)

Vote—Public Works and Buildings,
£113,001:

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.53]: The great activities of the Public Works Department come under Loan expenditure. Our activities in connection with these Estimates are not very big. The big moneys that the Public Works Department have to spend come up for discussion on the Loan Estimates, but with these Estimates not very much expenditure is provided for. The expenditure for the past year has been a record since the department was established. From loan funds the expenditure was £1,732,105, and from revenue, on works and buildings, the expenditure was £89,668, on Labour, £12,310, on the sale of Government Property Trust Account £104,235, and on Federal Aid roads £286,433, a total of £2,224,751. In addition from revenue there was expended on the Goldfields Water Supply £136,633, and other hydraulic undertakings £26,719, making a grand total of £2,388,103. This is a larger amount than the department have been called upon to administer since it was established. The total revenue received was £228,313, made up of Public Works and Buildings, £18,129; Labour, £6,372; Goldfields Water Supply, £161,909; and other hydraulic undertakings, £38,903. The principal works carried out

during the year were on the Albany-Denmark railway extension, where further progress was made towards the completion of the line, the expenditure for the year being £92,838; the Ejanding Northwards railway, this being completed to Kulja for a distance of 77 miles. Recently a start was made with the northern spur to the west of Lake Hillman. The cost to the 30th June was £113,886. The relaying work of the Jarnadup-Pemberton line has been completed and handed over to the working railways. Previously the last-mentioned line was not up to the working railways standard. It was run by the State Sawmills Department. It has now been brought up to the working railways standard, complies with the conditions of the Railway Act, and has been handed over to the working railways for operation.

Hon. G. Taylor: That means there has been proper fettling and relaying.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, re-sleeping and relaying right through, as well as regrading in one or two places.

Hon. G. Taylor: It has been put on a permanent basis.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. In addition, the Lake Brown-Bullfinch railway was commenced, and up to the end of the financial year £44,385 had been expended. The Norseman-Salmon Gums railway was completed and handed over to the working railways. Water supply reservoirs were established along the Esperance Northwards railway, the Ejanding Northwards line, and the Kalkalling-Bullfinch railway. In the matter of harbours and rivers, further progress was made at the Fremantle harbour. The Victoria Quay has been strengthened, new sheds have been erected, and general improvements effected at a total cost of £118,000. At Geraldton steady progress has been made with the construction of the harbour. The construction of the new wharf has been commenced. The expenditure for the year at Geraldton was £79,495. The Swan River improvement scheme has been started. We have not yet received the plant which was ordered, except the two grab dredges. The suction dredge that will be the main implement used in this work did not arrive until a week or two ago. The parts are now here and are being assembled. The dredge will be in action early in the new year. The expendi-

ture for the financial year was £19,731. In connection with public buildings, owing to expansion, additions and improvements were effected to a number of public offices, to the Government abattoirs, and to the Old Men's Home, where the accommodation was overtaxed. A sum of £9,800 was expended on additions to the Fremantle hospital. Progress has been made towards the completion of the Point Heathcote mental home. That will be finished within the next week or two, and will then be handed over to the Lunacy Department to operate. In addition to these works, £59,152 was expended on new school buildings and additions and renovations. Under roads and bridges, £395,343 was expended from loan on roads in groups and other areas. A considerable portion of this money was provided under the Migration and Development Agreement, but in addition the State had to provide from ordinary Loan Funds numerous other roads in group areas and also to clear tracks in agricultural districts. That expenditure is altogether apart from the scheme under the Federal aid roads grant. That is to say, the State has expended nearly £400,000 on roads outside our agreement with the Commonwealth. On the revenue side the amount provided for works and buildings in the labour section is £127,433. That is an increase of £25,455 as compared with last year. The main items making up the increase are—salaries £1,237, main roads State contribution as required under the agreement £38,042, being an increase of £19,036 on last year's contribution, factories branch salaries £1,203, and roads and bridges £3,322. The position as regards Federal aid road finance is that the balance carried forward from the last two years totals £574,695. This year there will be available, in addition, £672,000; or I may say that we shall have available for spending on roads under the scheme during this year £1,246,695. It is not anticipated, of course, that we shall be able to expend all that money: we have not the staff to get the necessary surveys plans and specifications ready in the time. The State's proportion of the expenditure, three-sevenths, will amount to £534,298. By the agreement, one-eighth of that amount must come out of revenue. This will mean an expenditure of £66,787. However, it is not anticipated that we shall be able to get through the whole of the road

grant this year, and therefore the Estimates provide for an expenditure of only £38,000 out of revenue, on the assumption that the total expenditure will be about £700,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: There are only eight months to go.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But these are Estimates for the whole year, as from the 1st July. The total of salaries shown on the revenue Estimates represents an increase of £14,113 over the previous year's actual expenditure. That increase is mainly due to the staff of the Public Works Department, particularly the drafting and accountancy officers having performed services for various departments.

