

ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: As a mark of respect to our late colleague, Mr. Piesse, I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.59 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 19th September, 1944.

	Page
Questions: Commonwealth hospital grant, as to application to Home of Peace	630
Algae nuisance, as to control	630
Malaria, as to prevention of spread	630
Bills: Fruit Growing Industry (Trust Fund) Act Amendment, 3a.	630
Testator's Family Maintenance Act Amendment, report	630
Electoral Act Amendment, 2a.	632
Motion: Vermin Act, Select Committee appointed	631
Annual Estimates, Message, Financial Statement for 1944-45	633

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

QUESTIONS (3).**COMMONWEALTH HOSPITAL GRANT.**

As to Application to Home of Peace.

Mr. CROSS asked the Minister for Health:

Is the proposed grant by the Commonwealth Government to hospitals of six shillings per bed per week, to apply to the Home of Peace for the Incurable?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied:

No. Some lesser amount will probably later be fixed and notified as applying to institutions for chronic cases.

ALGAE NUISANCE.

As to Control.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is the algae nuisance one which can now be controlled?

(2) If not, what has to be done to overcome the trouble?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied:

(1) Investigation discloses that the only permanent method of controlling algae is to deepen the shallow parts of our river channels.

The work in this direction was commenced prior to the war, but had to cease because the necessary plant and manpower were required for war purposes.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

MALARIA.

As to Prevention of Spread.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is there any liaison between the Federal and State Health Departments in planning to prevent the spread of malaria, which, unfortunately, has broken out near Sydney?

(2) If so, what steps are being taken?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The State Health Department is in touch with the Federal Health Department which advises at regular intervals occurrences of malaria in other States. The Federal Health Department also provides confidential information regarding malaria incidence in war areas. Cases of malaria among service men on leave or repatriated are notified to the State Health Department.

The State Department has been able to purchase from the Commonwealth supplies of atabrin and plasmoquine for treatment of civilian cases.

Malaria is essentially a local problem depending on the presence of the particular varieties of mosquito which carry malaria and on persons who still have the parasites in their system.

FRUIT GROWING INDUSTRY (TRUST FUND) ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

TESTATOR'S FAMILY MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

MOTION—VERMIN ACT.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 30th August on the following motion by Mr. Watts—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon—

(a) Desirable amendments to the Vermin Act.

(b) Ways and means of establishing in Western Australia a capital fund from which expenditure and/or compensation necessary may be met in combating all kinds of vermin and diseases in the form of scourges, insect pests and plant diseases, such to include rabbits, emus, dogs and foxes.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

[4.35]: For a long time—as a matter of fact, spread over several years—I have given consideration to the very many matters that come within the ambit of this motion, and more recently I have scrutinised what might be suitable amendments to the Vermin Act to widen its scope in some directions, and in others to take away from some local bodies the powers they now possess, and in very many ways to alter the principles that now exist in the vermin law. I have inquired, too, much further afield than Western Australia into just what might be done to control better the vermin and pests which affect the rural industry in all districts of this State as well as in the other States of Australia. The Leader of the Opposition, in submitting the motion, mentioned a move by the member for Beverley for the appointment of a Select Committee in 1941, and many members in this House will recall that I opposed the motion at that time and that it was defeated. But I would point out that the motion as submitted by the member for Beverley dealt more particularly with questions of administration and the control of the Central Vermin Fund.

The motion now before the House, however, is very much wider in its scope; and I would, at the outset, mention that many amendments to the existing Vermin Act have during recent months been given the closest scrutiny by myself in the hope that certain existing anomalies, and the advantages that could be gained by amendments, could be dealt with by Parliament during this session; but I am also conscious that the proposed amendments which have had consideration do not go far enough in the endeavour more equitably to overcome the

problems associated with vermin control and affecting, as they do, every citizen of Western Australia. The Central Vermin Fund, which the parent Act authorises, generally has an amount in credit exceeding £20,000, which represents approximately the annual collections and payments to the fund. The sum varies from about £17,000 to about £30,000, according to the amount of arrears collected in any given year. At the moment, there is a sum of over £20,000 in the fund. As a matter of fact, as at the 30th June last, there was over £30,000 in the fund. But according to how the vermin is prescribed, provided for and proclaimed, under the schedule to the Act, so are the disbursements from that fund restricted and limited.

Generally it can be said that the handling of problems which involve expenditure in relation to vermin is, to a considerable extent, confined when the Act is applied as it is at present. I think there is a great necessity for a very close scrutiny of how the Vermin Act can be widened in its scope so as to deal with the many pests other than those which it at present covers. I have in mind the many scourges which have affected this country; not only the rural industry but all the taxpayers of the State, because they have come to us at times in the form almost of a calamity. I refer to such animal diseases as rinderpest which cost Western Australia almost £50,000, and swine fever which occurred only two years ago and cost about £35,000. Then we have such things as payments from the Dairy Cattle Compensation Fund for the compulsory destruction of diseased cattle which, from the Treasury and the fund itself, have totalled about £20,000. Insect pests at times come in the form of a scourge. We have experienced the grasshopper pest, which in one year cost the taxpayers of this State £20,000, and the total amount spent under that heading exceeds £40,000.

Mr. Watts: And what did it cost indirectly?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am speaking only of the amounts that have been paid from the Treasury, and not the losses that have accrued to the State because of the destruction of something associated with production and that had a particular value. If we take the expenditure on the destruction of emus we find that another particular section of the com-

munity suffers very serious losses. During this season the emus have given cause almost for alarm because they have invaded certain areas of the outer farming districts in tens of thousands, and most members know just how serious can be their depredations because when the crop is ripening one emu can, when it is on the run, knock over an area of about a yard wide right through a paddock.

Mr. McLarty: Do you pay any bonus for their destruction?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: During the period when the emu was a serious pest particularly in the district north of Mullewa, over 40,000 were killed in one district, and in one year about £5,000 was paid for their destruction. That payment was made direct from the Treasury because emus had not been declared vermin, in a State-wide sense, until consideration was given to that matter very recently. As a result, payments could not be made from the Central Vermin Fund. A bonus of 1s. a head was paid at the time of which I speak, and in two years nearly 60,000 emus were paid for. That is a colossal number, and when members realise that they were all destroyed in farming districts they can realise the actual damage caused by the emus. Consideration is being given at the moment to the payment of a bonus for the destruction of emus in the outer areas. In addition, ammunition has been supplied free through the Agricultural Department, and in some cases petrol has been supplied free through the Agricultural Drives on the pests and killing them, as they have done in recent months, in hundreds.

The Central Vermin Fund is under the control of a board consisting of a pastoralists' representative, Mr. Paterson; a farming representative, Mr. Teasdale, and a Government representative, Mr. Arnold, whose official title is Chief Inspector of Rabbits, but who is better known as the officer in charge of the Vermin Branch. This board makes recommendations from time to time in regard to the application of a levy to be imposed in the form of a tax, and also the disbursements of the funds. The levy or tax is imposed upon pastoral and agricultural properties only; that is, those covering 160 acres or more in extent. Most orchards and horticultural properties and small farms are exempt mainly by reason of their limited acreage. All municipalities and townsites are exempt

from the levying of the vermin rate which is collected by the Taxation Department and paid into the Central Vermin Fund. There is no doubt that where certain types of pests cause serious harm to particular sections of the rural industry, all the community suffer to some extent. If it is not a case of suffering through general taxation making good the amounts lost to the Treasury, there have been very big losses to the State because of the cost represented in the destruction by the pests, whether animal or insect.

I have in mind in dealing with insect pests, for example, that this State has had to take in hand some very serious threats to its fruit industry from codlin moth, and all sorts of pests of that nature in addition to vegetable pests. The Department of Agriculture has made endeavours to combat and eradicate such pests as the Bathurst burr and others of a virulent type which could do much harm in the agricultural districts. The Leader of the Opposition in moving this motion suggested that very wide powers should be considered if amendments to the Vermin Act were found necessary. During the last year or two I have had the opportunity to scrutinise this problem in other States. I am satisfied that in many respects there is an urgent need for consistency in the legislation and regulations dealing with vermin throughout Australia.

There are many pests and diseases common to all the States, and yet we find not only varying methods of dealing with such pests but, in an interstate sense, States endeavouring to protect each other from the invasion or intrusion into their midst of pests from other States, and dealing with such matters in ways that are certainly not consistent and, perhaps, not in the best interests of Australia. I have in mind too the differential rates paid as between the Northern Territory and the North-West of this State in connection with the dingo bonus. We find on examination that dogs are paid for at 7s. 6d. per head in the Northern Territory and, with the bonus from the local authorities, at £1 per head from the Central Vermin Fund in this State. If we look at the figures for Hall's Creek, which is close to the Northern Territory, we find the effect of this differential rate to be such that no self-respecting dog has died in the Northern Territory for years because his scalp is worth so much more in Western Australia and has been paid for there. Notwithstanding

ing the efforts of the local authorities to police the matter, no other deduction can be drawn from the tremendous increase in some districts than that there is trafficking in scalps.

All of these things suggest that there should be an examination not only of what should be done within the State but also what relationship there should be in the control, regulations and bonuses in an interstate sense. I submit it is a fallacy to assume that the payment of a bonus ensures the destruction of a pest. Many deputations and representatives of various districts in this State have from time to time recommended and urged that the bonus on foxes should be raised to £1 or £1 10s. per head to ensure greater destruction, but it does not follow that the payment of a bonus will, in actual practice, cause more scalps to be delivered to the central authority. In some instances dog hunters, if they are trapping for a living, are anxious that more male dogs should be trapped, and kangaroo shooters, when out to shoot for a living, shoot the big bucks and do not worry much about the does. The same thing applies to other forms of bonuses. The fox is the easiest pest of all to poison, and if the work is handled by professional people with the idea of getting the bonus as compensation, the size of the bonus, insofar as the farming community is affected, does not ensure greater destruction.

The farmer should consider what is a potential menace to him and what part of his income he is sacrificing if he does not take measures to destroy the pests. We have a case on record of our commonest pest, the rabbit. Some farmers have faced the problem and ensured the destruction of the pest within their own vicinity as well as within their own boundaries. I think an outstanding achievement in the control of rabbits is that of Cranmore Park, in the Milngavie district. There is not a rabbit within the boundaries of Cranmore Park, and the eradication of the pest on that property—it threatened the very existence of the property as an economic unit several years ago—cost 3s. per acre, and of course the carrying capacity, since the removal of the millions of rabbits which had infested it, has been tremendously increased. We reach a point, therefore, when we must consider whether the destruction of vermin should be a charge on the national purse, or upon

the general taxpayer when we find that individuals in some instances can make such an adequate contribution in their own interests to the national wealth by dealing with the problem themselves. At Cranmore Park this has been achieved over a very large area; yet on adjoining properties of one-tenth of the area, the rabbit infestation is a very serious matter.

In regard to other pests we find the same sort of attitude. If there is a contribution by the State or the taxpayer, the farmer loses the incentive and is anxious to get some benefit for himself from a general fund. Then we find there is much conflict in road boards, which constitute the vermin boards, as to the application of the appropriate sections of the Act to their operations. Within the scope of the Act there is an opportunity for the vermin boards to levy their own rates, make the collections and employ inspectors and others to carry out the requirements of the Act, but unfortunately the experience has been that some members of the vermin boards have been the greatest offenders against the Vermin Act. This being so, if an inspector finds that one of the members of the board is an offender, and if he carries out his duties properly, he is not retained in that position very long. We have very many instances of that, and one matter worthy of close attention is whether control should be removed entirely from district or local interests so that authority might be vested in the central board, rather than leave local boards to deal with the matter as many of them have pretended to do in the past.

In the South-West there are parts where rabbits threatened to become a menace and boards have spent up to £1,300 in a year on vermin destruction, and not wealthy boards, either. Those boards have done a very effective job. On the other hand, in other districts there have been persistent requests from ratepayers for the Government to exert authority and spend more Government money than the boards are doing. There are cases in the Great Southern districts where boards have not done much to help themselves or the farmers of the district. There are many things pertaining to the subject on which I admit an inquiry would throw considerable light, but there are also some aspects which suggest that conditions might not be improved as a re-

sult of inquiry by a Select Committee. I confess that I have somewhat of a natural aversion to Select Committees, because sometimes they are sought for political reasons and sometimes, although departments have been anxious and active in their efforts to solve problems, departmentally and inter-departmentally, the granting of a Select Committee has given its sponsors an opportunity to obtain political kudos. A very notable case was that of the Select Committee to inquire into certain aspects of education. I opposed the appointment of that committee but the House ultimately agreed to it, and, in spite of the fact that certain moves and undertakings had been put in hand by the department, the sponsor of the motion took considerable credit unto himself because the department did those things it had intended to do long before the Select Committee was appointed.

Those are things that prompt me to oppose the appointment of such a committee as here proposed; but, feeling as I do that this matter is such an important one, I am quite prepared to say that I am willing to disclose to this House plans that I already have in mind in regard to the amendments to the parent Act, and to produce documents which have come to me in the pursuit of evidence of how best to deal with this problem and associated problems. As I have assurances both in his speech and in conversation from the Leader of the Opposition that he is actuated by the same motives as would guide any member on this side of the Chamber in the endeavour to solve these problems, I have not a very strong objection to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into this matter. I believe the matter to be of such national importance that no-one should endeavour to deal with it in any way politically, and that even should the Select Committee, if appointed, in the course of its inquiries find it necessary to make certain recommendations, no such Select Committee should, unless it has a realisation of the responsibilities of administration, cavil or complain if such recommendations as it might make cannot be given effect to by the Government. Those are the important aspects in coming to a conclusion as to whether one should agree to or disagree with the appointment of the proposed committee.

I make those statements quite freely and frankly in this Chamber, because if there is anything which is highly disturbing and upsetting, it is the attempt to make political capital out of an inquiry into such important public matters as this one. I consider that full admission should be made that the Government has been active in its scrutiny in such matters, and that the purpose of the Select Committee is to make sure that the closest examination is made, and the widest inquiry prosecuted, to endeavour to find a solution to such problems as have been raised during the course of this debate. The motion as moved by the Leader of the Opposition is in two sections. It proposes that various amendments to the Vermin Act are necessary. I hold that several amendments to the Act are necessary. I consider that *not only* the sections dealing with divided control need amendment, but that certain matters in relation to the strictures that are placed upon the Advisory Committee and the Minister as to expenditure of the funds that are collected should be reconsidered. I hold, also, that the section which deals with ways and means of raising the money warrants close inquiry.

Further, I consider that the motion as worded covers very many things I have in mind that should not restrict the inquiry of such committee to vermin as generally recognised—dogs, foxes, eagle-hawks and rabbits, which now come under the control of the Vermin Act. In my opinion, the inquiry should go much more widely into all sorts of pests, whether animal, vegetable or insect, which do from time to time not only threaten the internal economy of this State but also impose a very serious charge upon the Treasury. To be very pointed in the matter, I have no objection to the appointment of a Select Committee with the reservations I have mentioned, and I will hope that there shall be no attempt whatever to treat this matter in any way politically. I believe the Leader of the Opposition to be quite honest and sincere in his statement that this subject is divorced entirely from any political motives and is moved solely in the best interests of the State.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet): I am indeed pleased to hear the Minister for Agriculture give his blessing to the proposed Select Committee. From my experience of the Vermin Board I have realised that

rabbits constitute a very serious pest to the people not residing in my electorate. Dogs, foxes and emus, if taken in hand in the proper manner, could be cleared out of the State in two or three years with the expenditure of reasonable amounts. I acknowledge that there would be great danger of dogs being imported from the Eastern States to replace dogs destroyed here; and therefore I agree with the Minister that destructive operations should cover not only this State but should extend to other States which suffer from the pests. Further, I consider that foxes should be easily controlled, but I also hold that otherwise they are likely to become a more onerous pest than dogs. Foxes, instead of living upon rabbits and small game, are now attacking sheep, which they mutilate and which consequently die. The foxes could be taken in hand within a very short time. Similarly, emus properly taken in hand should not live here for any period at all. It is easy to destroy emus. Thousands of the birds are to be seen along the No. 1 rabbit proof fence at any season of the year, and there are no traps to catch them. I believe that the emu population of Western Australia could be destroyed in twelve months if the problem were taken adequately in hand. I may mention that I have seen two hundred emus within the last three months travelling along the fence.

The worst pest on the Goldfields and the adjacent pastoral areas, however, is the blowfly. Quite recently the green blowfly has for the first time put in an appearance on the Murchison. Men who have suffered for many years from ravages of other pests were astounded at the damage done by the green blowfly. Far more stock have been lost in one season through green blowflies than are lost in drought time. On one station no less than 6,000 sheep were destroyed by them in one season. The blowfly flies all the time, and strikes anywhere—on the neck, or shoulder, or back, or lower part of sheep; and the effect of striking blowflies shows itself as something phenomenal in a month's time. The sheep struck takes a long time to die, though it does die eventually. Meantime it produces thousands upon thousands of blowflies. The mule treatment does not seem to affect the green blowfly. If the Select Committee can devise some method whereby the green fly could be destroyed in Western Australia, it would be such a great advantage to the

sheep producers on the Goldfields and further North that no cost would be too great. At present no traps are used; some of the pastoralists spray the sheep at certain periods of the year and also crutch their sheep, but it is found that the spraying is not effective for a period longer than a month or six weeks.

I recently read an article dealing with an insecticide that was discovered some 50 or 60 years ago in Switzerland. It had been put on one side until the present war broke out, when it was put to use to destroy body lice on soldiers, especially soldiers in New Guinea. This insecticide was so powerful that once spread on a man's shirt it would continue effective, notwithstanding the washing of the shirt, for a period of at least two months. Perhaps such an insecticide might prove effective in destroying the blow fly on sheep. I do not know, but the proposed Select Committee could inquire into a matter like this. I believe much good will result from the labours of the committee, if appointed. The suggestion that political capital could be made out of the appointment of this proposed committee is ridiculous, because every member on this side of the House is just as anxious to overcome our vermin problems as are members on the opposite side of the House. I sincerely hope the Government will agree to the appointment of the committee and will make available to it funds not only from the ordinary channels, but also other channels, if necessary, so that it may effectively carry out its work. I strongly support the motion.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington): I feel certain that no political capital will be made out of this proposal to appoint a Select Committee. On the contrary, if it is refused political capital could be made out of it. The questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition are so important to every person in the State that I repeat it is most unlikely that any political capital will be made out of the appointment of a Select Committee. I am positive the Leader of the Opposition had not the slightest idea of drawing political capital from the motion. It would be interesting if we could estimate the financial loss to this State from vermin, disease, scourges, insect pests and plant diseases. The word "scourges" covers a very wide field indeed. Everything that is detrimental to our land is embraced in the

motion. Unquestionably, the carrying capacity of our land is greatly reduced by the vermin and pests that I have mentioned. At present there is an urgent need for food and if the appointment of this committee can do only a little to get rid of some of these pests and thereby increase production, its appointment will have been well worth while. In the district where I reside rabbits are increasing, mainly because labour is not available to deal with them.

The Minister referred to Cranmore Park, and indicated that rabbits had been effectively dealt with there; but I would say that it is easier to control rabbits on those lands than it is in portions of the South-West district, particularly the hilly country. Cranmore Park can be effectively fenced and rabbits poisoned with cyanide, but this poison cannot be used to any extent in the South-West, where there is so much fresh water. Further, it is more difficult to fence land in the South-West district. I am hoping that rabbits will be dealt with effectively when labour is once more available. There is a demand for rabbits in this State. Only today I was talking to a lady who was going shopping and she told me how difficult it was to buy a rabbit in Perth today, and the member for Subiaco confirms that statement. If we could induce trappers to trap rabbits for the market it would be a great help to us. I have heard it said that trapping does not get rid of rabbits, but I cannot agree with that statement. I am perfectly certain that it does. No doubt, when the Select Committee gets to work it will go into that aspect. The Minister for Agriculture, in referring to foxes, said that they were easy to poison. That is true. They are much easier to poison than are dingoes.

Despite the fact that foxes are easy to poison, however, they are multiplying in the South-West district at an exceedingly rapid rate. Some people suggest that the fox should not be poisoned because he is the natural enemy of the rabbit, but I do not subscribe to that view. I know the damage that foxes cause during the lambing season. I also know the number of lambs they destroy, compared with the number of rabbits they destroy, and the balance is very much against the fox. It is advisable to destroy every fox we can. The Minister for Agriculture also referred to dingoes. These have practically gone from my electorate. We see very few of them, but I understand that

north of Mullewa they are increasing in large numbers. If we notice an emu in our district we have a look at it.

Mr. Doney: You would not dare to shoot it.

Mr. McLARTY: As I say, we see so few of them that we take notice of them when we do. But the Minister has told us what a pest they are in the northern constituencies. Members representing those constituencies have also told me, on discussing the matter with them, that kangaroos in the Kimberleys and the North-West are increasing by thousands, with the result that the carrying capacity of the stations in those parts of the State is very greatly reduced.

The Minister for Agriculture: There were 30,000 kangaroos on one property in 12 months.

Mr. Marshall: That is in keeping with the natural increase.