Hon. G. Taylor: Does that amount represent all the salaries for the public servants in your department?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The Public Works Department do work for various other departments, for which recoups are made. For instance, in respect of the work done by the Public Works Department for the Main Roads Board, they will receive £5,500 on account of drafting and £50 towards the salary of the stationery clerk. This year the Public Works Department staff has been considerably strengthened, and the estimated recoup is £11,000. In addition, a recoup of £1,765 is expected for work done by the drafting staff for the Metropolitan Water Supply. The one drafting staff does the necessary work for the Public Works Department, the Water Supply Department, and the Main Roads Board. All the draftsmen are under the chief draftsman, and are controlled by the Engineer-in-Chief. That system is more flexible when work is slack in one department and rushed in another. The draftsmen are then changed over from one department to another. In such conditions rush work can be got out more expeditiously. The balance in the increase in salaries is accounted for by the increased staff due to greater activities, and by statutory increases, over which the Government have no control whatever. That, briefly, is the position in regard to the Public Works Estimates. Our big activities, as I have stated, are under Loan, and that is where scope for wider discussion and more detailed explanation will be offered.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The opportunity given is not very adequate.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Whatever the opportunity may be it offers itself within the Standing Orders. I think I shall be able to mix in whatever happens.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are not very successful this time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The big items of expenditure, I say, are not provided here.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Those are for the second opportunity.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Our big expenditure is out of Loan, and on the Loan Estimates scope will be offered for discussion. The present Estimates provide mainly for salaries. I content myself with that explanation.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.8]: These Estimates cover not only the Public Works and Labour Departments, but the Arbitration Court, administration of the Factories Act, and many other activities of considerable interest.

The Minister for Works: These come later.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They must be dealt with in the general discussion. The Chairman of Committees has ruled that we may have a general discussion when a department is called, but at no other time during the consideration of the Estimates. I am sorry that I was not here when the Minister began his remarks. At the time I entered the Chamber he was dealing with the work of the Main Roads Board. I do not think the Minister stated the amount he received from the Federal Government last year. I should like to know how much was claimed, how much received, and how much refused. The Minister informed us that some discussion was in progress between our Public Works Department and the Federal Minister for Public Works regarding expenditure that was not in accordance with the agreement under which we receive aid from the Federal roads vote. Nothing was said about it last year, because the matter had not been finalised then and we did not want to make it more difficult for the Minister to negotiate. I believe a considerable amount of the money claimed from the Federal department under the agreement by our department was refused, though I do not know how much. Of the money spent between the 1st January and the 22nd March, 1927, about £30,000 was

refused. That is a pretty serious sum. I do not know whether the Federal Government have refused to pay anything further, and if so how we propose to meet the amount, whether by charging it to Loan or by charging it to revenue. I dare say the Minister explained that under the agreement with the Federal Government he had to call for tenders for work before he could put it in hand, even under the Main Roads Board. It must be a fairly expensive business to call for tenders in connection with many small items. I believe the Minister does have piece work done on roads, and piece work is a form of contract. We ought to make an effort to have the system a little more elastic. It seems to me quite impossible to let contracts for strengthening small lengths of road. In most of our roads occasionally small stretches require to be strengthened, particularly in winter time, when the work ought to be done promptly. We know that the contract system has proved more satisfactory than day labour. One does not know why it should be so, because the same men would be employed by a contractor as by the department. It is a fact, however, that better results are obtained from contract. There is no denying that. I understand that the Minister did make efforts to obtain some modification of the agreement, but without success. I do not propose to criticise the Main Roads Board. I think the work now being done by them is satisfactory. There has been a lot of expenditure, and there has been considerable improvement in roads. To get from here to Northam used to be a difficult thing.

The Minister for Justice: It used to be a test of endurance.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Now the road is fairly good. My only complaint is that people now travel too fast over it. Yesterday someone told me that he came down from Northam to Perth in 2 hours 10 minutes. That is too fast altogether. However, the roads are being improved. Under the Federal agreement, I believe, the only work paid for is the completed work. As a result there have been many complaints. People found that it took considerable time to complete a stretch of road, and during that time the remainder of the road had to be left to take care of itself. I hope the Minister has made some satisfactory arrangement with the Federal Government in that

regard. It goes without saying that one could not improve towards permanency the whole of the 116 miles of road from here to Bunbury at one time. But a little work of a permanent character here and there would not be paid for under the scheme by which the Federal and State Governments are doing the work. I believe that has been the case up till now. Some time ago the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) drew attention to the value of the earth roads near Kellerberrin. Wonderful results are being obtained from earth roads, especially in drier areas.

Mr. Thomson: Excellent results.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Splendid results, and the roads are much more comfortable to ride on than the gravelled roads.

Mr. Thomson: They are standing up better, too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There does not seem to be any satisfactory road between the blanket road, as I think it is called, and an earth road.

The Minister for Works: In the dry areas the earth road is all right.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have travelled over some of those earth roads, and undoubtedly they are excellent. Really, we are pioneering even now with the change-over from slow horse-drawn vehicles to motor vehicles. Naturally it takes time to get the best results. I believe the great thing in connection with road building is to have all the material of the one strength. If a road is built with material that is 80 per cent value in one part, 70 per cent elsewhere and a portion 100 per cent., then the road will not stand up to traffic, because the strong bar through the road, consisting of the material of 100 per cent. value, helps to create holes that gradually increase in size. That is why the earth roads in Western Australia being more or less of uniform strength, carry the traffic so well. Then again it is found that where the traffic consists almost entirely of motor vehicles, a road will stand up to the use it is put to far better than if mixed traffic passes over its surface—mixed traffic such as heavy horse-drawn waggons and motor vehicles. I presume that the mixture of traffic has something to do with the bad roads we have in various parts of the State. I do not know how we can maintain any but light roads over long stretches throughout Western Australia. There are thousands of miles of road throughout the State that are fairly constantly used, principally by light

traffic. On the other hand, if roads are to be macadamised and tarred, then the expense of upkeep will be enormous, far beyond what the State can face. As for the construction of main roads, it is a wonderful help to us that £382,000 is available from the Federal Government. I think we should consider whether the proportion contributed by the State—that is, 15s. for every pound supplied by the Federal Government—should not be regarded as a wholly national charge. At present the State charges the local governing authorities with one-half of the 15s. I do not think that is a good idea, and I hope the Minister will be able to alter the Act so that the State shall accept the full responsibility.

Mr. Thomson: That is what the road boards have asked for.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: For instance, there is the road built from Perth through Northam and on to Mullewa. A proportion of the expenditure on that road is charged up to the local governing authorities. Naturally the various road boards, seeing that they have not viewed the portions of the road where the expenditure has been incurred, are concerned when they are called upon to pay. I do not think the local authorities of Northam have complained, but when the Goomalling Road Board is debited with their proportion of the work done on the road outside Midland Junction, or wherever the road starts, naturally that board is caused some concern. Thus it is with all the other local authorities. Another point is that the maintenance costs will be considerable. If the Federal Government are not more directly concerned, they will get off far more lightly than the State. At the same time, it is a wonderful thing that we have had placed at our disposal such a large amount of money. I notice that £38,000 is placed on the Estimates for this year, and I understand the Minister explained that that amount would justify him in claiming little more than half of the £382,000 that is available. I was not present when the Minister made his explanation, but I suppose he indicated that it was not possible to avail ourselves of a larger proportion of the money because we could not call for sufficient contracts to absorb all the funds. It is a pity that that could not be done. While we shall have the right to spend later on any unexpended portion of the money for this year, it seems to me that some difficulty may be created owing to the

increased amount that will be available for expenditure.

The Minister for Works: No, it gradually cuts out.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It will cut out very gradually.

The Minister for Works: I think that next year we shall be well up. The trouble was that there were no surveys or levels taken of roads throughout the State. We had to start off scratch.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There was no need for surveys or levels.

The Minister for Works: But we must have them if we let contracts.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I realise that the Government must have them because the Federal Government insisted upon it being done. A great deal of unnecessary deviation has been authorised and this has proved irritating to people whose land has been cut up. More than that, the land I refer to has been obtained at very considerable cost. I realise that we must get the best grades available, although I do not suppose the matter of grade affects motor vehicles so much as it formerly did the horse-drawn vehicles. The Minister for Works is also Minister for Labour, and I want to say a few words about the unemployed.

The Minister for Works: The Labour Bureau does not come under this Vote.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Labour Bureau has nothing to do with it. The unemployed want work and that comes from the Minister for Labour.