Mr. McLARTY: The Minister's remark must indicate to members what it means to the carrying capacity of a station when 30,000 kangaroos are on one property in 12 months. I feel I have said enough about these pests and I will now deal with another part of the motion, namely, diseases. The Minister has referred to diseases of stock. Those representing dairying districts are very perturbed about such diseases. For instance, we have contagious abortion amongst our dairy herds, and that is causing all dairy farmers very grave concern at present. There is also mammitis and mastitis, and these diseases are causing tremendous loss amongst dairy herds. In the far North there is pleuro-pneumonia and tick fever.

It may be interesting to the Minister to know that I can claim, in regard to tick fever, that I was able, some years ago, to do something that greatly reduced losses in Western Australia due to that disease. I was visiting Queensland at the time and called at the research station near Brisbane, which is well known to the Minister for Agriculture. There I met a veterinary surgeon who is regarded as one of the outstanding authorities in the world on tick and tick fever. I happened to mention to him the serious losses suffered by pastoralists in the Kimberley district through tick and tick fever. He said, "You should not be having those losses. Do you not use acaprin?" I had never heard of it, and I asked him about it. He told me that if

cattle affected by tick fever were inoculated many of them would recover. He was good enough to give me some of the preparation, which I brought to Western Australia. I told the pastoralist about it and interviewed the head of the Stock Department. I gave the matter publicity through "The West Australian," and asked pastoralists to get some into Western Australia as quickly as they could. They did so, and today it is being extensively used in the northern parts of this State, with very beneficial results. What is needed—and I know the Minister is fully alive to the need—is more veterinary officers throughout the State.

Mr. Cross: We need a research laboratory, too.

Mr. McLARTY: I agree. There was a letter on this subject in today's paper. I hope the Minister read it. It seems to me that special efforts should be made to induce more of our young men to become veterinary surgeons. It would pay the Government over and over again to finance young men desirous of taking up this work who, of course, should be required to give an undertaking to remain in Government employ and serve the State that helped them to a profession. At present it is exceedingly difficult to obtain the services of a veterinary surgeon anywhere. With the increase in stock diseases, the services of veterinary surgeons become increasingly necessary. I know that the few veterinary officers attached to the Agricultural Department are only too willing to lecture to farmers throughout the various districts, and those lectures are much appreciated. One thing the proposed Select Committee could do would be to ascertain the prospects of getting young men to take up this profession and also what steps should be taken to encourage them to do so. Another disease causing great loss in the South-West in respect of which there is need for research is foot-rot in sheep. I was talking to a prominent pastoralist from the Eastern States a few weeks ago, and he ventured the opinion that in a few years' time we would not be able to carry sheep in the South-West, owing to foot-rot.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are two kinds, are there not, one more virulent than the other?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. I do not think the Eastern States pastoralist was right. I con-

sider that with proper expert advice, the spread of foot-rot could be greatly reduced. Very briefly I have dealt with vermin and diseases, but I have not by any means covered the whole field in regard to either. When we come to plant pests, we know there are too many to mention. Probably in my part of the country those which are causing the greatest loss are lucerne flea and red mite. The lucerne flea has been combated. There is a parasite which, when it gets a hold, checks the flea. But the red mite is not under control. One can sometimes go into a subterranean clover patch and see the tremendous damage done as a result of the activities of this pest. The Select Committee should be able to obtain information from farmers that might be of some help in this regard.

Coming along the road a few days ago, I saw a plant that is causing loss to Western Australia. I refer to the Cape tulip. I believe that some of the losses caused by this plant could have been prevented. The little interest displayed by some farmers in plants that they know will cause losses is amazing. I went on to a farm some time ago and was amazed to see a quantity of Cape tulip amongst which stock were running without any of them dying. Yet I know that if I had purchased some cattle and put them on that farm, there would have been heavy mortality. Apparently, however, stock can become immune or else some are too cunning to eat the plant. Stock not used to it, however, are likely to fall victims to it, with heavy losses. We see it growing not only inside fences but on public roads as well. There is no doubt that its spread could be prevented. Again, there is the yellow lupin. I understand this plant is poisonous and causes loss among stock. At present, and for some years, we have been advocating the growing of lupins and they are being cultivated very extensively. Before the war, children collected seed from plants along the road, particularly out from Fremantle, where they grow very well. If yellow lupin seed is to be mixed with other lupin seed, there will be further stock losses.

Again, only a few years ago, if the plant known as *Watsonia* were seen by people they wanted to grow it. Certainly it is not poisonous, but it is a take-all; it covers the land wherever it grows. Today we must have hundreds of acres of *Watsonia*

along the brooks in the South-West. I do not see much prospect of getting rid of it unless our scientists can find some spray or something of that kind, that will destroy it. In addition, we have the common double-gee which has not been tackled in the way it should have been, and, as a result, it has spread to a large extent. I believe that in the future research will do something to get rid of these pests. We know what happened with the prickly pear in Queensland. Anyone who saw the prickly pear there would not have thought that the country covered by it could ever be used again, but the scientists got to work and thousands of acres—

The Minister for Agriculture: Millions of acres.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, millions of acres are now cleared of it, and some of the best dairying land in Australia is to be found in those reclaimed areas.

The Minister for Agriculture: It was increasing at the rate of about 1,250,000 acres a year.

Mr. McLARTY: This is a national matter and all should share the responsibility. It is not right that we should say to a landowner, "You must bear all the cost of the destruction of the vermin pests and scourges of this country." The more of these pests we have, the more hard hit is the whole community. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that a special fund should be provided to deal with and check them.

Mr. North: Do you include rats?

Mr. McLARTY: The hon. member may include them if he likes. Whether they are to be included as vermin, pests or scourges, I do not know. The public own most of the land in Western Australia, and I think it is only fair that they should be asked to bear portion of this taxation. I need not say any more, but I hope that when all these new settlers go on the land the necessity for dealing with these pests will be impressed upon them. It should also be pointed out to them that if they are careless they are bound to be the losers. The motion also refers to compensation. A farmer might get some of these pests on his place, or he might be quarantined on account of some noxious weed on his property, or the outbreak of a disease in his stock. If it is in the interests of the country generally that the pest with which he is troubled should not be allowed

to spread, it is only fair that he should receive just compensation as he has to bear the burden of the loss.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

Select Committee Appointed.

Ballot taken and a Select Committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Hoar, Mann, McLarty, Triat and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to move from place to place; to report on the 31st October.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read transmitting the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1944-45, and recommending appropriation.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1944-45.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply to consider the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ending the 30th June, 1945, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER

[5.47]: It is my privilege to submit the Budget showing the estimated Revenue and Expenditure of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the financial year 1944-45, and to give members a review of the financial transactions of the fund for the year which has just closed. In doing so I shall make no attempt to give a detailed explanation of the variations in the actual figures as compared with the Estimates submitted 12 months ago; indeed, I shall refer to figures as little as possible. Members have just been supplied with copies of the Estimates and Budget Tables and will be able to seek whatever further information they desire, either during the discussion on the Estimates or when Ministers are dealing with the operations of their own departments. Figures are difficult to follow, and a long dissertation on them is apt to become wearisome to listeners, as well as to the speaker.

War Situation and Post-War Period.

I am sure I am expressing the views of all members when I say how full of gratitude we are to our own fighting men and to those of our Allies for the very great improvement that has taken place in the war situation during the past 12 months. Last year I suggested that we had reached the beginning of the end of the war in Europe and I think it is safe to predict today that the victorious conclusion of the European war at any rate is not very far distant. Our thoughts naturally turn to the problems that will confront us when victory has been won and peace restored, problems to meet which we have been making plans during the past few years. In the great work of economic and social reconstruction, which will have to be undertaken in the post-war years, Western Australia will have an important part to play in the economy of Australia. We have a big area to deal with, and much developmental work remains to be done if we are to share in the post-war progress on some sort of equality with the more developed Eastern States.

Atlantic Charter.

The United Nations, of which Australia is one, have become parties to the Atlantic Charter, and as a State which is so dependent for its economic stability on the sale of primary products in overseas markets, the operation of the Charter may present to Western Australia peculiar problems as it may also present to us peculiar opportunities for expansion. It seems certain that in the immediate post-war period there will be such a demand for foodstuffs for the starving peoples in Europe that we should have a ready sale for our products. Our concern, therefore, is as to our ability to meet this demand on account of our own efforts and on account of the seasonal conditions which play such a large part in our economy.

Agricultural Season, 1943-44.

The 1943-44 season was a difficult one for the agricultural industry. The summer commenced early and was one of the longest and driest on record. In the wheat district, crops suffered from the detrimental effect which the dry spring weather had on late sown crops. Wheat prospects in mid-season of last year were very bad, but the season ultimately finished with a total yield of

16.56 million bushels, which represented a much lower yield than if the State average of about 11 bushels per acre had been obtained. Under all the circumstances, the recovery towards the latter end of the season was better than had been hoped for in the early stages.

Wheat Acreage Restriction.

In regard to wheat acreages for this State, the Government has always adopted the idea that our internal economy is based on a production of about 35 million bushels upwards. Difficulties of manpower and superphosphate have of themselves imposed restrictions on plantings, and when it was found that inevitably the State must accept a curtailment of acreage because of areas being compulsorily reduced by the Commonwealth, the Government insisted on compensation being paid because of the lesser yield and the acreage thrown out of production. Originally this was based on 1s. per bushel compensation on the 11 million bushels loss in the first year, which worked out at 12s. per acre. The basis of 12s. per acre has been adopted during the past three years. This has meant a considerable recompense to farmers, who would have been in very bad financial circumstances if the compensation had not been payable to this State. The payments for acreage compensation since 1941 have amounted to £1,150,000. Members will appreciate what a tremendous economic effect that has had. I think, without boasting, the Minister for Agriculture might take great credit to himself for having insisted upon compensation being paid to our wheat farmers, particularly as such compensation has been paid only in Western Australia.

Dairying.

In the dairying districts, production was well maintained in the spring months, despite the early dry weather. However, the rapid drying off of pastures, together with manpower difficulties, reduced fodder conservation to a low level. On account of the long dry summer, seeding of cereal crops and germination of pastures were belated and, even after growth did commence, it was retarded somewhat by cold weather. In parts of the South-West the shortage of natural feed and conserved fodder was increased by bush fires which swept through

a number of paddocks, destroying paddock feed and haystacks. The present position is that cereal crops are looking well, but will be dependent on good finishing rains. In the dairying districts production is being fairly well maintained, though it is about 4 per cent. lower than it was last year.

Production.

The 1943 wool clip was a record for both total quantity and average yield per head. The total yield was 100.2 million pounds weight of greasy wool for an average of 8.7 lbs. per head. The number of sheep shorn—11.5 million—was also a record. This is a tribute to the way in which the agricultural community has gone in for sheep. The North-West has suffered a very serious diminution of its flocks, and to be able to show a record in the face of that is something for which our agriculturists deserve credit. Lack of manpower to some extent restricted the output of dairy products which, though lower than last year, reached a fairly high level. Butter production was 6,587 tons or about 8 per cent. below the target set for the State. Cheese production was 773 tons as against a target of 700 tons. In view of the many difficulties with which the industry had to contend, this is a performance of which dairy farmers can well be proud. Fertiliser rationing was continued in 1943-44. After several adjustments, the final allocation made to this State was 121,400 tons. The State's normal requirements are in the vicinity of 265,000 tons. During the early part of the year, potash was in very short supply but, as a result of the operations of the Government's potash works at Lake Chandler entering the productive stage, sale of this material is now free from control.

Revenue for 1943-44

I now turn to a brief review of the financial operations for last year. We budgeted for a surplus of £1,505, whereas the actual surplus was £38,021. The actual revenue was approximately £13,590,000 against an estimate of £13,137,000, an improvement of £453,000. Expenditure totalled £13,551,000 against an estimate of £13,135,000, an increase of £416,000. Taxation revenue was £115,000 above the estimate, the main contributing items being totalisator duty and probate duty, both of which were approxi-

mately £50,000 greater than was anticipated. One pleasing feature was the revenue from stamp duties, which showed an increase over the estimate of roughly £12,000, the actual receipts being £220,000. This is the first time this item of revenue has shown an increase since 1937-38.

Mr. Watts: How much of the stamp duty was due to motorcar third-party insurance policies?

The PREMIER: Probably the Minister for Works will be able to give the hon. member that information later on. I do not think we collected much stamp duty on motorcar policies last year. The increase was largely due to a revival of business which, for the first two or three years of the war, had fallen to a low ebb, although not many properties, on which we get a good deal of stamp duty, have changed hands.

Mr. Watts: Most of the third-party policies had to be operative by the 1st July, and some were paid before that date.

The PREMIER: I paid mine on the 1st July, and I think most people did so when they had to renew their licenses on the 1st July. Most people did not meet their liability for motorcar licenses till the beginning of the current financial year. Anyhow, the hon. member may know more than I do about the matter; I am only speaking from my own experience.

Territorial Revenue.

Territorial revenue was £32,000 greater than we expected, due to an increase of £39,000 in the receipts from land rents over the figure in the Budget. It appears that a fairly large number of farmers paid up arrears of rent. In addition, some farmers were in a position to make their conditional purchase payments in advance and thus obtain the freehold of their properties.

Departmental Revenue.

Departmental revenue exceeded anticipations by £88,500. Most departments were able to show better revenue results than were expected. Treasury Miscellaneous revenue was improved substantially on account of collections of Agricultural Bank interest, which were £42,600 above the estimate. That fact, too, indicates that the people engaged in our agricultural industry—numbers of them, of course, are away because we are engaged in war activities to

a great extent—have had a fairly prosperous year, being able to wipe off their debts to the Bank in some instances and in many cases to pay back interest; others, again, were enabled to make their properties freehold, which is a very encouraging feature.

Commonwealth Grant.

Another contributing factor to the increase in revenue was the Commonwealth grant, which was £50,000 greater last year than the grant received in the preceding year. As an offset to this increase, the revenue received from State Trading Concerns was approximately £20,000 less than the figures anticipated in the Budget. Smaller profits from the State Sawmills and the State Hotels were offset to a slight extent by increased profits from the W.A. Meat Exports Works. I shall deal with the revenue received from Public Utilities when discussing the expenditure, in order that the matter may be clear to members by having the expenditure and revenue figures simultaneously.

Government Expenditure.

Turning now to expenditure, the payments under special Acts last year were £85,000 less than the estimate. Payments for interest and sinking fund were £58,000 below the Budget figures. The reasons for this reduction were that the Budget estimate contained an allowance of £10,000 for interest on new money; but as no new money was borrowed this expenditure was not incurred, most of our Loan expenditure being met from Loan repayments. We commenced the year with a substantial carry-over of Loan money; and this, together with Loan repayments received during the year, was more than sufficient to finance our Loan expenditure for 1943-44. I shall deal with that subject when the Loan Estimates are introduced in the course of a few weeks.

Saving of Interest.

We also had a saving on the conversion loan which occurred during the year, as the rate of interest was lowered from an all-round one of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to optional rates of $3\frac{1}{4}$ or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., depending on the period for which the converters took the new loan. Our share of the loan was £1,700,000. An amount of £400,000 was con-

verted to a $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. rate of interest, and £1,300,000 to $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The annual saving in interest represents £7,409. Later on, when dealing with the Estimates for the current year, I shall refer to the effect of another conversion, which will take place next month.

Timber Conservation.

Expenditure under other special Acts was below the Budget estimate. The payment to the Forests Department for reforestation work was £18,000 less than anticipated, because of the drop in revenue from timber. Provision is made in the Forests Act for the transfer from Consolidated Revenue to the Forests Department of three-fifths of the net revenue from timber, for conservation purposes. Owing to severe restriction of our oversea export trade because of war conditions, timber revenue was lower than expected, and in consequence the amount to be transferred to the Forests Department was correspondingly lower than the Budget estimate.

Superannuation and Family Benefits.

Pension payments under the 1871 Superannuation Act were approximately £5,000 less than expected. When the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act of 1938 came into operation, it was anticipated that pensions under the 1871 Act would just about have reached their limit and would tend to decrease. They did not do so, but on the contrary increased. Last year, however, they were less than in 1942-43 by £3,600; and I anticipate that we should now see a fairly regular reduction in the payments from year to year. Payments under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act of 1938 were £7,700 below the Budget figure.

University Grant.

These reductions were offset by an increase in the amount paid to the University as grant, the actual payment being £6,450 greater than the figure provided in the Budget. Members will have read in the Press that the University has approached the Government for an increased grant. The University has got behind from year to year and the Government has arrived at an agreement with it which it is submitting to Parliament, by way of legislation, for ap-

proval. I hope to introduce the measure on my return from the Premiers' Conference in Melbourne.

Departmental Expenditure.

Departmental expenditure was £233,000 above the Budget estimate. The main items accounting for this increase were as follows:—

War-caused expenditure, which was £44,000 greater than the estimate.

The payments made by the Government under the Pastoralists' Voluntary Debt Adjustment Scheme; these were £17,000 more than the Budget estimate.

Members are aware that the Government is assisting the pastoral industry by paying a small rate of interest on debt which is suspended by stock firms and other financial institutions in cases where those organisations have agreed to reduce the total indebtedness of the pastoralists concerned. Because of the long drought experienced in our pastoral areas, it became necessary for the Government and the financial institutions concerned to endeavour to put the pastoralists on a better financial footing. Some pastoralists had incurred overdrafts to the extent of about £7 or £8 per sheep on their properties. They could never have got out of their financial troubles unless they had been assisted in the way I have mentioned. I have noticed in the Press that the year 1944 is supposed to be the end of the drought. This was a prediction by the late Clement Wragge, who had an Australia-wide reputation and whose predictions men in the outback swore by.

Hon. N. Keenan: He was only a quack.

The PREMIER: That may be so, but he had a scientific basis for his predictions. He talked about sunspots, of which notice is now taken by meteorologists; but the extraordinary fact is that in the main his predictions were fairly reliable. He predicted a drought in this State during the years 1935 to 1944. We have had a drought during those years; that, unfortunately, is only too true. But if we believe his predictions of misfortune, I, as an optimist, would like to believe his predictions of good fortune.

A loss of £56,000 on the State Shipping Service was met from revenue and for this loss no provision was made when the Budget was prepared. A reduction in Treasury Miscellaneous expenditure was brought about

by the cessation of the premiums for war damage insurance and this resulted in saving of £41,000 for the year. Public Works departmental expenditure exceeded the estimate by £37,000, because of the fact that £50,000 had been provided for deferred maintenance on public buildings, the amount being placed to reserve. No provision for this sum was made when the Budget was prepared. The additional expenditure of £50,000 was offset by some miscellaneous savings.

Forestry and Firewood.

A special grant of £45,000 was made to the Reforestation Fund. This amount was not included in the Budget estimate. Assistance to the fund was given because of the necessity for maintaining our forests in proper condition to prevent loss by fire. On account of the almost total cessation of the oversea export of timber, with which I dealt earlier, revenue was smaller and the contributions to the Reforestation Fund were insufficient to maintain the forests in proper condition. Forest revenue was increased by £14,000, but the expenditure exceeded the sum by £32,000. The loss was brought about by increased production of firewood. Members no doubt are aware of the arrangements whereby firewood is supplied to the public by the Forests Department. We had got to the stage in the metropolitan area and in some of the larger country towns when firewood was practically unobtainable.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: I was dealing with the position regarding firewood in Western Australia, more particularly in the metropolitan area, and was saying that on account of the shortage the Government had been obliged to stop in and endeavour by some means or other to provide firewood to keep people in a reasonable degree of comfort. The reason for the firewood shortage was lack of manpower. In order to obtain manpower the Government had to contact the Commonwealth and get internees and prisoners of war for firewood cutting.

Mr. Fox: How is the position now? Is it fairly good?

The PREMIER: Yes. We do not hear complaints now in regard to lack of firewood. However, it cost a good deal to produce the firewood. Prisoners of war and in-

ternees are not the best of workers and do not understand the business. Moreover, we had to provide conditions for them that would not be tolerated in the ordinary scope of industry. The obligations placed on the Government for the control of these people necessitated fairly substantial expenditure, and so far no satisfactory arrangement has been made with the Commonwealth Government for a recoup of the amounts involved which were not recovered in the sale of firewood. The matter is being prosecuted with vigour, however, and it is hoped that this loss will be recovered from the Commonwealth Government. All the firewood cut for the metropolitan area has been cut at a loss to the Forests Department. It has been necessary to go further afield than other cutters were accustomed to go before the war. However, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have performed a service to the people of this country without which they would have suffered severe discomfort.

Education Department.

The cost of the Education Department was £32,000 greater than the provision in the Estimates.

Public Utilities.

Dealing now with public utilities, the revenue was estimated at £6,620,000 but actually amounted to £6,813,000, an increase of £193,000. As against this, however, expenditure was £268,000 above the estimates, the figures being—estimated £4,667,000, actual £4,935,000. The principal public utilities are the Railways and Water Supply Departments. In the Railway Department an increase in actual revenue over the estimate of £120,000 was more than offset by an increase in actual expenditure over the estimate of £178,000. Included in this figure, however, is provision of £50,000 for deferred maintenance, which money has been transferred to a trust account and will be held for post-war expenditure, so that the actual increase in expenditure was £128,000.

The estimate of railway revenue for last year was framed on the assumption that traffic for the Defence Services, which in the preceding year had reached a high level, would show a decrease; but, in fact, the goods traffic on this account showed an increase. Civilian passenger traffic was also greater than was anticipated. The increase in expenditure was brought about by in-

crease in the basic wage and war loading costs, and also by the need to employ some additional staff to handle the greater business dealt with. Stores such as tarpaulins, coal and material generally were higher in cost and more money was spent on sleeper renewals and rollingstock repairs.

Tramway revenue showed an increase of £35,000 over the estimates, while the expenditure was £29,000 greater than the budget figure, showing a net improvement of £6,000. Electricity supply had a revenue £40,000 greater than the Budget estimate, but increased expenditure of approximately £52,000 more than offset the higher revenue earnings. Metropolitan Water Supply revenue was £14,700 greater than the Budget estimate and the expenditure was £3,600 below the estimate, a total improvement of £23,300. The saving in expenditure was due, in part, to the cessation of war damage insurance premiums, and the fact that some work for which provision had been made in the Estimates was not carried out in its entirety.

Four Successive Surpluses.

Reviewing the position generally, it can be said that the result of the year's transactions was very satisfactory indeed. The surplus secured last year was the fourth in succession and constitutes a record in our financial operations since the beginning of Federation. The total of the surpluses over the four years is £75,000. It must not be overlooked, however, that part of the satisfactory result of the last four year's operations has been due to war causes. Our revenues have been increased by war conditions, particularly those of some of our public utilities—for example, the Railway Department. Though we have received increased revenues for the transport of military material, the freight charged is at a flat rate and represents a reduction in the rates that would be charged for civil traffic. This reduction represents a concession of about £150,000 per annum. So by charging the Defence Department £150,000 less than would have been charged to civil consignees, we have to some extent assisted in the war effort. At the same time some normal expenditure could not be undertaken because of shortage of manpower and material. Therefore, though we have accumulated surpluses, we have built up a liability for deferred expenditure

which will have to be incurred when the war is over. Though we have in reserve £170,000 for belated maintenance for the Railway Department, the liability on this account is very considerable and will probably exceed the reserve.

Railway Finance.

The net financial position of the Railway Department has actually deteriorated during the war on account of rising costs. These rising costs should have been recovered—in part at least—by increased charges for freights and fares, but if we had raised our charges the effect would have disclosed itself in increased costs to the community. Usually increased costs mean increased prices—where the added cost can be passed on—and higher prices mean a higher basic wage. Under the Commonwealth Price Stabilisation Scheme the spreading effect of higher costs is arrested by the payment of subsidies to the concerns bearing the added cost. In the case of Government undertakings, however, the Commonwealth Government is not willing to pay subsidies where the State Budget as a whole can be balanced without them. I admit that we recover some of the higher costs through the special grant paid to us on the recommendations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, but only a portion is recovered in this way, and, in so far as we are not subsidised through the special grant, the State is making a substantial contribution to the war effort.

Uniform Tax Plan.

Another fact which has contributed to our betterment, and which is due to our own efforts, is represented by the receipts from the Commonwealth under the uniform tax plan. Under this plan the Commonwealth pays, as compensation for the loss of our right to impose income tax, a sum of money equal to the average of our collections under this heading for the two years ended June, 1941. Prior to the introduction of the uniform tax scheme the Government had boldly attacked the question of taxation, and I think it is no exaggeration to say that our tax plan placed us in the position of being able to undertake most of our necessary expenditure without incurring large deficits. When the Government superseded the financial emergency tax by the income tax we were able

to collect sufficient revenue to meet our requirements and at the same time grant relief where it was most urgently needed, namely, to those on low incomes with large family responsibilities. That completes my review of the position as it was during the last financial year.

Revenue Estimates, 1944-45.

I turn now to the Estimates for the present year. We have anticipated a small surplus of £1,673. Revenue is estimated at £13,584,871 and expenditure at £13,583,198. We have budgeted for a decrease in taxation receipts of £88,000 which is accounted for by an anticipated decline in collection of land tax of £13,000, because of the fact that last year a fairly large amount of arrears was collected which, of course, will not be incurring. Totalisator duty is expected to yield £50,000 less than last year, which was a year of abnormally high receipts. Probate duty is expected to yield £23,000 less than receipts for last year, because last year there were several large estates assessed and it would not be safe to anticipate a repetition this year. Under the heading of "Territorial" we anticipate a decline in revenue of £33,000, due to an expected drop in land rents. I explained earlier that receipts from land last year were particularly good and we have not anticipated that we will be able to repeat this performance.

M.V. "Koolama."

Departmental revenue is expected to be about £280,000 higher than it was last year. This is due to the inclusion in Treasury Miscellaneous reports of an amount of £318,000, being the proceeds of the insurance paid to us for the loss of the m.v. "Koolama." The whole of this amount is included in departmental expenditure as a transfer to trust funds for future requirements, and is not being used for ordinary revenue expenditure this year. In case members have forgotten the arrangements made for the purchase of the "Koolama" I should like to explain that the loan money provided for this ship was raised in London by the issue of debentures repayable over a period of ten years. When the ship was lost as a result of enemy action the insurance company paid over to us the full value of the insurance money and, in so far as future payments have to be made

under the debentures, the amount still to be paid has been transferred to a trust account to meet this liability. The sum involved is £126,500, and this amount is included under departmental expenditure. The balance of the insurance money amounting to £191,500 has also been transferred to a trust account to be held in trust for future use. It would be quite legitimate to use this money for ordinary revenue purposes because this amount has been met from Revenue for the payment of debentures as they became due. It is proposed, however, to use it to pay off Treasury bills issued for advances to meet deficits during the depression.

Treasury Bills.

At the present time we owe the Commonwealth Bank approximately £6,000,000 on short-dated Treasury bills for deficit accommodation. This accommodation was provided during the depression years 1930-35. When the Treasury bills were negotiated no specific arrangements were made with the bank for their redemption, but it was understood that, until they could be repaid or refunded, the Commonwealth Bank would continue to renew them when they expired at the end of each three months. The Commonwealth and the States together have been paying sinking fund at the rate of 10s. per cent. on these bills, the contribution being shared equally between them.

As a result of a legal opinion recently obtained by the National Debt Commission it is now clear that the moneys advanced for deficits through Treasury bills should have carried a sinking fund at the rate of £4 per cent., according to the requirements of the Financial Agreement. To have met this liability and to have overtaken the arrears of sinking fund contributions since the issue of the bills would have meant a staggering burden for the States because, under the Financial Agreement, the Commonwealth is not liable to contribute any sinking fund for the redemption of debts incurred by a State to finance a Revenue deficit. If we attempt to overtake the arrears now, we will be faced with an expenditure of about £2,000,000. Means have been considered whereby this liability will be met at some time because up to now nothing has been paid off the amount of the accumulated deficit of £6,000,000, brought about during the depression.

In order to make some attempt to remove this incubus of £6,000,000, so far as Western Australia is concerned—and I think that for the Commonwealth and the rest of the States an amount of £50,000,000 is involved—the Prime Minister made a proposal at the last meeting of the Loan Council that if the States would redeem immediately some of the Treasury bills, the Commonwealth would undertake to amend the Financial Agreement Act by reducing the sinking fund contribution on them from £4 per cent. to £1 per cent., to which the Commonwealth would continue to contribute its 5s. per cent. Under the Financial Agreement any State which incurs a deficit has to pay £4 per cent. sinking fund. According to the Financial Agreement the Commonwealth is not obliged to make any sinking fund payments on Revenue debts, but it has been doing that since the depression and has agreed to continue to do so if we make this arrangement. In order to get a satisfactory solution of this problem, the Commonwealth Government asks us to pay one per cent. sinking fund to which it will contribute 5s. At the same time the Commonwealth Government undertook to arrange with the Commonwealth Bank to convert the Treasury bills to debentures and to reduce the rate of interest from one and a quarter to one per cent. for the whole amount, and it would gradually be wiped off over a period of years.

Mr. McDonald: This arrangement would be outside the Financial Agreement.

The PREMIER: Yes, at present, but the Agreement will have to be amended to cover it. The Financial Agreement is not part of the Commonwealth Constitution. All that the Constitution provides in regard to it is that it shall be legal for the States and the Commonwealth to make a financial agreement. When a financial agreement has to be made it has to be ratified by each of the State Parliaments and the Commonwealth Parliament. The Commonwealth Government, in order to tackle the problem of the huge floating debt, said it would continue to pay the 5s. per cent. sinking fund, which it is not obliged to pay under the Financial Agreement, and arrange with the Commonwealth Bank to issue debentures at one per cent. As a consequence we will now be paying two per cent. where before we were paying only one and a quarter per cent., but not reducing the

debt at all. Like Tennyson's brook, it was going on for ever.

I will not deal with that further at this stage because the Commonwealth and the State Governments have undertaken to bring before their respective Parliaments legislation dealing with it, and the matter can be discussed at some length then. We agreed to wipe off £250,000 of that floating debt, and that money will be obtained from the sum of £191,500 which, as I said, is the profit on the "Koolama" insurance, together with the £75,000 which is the accumulated surplus of the last four years. The floating debt of £250,000 worth of Treasury bills was issued to us by the Commonwealth Government during the depression.

Commonwealth Grant.

Returning now to the consideration of the estimated revenue for the present year, the amount of the Commonwealth Grant will be £54,000 greater than was received last year. I have received advice from the Prime Minister to this effect, though I have not yet received the report of the Grants Commission. It will be remembered that the amount we received last year was £850,000, which was £50,000 more than was obtained in the previous year. As I have said, the amount will be £54,000 greater this year. It is anticipated that the Grants Commission's report will be received soon, and I shall comment on the Commission's recommendations when I have an opportunity to read them.

Trading Concerns Revenue.

Revenue from State Trading Concerns has been estimated at £41,000 less than the amount received last year. The results of this year's transactions of the trading concerns are now known. The profits from the Saw Mills are lower than they were last year by approximately £11,600. The receipts from the Wyndham Meat Works will be lower than they were last year, due to the fact that the undertaking was closed for the whole of last season, and the receipts received last year from the sale of stores will, of course, not be repeated this year.

Expenditure.

Coming now to the expenditure side, it is anticipated that interest payments will be less than last year by approximately

£68,000. This is accounted for by the continuance of the saving on the conversion loan last year and in anticipation of the conversion loan which takes place next month. Sinking fund payments tend to increase as stock is cancelled and we are becoming liable for payment of interest at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the amount of the cancelled stock.

National Debt Conversion.

It may be desirable for me to explain to members how the sinking fund provisions of the Financial Agreement operate. It is a very complicated arrangement and not easy to understand. When the agreement was drawn up, provision was made for sinking fund contributions on the State debt at the rate of 10s. per cent. These contributions were assumed to accumulate at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, at which rate the debt would be repaid in 53 years. Under that agreement the Commonwealth and States agreed that the stock of any State which had incurred a debt should be bought up by the National Debt Commission, to which the State would pay an interest rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. That was all right for the States, and the proposal was enthusiastically accepted because at that time most of the stock required interest payments at rates of 6, $5\frac{1}{2}$ or $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. over the year. When the stock was bought by the National Debt Commission, we had to pay only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, and naturally the change was welcomed. Now, however, that interest rates have come down to $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., we still have to pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest on that stock. Consequently the effect today is that in respect of stock bought by the National Debt Commission, the State really has an increased burden to bear. The sinking fund contributions are paid to the National Debt Commission which employs these moneys to purchase and cancel Government stock. The question of reducing the rate from $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to bring it into line with existing rates has been discussed on many occasions by the Loan Council, but so far no action has been taken. If the rate were reduced, the period over which the loans were redeemed would be increased from 53 years, unless the contribution of 10s. per cent. were increased.

Australian National Debt.

The matter is still open for negotiation, but it will be realised that any easing of the burden of the national debt by the purchase of stock at present means for the time being that we have to pay a greater amount of interest than would be necessary if we were borrowing new money. The National Debt Commission, of which the Chief Justice of the High Court is chairman and the members represent the Commonwealth Treasury and the States, is one of the results of the Financial Agreement whereby all the public indebtedness of Australia, Commonwealth and State, was to be redeemed in 53 years. We are getting on towards that period, and 15 years have already elapsed. I do not know that I would like to be the Treasurer in the years to come when the total public indebtedness of Australia, it is anticipated now, will be liquidated.

Mr. Thorn: That will be an interesting age.

The PREMIER: Yes. I am inclined to think that some arrangement may be arrived at to extend the period somewhat, but there is an earnest endeavour to wipe off the accumulated debt of the Commonwealth rather than to allow it to mount all the time. All loans that are raised now carry provision for sinking fund payments for the wiping out of the debt in 53 years.

Mr. Mann: Then we are handing on something for posterity.

The PREMIER: Yes, in a different sense from what has been handed down to us.

Mr. McDonald: But there will be fresh borrowings in the meantime.

The PREMIER: That is so. The effect of the change in methods of finance can be seen in what this State has accomplished. Western Australia owes less now than it did two or three years ago.

Mr. Mann: The indebtedness on the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme was paid off.

The PREMIER: But that was rather different. That scheme was arranged on the assumption that the life of the Goldfields would not be excessively long. In the circumstances, the money was borrowed at a higher rate of interest and a larger amount was set aside for the sinking fund, which was 3 per cent. Of course, the indebtedness was not paid off from the revenue of the Coolgardie Water Scheme itself—it was known by that name originally—for State

revenue was drawn upon by way of taxation to a considerable extent. The fact remains, however, that the indebtedness on the scheme was wiped off because of the heavy sinking fund charges and contributions.

Departmental Expenditure.

Payments under Other Statutes will increase by approximately £12,000, caused mainly by anticipated greater payments under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, 1938. Under departmental expenditure, fairly substantial increases have been provided for. The Agricultural Department expenditure will be increased by £19,000, due to the fact that several professional men previously on military duty are returning to their civil occupations. While those men were on active service, naturally the State was not involved in expenditure on their account. An additional provision of £5,000 has been made for grasshopper eradication, and £2,000 has been provided for the purchase of a bulldozer to undertake experimental work in land clearing. It is anticipated that if the experiments are successful, a substantial reduction in the cost of land clearing can be effected.

When the war is over a number of bulldozers will be available in Australia, but if in the interim we can demonstrate the best method of using them, we shall have performed a very useful service in assisting the development of the State. An amount of £60,000 is provided for maintenance of public buildings this year, which is expected to be sufficient for the purpose; therefore no provision is being made for belated repairs this year, and thus we are showing a decrease on last year's vote. We have an amount of £150,000 odd in a trust fund, but we are not increasing that amount. From now on we hope to keep pace with repairs.

Public Health.

In the Public Health Department provision has been made for the appointment of an additional school doctor and an additional school dentist. It is felt that if possible the services of these additional officers should be obtained in order that an enlargement of this work can be undertaken. In the Crown Law Department a saving of £7,000 should be effected because of the fact that last year we had to meet the cost of elections for both the Council and the Assembly which, fortunately, has not to be met this year.

Educational Facilities.

Under the Education Vote, provision has been made for an increase in technical education. We have also decided to increase the allowance for secondary school scholarships from £24 to £30 per annum and to increase the number of full scholarships from 50 to 250. There have been 50 full scholarships and 200 part scholarships, and next year the 200 will be made full scholarships. Some of these, of course, are for country children. Provision has been made for the extension of the period for training teachers from one year to two years. I am very pleased that it has been possible to arrange for the return to the two-year training course for teachers, because I am satisfied that one of the most important tasks of the work of the Education Department is to ensure that teachers receive adequate training before embarking on their work of instructing the young.

Archives Branch.

The Budget also includes provision for the commencement of an Archives Branch which, in the initial stages, will be controlled by the Public Librarian. Not much expenditure will be entailed at this stage, but it is intended to appoint an officer to classify and catalogue the material already collected and stored at the Public Library. Information will be sought from public bodies and private individuals regarding documents and articles of historic interest held by them. In this way a record will be available for anyone seeking information, and later when a suitable building is available to house these articles, we will know whom to approach when we make an appeal to obtain them. We have many documents containing items of great historical value, but they are at present heaped in one of the rooms of the Public Library. We propose to engage a capable man under the supervision of the Public Librarian, Dr. Battye, to classify and catalogue them. An endeavour has been made to do something along these lines. Instructions have been issued to departments that any document which is considered to be of historical value must not be destroyed. I am afraid that many such documents have been treated as waste paper, but in future they will be sent to the Public Library. It is time the State did something to get the information regarding its early history tabulated.

Mr. Doney: What amount do you propose to set apart?

The PREMIER: At present we propose to employ an officer to catalogue and classify these documents. There are people in the older settled parts of the State who have valuable documents which, I believe, they would make available if there was an officer with whom they could get into touch. When the war is over, the documents will be made available for public inspection. I believe this is the only State that has not an Archives Branch.

Country Libraries.

An amount has also been listed for Government assistance to local authorities for the establishment of country libraries. A small committee has been formed, which is now investigating the question and it is hoped that a satisfactory arrangement can soon be made. The Government's intention is to subsidise up to some limit the local efforts. Previously we had paid a special grant to the Kindergarten Union of £800 because of a similar payment to that body by the Commonwealth Government. This year the Commonwealth has agreed to pay a special grant of £900, and the Government is prepared to make a like payment, which will be in addition to the usual annual payment of £800 to the union. I think the amount is paid on the basis of £1 per head up to £50.

Public Utilities.

Dealing with public utilities separately, I may say that receipts are estimated to be £172,000 less than last year's collections, while the expenditure is expected to decrease by £149,000. Railways account for most of this variation. It is anticipated that the military traffic will be substantially less than that of last year, and estimated revenue has been decreased on this account by £205,000. Expenditure will be correspondingly less. Last year war damage insurance cost the Railway Department £17,500, and this expenditure will not be repeated during the current year. As against these decreases in both revenue and expenditure, electricity supply receipts are estimated to be £29,000 greater than last year while expenditure will show an increase of £23,000. Receipts from tramways are anticipated to be £17,000 greater than in 1943-44 and expenditure will be approximately £8,000 greater.

Mr. Watts: On what do you base the anticipated increase in tramway revenue?

The PREMIER: Trams, buses and trolley-buses seem to be more crowded than ever. One may see strap-hangers everywhere, and not only during peak periods but also at many times through the day. Motorear owners are allowed a small quantity of petrol, but very few can obtain the requisite priority to buy new tyres, and consequently many people who formerly used motorears now patronise the bus, trolley-bus and tram services. The tendency during the past two or three months has been for patronage to increase. Most of the estimates have been framed on a conservative basis and I think this estimate will be realised. We expect very little difference in the figures for other public utilities such as the Metropolitan Water Supply Department, Abattoirs, etc.

I think members will agree that no extravagant estimates of revenue have been included, and that no item of expenditure which should be anticipated has been omitted. I really expect that we should do better than we anticipate. I would not like to bring in extravagant estimates and find myself unable to realise them. Nevertheless I think that in many instances our expectations of revenue will be exceeded. I cannot tell what totalisator taxation will bring in this year. I have estimated for £50,000 less than last year's return. It may be that many people will go to the races this year, for there were plenty of people going to the races who seemed to have plenty of money. A number of those people have left our shores, and it may be that our totalisator revenue will decrease. However, I believe that all legitimate expenditure which can be anticipated is provided for in this Budget.

Conclusion.

I feel sure that we can look forward to the future with confidence. Provided the season finishes well, our primary producers should enjoy as great a degree of prosperity as they enjoyed in the preceding year. In this respect I may say that while we have cause for concern, we are far more fortunately placed than some of the Eastern States, which are experiencing very bad drought conditions. In company with the Minister for Lands I passed through South Australia a fortnight ago, and we saw more yellow crops there than ever I

saw in my life before at this stage—yellow crops five or six inches high. The Premier of Victoria said that in the Wimmera district, which was one of the safest and usually one of the most highly productive wheat areas in Victoria, many of the crops were a failure, and that the estimated yield was about 5,000,000 bushels.

While we are not very satisfied with our outlook, we have much greater cause for satisfaction than exists in eastern Australia. In fact, while in the Eastern States we were approached by the Premiers of South Australia and Victoria to know whether we had any surplus chaff of any kind to assist their States through the drought period. We did have a small reserve of chaff, but in view of the season here we could not make any promises to assist either South Australia or Victoria. With the approach of peace we can anticipate an easement in the manpower shortage, and an ability to undertake those tasks of development which were interrupted by the war five years ago. This State has suffered heavily by reason of the patriotism of its men and women. Western Australian enlistments represent a far greater proportion of the population than do the enlistments of any other State of the Commonwealth. The consequent loss of manpower during the war years means that a great amount of work remains to be done, which will provide employment for those men and women returning to civil life when the war is ended. I hope that when the Budget is delivered next year the war will be over and that we will then be able to devote the whole of our energies to those tasks of peace for which we are fitted. That may be only a pious hope, but certainly we believe that the European war will conclude very shortly.

The war in Asia may last for some time yet, because the Japanese are undoubtedly fatalistic fighters. We read constantly of Japanese prisoners killing themselves. We hear that they never surrender. We cannot judge what an army of four or five million will do when the Allied Forces get closer to their home. However, I am sure that, given courage and proper guidance, a great future awaits this State, not only in the realm of primary production but also in remunerative goldmining, in the maintenance of suitable secondary industries and in the establishment of new ones. It

is our task so to develop this State that those who return from the Services will find opportunities to live full and useful lives in freedom, to defend which they have been fighting and making sacrifices. It is the intention and desire of the Government that such a life will be available

to our people, and it is in this spirit that the Budget has been prepared and is now submitted. I move the first division of the Estimates, namely—

Legislative Council, £2,265.