The Minister for Works: Does it?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A good deal of the work that is available through the Government must come from the Works Department. At any rate, I think this is the proper time to discuss the matter. We are all concerned about it, and desire to do anything we can to achieve a better state of affairs. We know that meetings have been held in the metropolitan area quite recently, and some disturbances have taken place. I was at a meeting last night, and while there was some noise, it seemed to me that it was mostly good-tempered. It appears to be one way these unfortunate people have of expressing their disapproval of the situation in which they find themselves. Some of these people have been out of work for a long time. Naturally it is bad enough during the first month; the second month is a little worse, and as time goes on the men want not only food but clothing. House

rent mounts up, and the men who are out of work are much concerned. They are anxious about to-day but are in great fear about to-morrow. They do not know what will happen.

Mr. Thomson: It is deplorable that so many men should be out of work in Western Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is. While there are a few men who go to meetings because they enjoy having little brushes with public men, there are many who attend them with the object of expressing their anger at finding so many others out of work as well.

Mr. Thomson: I think they go to express their disappointment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, perhaps so. Naturally they take advantage of the opportunities open to them. They cannot call meetings themselves, or if they do, the people they wish to reach are not those who generally attend. So it is that they go to meetings and make themselves heard. They make their demands, and I am bound to confess that I am entirely in sympathy with men who are out of work. It cannot be expected that such men will not make themselves heard, despite the fact that it does not do much good when they make themselves heard to such an extent time after time at public meetings. There can be no real peace or prosperity in any country when a considerable number of the people are out of work. Of that there can be no doubt. Not only do the men who are out of employment lose, but the State itself loses. Those men could have been creating an asset by working, and so increasing the trade of the State. As a matter of fact, while such men are idle they constitute an expense to the State. There is no way of building up the prosperity of the State except by work, and unless we can keep our people at work the position generally here must become worse for everyone. It is not possible for the Government to employ every man in the State who requires work. There was a time when it was thought that a Government could employ everyone who wanted work. It was then considered that if everything was nationalised, all would be bright and happy. We know that that idea of nationalisation has disappeared, and now we have the Government responsible for managing the affairs of the State, for encouraging enterprise to provide work, and also for providing as

much work as the State itself can. The pressing need confronting Parliament to-day is the task of dealing with unemployment. We have not brought in a great number of people during the last three years. I think the aggregate number was about equal to the number brought in during the previous three years. I believe the total was about 13,000. While we received a very small number of newcomers in 1926, we did, in 1927, bring in a large number of people in excess of the number of departures. We have always looked forward to the time when that would be so. In that year a large number of the newcomers were from the Eastern States. We had something over 8,000 in 1927 and a little over 1,000 in 1926. I refer to the excess of arrivals over departures. In 1927 some dislocation was caused for the time being. In this State we have large areas awaiting development, and we must see to it that men are put to work. We shall find that unless something is done, the unemployed will increase in numbers after the coming harvest.

The Minister for Justice: There is a limit to Governmental activities.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no limit to the Government's opportunities.

The Minister for Justice: There is a limit to Governmental expenditure.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is an easy way of getting out of it, but it is not the way. There will be a good deal of work available during the harvesting months, but not so much as usual because the crops are lighter. The work that will be available will not absorb all who are out of work now. Then again the farmers are using larger machines and require the services of fewer men. As the crops will be lighter, there will be not only less labour required, but there will be less money available. The circulation of money within the State is probably four or five times the value of the total of the gross production of wealth. It was between £120,000,000 and £150,000,000 last year and there will be £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 less received this year on account of wheat and wool. That will mean in all probability that there will not be so much money in circulation, and the reduction in actual circulation of money will possibly be very considerable. We have to look ahead a bit and see what can be done. There are not many more than

100,000 able-bodied men in the State altogether, and there should be work for every one. There can be no peace while such a large number of men are out of work, and there can be no real prosperity either. We should devote ourselves to the task of getting these men back to work. I know that the Government are limited regarding the amount of money they can spend, but with the Government money spent is money spent only once. We have a revenue of £10,000,000, the greatest we have had so far by far. A great deal of that will be paid away in wages earned. It is earned through the railways, through the State trading concerns and through other Government activities and it is paid away by those concerns in wages. Then there will be the loan money. Last year our loan expenditure was £4,600,000, a considerable amount more than we have ever spent before. A sum of £1,000,000 of course would give 5,000 men £200 a year each, and if each man could be given a chance of earning £200 a year, 5,000 of them would be made fairly happy by the expenditure of that million. Then, in turn, the trade created by the 5,000 men at work would absorb a large number more. If only actual wages were concerned, we could employ a great number of men, but a great deal of our expenditure goes in various other ways. A lot is required, particularly when we are building a railway line, for the purchase of plant and material. I think the Minister said that of the cost of £4,600 a mile for a railway, something approaching £2,000 went in rails and sleepers. We should be able so to arrange our work that a great proportion of the money is spent, now and until we clean up the existing position, in wages. We want to spend our money on work. It may be nice and desirable to have the road in South Perth that costs, I believe, £120,000. Once the road is completed, however, it does not make continuous work. There may be many works about the city that we should like to do, but for the most part they represent dead-end work, and when men have finished the job, they have to look for another job. A certain amount of work must be done in the city, but we should avoid spending our borrowed money on anything other than work that produces work. Unless we do that, we shall have a continuance of the present unemployed troubles. We must not