Progress reported.

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND.
ESTIMATE FOR 1944-45 YEAR.

	£	£	£	£
SURPLUS FOR YEAR 1943-44				38,021
Add Increases in Estimated Revenue, 1944-45—				
Territorial :				
Timber			2,768	
Law Courts			0,143	
Departmental :				
Forests		4,883		
Public Health		2,350		
Treasury :				
Transfer "Koolama" Insurance	318,082			
Loan Commitments "Koolama" Loan, 1944-45, transferred	37,319			
Agricultural Bank Interest	7,427			
		363,328		
Sundry Minor Variations (net)		762		
			371,893	
Commonwealth—Disabilities Grant			54,000	
Public Utilities :				
Goldfields Water Supply		0,723		
Tramways		18,837		
Electricity		29,268		
			55,828	
				493,562
Add Decreases in Estimated Expenditure, 1944-45—				
Special Acts :				
Pensions		3,013		
University (Increase shown in Miscellaneous)		6,600		
Sundry Minor Variations (net)		2,417		
			12,030	
Departmental :				
Treasury Miscellaneous :				
Overdrawn Estates—Agricultural Land Purchase	20,000			
Expenditure due to war conditions	27,523			
Royal Mint—Extra Grant	8,000			
Discount and Expenses on Conversion Loans	4,493			
Pastoral Industry—Interest	10,237			
War Damage Insurance	38,056			
Reforestation—Special Grant	45,000			
State Shipping—Losses	56,047			
		215,350		
Public Works Department		31,322		
Health Department		4,670		
Mental Hospitals		5,898		
Crown Law Department		6,937		
			263,981	
Public Utilities :				
Railways		180,320		
			180,320	
				456,331
				987,914
Less Decreases in Estimated Revenue, 1944-45—				
Taxation :				
Totalisator Duty		50,210		
Probate Duty		29,490		
Land Tax		12,519		
Minor Variations (net)		1,598		
			87,727	
Territorial :				
Land		34,254		
Mining		873		
			35,127	
Departmental :				
Child Welfare		2,394		
Lands and Surveys		3,801		
Native Affairs		5,325		
Public Works		17,453		
Treasury :				
Commission—Sale of Tax Stamps	2,692			
Exchange	3,092			
Government Workers Compensation Surplus	6,300			
Pig Industry Recoup	5,762			
War Damage Insurance	36,609			
Sundry Variations (net)	11,920			
		66,375		
			95,348	
Royal Mint			10,099	
Public Utilities :				
Fremantle Harbour Trust		5,140		
Metropolitan Water Supply		11,660		
Other Hydraulic Undertakings		3,057		
Railways		204,766		
State Batteries		2,674		
Minor Variations (net)		584		
			228,181	
Trading Concerns :				
Profits		12,808		
Interest, Departmental Charges, and Sinking Fund		28,576		
			41,384	
				497,866
				490,048

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE—*continued.*

	£	£	£	£
<i>Less</i> Increases in Estimated Expenditure, 1944-45—				
Special Acts :				
Interest and Sinking Fund		34,851		
Superannuation		22,862		
			57,313	
Departmental :				
Treasury—Miscellaneous :				
University Grant	5,700			
"Koolama" Insurance transfer	318,082			
Special Grant to Reforestation Fund	15,000			
Minor Variations (net)	2,201			
		340,983		
Agricultural Department		19,343		
College of Agriculture		5,828		
Native Affairs Department		5,750		
Forestry Department		3,819		
Education Department		15,586		
Minor Variations (net)		8,894		
			400,182	
Public Utilities :				
Tramways		7,392		
Electricity		23,439		
Minor Variations (net)		49		
			30,880	
				488,375
SURPLUS ESTIMATED, 1944-45				£1,873

INDEX TO RETURNS

	Return No.
Agricultural Lands Purchase	26
Balance Sheet	1
Commonwealth Grants paid to Trust Funds	34
Consolidated Revenue Fund—	
Expenditure—Statement of	4, 27
Receipts from Commonwealth	34
Revenue and Expenditure, 1943-44, compared with Estimate	2
Revenue—Statement of Receipts	3
Surpluses and Deficiencies for Financial Years 1900-01 to 1943-44	5
Expenditure not subject to Parliamentary Appropriation	29
Forests Improvement and Re-forestation Fund	31
General Loan Fund—	
Loan Assets—Detailed Classification, 1943-44	11
Loan Assets—Summarised Classification, 1943-44	10
Loan Expenditure for 1943-44 compared with previous years	6
Loan Repayments—Receipts and Expenditure	28
Grants from Commonwealth, paid to Trust Funds	34
Hospital Fund	30
Public Debt—	
Contingent Liabilities	7 (e)
Loan Authorisations and Flotations	7 (a)
Loan Indebtedness	7 (b)
Loan Liability—Statement showing amounts maturing each year	8
Net Public Debt per head of population	7 (d)
Sinking Fund	9
Summary of Gross Loan Raisings and Disbursements	7 (c)
Public Utilities—	
Electricity	14
Goldfields Water Supply	16
Metropolitan Water Supply	15
Railways	12
Tramways	13
Railways—	
Return relating to	12
Tonnage and Earnings on Goods Carried	36
Road Funds	32
Social Services	35
Taxation—	
Statement of Amount Paid to Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust Funds, and Special Accounts	33
Trade, Production, Population, etc.	37
Trading Concerns—	
State Brick Works	18
State Hotels	22
State Engineering Works	19
State Quarries	20
State Sawmills	23
State Shipping	21
Summary—Years 1937-38 to 1942-43	17
West Australian Meat Export Works	25
Wyndham Freezing Works	24

Return No. 1.]

BALANCE SHEET OF THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA AT 30th JUNE, 1943, AND 30th JUNE, 1944.

	30th June, 1943.	30th June, 1944.		30th June, 1943.	30th June, 1944.
	£	£		£	£
Public Debt	96,988,206	96,478,295	Invested in Works and Services, etc. ...	95,921,830	95,022,365
			Balance—General Loan Fund c/d. ...	1,066,376	1,455,930
	96,988,206	96,478,295		96,988,206	96,478,295
Balance General Loan Fund	1,066,376	1,455,930	Consolidated Revenue Fund	5,939,996	5,901,975
Advances to Revenue Fund	5,939,996	5,901,975	Commonwealth Government—Tax Arrears	...	483,275
State Taxes, Arrears ... ..	...	429,943	Advances (under Appropriation "Advance to Treasurer")	302,314	264,913
Hospital Fund Contributions, Arrears ...	...	53,332	Expenditure in Suspense ... ..	...	126,744
Reserve Accounts	14,783	14,853	Stores on hand	708,877	838,527
Suspense Accounts	89,441	140,950	Remittances to London ... ..	...	360,000
Trading Concerns	76,838	126,869	Trust Fund Investments—		
Trust Funds—			Governmental	1,678,429	1,879,263
Governmental	4,698,918	4,380,712	Private	2,018,863	2,214,502
Private	2,203,963	2,363,223	Banking Account	2,920,372	2,365,023
			Cash in hand, etc.—		
			Banks Current Account	477,021	372,161
			Banks in Eastern States	29,054	26,745
			In London	9,796	10,077
			In Transit	5,593	10,751
			In Hand ... ..	...	13,835
	14,090,315	14,867,787		14,090,315	14,867,787

[Return No. 2.]

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, 1943-44, COMPARED WITH ESTIMATE.

SUMMARY

	Estimate.	Actual.	Comparison with Estimate.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Revenue	13,136,558	13,589,175	452,617	...
Expenditure	13,135,053	13,551,154	416,101	...
Deficit ... ..	...	...	...	...
Surplus	1,505	38,021	36,516	...
Net Improvement			£36,516	

DETAILS

Revenue.	Estimate.	Actual.	Comparison with Estimate.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Taxation	3,305,884	3,420,911	115,027	...
Territorial	318,000	349,859	31,859	...
Law Courts	70,000	50,857	...	19,143
Departmental	1,345,576	1,434,100	88,524	...
Royal Mint	65,000	78,099	13,099	...
Commonwealth	1,273,432	1,323,432	50,000	...
Trading Concerns	138,666	119,104	...	19,562
Public Utilities	6,620,000	6,812,813	192,813	...
Total Revenue	13,136,558	13,589,175	491,322	38,705
Net Increase			£452,617	

Expenditure.	Estimate.	Actual.	Comparison with Estimate.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
SPECIAL ACTS—				
Constitution Act	16,910	16,910	...	...
Interest—Overseas	1,791,855	1,787,764	...	4,091
Interest—Australia	1,724,758	1,698,747	...	26,011
Sinking Fund	633,750	606,060	...	27,690
Other Special Acts	498,083	470,754	...	27,329
GOVERNMENTAL—				
Departmental	3,295,744	3,531,860	236,116	...
Exchange	506,000	503,219	...	2,781
Unemployment Relief	1,000	645	...	355
PUBLIC UTILITIES	4,666,953	4,935,195	268,242	...
Total Expenditure	13,135,053	13,551,154	504,358	88,257
Net Increase			£416,101	

UNFUNDED DEFICIT.

	£
Unfunded Deficit to 30th June, 1943	5,939,996
Surplus for 1943-44 year	38,021
Total Unfunded Deficit to 30th June, 1944 ..	5,901,975

[Return No. 3.]

REVENUE.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS FROM 1935-36 TO 1943-44 AND ESTIMATE FOR 1944-45.

Heads.	1935-36.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.	Estimate 1944-45.
TAXATION—	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Land Tax	117,682	117,249	124,083	115,229	99,880	122,063	136,455	132,102	122,510	110,000
Income Tax	274,794	283,539	682,097	741,178	859,617	1,874,400	2,141,332			
Financial Emergency Tax	827,119	971,372	1,074,561	1,214,695	1,263,700	295,288	43,206	2,546,000	2,546,000	2,546,000
Dividend Duty	361,387	427,966	184,026	141,036	150,449	186,570	149,329			
Totalisator Tax	50,892	60,782	57,041	57,146	51,869	48,423	48,045	61,370	115,210	65,000
Stamp Duty	261,192	273,274	290,880	283,921	280,096	245,067	229,052	209,087	221,813	220,000
Probate Duty	112,657	93,320	101,431	123,798	122,928	165,008	182,559	170,288	233,400	210,000
Entertainment Tax	89,246	95,232	98,610	103,463	98,722	96,602	99,234	106,691	98,189	93,123
Licenses	81,851	80,541	82,576	83,757	88,993	94,185	82,958	82,641	83,780	84,000
Total	2,185,800	2,403,575	2,594,987	2,864,223	2,996,054	3,127,604	3,111,250	3,317,679	3,420,911	3,339,123
TERRITORIAL AND DEPARTMENTAL—										
Land	206,831	189,111	170,600	138,176	132,757	133,190	127,157	167,730	109,254	165,000
Mining	42,242	41,838	38,884	41,201	39,863	34,559	32,579	21,707	21,873	21,000
Timber	134,318	155,469	165,129	137,395	143,585	161,079	150,083	137,596	128,732	131,500
Royal Mint	28,621	30,750	33,959	34,980	43,274	57,038	65,291	60,759	78,000	68,000
Departmental Fees, etc.	838,374	863,679	989,951	892,926	971,047	958,122	1,101,813	1,248,651	1,434,100	1,710,577
Law Courts	65,242	75,722	81,957	88,158	84,906	84,704	81,812	68,389	50,857	60,000
Commonwealth	800,000	500,000	575,000	570,000	595,000	650,000	630,000	800,000	850,000	904,000
Do. Special Grant	35,000	33,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Do. Interest Contributions	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432	473,432
Total	2,624,060	2,363,001	2,523,909	2,376,268	2,483,924	2,542,124	2,682,167	2,968,284	3,236,347	3,533,550
PUBLIC UTILITIES—										
Native Stations	4,785	5,005	4,277	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bunbury Harbour Board	8,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	500	11,500	5,000	5,500	6,000
Fremantle Harbour Trust	231,307	238,429	257,413	261,637	242,333	192,160	135,344	237,241	259,140	254,000
Goldfields Water Supply	240,481	236,848	293,873	296,904	310,723	347,748	300,198	273,779	270,277	280,000
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs	6,003	6,638	6,496	5,696	6,504	6,092	6,225	6,307	5,654	5,500
Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale Yards	52,260	52,719	52,227	50,615	54,909	61,442	67,370	78,682	81,728	80,000
Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage	376,608	412,545	439,184	468,762	501,219	527,180	561,628	563,768	577,660	566,000
Other Hydraulic Undertakings	61,755	58,147	61,104	54,065	61,308	68,502	78,438	82,210	84,057	81,000
Perth City Markets	866	66	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Railways	3,424,494	3,468,657	3,645,942	3,588,013	3,497,529	3,573,979	3,898,809	4,448,370	4,419,766	4,215,000
Tramways, Perth Electric	237,103	235,797	238,568	302,354	304,856	334,561	402,693	469,751	515,163	532,000
Electricity Supply	348,425	364,663	387,037	414,519	425,715	437,988	462,789	477,904	540,932	570,200
State Ferries	8,514	8,458	8,231	8,143	7,782	8,404	9,964	11,337	11,546	12,000
State Batteries	126,298	122,532	125,072	120,095	124,424	110,756	70,759	42,723	29,674	27,000
Cave Houses, etc.	5,870	5,804	6,586	10,372	13,641	13,861	10,689	19,955	11,715	11,722
Total	5,183,249	5,316,308	5,574,009	5,679,360	5,550,923	5,683,173	6,006,451	6,759,027	6,812,813	6,640,466
TRADING CONCERNS	40,612	102,549	121,137	129,809	89,042	79,167	100,281	106,708	119,104	77,722
GRAND TOTAL	10038721	10185433	10819042	10,949,660	11,119,943	11432068	11940149	13151678	13569175	1358487

[Return No. 4.]

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FROM 1935-36 TO 1943-44, AND ESTIMATE FOR 1944-45

Head.	1935-36.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.	Estimate 1944-45.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Special Acts ...	3,918,351	3,997,418	4,181,908	4,270,903	4,402,863	4,511,542	4,583,533	4,595,471	4,580,235	4,625,518
Parliamentary ...	13,374	14,992	14,544	14,809	14,992	14,882	15,867	16,209	16,332	16,995
Premier ...	20,626	21,901	18,146	19,045	17,718	17,998	16,087	12,459	10,549	9,923
Treasury ...	23,781	24,454	27,211	28,780	29,788	34,205	34,313	31,053	30,445	30,930
Governor ...	2,339	2,419	2,487	2,474	2,401	2,382	2,437	2,644	2,793	2,488
London Agency ...	10,156	10,160	12,039	12,361	10,478	10,000	10,619	9,643	10,319	9,785
Public Service Commis- sioner ...	1,571	1,520	1,540	1,788	1,675	1,727	957	1,564	1,654	1,728
Government Motor Cars ...	2,236	3,584	3,697	3,151	3,383	2,924	2,443	1,589	1,313	1,994
Audit ...	12,420	13,338	14,190	15,739	16,416	16,653	16,425	17,273	18,799	18,250
Compassionate Allow- ances ...	6,711	8,182	7,162	8,992	6,230	2,599	3,386	3,056	4,679	2,984
Government Stores ...	13,738	14,587	15,643	16,862	17,135	17,769	16,956	18,194	18,710	19,610
Taxation ...	33,894	33,699	33,860	33,795	33,668	43,739	40,805	12,441	12,067	12,000
Workers' Homes Board ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Supersannation Board ...	...	...	...	...	2,446	2,516	2,381	2,500	3,259	3,350
Printing ...	53,564	56,905	61,049	69,914	68,358	66,921	67,425	66,415	70,338	70,400
Tourist and Publicity Bureau ...	2,112	3,752	4,387	6,638	7,144	7,109	3,887	1,489	482	730
Literary and Scientific Miscellaneous and Re- funds ...	11,148	11,101	11,150	11,520	11,150	11,249	11,802	16,550	11,550	13,050
Forests ...	605,939	751,683	778,467	625,650	649,075	777,850	837,157	1,336,831	1,359,102	1,484,729
Public Works ...	22,289	25,453	27,105	28,474	28,696	29,140	28,456	77,949	137,106	140,925
Town Planning ...	87,627	103,335	93,682	100,767	98,416	90,453	98,602	251,977	233,052	201,738
Unemployment Relief ...	1,374	1,414	1,478	1,653	1,725	1,679	1,787	1,835	1,684	1,900
State Labour Bureau ...	68,605	69,578	69,826	64,183	73,182	41,953	13,355	8,895	3,334	3,810
Lands and Surveys ...	51,094	51,743	52,237	56,765	56,077	56,519	54,292	55,353	61,392	65,100
Farmers' Debts Adjust- ment and Rural Relief ...	3,944	8,681	7,024	6,057	5,073	3,987	2,989	2,679	2,003	1,330
Agricultural Bank ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
College of Agriculture ...	87,254	100,419	118,174	117,049	112,640	108,835	107,559	105,370	112,529	137,700
Factories ...	891	908	913	1,118	1,423	1,538	1,595	1,183	1,701	1,787
Arbitration Court ...	4,806	5,250	5,570	6,765	7,402	7,308	7,824	7,520	7,796	8,800
State Insurance ...	4,148	6,523	7,688	6,477	5,762	5,598	5,277	5,075	5,594	5,800
Department of Industrial Development ...	1,572	2,235	1,984	2,518	3,891	3,639	8,176	4,680	7,412	5,190
Child Welfare ...	118,502	116,338	120,957	126,309	123,081	132,145	108,833	78,936	72,674	75,600
Mines, Explosives, Geo- logical, etc. ...	145,720	144,092	142,504	144,103	139,698	129,847	123,341	112,284	113,507	115,655
Medical and Health ...	69,095	33,112	78,194	80,090	83,287	81,886	83,278	88,837	104,030	101,485
Mental Hospitals ...	101,248	107,269	112,004	120,453	124,490	128,429	134,578	140,240	148,796	143,100
Office of Chief Secretary ...	26,284	26,610	28,734	31,339	33,705	35,157	37,440	40,173	40,886	41,903
Prisons ...	26,074	28,084	28,015	29,513	29,949	32,679	32,373	38,465	46,682	47,000
Education ...	685,284	716,957	786,917	757,051	772,556	784,099	831,095	813,439	873,737	889,302
Police ...	228,394	239,458	243,124	255,378	253,848	269,795	279,743	292,070	292,583	291,374
Crown Law & Branches ...	78,874	74,194	84,863	92,204	91,694	87,586	88,272	87,127	104,977	98,400
Natives ...	14,083	20,008	25,202	39,000	44,844	44,900	44,000	40,250	41,250	47,000
Harbour and Light and Jetties ...	22,957	24,149	27,240	26,743	23,411	23,135	29,513	32,243	42,600	42,600
Fisheries ...	4,158	4,583	4,563	5,473	6,189	6,982	7,980	7,141	8,145	7,373
North-West ...	...	...	...	...	13	143	86	84	243	200
Total, Departmental...	2,648,836	2,935,670	3,023,170	2,970,790	3,032,939	3,142,615	3,213,882	3,843,415	4,035,724	4,171,925
PUBLIC UTILITIES.										
Goldfields Water Supply ...	114,411	120,334	125,155	135,389	180,055	186,763	145,022	184,642	141,875	142,750
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs ...	8,584	4,802	4,559	4,029	4,531	4,738	4,551	5,235	5,877	6,984
Metropolitan Abattoirs ...	30,231	33,550	30,830	33,912	34,480	35,172	40,975	49,041	57,588	56,910
Metropolitan Water Supply ...	99,202	101,357	97,088	101,960	105,268	106,655	138,205	126,552	131,860	134,955
Other Hydraulic Under- takings ...	51,092	60,142	61,090	58,685	64,980	63,316	61,093	74,878	74,289	73,545
Railways ...	2,488,412	2,691,698	2,669,181	2,902,677	2,800,850	2,733,203	2,998,434	3,490,171	3,624,320	3,444,000
Tramways ...	204,892	205,646	211,013	247,071	249,438	255,508	299,684	345,407	386,908	394,600
State Ferries ...	7,998	8,083	8,452	8,380	8,596	8,167	8,656	10,628	10,585	9,655
Electricity Supply ...	241,853	270,384	290,879	312,719	307,895	304,623	344,577	392,853	451,761	475,200
State Batteries ...	118,643	118,100	112,225	113,806	112,918	106,416	88,359	47,453	38,702	37,000
Cave House ...	5,760	7,786	7,458	9,751	11,925	12,261	11,360	11,502	11,280	11,276
Native Stations ...	6,902	6,593	6,777	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Perth City Markets ...	678	110	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Public Utilities	3,978,156	3,623,550	3,624,657	3,928,409	3,830,910	3,766,800	4,140,966	4,688,356	4,935,195	4,785,755
GRAND TOTAL ...	9,945,343	10,556,638	10,829,735	11,170,102	11,266,768	11,420,957	11,938,381	13,127,242	13,551,154	13,583,198

Return No. 5.]

STATEMENT SHOWING ANNUAL SURPLUSES AND DEFICIENCIES OF CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND,
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 1900-01 TO 1943-44.