sit down and say to the unemployed, "We wipe our hands of you; we cannot be responsible; we cannot absorb every one of you." It would be a bad thing for the country if all the people in it were employed by the Government. Where we are putting in development railways and roads and water supplies, we are doing useful work, but we are probably not helping the future very much in a good deal of the expenditure undertaken. I should say there are just a few industries that do mean more and more work. One of them is the timber industry, except at such times as the market may be against us. At the present time I understand the export market is a bit against us, but generally the timber industry is a wealth-producing industry that means work. I hope the gold mining industry will revive and absorb many people. If we could only get a revival there, it would relieve the position considerably. Then there is that great industry—agriculture. I do not think we can overlook it. We cannot do much outside the safe area, but within the safe area I do not think agriculture can be overdone. At any rate, we should so organise our activities as to provide a continuity of work. We cannot allow the present state of affairs to continue. I doubt if many of the men now out of work have been able to pay their rent. I doubt if any of them has quite as much food as is good for him. At any rate, idleness is bad for men, even if they are comfortably provided for. Apart from that their idleness means a great loss to the State. When I was in office, I was frequently told by members now sitting on the Government side that it was my job to see that everyone was kept at work. I think I did it fairly satisfactorily.

Mr. Sleeman: Question!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no question at all. The only difference was that occasionally, for political reasons, some people sought to collect the unemployed to make some sort of a demonstration, but they never brought the unemployed to me without my being able to absorb them.

Mr. Sleeman: By sending them to a job in the country that they could not find.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They were sent to jobs that did exist in the country. Anyhow, the present is not the time to raise any point like that; the time to speak was then. If the hon. member had anything

to say at that time, he must have remained silent while men suffered. If anyone did that, surely he would be unworthy.

Mr. Sleeman: We spoke at the time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not to that effect; the hon. member and his friends always expressed themselves as satisfied. At times there might be a strike somewhere and that means a cessation of work in other industries.

Mr. Sleeman: When the master bakers went on strike, for instance? Is that what you are referring to?

The CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing strikes; we are dealing with the Estimates.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are dealing with unemployment. The development work that we put in hand leads to much other work, and similarly with the work of people who settle on the land or engage in other primary industries. Most assuredly we should do something. I was pointing out what organisation I had when in office and the extraordinary silence at present when there is existing real unemployment that has lasted month after month. Ministers might reasonably be expected to devote their attention and energy and all the hours they possibly can to this work of organising for the absorption of the people now out of employment, and so order things as to ensure that there will be no serious recurrence of the trouble. We shall be told that a great many Southern Europeans have entered the State. They are included in the number of arrivals shown in the quarterly abstract. We know exactly the number who come in month by month, and we have not brought in such a vast number, even inclusive of the Southern Europeans. We cannot let the unemployed go short. The longer they are out of work, the greater become their needs: and something will have to be done. It is for the Government to say what they can do and what they cannot do. I have said before, and I repeat it, that the heavy indirect taxation by the Federal Government, the heavy taxation by the State Government and the heavy taxation of the local authorities is one of the causes of unemployment. The present Ministers have more money to spend than was ever spent in the State before. They are getting far more money through the Treasury by way of taxation, Federal grants, earnings of railways and other public utilities than ever before. The present Government are getting £3,700,000 a year more through their hands than I received in any one of