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Annual.	
			Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£
1900-01	3,078,033	3,165,244	...	87,211
1901-02	3,688,049	3,490,026	198,023	...
1902-03	3,630,238	3,521,763	108,475	...
1903-04	3,550,016	3,698,311	...	148,295
1904-05	3,615,340	3,745,225	...	129,885
1905-06	3,558,939	3,632,318	...	73,379
1906-07	3,401,354	3,490,183	...	88,829
1907-08	3,376,641	3,379,006	...	2,365
1908-09	3,267,014	3,368,551	...	101,537
1909-10	3,657,670	3,447,731	209,939	...
1910-11	3,850,439	3,734,448	115,991	...
1911-12	3,966,673	4,101,082	...	134,409
1912-13	4,596,659	4,787,064	...	190,405
1913-14	5,205,343	5,340,754	...	135,411
1914-15	5,140,725	5,706,541	...	565,816
1915-16	5,356,978	5,705,201	...	348,223
1916-17	4,577,007	5,276,764	...	699,757
1917-18	4,622,536	5,328,279	...	705,743
1918-19	4,944,851	5,596,866	...	652,015
1919-20	5,863,501	6,531,725	...	668,225
1920-21	6,789,565	7,476,291	...	686,725
1921-22	6,907,107	7,639,242	...	732,135
1922-23	7,207,492	7,612,856	...	405,364
1923-24	7,865,595	8,094,753	...	229,158
1924-25	8,381,446	8,439,844	...	58,398
1925-26	8,808,166	8,907,309	...	99,143
1926-27	9,750,833	9,722,568	28,245	...
1927-28	9,807,949	9,834,415	...	26,466
1928-29	9,947,951	10,223,919	...	275,968
1929-30	9,750,515	10,268,519	...	518,004
1930-31	8,686,756	10,107,295	...	1,420,539
1931-32	8,035,316	9,593,212	...	1,557,896
1932-33	8,332,153	9,196,234	...	864,081
1933-34	8,481,697	9,270,609	...	788,912
1934-35	9,331,430	9,498,525	...	167,095
1935-36	10,033,721	9,945,343	88,378	...
1936-37	10,185,433	10,556,638	...	371,205
1937-38	10,819,042	10,829,735	...	10,693
1938-39	10,949,660	11,170,102	...	220,442
1939-40	11,119,943	11,266,768	...	146,825
1940-41	11,432,068	11,420,957	11,111	...
1941-42	11,940,149	11,938,381	1,768	...
1942-43	13,151,678	13,127,242	24,436	...
1943-44	13,589,175	13,551,154	38,021	...

LOAN EXPENDITURE FOR 1943-44 COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEARS.

(EXCLUSIVE OF LOAN SUSPENSE EXPENDITURE.)

Undertakings.	1932-33.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Railways, including Land Resumptions	180,567	316,124	295,076	116,240	178,882	349,393	198,065	102,153	102,476	29,899	23,781	17,856
Tramways—Perth Electric	5,601	11,290	...	...	35,591	8,612	8,042	126	9,109	29,857	71,949	9,389
Electric Power Station	918	2,069	203,268	281,165	109,837	39,977	17,919	1,097	15,126	22,578	56,136	25,358
Fremantle Harbour Works	169,618	91,975	98,688	100,068	78,781	81,891	34,603	15,845	51,853	97,168	63,817	5,228
Harbours and Rivers generally	73,302	164,169	206,830	200,949	108,065	70,240	57,689	36,081	24,518	3,261	3,401	5,917
Sewerage—Perth and Fremantle	125,055	177,673	330,199	455,901	881,334	253,490	351,400	242,105	115,433	71,112	17,494	6,473
Water Supplies a	656,840	656,072	784,605	819,339	881,638	709,742	584,132	611,559	754,457	270,451	73,003	52,565
Development of Goldfields b	30,041	74,166	59,682	27,167	20,550	29,071	42,015	65,806	43,458	17,790	137,854	99,490
Development of Agriculture	287,150	366,116	341,850	217,644	187,711	154,658	179,462	205,611	165,747	91,814	28,097	28,529
Assistance to Settlers, Industries, etc.	84,679	113,535	6,921	9,239	8,870	8,471	442	9,198	12,895	8,429	6,948	3,050
Agricultural Group Settlement	79,646	115,904	26,073	9,618	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Land Settlement for Soldiers	403	1,199	331	427	434	87	540	417	679	8	121	210
College of Agriculture	...	...	...	...	...	...	679	443	1,116	775	41	...
Immigration	461	132	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agricultural Bank—Working Capital	303,257	325,000	50,000	...	53,365	215,325	15,023	3,000	417	...	...	...
Steamships	...	...	...	...	35,000	25,000	...	10,000	10,000	...	...	...
Workers' Homes—Working Capital	35,000	35,000	35,000	...	4,647	13,922	4,999	9,178	20,702	147	1	...
State Hotels	...	519	...	8,000	...	...	12	...	1,646	2,343	2,211	...
Ferries	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,571	39,429	15,671	5,000
State Engineering Works	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	57,231	85,289	53,151	38,808
Public Buildings	34,634	98,020	106,418	84,454	89,182	91,726	114,954	103,636	3,194	300,000	69,291	75,000
Hospital Buildings and Equipment, including Grants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41,734	...	...	45,000
Roads and Bridges	83,004	124,647	213,804	132,902	83,204	160,038	65,000	325,000	9,416	5,000	813	130
Sundries	1	c 412	d 25,103	593	5,448	62,493	9,000	7,040	4,478	5,204	...	...
Bulk Handling of Wheat	...	...	...	...	...	800	1,580	2,045	...	...	...	...
Boya Quarries	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Air Raid Precautions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60,000	22,363
West Australian Meat Export Works	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	86,000	14,064
Native Stations, Hospitals, etc.	...	...	337	421	470	5,568	5,500	8,294	14,000	11,207	...	...
Discount and Flotation Expenses	78,007	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	2,217,982	2,644,022	2,784,185	2,464,167	2,193,117	2,315,094	1,693,111	1,759,174	1,760,366	791,951	774,606	377,330
<i>Less</i> Expenditure from Loan Repayments	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Receipts	249,276	215,740	97,064	74,791	78,376	154,825	153,105	101,086	140,203	89,867	184,706	198,896
Net Expenditure from Loan Raisings	1,968,707	2,448,282	2,687,121	2,389,376	2,114,741	2,160,179	1,545,006	1,658,088	1,620,163	702,084	589,900	178,434

Includes Loans to Local Authorities for erection of Country Hospitals, etc., c £400; d £103.

a Including Goldfields Districts.

b Excluding Water Supplies.

[Return No. 7.]

PUBLIC DEBT.

(a) LOAN AUTHORISATIONS AND FLOTATIONS.

	£	£	£
Authorisations to 30th June, 1943 ... ..	...	119,932,866	
Authorisations, 1943-44 ... ..	...	350,373	
		<u>120,283,239</u>	
Flotations—			
Inscribed Stock, Debentures, Treasury Bonds, etc., issued in Australia and Overseas—Net proceeds:—			
	£		
For Works and Services	99,639,197		
For Funding Deficits	6,140,087		
	<u>105,779,284</u>		
Discounts and Flotation Expenses (including Cost of Conversion Loans), net:—			
On Works Loans	3,973,087		
On Deficit Loans	198,807		
	<u>4,171,894</u>		
		109,951,178	
Short Term Debt current at 30th June, 1944—			
London	2,959,714		
Australia	6,305,000		
	<u>9,264,714</u>		
Total Flotations ... ..	...	119,215,892	
Balance available for Flotation ... ..	...	<u>*£1,067,347</u>	

* Includes surplus of £46,415 under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Acts.

(b) LOAN INDEBTEDNESS.

	£	£
Total Amount raised to 30th June, 1943 ... ..	...	118,758,142
Flotations during the year—		
Counter Sales	67,750	
Instalment Stock	390,000	
	<u>457,750</u>	
		119,215,892
Redemptions—		
Total to 30th June, 1943	21,769,936	
During the year—		
National Debt Commission:		
Securities repurchased	£372,510	
Instalment Stock redeemed (Australia)	18,309	
Do. do. do. (London)	27,882	
Inscribed Stock redeemed at maturity	548,960	
	<u>967,661</u>	
		22,737,597
Gross Public Debt at 30th June, 1944 ... ..	...	96,478,295
Sinking Fund ... ..	...	70,159
Net Public Debt at 30th June, 1944 ... ..	...	<u>£96,408,136</u>

[Return No. 7—continued.]

(c) SUMMARY OF GROSS LOAN RAISINGS AND DISBURSEMENTS.

<i>Raisings.</i>		<i>Disbursements.</i>	
	£		£
Total Flotations, as per Return		Discounts and Expenses—	
7 (b)—		To 30th June, 1943 (Net) ...	3,972,714
To 30th June, 1943 ...	118,758,142	During Year 1943-44 ...	373
During Year 1943-44 ...	457,750	Redemption of Agricultural	
		Bank Mortgage Bonds ...	1,566,000
Receipts from Loan Repayments—		Deficits Funded (including Dis-	
To 30th June, 1943 ...	2,303,226	count and Expenses) ...	6,338,894
During Year 1943-44 ...	256,153	Advances to meet Expenditure	
		pending receipt of Revenue ...	5,901,975
		Expenditure on Works and Ser-	
		vices ...	102,535,346
		Loan Suspense Expenditure ...	4,039
		Balance of General Loan Fund	1,455,930
	121,775,271		121,775,271

(d) NET PUBLIC DEBT FOR HEAD OF POPULATION ON 30th JUNE EACH YEAR.

Year.		Debt per Head.		Year.		Debt per Head.	
		£	s. d.			£	s. d.
1917 ...	...	116	5 5	1931 ...	...	174	2 6
1918 ...	...	118	0 8	1932 ...	...	180	3 8
1919 ...	...	116	7 0	1933 ...	...	187	4 8
1920 ...	...	119	7 3	1934 ...	...	193	7 6
1921 ...	...	†124	15 11	1935 ...	...	197	11 11
1922 ...	...	137	1 0	1936 ...	...	199	7 10
1923 ...	...	142	9 6	1937 ...	...	201	15 2
1924 ...	...	146	13 6	1938 ...	...	202	19 8
1925 ...	...	146	3 11	1939 ...	...	204	7 1
1926 ...	...	155	14 8	1940 ...	...	*203	2 9
1927 ...	...	157	14 4	1941 ...	...	*204	16 9
1928 ...	...	165	10 7	1942 ...	...	*202	13 11
1929 ...	...	162	6 9	1943 ...	...	*201	17 1
1930 ...	...	163	9 9	1944 ...	...	198	6 8

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

(e) CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AT 30th JUNE, 1944.

	Securities Issued.	Re- deemed.	In Circu- lation.	Funds Invested.
Finance and Development Board Act ...	700,000	700,000	...	...
Metropolitan Market Act ...	19,000	1,322	17,678	...
Workers' Homes Act ...	189,000	11,541	177,459	...
Agricultural Lands Purchase Act ...	587,471	464,479	122,992	3,654
	1,495,471	1,177,342	318,129	3,654
Bank Guarantees in force ...	...	...	191,780	...
Metropolitan Water Supply Act *	...	...	65,380	...
Land Drainage Act *	...	...	691	...
Total, Contingent Liabilities ...	...	...	575,990	...

* Principal and Interest on Debentures chargeable on the revenue and assets of the concern.

[Return No. 8.]

LOAN LIABILITY—STATEMENT SHOWING AMOUNTS MATURING EACH YEAR.

Earliest Date of Maturity.	Latest Date of Maturity.	Interest Rate.	Repayable in—		
			London.	New York.	Australia.
		%	£	£	£
...	1943	4.65	...	...	†600
...	1944	1½	...	...	*6,305,000
...	1944	2½	*2,959,714	...	...
...	1944	3	...	...	72,500
...	1944	3½	...	...	286,000
...	1944	4	...	...	1,607,494
...	1945	2½	...	...	215,000
...	1945	3½	...	...	463,000
1944	1946	3	3,228,661	...	...
1945	1946	2½	...	...	247,233
...	1946	2½	...	...	266,000
1927	1947	3½	1,417,801	...	...
1946	1947	2½	...	...	236,150
...	1947	3½	...	...	32,630
...	1947	4	...	...	1,274,724
...	1947	5.0375	...	...	250,000
1947	1948	2½	...	...	706,300
...	1948	3	...	...	1,443,925
...	1948	3½	...	...	1,147,070
...	1948	3.4875	...	...	281,055
...	1948	3½	89,694	...	...
...	1948	3½	...	...	1,461,380
1943	1948	4	2,716,302	...	...
...	1949	3½	...	...	1,304,220
...	1949	3½	...	...	1,741,310
...	1950	4	...	...	1,341,198
...	1951	3½	...	...	3,952,210
1948	1953	3½	864,393	...	...
...	1953	4	...	...	1,238,774
1952	1954	3½	...	...	587,800
...	1954	3½	...	...	3,167,950
1935	1955	3½	3,204,904	...	...
...	1955	4	...	...	1,239,763
1953	1955	3½	...	...	2,467,805
1952	1955	5	...	1,498,444	...
1950	1956	3½	...	...	1,159,260
1950	1956	3½	...	...	476,000
1950	1957	3½	...	...	2,717,791
...	1957	3	...	...	145,841
...	1957	4	...	...	1,174,159
1947	1957	5	...	516,992	...
1950	1958	3½	...	...	2,997,510
...	1958	3	...	...	167,685
1950	1959	3½	...	...	1,523,830
...	1959	3	...	...	361,699
...	1959	4	...	...	1,167,005
...	1960	3	...	...	442,537
1940	1960	3½	877,408	...	...
1950	1960	3½	...	...	9,050
1956	1961	3½	1,739,527	...	...
...	1961	4	...	...	1,218,546
...	1961	3	...	...	304,438
...	1962	3	...	...	180,344
1942	1962	4	4,866,583	...	...
...	1963	3	...	...	190,187
...	1964	3.1	...	...	1,566,000
...	1964	3	...	...	154,133
...	1965	3	...	...	31,325
...	1966	3	...	...	445,191
...	1967	3	...	...	534,507
...	1969	3	...	...	390,000
1964	1974	3½	8,829,191	...	...
1945	1975	5	12,976,482	...	...
		Average Rate 3.573%	43,770,640	2,015,436	50,092,219
			£96,478,295		

* Floating Debt.

† Overdue.

[Return No. 9.]

SINKING FUND.

TRANSACTIONS DURING THE YEAR 1943-44.

		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Receipts:					
Balances brought forward, 1st July, 1943—					
National Debt Commission ...				173,514	19 10
Contributions:					
State—					
5s. per cent. on loan liability ...		259,582	13 7		
4½ per cent. on cancelled securities ...		353,466	10 7		
3 per cent. under Federal Aid Roads Act ...		17,623	6 11		
Special contribution on account loan for purchase of M.V. "Koolama"		20,690	10 10		
Exchange on contribution re M.V. "Koolama"		5,250	4 6		
Special payment outside provisions of the Financial Agreement		26,986	4 7		
Profit arising out of Conversion of a Loan in London		8,812	15 0		
Commonwealth—					
5s. and 2s. 6d. per cent. on loan liability ...		183,021	18 0		
Net earnings on Investments...		4,646	0 1		
				880,981	0 10
				1,054,406	0 8
Disbursements:					
Redemptions and Repurchases, etc., at net Cost (including Exchange)		948,865	4 0		
Repurchases from Special Sinking Fund ...		35,471	10 4		
				984,336	14 4
Balance, Sinking Fund, 30th June, 1944 ...		60,831	17 1		
Balance, Special Sinking Fund ...		327	9 3		
				70,150	6 4
				1,054,406	0 8

TRANSACTIONS FROM 1ST JULY, 1927, TO 30TH JUNE, 1944.

		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Receipts:					
Balances brought forward—					
1st July, 1927—Endowment Policy (M.V. "Kangaroo"), Premiums paid		57,697	10 0		
1st July, 1929—Crown Agents		897,347	0 10		
				955,044	10 10
Contributions:					
On account M.V. "Kangaroo" ...		47,250	0 0		
On account, Crown Agents ...		40,812	13 5		
State—					
5s. per cent. on loan liability ...		3,782,189	8 5		
4½ per cent. on cancelled securities ...		2,315,088	0 11		
3 per cent. under Federal Aid Roads Act ...		203,163	4 4		
Special contribution on account loan for purchase of M.V. "Koolama"		134,486	10 5		
Exchange on contribution re M.V. "Koolama"		34,126	9 3		
Special payment outside provisions of the Financial Agreement		26,986	4 7		
Profit arising out of Conversion of a Loan in London		8,812	15 0		
Commonwealth—					
5s. and 2s. 6d. per cent. on Loan Liability		2,438,972	12 8		
Net earnings on Investments		382,372	15 11		
Accretions to Endowment Policy at maturity		35,052	10 0		
Exchange on remittances		20,504	6 1		
				9,518,309	10 7
				10,473,354	1 5
Disbursements:					
Redemptions and Repurchases, etc.		9,141,554	16 11		
Repurchases from Special Sinking Fund		35,471	10 4		
Contributions refunded to the State		430	17 11		
Contributions to Crown Agents		39,984	2 8		
Premiums on Policy account M.V. "Kangaroo"		47,250	0 0		
Repayment of 1934 Loan (Crown Agents)		998,353	7 3		
Repayment of 1936 Loan (M.V. "Kangaroo")		140,000	0 0		
				10,403,194	15 1
Balance, 30th June, 1944:—					
National Debt Commission		60,831	17 1		
Special Sinking Fund		327	9 3		
				70,150	6 4
				10,473,354	1 5

[Return No. 10.]

SUMMARISED CLASSIFICATION OF LOAN ASSETS, 1943-44. (c)

Undertaking.*	Loan Liability. (b)	Capital Charges (c).			Net Earnings.	Surplus.	De- ficiency.
		Interest.	Sinking Fund.	Exchange.			
FULLY REPRODUCTIVE.							
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
State Saw Mills	204,058	9,989	1,070	1,389	34,910	21,862	....
State Hotels	74,358	2,957	503	411	7,481	3,010	....
Metropolitan Markets	152,520	5,756	962	801	8,154	635	....
Abattoirs, Sale Yards, Grain Sheds, and Cold Stores	321,543	12,136	1,997	1,686	24,041	8,220	....
Tramways	1,354,828	51,134	8,441	7,111	128,255	61,569	....
Small Loans Scheme	11,319	427	93	59	629	50	....
State Ferries	8,882	335	62	47	961	517	....
State Engineering Works	182,461	6,886	1,103	958	20,047	11,100	....
West Australian Meat Export Works	218,620	8,251	1,373	1,147	29,531	18,760	....
Aborigines, Stations, etc.	94,959	3,584	590	498	8,916	4,244	....
	2,688,148	101,455	16,794	14,109	262,925	130,507	....

PARTIALLY PRODUCTIVE.

Railways (e)	26,693,350	1,007,462	167,179	140,110	793,446	....	521,305
Harbours and Rivers (d)	6,443,868	243,205	40,980	33,823	276,142	....	41,866
Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drain- age	17,027,072	642,637	108,727	89,373	585,922	....	252,815
Mining Generally	853,619	32,217	5,319	4,481	1,220	....	40,797
Roads and Bridges	3,443,985	129,983	21,580	18,077	36,348	....	133,292
Plant Suspense	154,801	5,843	967	813	1,902	....	5,721
Pine Planting and Reforestation	1,020,235	38,506	6,300	5,355	47,277	....	2,884
Assistance to Industries	311,797	11,768	1,984	1,637	274	....	15,115
Agricultural Bank (f)	7,991,945	301,633	51,274	41,949	347,808	....	47,048
Soldiers' Land Settlement (g)	2,059,754	77,739	12,907	10,811	20,695	....	80,762
Group Settlement	4,279,858	161,531	26,837	22,464	41,428	....	169,404
Agriculture Generally	3,361,454	126,868	21,011	17,644	16,592	....	148,931
Bulk Handling of Wheat—Bunbury	71,208	2,688	446	374	1,500	....	2,008
Electricity Supply	2,028,026	76,542	12,614	10,645	89,171	....	10,030
Tourist Resorts	75,284	2,341	472	395	438	....	3,270
Workers' Homes Board	710,296	26,808	4,494	3,728	33,917	....	1,113
Wyndham Meat Works	1,072,322	40,472	6,719	5,628	20,000	....	32,810
State Brickworks	52,097	1,966	327	273	1,345	....	1,221
Loans to Public Bodies	62,700	2,366	418	320	2,834	....	270
Stock Suspense	23,527	888	151	128	181	....	1,031
	77,737,198	2,933,963	488,706	408,032	2,318,390	....	1,512,311

TOTALLY UNPRODUCTIVE.

State Shipping Service	348,396	13,074	2,171	1,818	....	....	17,063
Miscellaneous	250,628	9,459	1,461	1,315	Dr. 1,461	....	13,686
Rabbit-proof Fence	334,548	12,627	2,096	1,756	Dr. 6,669	....	23,148
Campion Alunite Deposits	191,018	7,209	620	1,093	....	....	8,832
State Batteries	422,987	15,965	2,644	2,220	Dr. 8,827	....	20,656
State Quarries	38,001	1,457	250	203	....	....	1,910
Public Buildings, including Schools, Police Stations, Gaols, Court Houses, Hospitals, and Institu- tions	4,230,470	159,667	25,071	22,205	Dr. 27,538	....	235,381
	5,814,646	210,458	35,213	30,520	Dr. 44,485	....	320,676

SUMMARY.