the five years I was in office. I do not wish to infer that when we increase our revenue, as it has increased by more than £2,000,000 a year, it does not entail considerable expenditure. Larger revenue means that more money is paid away by the railways, for instance, in the shape of wages. The railways get their coal requirements within the State and the expenditure for coal represents largely wages, too. A good deal of the £3,700,000 additional revenue that the present Government are getting is money that is and can be paid to the workers in the shape of wages. I hope we shall hear something from Ministers on the questions I have raised. I thought the Minister for Works might deal with them or he might, in his capacity as Minister for Labour, refer to them. If Federal money is available and can be spent only when we get surveyors to do the work, it would be advisable, if possible, to get a bigger staff for a time and have the necessary surveys made. I daresay the Minister will tell us that every available surveyor has been put on, but there must still be in the State a number of men capable of taking levels and making road surveys. For the most part the land surveyors mark the roads in the back country. I take it, however, that the cost of that work will now come out of the Federal grant, so there will not be any need for the Lands Department to do that sort of work. The cost of the surveys should have been met out of the Federal aid funds since the agreement came into operation and that ought to help considerably. I do urge the Minister to exert every effort to increase the amount of work and to use to the full the Federal road grant plus the amount that has to be found by the State. I believe there are 3,000 men out of work all over the State. That, after all, is not such a big number to find work for, and the amount that they draw during the next twelve months at £200 a year is not so great. Further, we shall have the harvest presently, which will afford some relief and give the Government an opportunity to organise the work that is to keep those men in permanent employment. There was a time when we heard a great deal about the right to work. I suppose there must be a brief period between contracts when workmen have to stand down. I suppose there will be periods in the timber industry when there will be no orders to cut, and of course shipping is likely to be er-

ratio. Years ago our exports were confined to timber and a little wool, whereas now those commodities are exported in large quantities together with large quantities of wheat. Our opportunities to employ people are better than they ever were before. All who can should make an effort to help, and though it is for the Government to act, we ought to be prepared to help the Government if they will accept our help. Just what can be done, I do not know. The Government are not very anxious ever to call for help from the Opposition. It is a shocking thing to see men out of work. When I was in office I had to accept the full responsibility. Now Ministers must accept it also, but that does not prevent them from seeking help from this side of the House if we can be of any assistance. I appeal to the Minister to put as much work in hand as possible, work of a character that will breed work. Running a railway out will breed work. More men will be employed as the result of the building of a railway that can be employed in the actual construction of a line. There is a difficulty that we have to face perhaps after the construction of a line. In much of the new country to be opened up water troubles exist in the summer months, and because of that probably clearing will not be undertaken. There it might be possible to do something to help those people who have selected land, to give them assistance to carry on the work of clearing, assistance to the extent of the carting of water. When we pay men who are out of work just enough to keep them going, paying them a limited amount perhaps for themselves and in some cases for a wife and child, it all means a loss, but if we pay them and get something in return for it, it will be really a saving and we shall be doing some good. I do hope the Government will settle down to a period of hard work.

Mr. Thomson: They are spending money all right.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, but in the wrong direction. People have got into the habit of asking Ministers to visit every part of the State, and it seems to have become a week-end custom for Ministers to go here and there at the week-end. It is right that Ministers should visit country districts occasionally, but only when convenient.

The Minister for Works: It means working seven days a week, day and night.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is work that does not give very much result. Country people have a right to see Ministers, particularly in the early stages of development, but there is no need for Ministers to go here and there, opening small shows and attending to minor matters. A Minister's real job is in his office and I know that a Minister cannot get through his work except by the expenditure of a considerable amount of time in his office. No Minister can carry on the work of any of the important departments merely by beginning at 9 o'clock in the morning and finishing at 5 in the afternoon.

Mr. Thomson: That is why the Minister for Lands is broken up in health.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Sometimes when Ministers finish on Friday night they dash off somewhere into the country, travel 200 or 300 miles and return on Monday morning or Monday evening. Then it is only natural to expect that they are not fresh and fit for work on Tuesday. A Minister's job is very largely in his office, and the public should realise that, when they make requests that representatives of the Government should attend show after show. I hope Ministers will in the future refuse these invitations and settle down to work, and try to get the unemployed difficulty cleared up. I do not propose to discuss the details of these Estimates nor refer to the buildings erected by the department. I should be sorry to think that we should not require more schools. After all, if we cannot make progress in one way, let us make it in another; let us have more children to educate. I do not think there is any need to say anything about the Arbitration Court at this stage, because we shall have occasion to deal with it later. It does, however, appear to me that the judge might be left to do the work without the assistance of the lay members. The Minister for Works will remember that I told him many years ago, before he came to Parliament, that I could not see the use of giving the President of the Arbitration Court assistance in the shape of two lay members. So far as I can see when either makes a statement it is usual for the other to express an opposite view, and the judge then really decides the question. That kind of thing means considerable expense and de-

lay. I fail to see of what use lay members are to the court.

Mr. Thomson: You never see the employees' representatives and the employers' representatives agreeing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did in one case the other day. But it is too much to expect at any time.

The Minister for Works: That was in a mining case.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not the one I have in mind. If we have three on the bench and two are always pulling in opposite directions, we might just as well leave those two out. The lay members always look at a question from a different angle, and so they always differ. Therefore, why should we not leave it entirely to the President of the Court, who has to decide in any case? I am not criticising the work of the court in any shape or form, but it does seem to me that the President is the man who does the work and should be permitted to carry it on without the assistance of lay members.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.55]: I wish to stress the enormous amount of money that is being handled by this department and also the fact that we are faced with an increased expenditure of £25,000 this year. It is the practice of road boards and municipalities to have finance committees to deal with their finances. The statements that are submitted to the local authorities are first examined by the committees and then are dealt with by the bodies concerned. We in this House are not in that position in connection with the Estimates that are submitted to us. We have to accept the statements that are presented by Ministers and we have no opportunity to check those statements until the Auditor-General's report is available to us perhaps 12 or 18 months later. Members are asked to give intelligent consideration to important financial proposals and they have to accept an array of figures such as that presented this afternoon by the Minister for Works in his introductory remarks. As we are not furnished with a copy of those figures, we are naturally not able to follow the whole of the ramifications of the department and the expenditure incurred. I was able to get one figure that was referred to by the Minister. He said that the department had spent £2,385,000. There

is an old saying that the constant dripping on a stone eventually wears away that stone. I am hoping that by persistent advocacy this House will yet see the advisability of appointing a finance committee. Such a committee should be able to give valuable advice to members in connection with the Estimates when they are submitted to us. Let me come to the position with which we are faced. The other evening I asked some information about the Auditor-General's report and referred to this paragraph on page 38—

On the basis approved by the Minister the procedure had the effect of overcharging the Loan and Government Property Sales Funds, and undercharging the Revenue Fund.

The reply I got was not satisfactory, but I have now before me an answer I received from the Auditor-General. I just wish to draw the attention of the House to the anomalous position we occupy when we endeavour to take an intelligent interest in the Estimates. This is what the Auditor-General writes—

Parliament, in appropriating the salaries expenditure to the three funds mentioned, decides the proportion to be charged to each of the funds. The question of what proportion of salaries of the Public Works Department should be charged against Revenue Fund is a matter of opinion. As Parliament decides the question each year, I have not investigated the matter to the extent necessary to offer an opinion.

There is an intelligent interpretation by the Auditor-General as to the amount that should be charged against the revenue of Western Australia, as compared with loan funds. It places me in a very peculiar position when I find that the Auditor-General says the revenue is being undercharged. In my business I have an auditor. I pay him to go through the books, and he submits to me what is a fair charge against the various departments, and the estimated charge for salaries and labour versus the amount of material used. We here are in a very unfortunate position. How is this Committee to arrive at what it is fair and reasonable to charge to revenue, and what to charge to loan? I am only seeking information. We are in a very unhappy position when, out of a desire to do our duty, we endeavour to ascertain what is a fair charge to levy against revenue.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We know that the charge against loan funds is altogether excessive.

Mr. THOMSON: It is the Minister who decides what shall be charged. The statement made by the Leader of the Opposition is a perfectly correct one. In my opinion, backed by the opinion of the Auditor-General, we are not getting a fair deal, and we are under-charging revenue.

The Minister for Works: On what do you base that opinion?

Mr. THOMSON: On the various statements that have been made.

The Minister for Works: How can you judge?

Mr. THOMSON: Well, then, how can this Committee judge? If the Auditor-General in his report says that 75 per cent. is too great a charge to be levied against loan, and that it means under-charging revenue, how are we to arrive at a fair and equitable basis?

The Minister for Works: How do you know it is too great?

Mr. THOMSON: We all feel confident it is too great.

The Minister for Works: Have you any basis for that feeling?

Mr. THOMSON: No, but I am endeavouring to arrive at a basis. The Auditor-General has refused to express an opinion, and now the Minister wants to know if we have any basis.

The Minister for Works: How can the Auditor-General form a basis?

Mr. THOMSON: What does he say in his report?

The Minister for Works: That is what I want to know.

Mr. THOMSON: While allegedly he is free, he is not ready to enter into an inquiry by a private member and endeavour to ascertain what is a fair charge, unless it is on an expression of opinion by the House.

The Minister for Works: He had no right to express that opinion unless he had grounds for it.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow members to discuss the Auditor-General's report.