Fully Reproductive	2,688,148	101,455	16,794	14,109	262,925	130,507	....
Partially Productive	77,737,198	2,933,963	488,706	408,032	2,318,390	....	1,512,311
Totally Unproductive	5,814,640	219,458	35,213	30,520	Dr. 44,485	....	320,676
Capital Adjustments and Unallo- cated Costs of Raisings	2,880,398	108,712	21,445	15,119	....	....	145,276
Advances to C.R. Fund	5,901,975	78,693	37,220	....	....	....	115,913
Balance of General Loan Fund	1,455,930	44,230	6,682	5,337	....	....	56,249
	96,478,295	3,486,511	606,060	473,117	2,536,830	....	2,028,858

Public Debt, 30th June, 1944

NET DEFICIENCY £2,028,858

* For details see Return No. 11.

(a) This statement distributes the net cost of loan charges for the year over the various assets. (b) Total expenditure from loan funds (including proportionate cost of raising), after allowing for sinking fund redemptions and other adjustments. (c) Actual expenditure averaged over all assets. (d) To this should be added £571,848 included in Railway Capital. (e) Includes £571,848 being part of Capital Expenditure on Harbours and Jettyes controlled by Railway Department. (f) Includes £3,195,727 in respect of advances to settlers under Soldiers' Land Settlement Scheme. (g) Represents expenditure by P.W.D. on roads, bridges and drainage, and by Lands Department on repurchased estates.

[Return No. 11]

DETAILED CLASSIFICATION OF LOAN ASSETS 1943-44*.

Undertaking.	Loan Liability.	Capital Charges. (a)			Net Earnings.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
		Interest.	Sinking Fund.	Ex-change.			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Railways (b)	26,693,350	1,007,462	167,179	140,110	793,446	...	521,305
Tramways	1,354,828	51,134	8,441	7,111	128,255	61,569	...
Electricity Supply ...	2,028,026	76,542	12,614	10,645	89,171	...	10,630
	30,076,204	1,135,138	188,234	157,866	1,010,872	...	470,366
<i>Harbours and Rivers.</i>							
Fremantle Harbour Trust	2,851,644	107,627	18,023	14,968	259,140	118,522	...
Fremantle Other ...	607,146	22,915	4,274	3,187	28,269	...	2,107
Bunbury Harbour Board	609,779	23,014	3,824	3,200	5,500	...	24,538
Bunbury Other ...	79,398	2,997	498	417	Dr. 1,101	...	5,013
Geraldton (c)	699,101	26,386	4,382	3,669	Dr. 505	...	34,942
Albany (c)	153,292	5,786	961	805	Dr. 1,303	...	8,855
Esperance (c)	15,851	598	100	83	52	...	729
Busselton (c)	20,351	768	127	107	...	...	1,002
North-West Ports (c) ...	577,446	21,974	3,612	3,031	Dr. 9,551	...	37,988
Swan River	446,664	16,858	2,793	2,345	336	...	21,660
Dredges, Steamers and Plant	230,763	8,709	1,454	1,211	Dr. 539	...	11,913
Other Jetties and Works	152,433	5,753	932	800	Dr. 4,156	...	11,641
(c)	6,443,868	243,205	40,980	33,823	276,142	...	41,866
<i>Water Supplies.</i>							
Metropolitan	8,048,529	303,768	50,694	42,246	445,801	49,093	...
Goldfields Water Scheme	3,079,862	116,240	19,171	16,166	129,395	...	22,182
Country Towns	1,087,068	41,028	6,815	5,706	18,658	...	34,891
Country Areas	1,161,174	43,790	7,186	6,090	1,168	...	55,898
Goldfields Areas	955,531	36,064	5,989	5,015	Dr. 2,082	...	49,150
Irrigation and Drainage	2,518,932	95,070	15,775	13,221	Dr. 6,267	...	130,333
Other Works	175,976	6,677	1,097	929	Dr. 751	...	9,454
	17,027,072	642,637	106,727	89,373	585,922	...	252,815
<i>Trading Concerns.</i>							
Wyndham Meatworks...	1,072,322	40,472	6,719	5,628	20,000	...	32,819
Quarries	38,601	1,457	250	203	...	...	1,910
Brickworks	52,097	1,966	327	273	1,345	...	1,221
Engineering Works ...	182,461	6,886	1,103	958	20,047	11,100	...
Saw Mills	264,658	9,989	1,670	1,389	34,910	21,862	...
Shipping Service	346,396	13,074	2,171	1,818	...	...	17,063
Hotels	78,358	2,957	503	411	7,481	3,610	...
West Australian Meat Export Works ...	218,620	8,251	1,373	1,147	29,531	18,760	...
	2,253,513	85,052	14,116	11,827	113,314	2,319	...
<i>Development of Agriculture.</i>							
Agricultural Bank (d)...	7,991,945	301,633	51,274	41,949	347,808	...	47,048
Soldiers' Land Settlement (e)	2,059,754	77,739	12,907	10,811	20,695	...	80,762
Group Settlement	4,279,858	161,531	26,837	22,464	41,428	...	169,404
Rabbit-proof Fence ...	334,548	12,627	2,096	1,756	Dr. 6,669	...	23,148
Generally	3,361,454	126,868	21,011	17,644	16,592	...	148,931
	18,027,559	680,398	114,125	94,624	419,854	...	469,293

* See footnote (a) on Return No 10.

[Return No. 11—continued.]

DETAILED CLASSIFICATION OF LOAN ASSETS 1943-44—continued.

Undertaking.	Loan Liability.	Capital Charges. (a)			Net Earnings.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
		Interest.	Sinking Fund.	Ex-change.			
<i>Abattoirs, Saleyards, etc.</i>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Metropolitan Abattoirs	229,195	8,650	1,419	1,203	23,988	12,716	...
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs ...	25,613	967	160	135	Dr. 222	...	1,484
Generally ...	66,735	2,519	418	350	275	...	3,012
	321,543	12,136	1,997	1,688	24,041	8,220	...
<i>Development of Mining.</i>							
State Batteries ...	422,987	15,965	2,644	2,220	Dr. 8,827	...	29,656
Generally ...	853,619	32,217	5,319	4,481	1,220	...	40,797
	1,276,606	48,182	7,963	6,701	Dr. 7,607	...	70,453
<i>Public Buildings.</i>							
Education (including Narrogin School of Agriculture and Muresk College of Agriculture) ...	1,677,012	63,294	10,391	8,802	Dr. 11,509	...	93,996
Police Stations, Quarters, etc. ...	172,934	6,527	1,082	908	Dr. 3,496	...	12,013
Court Houses, Quarters, etc. ...	46,112	1,740	278	242	732	...	1,528
Goals ...	72,891	2,751	409	383	Dr. 1,351	...	4,894
Hospitals ...	1,083,126	40,880	6,505	5,685	Dr. 342	...	53,412
Institutions ...	637,521	24,061	3,966	3,346	Dr. 5,189	...	36,562
Buildings generally ...	540,874	20,414	3,340	2,839	Dr. 6,383	...	32,976
	4,230,470	159,667	25,971	22,205	Dr. 27,638	...	235,381
<i>All Other.</i>							
Aborigines Stations ...	94,959	3,584	590	498	8,918	4,244	...
Assistance to Industries	311,797	11,768	1,984	1,637	274	...	15,115
Bulk Handling, Bunbury	71,208	2,688	446	374	1,500	...	2,008
Ferries ...	8,882	335	62	47	961	517	...
Loans to Public Bodies	62,700	2,366	418	329	2,834	...	279
Metropolitan Markets...	152,520	5,756	962	801	8,154	635	...
Miscellaneous ...	250,626	9,459	1,461	1,315	Dr. 1,451	...	13,686
Pine Planting and Re-forestation ...	1,020,235	38,506	6,300	5,355	47,277	...	2,884
Plant Suspense ...	154,801	5,843	967	813	1,902	...	5,721
Roads and Bridges ...	3,443,985	129,983	21,580	18,077	36,348	...	133,292
Small Loans Scheme—Workers' Homes Board ...	11,319	427	93	59	629	50	...
Stock Suspense ...	23,527	888	151	123	131	...	1,031
Tourist Resorts ...	75,284	2,841	472	395	438	...	3,270
Workers' Homes Board	710,296	26,808	4,494	3,728	33,917	...	1,113
Campion Alunite Deposits ...	191,018	7,209	620	1,003	...	...	8,832
Capital Adjustments and Unallocated Costs of Raisings ...	2,880,398	108,712	21,445	15,119	...	...	145,276
Advances to C.R. Fund	5,901,975	78,693	37,220	...	...	...	115,913
Balance of General Loan Fund ...	1,455,930	44,230	6,682	5,337	...	...	56,249
	16,821,460	480,096	105,947	55,010	141,830	...	499,223
TOTAL ...	96,478,295	3,486,511	606,060	473,117	2,536,830	...	2,028,858
					Net Deficiency ...	£2,028,858	
Public Debt, 30th June, 1944 ...	96,478,295						

(a) Actual Expenditure averaged over all assets.

(b) Includes £571,846 being part of Capital Expenditure on Harbours and Jetties controlled by Railway Dept.

(c) To this should be added £571,709 included in Railway Capital in respect of the following Harbours and Jetties—Albany, £119,077; Busselton, £34,794; Geraldton, £330,608; Esperance, £63,225; Port Hedland, £24,142.

(d) Includes £3,195,727 in respect of advances to settlers under Soldiers' Land Settlement Scheme.

(e) Represents expenditure by P.W.D. on roads, bridges and drainages, and by Lands Department on repurchased estates.

In Return 11 the average cost of servicing the Public Debt has been applied to all undertakings. In Returns 12-13 the figures as shown have been prepared in accordance with the published Commercial Accounts of the Utilities.

[Return No. 12.]

RETURN RELATING TO RAILWAYS.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	miles. 4,381	miles. 4,381	miles. 4,381	miles. 4,381	miles. 4,381
Number of Miles Open					
	£ 26,102,491	£ 26,160,572	£ 26,190,866	£ 26,082,078	£ 26,102,361
Loan Capital	633,808	633,808	633,808	633,808	633,808
Revenue Capital					
Total	26,736,299	26,794,380	26,824,674	26,715,886	26,736,169
Working Expenses	2,828,329	2,757,891	3,025,919	3,447,512	3,795,929
Interest	1,028,014	1,030,279	1,032,870	1,031,816	1,042,828
Total Annual Cost	3,856,343	3,778,170	4,058,789	4,479,328	4,838,757
Gross Revenue	3,555,982	3,571,828	3,996,312	4,417,907	4,386,523
Loss	300,361	216,342	62,477	61,421	452,234

[Return No. 13.]

RETURN RELATING TO TRAMWAYS.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£ 1,107,402	£ 1,117,372	£ 1,155,290	£ 1,219,525	£ 1,227,954
Loan Capital	275,003	281,207	318,000	386,906	430,496
Working Expenses	44,521	44,635	45,327	47,700	47,962
Interest					
Total Annual Cost	319,524	325,842	363,327	434,606	478,458
Gross Revenue	304,447	333,152	402,145	469,575	515,304
Profit ... ..	...	7,310	38,818	34,969	36,846
Loss	15,077	...	...	...	...

In Return 11 the average cost of servicing the Public Debt has been applied to all undertakings. In Returns 14-15 the figures as shown have been prepared in accordance with the published Commercial Accounts of the Utilities.

[Return No. 14.]

RETURN RELATING TO ELECTRICITY.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	1,926,579	1,922,487	1,930,817	1,969,154	1,984,088
Working Expenses	312,181	314,066	360,455	394,738	406,424
Interest	75,491	76,086	78,156	78,126	78,002
Total Annual Cost	387,672	390,152	438,611	472,864	544,426
Gross Revenue	425,754	443,307	461,095	483,349	546,916
Profit	38,082	53,155	22,484	10,485	2,490

[Return No. 15.]

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

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	8,794,462	8,996,194	9,082,146	9,093,957	9,108,603
Working Expenses	87,952	86,451	100,233	106,709	114,669
Interest and Sinking Fund	401,888	420,916	437,653	449,692	455,996
Total Annual Cost	489,840	507,367	537,886	556,401	570,665
Gross Revenue	497,693	513,783	533,218	546,613	575,403
Profit	7,853	6,416	...	...	4,738
Loss ... ..	...	...	4,668	9,788	...

In Return 11 the average cost of servicing the Public Debt has been applied to all undertakings. In Return 16 the figures as shown have been prepared in accordance with the published Commercial Accounts of the Utilities.

[Return No. 16.]

RETURN RELATING TO GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	2,724,111	2,944,479	3,024,998	3,059,470	3,079,864
Working Expenses	136,935	140,510	145,889	137,843	148,470
Interest and Sinking Fund	175,346	190,581	203,578	208,156	209,798
Total Annual Cost	312,281	331,091	349,467	345,999	358,268
Gross Revenue	(a) 322,377	(a) 362,164	(a) 312,456	(a) 279,960	(a) 291,713
Profit	10,096	31,073	...	...	...
Loss ... ..	...	...	37,011	66,039	66,555

(a) Includes Commonwealth Grant, £8,074.

[Return No. 17.]

SUMMARY OF TRADING CONCERNS.

—	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	2,251,247	2,249,545	2,275,597	2,292,595	2,314,961	2,251,449
Revenue Capital	162,794	157,794	157,794	192,974	203,640	52,242
	2,414,041	2,407,339	2,433,391	2,485,569	2,518,601	2,303,691
Gross Revenue	1,516,771	1,454,296	1,477,420	1,427,369	1,133,405	1,519,006
Increase in Stocks	206	73,066	1,657	8,640	14,679	7,358
Decrease in Stocks	52,865	111	75,253	34,928	25,241	11,516
	1,464,112	1,527,251	1,403,824	1,401,081	1,122,843	1,514,848
Working Expenditure (a)	1,341,466	1,444,176	1,331,462	1,318,216	1,068,114	1,410,346
Interest and Sinking Fund	116,319	146,999	132,740	132,853	122,645	147,152
Depreciation	37,741	49,673	38,080	31,675	20,638	39,959
Superannuation ... ..	...	...	...	...	338	411
Total Annual Cost	1,495,526	1,640,848	1,502,282	1,482,744	1,211,735	1,597,868
Profit ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Loss	31,414	113,597	98,458	81,663	88,892	83,020

(a) Includes provision for Bad Debts and Bad Debts written off.

Note.—Wyndham Meat Works—Financial years ended 31st January, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 31st October, 1942, and 31st January, 1944. State Shipping Service—Financial year now ends 31st December. 18 months to 31st December, 1939, included in above figures for 1938-39.

[Return No. 18.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE BRICKWORKS.

	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	52,238	52,231	52,231	52,231	52,231	52,231
Revenue Capital	1,774	1,774	1,774	1,774	1,774	1,774
	54,012	54,005	54,005	54,005	54,005	54,005
Gross Revenue	32,848	42,605	33,498	37,667	47,377	22,069
Increase in Stocks	206	87	...	854	...	993
Decrease in Stocks ... ..	...	...	10	...	766	...
	33,054	42,692	33,488	38,521	46,611	23,062
Working Expenditure	30,620	38,008	31,981	35,409	42,411	24,245
Interest and Sinking Fund	2,849	2,828	2,819	2,820	2,820	2,820
Depreciation	1,685	1,743	1,463	1,557	1,384	1,369
Superannuation ... ..	...	...	...	...	338	411
Total Annual Cost	35,154	42,579	36,263	39,786	46,953	28,845
Profit ... ..	...	113	...	...	...	...
Loss	2,100	...	2,775	1,265	342	5,783

[Return No. 19.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE ENGINEERING WORKS.

	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	121,554	121,554	121,554	141,554	168,548	175,980
Revenue Capital	123,509	123,509	123,509	123,461	123,461	...
	245,063	245,063	245,063	265,015	292,009	175,980
Gross Revenue	63,603	66,547	67,753	61,723	210,026	379,442
Increase in Stocks ... ..	...	...	...	5,270	14,679	6,365
Decrease in Stocks	518	111	822	...	...	...
	63,085	66,436	66,931	66,993	224,705	385,807
Working Expenditure	60,861	62,634	58,041	60,422	203,739	358,666
Interest and Sinking Fund	(a) 12,443	(a) 12,390	(a) 12,390	(a) 12,448	(b) 13,886	(b) 10,274
Depreciation ... ..	...	...	3,848	3,848	3,870	8,524
Total Annual Cost	73,304	75,024	74,279	76,718	221,495	377,464
Profit ... ..	...	...	...	...	3,210	8,343
Loss	10,219	8,588	7,348	9,725	...	...

Includes Sinking Fund (a) not charged, (b) charged, in the accounts of the Concern as follows :—

£305	£305	£304	£304	£366	£430
------	------	------	------	------	------

[Return No. 20.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE QUARRIES.

	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	35,596	30,953	39,031	39,931	39,931	38,601
Revenue Capital	872	872	872	872	872	872
	36,468	40,285	40,803	40,803	40,803	39,473
Gross Revenue	17,388	20,704	26,337	12,603	8,381	76
Increase in Stocks ... ..	...	1,385	1,657	...	...	...
Decrease in Stocks	394	...	...	1,091	1,160	446
	16,994	22,089	27,994	11,512	7,221	Dr. 370
Working Expenditure	15,072	21,727	26,978	12,430	8,320	601
Interest and Sinking Fund	1,884	1,904	2,133	2,131	2,131	2,131
Depreciation	1,600	1,625	2,343	2,254	1,249	47
Total Annual Cost	18,550	25,256	31,454	16,815	11,700	2,779
Profit ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Loss	1,562	3,167	3,460	5,303	4,479	3,160

[Return No. 21.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

	1937-38.	18 months to 31-12-39.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	634,204	629,956	631,751	631,751	631,751	346,396
Revenue Capital ... ..	...	...	...	45,000	75,000	...
Gross Revenue	189,148	317,877	241,353	247,842	128,733	277,594
Working Expenditure	195,785	339,568	263,940	275,682	166,479	291,985
Interest and Sinking Fund (a)	22,426	53,676	38,046	38,141	39,925	30,115
Depreciation	25,118	37,873	23,512	23,589	13,813	12,010
Total Annual Cost	243,329	431,117	325,498	337,412	220,217	334,110
Profit ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Loss	54,181	113,240	84,145	89,570	91,484	56,516

(a) Includes Sinking Fund not charged in the accounts of the Concern as follows:—

£1,055	£2,373	£1,675	£1,579	£1,579	£866
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	------

[Return No. 22.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE HOTELS.

	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	61,154	60,853	86,569	85,069	82,068	89,257
Revenue Capital	5,524	5,524	5,524	2,539	2,533	2,529
	66,678	66,377	92,093	87,608	84,601	91,786
Gross Revenue	63,456	62,429	63,547	60,572	58,725	70,447
Working Expenditure	52,034	52,461	53,229	52,543	52,320	59,539
Interest and Sinking Fund	3,609	3,607	4,772	4,818	5,941	6,099
Depreciation	80	240	353	210	298	1,307
Total Annual Cost	55,723	56,308	58,354	57,571	58,559	66,945
Profit	7,733	6,121	5,193	3,001	166	3,502
Loss ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...

[Return No. 23.]

RETURN RELATING TO STATE SAW MILLS.

	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	274,121	272,618	271,181	269,679	268,110	266,469
Revenue Capital	31,115	26,115	26,115	19,328	...	...
	305,236	298,733	297,296	289,007	268,110	266,469
Gross Revenue	680,707	574,192	578,349	696,551	665,817	607,288
Increase in Stocks ... ..	...	2,332	...	...	...	...
Decrease in Stocks	14,889	...	113	33,837	20,176	10,961
	645,818	576,524	578,236	662,714	645,641	596,327
Working Expenditure	(a) 579,868	538,575	558,944	(a) 592,307	(a) 572,016	557,135
Interest and Sinking Fund	16,808	16,294	16,280	16,195	15,047	15,045
Depreciation	8,697	7,523	6,561	(b) 217	(b) 24	2,559
Total Annual Cost	600,373	562,392	582,785	608,719	587,087	574,739
Profit	40,445	14,132	...	53,995	58,554	21,588
Loss ... ..	...	...	4,549	...	...	...

(a) Includes £5,000 paid to Mill Construction Reserve Account.

(b) On new assets only. Temporarily suspended on existing asset.

[Return No. 24.]

RETURN RELATING TO WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

	1-2-38 to 31-1-39.	1-2-39 to 31-1-40.	1-2-40 to 31-1-41.	1-2-41 to 31-1-42.	1-2-42 to 31-10-42.	1-11-42 to 31-1-44.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Loan Capital	1,072,380	1,072,380	1,072,380	1,072,380	1,072,322	1,072,322
Gross Revenue	489,621	369,942	466,583	310,411	14,346	21,455
Increase in Stocks ... ..	...	69,262	...	2,516	...	...
Decrease in Stocks	37,064	...	74,308	...	3,139	109
	452,557	439,204	392,275	312,927	11,207	21,346
Working Expenditure	407,226	391,203	337,349	289,423	22,829	21,564
Interest and Sinking Fund (a) ...	56,300	56,300	56,300	56,300	42,805	67,019
Depreciation (b)	561	669	...	...	...	...
Total Annual Cost	464,087	448,172	393,649	345,723	65,724	88,583
Profit ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Loss	11,530	8,968	1,374	32,796	54,517	67,237

(a) Includes Sinking Fund not charged in the accounts of the Concern, as follows:—

£2,681	£2,681	£2,681	£2,681	£2,681	£2,681
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

(b) Depreciation on Stores.