Mr. THOMSON: After all, he is a servant of the House.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not discuss the Auditor General.

Mr. THOMSON: I am dealing with the Public Works Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be allowed to deal with the Auditor General's report.

Mr. THOMSON: I am charging the Government, on the Auditor General's report, that the amount levied against revenue is not sufficient, and that too much has been charged to loan account. It is admitted that this year we may be having an increase of £25,450, which is another charge to revenue. Nevertheless, if the proper proportion is being charged to revenue, then for all we know it may be £25,000 or £50,000 less.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think that committee meeting on the left had better adjourn.

Mr. THOMSON: Instead of an increase of £25,450, if the full amount were to be charged to revenue it would be considerably increased, and possibly cause the House and the country grave anxiety. I feel I am justified in drawing attention to the unsatisfactory position with which we are faced in the Estimates that have been submitted to us. I also want to draw attention to a statement appearing in to-day's Press, as follows:—

Mr. Rustat Blake, who has been retained by the State Government to confer with the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, regarding the proposed Fremantle harbour extensions, is due to arrive from England on 12th February, according to a cable message received by the Premier, Mr. Collier, yesterday.

Having regard to the speech made by the Minister for Works when the Fremantle harbour extensions were discussed in the House, and knowing the Government are committed to what is called the Stileman scheme, I do hope the Minister will give the House an assurance that the visiting engineer is not only going to confer with Mr. Stileman, the Engineer-in-Chief, but that he will have submitted to him the whole of the schemes that have been outlined for the future development of Fremantle harbour.

The Minister for Works: Including that of Mr. Stevens, eh?

Mr. THOMSON: That is a very pertinent interjection. In a newspaper published in Fremantle and sent to members, the following, marked in red, has reached me:—

Wigs on the green! What is it all about? Dame Rumour may be a lying jade sometimes. Nevertheless, where there is smoke there is fire. Someone has said that Mr. Alex. McCallum visited the Harbour Trust offices one day lately, and it is said that things of a highly contro-

versal character were discussed and that the music was somewhat discordant. All this may be true, but still it has to be admitted that, after all, the very sweetest music sometimes has its discordant note.

The Minister for Works: Let me assure you that the only time in my life I have been at the Fremantle Harbour Trust office was when you were there with me. And you heard all that was said.

Hon. G. Taylor: What paper was that in?

Mr. THOMSON: A Fremantle paper sent to the House. It is marked in red.

Mr. J. H. Smith: At all events, it is worth recording.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no desire to bring anything controversial into the matter. All I want is an impartial inquiry into the development of the Fremantle harbour. As I said previously, it does not matter two-pence to me personally, but I want to see every side of the case presented to this consulting engineer. I am pleased to note that he is recommended by the naval authorities at Home. As I said when we were dealing with this question, I consider the naval authorities should be consulted on the development of the Fremantle harbour. I trust the Minister will give this eminent engineer coming out to advise us on a very important question, opportunity to come to a decision on the whole of the schemes.

The CHAIRMAN: Those members on the left must keep order!

Mr. THOMSON: Since the State Government have retained this eminent engineer to confer with the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, I do hope the whole of the schemes will be submitted to the visitor. The Public Works Department is a huge spending department and its ramifications cover a large number of activities. May I draw attention to the statement recently made by Sir Talbot Hobbs at a dinner at which the Minister for Works was present in his official capacity. When we were dealing with the Scaffolding Bill, I contended that it was imposing an additional tax on the people. Before I conclude that story—I am reminded that the House is going to adjourn at 6.15 p.m. and that a number of members are desirous of catching a train. So I should like to know whether I shall be permitted to continue my remarks at the next sitting, as I would if, in the ordinary circumstances, the

sitting were suspended from 6.15 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: If progress is reported and leave given to sit again, the hon. member will not be able to resume on this department at the next sitting.

Mr. THOMSON: Then must I carry on now, although a lot of members want to leave by train?

The CHAIRMAN: If progress is reported, the hon. member will not be able to resume at the next sitting.

Mr. THOMSON: The House could give permission.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can move to disagree with my ruling. I have only to carry out the Standing Orders. That is all I am here for.

Mr. THOMSON: A precedent was created when, unfortunately, the member for Swan was seized by an indisposition. He was permitted to resume his remarks next day.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can appeal to the House on Tuesday next.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes, the House can give permission if it so desires.

Mr. THOMSON: Very well, when next the House meets I will ask the Speaker whether I shall be able to resume. I am confident the House will give me the necessary permission.

Progress reported.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purpose of the Bill.

House adjourned at 6.17 p.m.