[Return No. 25.]

WEST AUSTRALIAN MEAT EXPORT WORKS.

	1942-43. £		1942-43. £
Loan Capital	219,193	Working Expenditure	96,564
Revenue Capital	47,067	Interest and Sinking Fund	13,648
		Depreciation, etc.	14,190
	266,260		
		Total Annual Cost	£124,402
		Profit	16,218
Gross Revenue	140,620	Loss	

[Return No. 26.]

THE AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT, 1909, and AMENDMENTS.

Position of Estates under the above Act, at 30/A June, 1944.

[Amount Authorised £1,500,000.]

Estates.	Receipts.				Payments.				Balances.		
	Proceeds of De-bentures.	Sale of Lots, Rents, etc.	Interest.	Total.	Purchase Money.	Survey Expenses, Interest, etc.	De-bentures Re-deemed.	Total.	Amount Over-drawn.	In Hand.	Invested.
Anniebrook	£ 4,992	£ 1,100	£	£ 6,092	£ 4,992	£ 3,618	£	£ 8,610	£ 2,517	£	£
Avondale	49,949	108,339	3,417	159,705	49,949	61,021	49,949	160,919	1,214	....	....
Baacton	32,875	16,798	....	49,673	32,875	29,335	....	62,210	12,537	....	....
Bowes	54,352	95,960	17,538	167,850	54,352	60,891	54,352	169,595	1,895	....	....
Brunswick	5,650	9,750	1,605	17,011	5,650	5,925	5,650	17,225	214	....	....
Bucklands	30,162	38,534	....	68,696	30,162	15,824	30,162	75,948	7,262	....	....
Henty	4,526	9,302	34	13,862	4,526	4,608	4,526	13,661	....	202	....
Homebush	1,250	1,979	742	3,971	1,250	1,471	1,250	3,971	....	....	....
Jelobine	8,320	18,513	361	27,194	8,320	10,286	8,319	26,935	....	253	....
Jingalup	2,734	2,714	16	5,463	2,734	2,859	2,734	5,327	2,864	....	....
Kokkatea	16,170	7,480	....	23,650	16,170	10,837	....	27,007	3,357	....	....
Marjidin	4,452	7,011	1,749	14,112	4,452	5,216	4,452	14,120	8	....	....
Mendel	16,586	10,765	224	27,575	16,586	12,049	....	28,635	1,080	....	....
Narra Tarra	24,119	40,594	3,881	68,594	24,119	21,412	24,119	69,650	1,056	....	....
Norman	7,000	11,444	4,303	22,747	7,000	8,747	7,000	22,747	....	....	....
Oakabella	22,000	40,472	12,018	74,490	22,000	26,315	22,000	70,315	....	4,175	....
Pickering	4,295	2,045	107	6,448	4,295	3,335	....	7,629	1,133	....	....
Porongorup	1,764	934	39	2,738	1,764	1,224	....	2,988	250	....	....
Ullijulup	3,350	5,427	916	9,693	3,350	2,839	....	6,039	....	....	3,654
Weirs	700	....	....	700	700	436	....	1,185	435	....	....
Wongooddy	42,280	13,516	....	55,776	42,280	27,931	....	70,191	14,416	....	....
Yandanoooka	149,000	298,420	16,161	454,581	149,000	165,738	149,000	445,738	....	8,843	....
Estates under S.S. Scheme .....	....	307,219	....	307,219	....	237,252	....	237,252	....	69,966	....
	477,506	1,047,222	63,160	1,587,888	477,500	718,876	354,514	1,550,897	60,107	83,444	3,654
										£37,098	
										Credit Balance, £36,991	

[Return No. 27.]

DISSSECTION OF CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND EXPENDITURE, 1936-37 to 1943-44.

Item.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Interest	3,258,860	3,391,569	3,440,331	3,528,758	3,540,508	3,546,625	3,497,501	3,486,511
Sinking Fund	359,759	397,827	449,074	431,561	516,635	555,296	594,154	606,060
Exchange	480,460	453,902	470,820	492,989	503,482	498,242	497,167	503,219
Unemployment Relief	51,144	51,066	46,850	53,530	26,215	4,624	3,818	645
Salaries and Wages	3,917,527	4,006,298	4,306,034	4,436,780	4,328,906	4,506,107	4,587,714	*5,031,048
Materials	920,284	905,021	1,049,207	1,009,158	995,293	1,088,616	1,260,319	1,472,251
Grants	155,756	180,644	189,815	138,533	166,092	151,038	151,269	172,440
Pensions	124,570	131,097	134,241	142,525	196,017	232,390	252,904	272,206
All other	1,308,279	1,805,411	1,083,712	933,834	1,147,800	1,235,441	2,283,406	2,006,765
Total	10,556,638	10,829,735	11,170,102	11,266,768	11,420,957	11,998,331	13,127,242	13,551,154

* Includes payment for Annual Leave, £36,157, paid from "Miscellaneous Expenses" item, "Expenditure as may be necessary owing to War Conditions." In previous years this item of expenditure was included in "All Other."

[Return No. 28.]

LOAN REPAYMENTS.
RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE.

Year ended 30th June.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Balance in Hand.
	£	£	£
1928	154,108	...	154,108
1929	235,404	33,297	356,215
1930	163,583	216,647	293,151
1931	84,248	...	377,399
1932	112,361	171,800	317,960
1933	91,761	249,275	160,436
1934	100,935	215,740	45,631
1935	150,507	97,064	99,074
1936	107,906	74,791	132,189
1937	122,975	78,376	176,788
1938	134,462	154,825	156,425
1939	147,040	153,105	150,360
1940	127,470	101,086	176,744
1941	127,889	140,202	164,431
1942	171,232	89,867	245,796
1943	281,355	184,707	342,444
1944	256,153	198,896	399,701

[Return No. 29.]

**SUMMARY OF TRANSACTIONS OF FUNDS, THE EXPENDITURE OF WHICH IS NOT SUBJECT TO
PARLIAMENTARY APPROPRIATION, FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1944.**

Fund.	Balance, 1st July, 1943.	Receipts during Year.	Payments during Year.	Balance, 30th June, 1944.
	£	£	£	£
Hospital Fund (<i>see</i> Return No. 30)...	51,070	279,131	285,682	44,519
Forest Improvement and Reforestation Fund (<i>see</i> Return No. 31) ...	78,722	98,567	108,697	68,592
Road Funds (<i>see</i> Return No. 32) ...	545,464	517,955	370,230	693,189
Metropolitan Markets Trust ...	1,985	21,317	(a) 18,800	4,502
Fremantle Harbour Trust ...	...	761,360	(b) 761,360	...
Bunbury Harbour Board ...	4,563	13,666	(c) 16,173	2,056
	681,804	1,691,996	1,560,942	812,853

(a) Includes payments on account of—Interest, £7,676; Sinking Fund, £994; and Profits, £479.

(b) Includes payments on account of—Interest, £143,816; Sinking Fund, £24,176; Replacement Fund, £2,000; and Surplus Cash, £91,148.

(c) Includes payments on account of—Interest, £5,500.

[Return No. 30.]

HOSPITAL FUND.—TRANSACTIONS DURING THE YEARS 1939-40 TO 1943-44.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
<i>Receipts.</i>	£	£	£	£	£
Balance from previous year ...	2,684	25,154	5,560	17,900	51,070
Hospital Tax Collections ...	271,689	284,910	292,700	275,750	275,750
Treasury Grants ...	61,000	26,703	6,000	30,000	...
Recoup of Expenditure on Buildings ...	...	...	...	...	...
Miscellaneous Receipts ...	3,080	2,106	2,207	2,306	3,381
Overdraft at end of year ...	...	...	...	...	...
	338,453	338,873	306,467	325,956	330,201
<i>Payments.</i>					
Overdraft at beginning of year ...	...	...	...	...	...
Administration Expenditure ...	4,555	5,198	5,133	2,294	2,263
Hospitals Expenditure—					
Departmental ...	128,138	119,885	101,908	87,118	104,273
Non-Departmental Subsidies, etc.	180,606	199,091	179,416	171,631	175,615
Miscellaneous ...	...	9,139	2,110	13,843	3,531
Balance at end of year ...	25,154	5,560	17,900	51,070	44,519
	338,453	338,873	306,467	325,956	330,201

[Return No. 31.]

FORESTS IMPROVEMENT AND RE-FORESTATION FUND—TRANSACTIONS DURING THE YEARS 1939-40 TO 1943-44.

—	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
<i>Receipts.</i>	£	£	£	£	£
Balance from previous year ...	88,814	100,164	97,853	107,472	78,722
Appropriation from Revenue Fund ...	49,294	53,230	52,206	39,710	(a) 71,735
Sundry Receipts ...	16,375	8,846	11,957	10,010	26,832
	154,423	162,240	162,016	157,192	177,289
<i>Payments.</i>					
Expenditure on Forest Improvements and Re-forestation during the year ...	54,259	64,387	54,544	78,470	108,697
Balance at end of year ...	100,164	97,853	107,472	78,722	68,592
	154,423	162,240	162,016	157,192	177,289

(a) Includes Special Grant, £45,000.

[Return No. 32.]

ROAD FUNDS.—TRANSACTIONS DURING THE YEAR 1943-44.

	Main Roads Contri- butions Trust Account.	Metro- politan Traffic Trust Account	Transport Co-ordina- tion Fund.	Federal Aid Roads Agree- ment, Account.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£
Balances from Year 1942-43	53,448	25,271	272	466,473	545,464
Receipts during Year—					
License Fees and Permits		150,228	31,940		182,168
Contributions by Local Authorities	110				110
Premiums on Omnibus Routes			220		220
Commonwealth Grant				334,017	334,017
Miscellaneous Receipts				174	174
Other Receipts in Suspense			64		64
	53,558	175,409	32,408	800,664	1,062,217
Transfers to other Funds				29,290	29,290
Transfers from other Funds	29,426		40	1,026	30,492
Totals	82,984	175,409	32,536	772,400	1,063,419
Payments during Year—					
Administration, Plant, Office Equipment, etc.		16,632	8,421		25,103
Transferred to Consolidated Revenue Fund		28,942			28,942
National Debt Commission Sinking Fund					
Treasury—Interest, Sinking Fund, and Prem- iums		7,306	220		7,616
Road Construction, Maintenance, Surveys, etc.		2,604		187,987	190,591
Distributions to Local and Statutory Authorities		94,000	21,415		115,415
Other Payments in Suspense			57	266	323
Subsidies paid for the operation of various Road Transport Services			2,240		2,240
		149,624	32,353	188,253	370,230
Balances in hand at 30th June, 1944	82,984	25,875	183	584,147	693,189

[Return No. 33.]

TOTAL NET COLLECTIONS OF STATE TAXATION TAKEN TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND,
TRUST ACCOUNTS, AND SPECIAL ACCOUNTS, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1944.

Particulars.	Paid to C.R. Fund.	Paid to Trust or Special Accounts.	Total.	Taxation per Head. (c)
	£	£	£	£ s. d.
Probate and Succession Duties	232,762		232,762	0 9 8
Other Stamp Duties	204,580		204,580	0 8 5
Land Tax	121,808		121,808	0 5 2
Income Tax—Commonwealth Reimbursement (a)	2,546,000		2,546,000	5 5 7
Liquor Licenses	78,778		78,778	0 3 3
Racing—				
Stamp Duty on Betting Tickets	16,023		16,023	0 0 8
Totalisator Duty	115,210		115,210	0 4 9
Totalisator Licenses	1,075		1,075	
Stamp Duty on Tote Dividends	1,059		1,059	
Motor Taxation	18,349	361,467	379,816	0 15 8
Other Vehicles		4,467	4,467	0 0 2
Entertainments—Commonwealth Reimbursement	(b) 98,189		98,189	0 4 1
Vermine Tax	20,337		20,337	0 0 10
Licenses, not elsewhere included	10,884		10,884	0 0 5
	3,465,054	365,934	3,830,988	7 18 8

(a) This amount includes arrears of State Income Tax, £91,136; Goldmining Profits Tax, £1,265; Financial Emergency Tax, £14,869; and Hospital Tax, £11,103: Total, £118,373. From this Commonwealth Reimbursement Grant an amount of £275,750 was paid to Hospital Trust Fund.

(b) Includes State Collections, £5.

(c) Based on estimated mean population for year 1943-44, viz., 482,817.

Service.	Loan Li- ability.	Expenditure :					Receipts.	Net Ex- penditure.	Cost per Head. (*)
		Indirect.		Direct.		Total.			
		Interest and Ex- change.	Sinking Fund.	Con- solidated Revenue Fund.	Trust and Special Accounts.				
1.—Education—	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
(a) Education Department and Schools ...	1,433,065	61,609	8,867	811,028	...	881,504	18,027	863,477	1 15 9
(b) University	34,115	1,467	214	48,768	...	50,449	...	50,449	0 2 1
(c) Technical Education	108,081	4,646	673	87,034	...	92,353	3,612	88,741	0 3 8
(d) Agricultural Education	101,751	4,374	637	18,968	...	23,979	11,777	12,202	0 0 6
(e) Library, Museum, Observatory ...	35,956	1,545	226	9,922	...	11,693	480	11,213	0 0 6
(f) Deaf, Dumb and Blind	884	38	5	3,300	...	3,343	...	3,343	0 0 2
Total 1	1,713,852	73,679	10,622	979,020	...	1,063,321	33,896	1,029,425	2 2 8
2.—Health, Hospitals, and Charities—									
(a) Public Health ... ..	...	...	...	58,593	...	58,593	15,286	43,307	0 1 9
(b) Care of Sick and Mentally Afflicted, Health of Mothers and Children	1,564,183	67,243	9,515	163,474	387,751	627,983	(†)147,296	480,687	1 0 0
(c) Recreation Facilities ... ..	...	...	...	8,300	...	8,300	...	8,300	0 0 4
(d) Relief of Aged, Indigent and Infirm, Child Welfare	96,320	4,139	598	103,649	...	108,386	37,874	70,512	0 2 11
(e) Miner's Phthisis ... ..	...	...	...	47,883	...	47,883	25,000	22,883	0 0 11
(f) Natives... ..	94,959	4,082	590	59,785	...	64,457	21,525	42,932	0 1 9
(g) Unemployment Relief ... ..	...	...	...	1,638	...	1,638	30	1,608	0 0 1
Total 2	1,755,462	75,464	10,703	443,322	387,751	917,240	247,011	670,229	1 7 9
3.—Law, Order and Public Safety—									
(a) Administration of Justice	46,112	1,982	278	87,497	...	89,757	77,538	12,219	0 0 6
(b) Police	193,545	8,321	1,211	287,598	...	297,130	47,372	249,758	0 10 4
(c) Gaols and Reformatories	72,891	3,134	409	49,537	...	53,080	6,678	46,402	0 1 11
(d) Public Safety ... ..	...	...	...	24,274	...	24,274	8,166	16,108	0 0 8
Total 3	312,548	13,437	1,898	448,906	...	464,241	139,754	324,487	0 13 5
GRAND TOTAL	3,781,862	162,580	23,223	1,871,248	387,751	2,444,802	420,661	2,024,141	4 3 10

(*) Based on estimated mean population for year 1943-44, viz., £482,817. (†) Includes £102,069 Patients' Fees paid to Hospital Fund.

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

Class of Goods.	1939-40.		1940-41.		1941-42.		1942-43.		1943-44.	
	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal	267,203	10.05	257,389	9.88	288,726	10.95	263,338	10.51	257,127	10.04
Ores and other Minerals	252,030	9.48	192,456	7.39	200,968	7.62	175,965	7.02	145,151	5.67
Wool	31,430	1.18	28,696	1.10	32,621	1.24	39,829	1.59	42,423	1.66
Hay, Straw, and Chaff	39,045	1.47	39,931	1.53	33,631	1.27	33,709	1.35	37,603	1.47
Wheat	671,453	25.25	681,758	26.18	669,800	25.27	442,476	17.67	539,066	21.06
Other Grain and Flour	159,588	6.00	162,088	6.23	143,359	5.43	148,041	5.71	170,118	6.64
Firewood	43,117	1.62	43,407	1.67	83,777	3.18	133,055	5.31	117,092	4.57
Local Timber	298,424	11.22	348,063	13.37	332,600	12.61	276,989	11.06	243,100	9.50
Imported Timber	1,571	0.06	985	.04	507	.02	289	.01	181	.01
Fruit and Garden Produce	95,810	3.60	88,171	3.39	84,039	3.19	86,220	3.44	80,870	3.15
Fertilisers	271,509	10.21	251,053	9.64	178,989	6.78	180,691	6.22	130,540	5.10
All other goods	527,716	19.86	509,860	19.58	592,352	22.44	779,080	31.11	796,976	31.13
Total	2,658,876	100.00	2,603,867	100.00	2,638,469	100.00	2,504,682	100.00	2,560,137	100.00

Class of Goods.	1939-40.		1940-41.		1941-42.		1942-43.		1943-44.	
	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal	£ 158,344	5.94	£ 152,020	5.92	£ 181,638	6.88	£ 156,101	5.57	£ 145,459	5.41
Ores and other Minerals	86,693	3.25	72,872	2.84	74,912	2.83	76,806	2.74	63,400	2.36
Wool	85,927	3.22	75,628	2.85	84,748	3.20	105,537	3.76	112,127	4.18
Hay, Straw, and Chaff	33,169	1.24	34,317	1.34	26,780	1.01	26,059	.93	30,081	1.12
Wheat	451,073	16.93	448,112	17.46	410,308	15.85	279,389	9.96	300,093	11.18
Other Grain and Flour	90,774	3.42	87,390	3.40	75,857	2.88	82,083	2.92	88,830	3.31
Firewood	10,673	0.40	10,733	.42	10,875	.75	37,227	1.33	32,903	1.22
Local Timber	250,281	9.39	296,903	11.57	267,670	10.12	263,018	9.37	217,885	8.12
Imported Timber	3,568	0.13	1,328	.05	907	.03	340	.01	192	.01
Fruit and Garden Produce	110,466	4.15	101,803	3.96	99,327	3.75	103,888	3.88	102,385	3.81
Fertilisers	73,555	2.76	67,378	2.63	46,520	1.77	36,780	1.31	39,190	1.46
All other goods	1,310,161	49.17	1,218,519	47.46	1,346,871	50.93	1,633,822	58.22	1,652,351	57.82
Total	£2,664,674	100.00	£2,566,803	100.00	£2,644,423	100.00	£2,306,110	100.00	£2,684,846	100.00

	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1939-40.	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44.
Railway and Tramway Revenue	£3,165,593	£3,562,357	£3,711,597	£3,754,454	£3,932,510	£3,883,367	£3,802,385	£3,908,540	£4,301,502	£4,916,122	£4,934,929
Railway Mileage (Route)	4,380	4,359	4,358	4,357	4,376	4,378	4,381	4,381	4,381	4,381	4,381
Wool exported	£4,810,846	£3,413,539	£4,671,738	£4,164,433	£3,161,540	£3,270,580	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Wool produced (c)— (quantity—lbs.) (value)	78,424,200 £5,103,128	89,991,658 £3,419,308	85,706,700 £4,793,147	63,537,200 £4,020,713	64,739,400 £3,183,641	72,475,000 £2,962,860	75,400,000 £4,054,729	89,427,000 £3,853,984	74,935,000 £4,055,000	92,697,000 £5,819,326	†97,635,000 †£6,102,000
*Wheat produced (bushels)	37,305,100	26,985,000	23,815,417	21,549,000	36,224,800	36,843,600	40,861,000	21,606,000	37,500,000	20,700,000	16,566,000
Wheat produced (value)	£5,483,650	£4,317,600	£4,639,768	£5,947,524	£7,426,084	£4,404,919	£7,269,316	†£4,182,255	£6,051,351	£4,294,815	(c)
*Hay produced (tons)	512,439	462,947	504,571	412,982	450,410	437,809	475,677	375,143	414,115	277,957	†322,600
Gold produced (b) (value)	£5,306,102	£5,213,894	£6,713,027	£8,191,168	£9,438,078	£10,784,852	£12,957,448	£12,000,027	£10,770,977	£7,167,716	£5,058,480
Coal produced	£269,302	£297,581	£334,797	£326,756	£362,196	£371,713	£361,152	£367,403	£431,005	£475,078	£523,724
Other Minerals produced (c)	£65,178	£63,391	£113,140	£140,446	£200,817	£187,592	£120,636	£238,733	£157,621	£160,868	(c)
Timber exported	£484,241	£631,228	£675,932	£699,613	£932,394	£721,941	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Timber produced	£683,391	£987,231	£1,161,031	£1,368,591	£1,425,342	£1,341,975	£1,317,031	£1,301,777	£1,366,742	£1,453,637	(c)
†Number of Sheep	10,322,350	11,197,156	11,082,972	9,007,535	8,732,076	9,177,531	9,574,443	9,516,272	9,722,780	10,424,385	11,102,936
†Number of Cattle	885,669	912,016	882,761	792,508	740,241	767,080	799,175	788,928	839,731	831,231	870,939
†Number of Horses	159,646	161,636	160,181	155,177	151,067	143,679	139,207	130,057	124,402	112,782	106,743
Area of land selected (acres)....	851,313	810,170	281,021	521,117	718,823	627,443	305,213	346,365	172,129	123,941	229,005
Area of land leased (acres)	7,543,950	5,327,978	4,613,172	3,926,517	3,868,080	3,201,701	2,795,988	2,509,275	2,244,369	1,655,497	3,036,811
Area of land under cultivation (d)	14,626,556	14,530,020	14,908,072	15,218,254	15,679,891	15,852,929	16,112,071	15,931,231	16,085,051	16,000,000	15,944,343
*Area of land under crop (acres)	4,217,260	8,840,530	3,726,324	3,851,876	4,168,021	4,683,333	4,286,935	3,983,303	3,816,522	2,782,366	2,703,000
Tonnage Shipping, Inwards	3,564,705	3,757,174	3,827,038	3,729,523	4,104,922	4,251,368	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Tonnage Shipping, Outwards	3,567,884	3,775,162	3,831,105	3,773,586	4,111,171	4,326,529	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Exports, including Gold	£17,291,577	£16,879,168	£18,891,679	£20,991,133	£23,100,537	£23,006,410	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Exports, excluding Gold	£11,984,436	£11,717,923	£12,165,281	£13,040,135	£13,746,172	£12,296,535	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Imports	£12,832,517	£14,226,405	£16,111,631	£18,023,359	£19,334,013	£18,048,238	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
Savings Bank Deposits	£8,182,395	£8,987,577	£9,463,344	£9,716,932	£10,004,412	£10,602,936	£10,039,271	£10,193,000	(a)	(a)	(a)
Savings Bank Withdrawals	£7,989,122	£8,501,441	£8,958,575	£9,425,588	£9,853,281	£10,285,055	£10,641,171	£9,657,739	(a)	(a)	(a)
Population end of Financial Year	442,027	445,692	450,243	454,231	460,161	465,429	470,751	474,610	479,005	479,624	(f) 436,094

* Season ended 28th February.
(b) Australian Currency Value.

† As at 31st December of year first mentioned.
(c) Calendar year first mentioned.

† Preliminary figures, liable to slight revision.
(d) Area cropped, cleared, fallowed, ringbarked, etc.

(a) Information not available for publication.
(e) Not yet available. (f) As at 31st December, 1943.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [8.18]: I feel that every member of this House who has any determined and settled view on the question of constitutional reform should interest himself in the Bill now before us, and accordingly with the leave and indulgence of the House I propose to speak for a short period of time. The Leader of the National Party laid a number of proposals before the House, all of which deserve consideration, and many of which merit unquestioned acceptance, in particular his proposal that all matters of constitutional reform should be referred to an impartial and independent tribunal for its inquiry and decision. As I am referring to the speech made by the member for West Perth, I wish to say that I concur with him in the view that the Government had no mandate, in the right sense of the word, to bring down this Bill. It is perfectly true that that statement is challenged on the ground that the electors residing in the uncontested electorates should have been counted in the number of those the member for West Perth included in his calculation as favouring a mandate. But that is not so, because, as proved by an interjection made by the Leader of the Opposition, all the elections for the uncontested seats were finalised and done with before the Premier delivered his policy speech; and therefore it would be wholly impossible for any elector in any of those constituencies to have given either his assent or dissent in respect of any matter contained in any part of that policy speech.

Mr. Needham: It was known to the electors.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I hear a kind of sotto voce from the member for Perth that it was known to the electors. It is said that it was known to the electors because it was a plank of the Labour Party for a great number of years. But if that argument were accepted it would mean that the Premier would be entitled to claim a mandate for every plank of the Labour Party. That would be a *reductio ad absurdum*, as we all know that a great number of those planks are suffering from dry rot. It seems to me that to a very large

extent the whole of this matter is shadow-sparring, because the entire absence of a mandate would not abridge or diminish in the slightest degree the power of any Government to bring down a Bill to this House if the subject matter of that Bill was within the prerogative of this Parliament. So I ask myself, and I ask the House, to get rid of this absurd thought, of this tawdry clothing of a mandate. The outstanding feature in the Government's proposal to reform the franchise of the Upper House is that that reform is not demanded as the result of any present clash between the Assembly and the Council.

In every case in history there has been some matter violently in dispute, and in consequence of such dispute and of failure to find any settlement of such dispute, the House which is elected on the more popular franchise has thrown down the gauntlet to the other House and has demanded the reform of that other House. That was the case in the instance referred to by the Minister in charge of the Bill, the instance of the House of Lords. That instance was that the Lloyd George Budget, which was more commonly known as the Limehouse Budget, was rejected by the House of Lords, and after many efforts to produce a settlement had failed, the House of Commons threw down its gauntlet to the House of Lords and the issue was knit whether the House of Commons was to give way or the House of Lords be forced to give way. But in the present case it is not suggested that there is any difference or clash between this Chamber and what is usually called in our debates "the other place."

Indeed, in the speech delivered by the Minister in charge of the Bill, there was no suggestion of any specific instance where the other place—the Legislative Council—had refused to give its sanction to any one specific matter that was necessary for the good government of this State. It was all general grounds, and so, indeed, the case here simply rests—so far as the Government is concerned—on general grounds and academic reasoning. I say—and it gives me very great pleasure to say—that those two heads, general grounds and academic reasoning, were very brilliantly, very forcibly and very eloquently dealt with by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe. The whole speech of the Minister in charge of the

Bill, as I say, did not contain a single charge of any specific instance where the other place had rejected a measure that the interests of the State required. Indeed, the greater portion of the Minister's speech consisted of platitudes, well-worn and well-known. We were told, for instance, that so-and-so and such-and-such—being of course some matters dealing with the constitution of the Legislative Council—were not democratic. Now, if there is one word in the English language which has been abused in recent years, it is the word "democratic." Nowadays it is meaningless, like the word "Fascist."

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. N. KEENAN: The first word is simply used as a term of eulogy: the second is simply a term of abuse. If a person wants to praise himself or to praise the party to which he belongs, he uses the word "democrat."

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. N. KEENAN: It does not matter what the actions of the party may be, wholly irrespective of its actions, it is termed "democratic."

The Minister for Works: You are a bit hard on the Country Party.

Hon. N. KEENAN: On the other hand, if it is desired to abuse any party, particularly a party which ventures to criticise, it is called Fascist. How far this craze for the misuse of words has gone I happen to know by my own experience; and, as the Premier is not in the House, I can give that experience without calling any blush to his cheek. I know the Premier to be a man of very liberal views and very broad and generous outlook. Nevertheless, I heard a disgruntled person, whose greed and whose envy were not satisfied to the extent of his bent, describe the Premier as a Fascist. That shows the extraordinary length to which nowadays people will go to use a word without knowing an atom about its meaning, but thinking it conveys something bitter, something nasty, something that will hurt, and that is the only meaning today which I can attribute either to the word "Fascist" and, as I shall show later in what I have to say in another way, to the word "democrat."

Let me turn, therefore, at once to the use of the word "democrat" as a term of eulogy and point to what extent it has been abused. The Minister in charge of

the Bill referred to the administration of the Government of Queensland. He referred in particular to the action of the Government of Queensland in having, by some means or other, succeeded in abolishing the Legislative Council Chamber in the Queensland Parliament. I think I am right in saying that the Minister expressed the opinion that that action by that Government was democratic. It was something that appealed to his misguided sense of what is right. But what are the facts? The facts are these: The question of the retention or of the abolition of the Legislative Council Chamber in Queensland was a matter which was left to be decided by the vote of the people of Queensland, and the people of Queensland by their vote determined in favour of its retention. But what did the then Premier of Queensland, who had the vocal praise of the Minister, do? Did he carry out that intention of the people? Not a bit of it! By every means, curious and devious, he got a Bill through Parliament abolishing the Legislative Council. This action commended itself to the Minister.

So we are faced with the position that this sudden, violent and clear defiance of the will of the people of Queensland is exalted as being democratic. The term "democratic" clearly has no meaning in the mind of the Minister—and in the minds of many others, I am afraid—except this: That whatever one's party does, that is democratic and right and proper and progressive but whatever another party does, or whatever an individual member of that party does, is Fascist and retrogressive and deserving of every censure. But of course there is a legitimate meaning of the word "democratic," and I propose to see how far those who want at present to reform the Legislative Council come within that legitimate meaning. Let me say, before I enter on that inquiry, that we who sit on these benches are not opposed, and never have been opposed, to a reform of the Constitution, including a reform of the franchise for the Upper House; but the view we strongly take is that the whole Constitution requires reform.

Mr. Withers: I am with you there!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Then do not interrupt me! The view we take is that the whole Constitution requires amendment and reform, and that the whole work

should be undertaken and not only a part that happens to suit sectional needs. In his policy speech at Geraldton before the last general election, the Premier said that inasmuch as the number of electors on the Legislative Council roll amounted to only one-third of the number on the Assembly roll, therefore every elector on the Legislative Council roll enjoyed and possessed three times the electoral value of an elector on the Assembly roll. The only element of error in the statement lies in the fact that the enrolment for the Assembly is compulsory and for the Council it is not, and therefore it is difficult to compare the two.

Allowing for that, however, and assuming the statement to be absolutely correct, does it mean that the fact that one section of the community enjoys an electoral advantage, an electoral value, superior to or higher than that enjoyed by another section is non-democratic? It must mean that, if plain language ever had a plain meaning; and if it does mean that, then the very high priest of non-democratic ideas is the Premier himself and the Government which he leads, because the Premier himself and his party in 1928 passed the Electoral Districts Act. Under that Act, any carpenter or plumber or painter or, indeed, any person living at, say, Boulder, or at Southern Cross, which happens to be 150 miles nearer, enjoys three times the electoral value that a carpenter, plumber, painter, or anyone else enjoys who lives in the metropolitan area.

Mr. J. Hegney: That applies to Kating, too.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am sorry, I did not hear the hon. member.

Mr. Thorn: You have not missed much!

Hon. N. KEENAN: This is by no means all. The Premier and the Government of which he is the head have been in office for 15 years out of the last 20 as a minority Government: I mean by a minority Government a Government which has not the assent of a majority of the electors of the State. That fact is beyond doubt. It is proved by the Federal Senate elections held in relevant years, because we all know they are carried out on a manhood franchise. And there can be no doubt that if members compare the results over the years, they will find that a Government has been sitting in this House and governing the

country when a majority of the electors has not been of its way of thinking. The same results shown by the Federal Senate election can be arrived at by adding up the number of votes cast at State general elections, with the exception of the last. Everyone knows that at the moment the Government holds office because of the wonderful personal influence and the wonderful personal popularity of Mr. Curtin.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is getting away from the Bill.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I confess that my reference to Mr. Curtin was a departure from the Bill. I am endeavouring to show that what is needed is a reform of the whole Constitution and not of one small portion of it, because the Government of the day for a great number of years has not been representative of the majority of the electors of this State. I suggest that the same result could be arrived at by considering the general elections held in this State. Adding up all the votes cast in the contested seats, and in the uncontested seats, allowing to the party whose candidates were returned unopposed that fractional part of the whole enrolment of such uncontested constituency as the same party in contested seats in which they were successful showed themselves to be possessed of—this is the only fair method of arriving at the position where there was no actual poll taken. If this method is applied, it will give the same result as is shown in the Federal Senate elections. I believe I gave that return in this House some years ago but as I said a moment ago it is unnecessary to fall back on it because we have the Senate elections to guide us.

It may be wondered how, in the circumstances, successive Governments have had a majority on the floor of the House to keep them in office. I propose to show how that enigma can be explained and satisfactorily explained. The net enrolment of seven Assembly seats in this Parliament of Western Australia amounts in all to 11,399 voters, which is a total of over 2,000 fewer than those for the one electorate of Nedlands or the one electorate of Canning. That is a fact worth contemplating. What it means is that every elector in each of those seven pocket electorates enjoys or possesses over seven times the electoral value of an elector in Canning or in Nedlands. That elector has not three times the electoral

value, which shocked the Premier so much when he noticed, as a result of his studies, that an elector on the Council roll enjoyed three times the electoral value of an elector on the Assembly roll! This is not three times, but over seven times. Yet, because all these seven electorates return good supporters to the Government, the present principle is looked upon as democratic. The net average enrolment for the whole of the State is 274,856.

I have taken these figures from what the Minister told us in the course of his second reading speech. We have 50 members returned to the House, so by dividing that number by 50 we get the net average for the whole State, which is 5,500. Yet of the 30 members who constitute the present Government party we can take 11, which is more than one-third of the whole, in whose case the net average of the electorates represented by them, amounts to just over 2,300, which is less—far less—that one half of the net average for the whole State. So, the enigma I spoke of is easily and readily explained. Yet with all this to face the Government has not the slightest hesitation in entering the lists as the champion of democracy in a joust with the Legislative Council. Personally, and I think, too, that I am speaking for every member of the party with which I am associated, I have no objection to any reasonable differentiation in the electoral values being enjoyed by people living in different parts of the State, based, firstly, on their distance from the seat of Government, and secondly on the difficulty and expense in reaching the seat of Government. But the illustrations I have given show only ghastly abuses of such a principle. The Minister told the House the story of a Victoria Cross winner who comes back to Western Australia and finds that he is not entitled to vote in an election for the Legislative Council.

Mr. Thorn: That is all "hooley."

The Premier: It is a fact.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Perhaps the Premier will allow me to examine the statement and see if it is a fact. The Minister apparently took it for granted that the many promises, to which we have listened quite recently when it became desirable to obtain the votes of the soldiers, were all piecrust and that an ungrateful country would not give a returning hero even a shed worth 7s., which is scarcely

the price a cowshed would command. Even if we pass this Bill so that it became law the returning winner of the Victoria Cross would not be entitled to a vote in a Legislative Council election. It would be necessary for him to have lived in Western Australia—not Australia, but Western Australia—for six months prior to an election and for one month in the particular electorate in which he seeks to vote. We have never questioned the fact that there are many qualifications which have to be complied with before anyone is entitled to become an elector for either House. We have assumed that among these qualifications will be some that will stand as evidence of a particular interest in Western Australia, such as the six months prior residence. Therefore the real question to be asked is this: Does the franchise of the Legislative Council only reach that end, or does it go much further? I freely admit that there are many reasons to be offered to show that it does go beyond that end, and that there are certainly many reasons beyond controversy to show that an inquiry is justified.

But if there is to be an inquiry it should be conducted by some impartial constitutional tribunal and not by this party-governed assemblage which, in its own constitution is a standing insult to every ideal of democracy. I desire to discuss shortly other matters which should be dealt with in a Bill of this character. The first and most important is the matter of providing some means for adjusting differences between the two Houses. Unless one House or the other is a mere rubber stamp these differences must arise. No one of us wants either House to be a mere rubber stamp. Therefore these differences are sure to arise.

The Premier: Some differences are bound to arise.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I regret that on occasions some very interesting interjections are made that I cannot catch.

The Premier: I said that some differences are bound to arise.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No attempt at the solution of this very difficult problem, which must be faced, is made in the Bill. For that reason, if for no other, this is mere partial reform. The previous member for East Perth brought down in the last Parliament a Bill designed to find some means for adjusting differences between

the two Houses. But, as has already been said in the course of this debate, the Government gave Mr. Hughes no assistance in having his Bill debated, and so it hung on the notice paper for a long period of time and then died the death of the innocent. Yet, who is there who will deny that the matter of finding some means to end differences between the Houses is one of the highest importance?

There remains still another matter on which I desire to say a few words. It is of the greatest importance, although so far it has not been touched on in the course of this debate. I am, without question, a firm believer in the bi-cameral system. I look upon it as a wise safeguard to prevent any violent political changes. While I am a believer in the bi-cameral system, I am a much stronger believer in this House being the ruling branch of the Legislature. It should be the ruling House beyond all question. If we place this Bill on the statute-book without taking any precautions to deal with the new constitutional position which will arise, what will be the result? Another place will then be entitled to say that it has just as much right to originate and pass legislation as we have; that its authority is based on exactly the same basis as that of this House and therefore that it has exactly the same rights and privileges as this House.

The Premier: Another place has said that already.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It has not.

The Premier: It has, by its actions.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the authority of the Upper House is based on the same source as the authority of this House is based, how could we stop another place from dealing with money Bills? It would have just as much right as this House. But that is not the end of it by any means. The whole constitutional structure will have to be safeguarded unless there is to be a violent change. That is so because until now there has been only one thesis of constitutional government throughout the British Empire. It is that the House elected on the popular franchise is to be the ruling House because it is elected by the whole of the people, because its base is as wide as the people and therefore as wide as it can possibly be. If we create a basis for another place similar to that which applies to this Chamber, what will eventuate from such a change?

Mr. Withers: It is done in connection with the Federal Senate.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is not done in the Commonwealth sphere, because the Senate is not elected on the same basis as the House of Representatives. In the Senate there are six senators elected for this State and there are six senators elected to represent New South Wales. The six senators from this State are elected by only a fraction of the number of people that elect the six senators who represent New South Wales. It was a conception entirely designed for the purposes of Federation, and it was created under extraordinary conditions not likely to arise again. For all these reasons I have advanced—they are reasons that appeal to me as being very grave—I hope the advice given by the Leader of the National Party will be accepted and that the Bill, after passing the second reading stage, will be laid aside for the purpose of bringing into existence a committee or some other appropriate tribunal to investigate the whole question of constitutional reform. That tribunal should be instructed to investigate the constitutional aspect of the Legislative Assembly, and to submit proposals that will make this House more in consonance with the ideals of democracy to which we are so prone to lay claim.

If the committee is appointed, as I hope it will be, I feel certain that its work will be beneficial, that it will enable us to institute reforms without endangering the Constitution and not lead us into unknown paths where the future now is an absolute mystery. The committee should, and I believe will, perform a task for Western Australia which all, I feel sure, will welcome. I believe that the hour has come for us to take that step. We have led Australia in matters of constitutional reform. Despite the backward nature of our country we were the first State to adopt preferential voting. I do not know if members generally are aware of that fact. The system was unknown in Australia before this State introduced it and thereby gave a right to the majority, notwithstanding the splitting of votes by a number of candidates, to elect the selected person who received a majority of the votes cast.

The Premier: Western Australia was the first State to adopt the secret ballot.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is so. We have led Australia in matters of constitutional reform and now the time has arrived when we should go still further. I believe that if we appoint the committee that has been suggested, we will be able to accomplish a measure of reform that will redound to the credit of Western Australia when in years hence it comes to be recorded in our history.

On motion by Mr. Withers, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.56 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 20th September, 1944.

	PAGE
Resolution: Commissioner of Railways, as to extension of appointment	687
Bills: Dried Fruits Act Amendment, 3R. passed	687
Local Authorities (Reserve Funds) Act Amendment, 3R. passed	687
Northam Cemeteries, 3R. passed	687
Life Assurance Companies Act Amendment, 3R. passed	687
Testator's Family Maintenance Act Amendment, 1R.	693
Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation), 2R., Com., report	693
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, 2R., Com., report	693
Financial Emergency Act Amendment, 2R., Com.	695
Plant Diseases (Registration Fees) Act Amendment, 2R.	698
Shearers' Accommodation Act Amendment, 2R.	699
Fruit Growing Industry (Trust Fund) Act Amendment, 2R.	700
Adjournment, special	701

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

BILLS (4)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Dried Fruits Act Amendment.
- 2, Local Authorities (Reserve Funds) Act Amendment.
- 3, Northam Cemeteries.
- 4, Life Assurance Companies Act Amendment.

Passed.

RESOLUTION—COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS.

As to Extension of Appointment.

Message from the Assembly requesting concurrence in the following resolution now considered:

That the appointment by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor of Mr. J. A. Ellis as Commissioner of Railways for five years commencing

on the 15th January, 1944, in the terms of Executive Council minute laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on the 12th September, 1944, be approved.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [4.39]: I move—

That the resolution be agreed to.

I submit this motion in accordance with a provision of the Government Railways Act which requires that any appointment to the office of Commissioner of Railways shall be subject to the approval of Parliament. It will perhaps be as well if I give the House an outline of the career of Mr. Ellis. As members are no doubt aware, he was appointed to the position on the 15th January, 1934. Mr. Ellis was trained as an engineer in England and served in that capacity for nine years with a well-known British firm of railway and public works contractors on dock and railway works for the London and North-West Railway Co. Then followed 16 years' service in the Queensland Railway Department, after which he joined the Western Australian Government Railways, serving for seven years, first as Engineer-in-Charge of Railway Construction and then as assistant Chief Civil Engineer. Mr. Ellis was 46 years of age when he succeeded Mr. Evans as Commissioner of Railways and at the time of his recent re-appointment was 56. Members will doubtless agree that the office of Commissioner of Railways in this State is at no times a sinecure. In peace-time many problems arise in our railway service that do not arise elsewhere, but in wartime those problems are intensified.

During the last four years—the war period—the problems, which our Commissioner has had to face in the administration of our railway service, have been much more severe than in any previous period in our history. I would also like to remind members that, by special request from the Commonwealth Government, our Commissioner was called upon to advise that Government with respect to railway matters associated with our war effort. I believe that at the express request of Mr. Essington Lewis who, of course, is well known to members of this House, our Government was called upon to make available the services of Mr. Ellis in that capacity.

Hon. J. Cornell: Was there not a board consisting of all the Commissioners, not one?