

to be closed up next week, or is it not? If it is to be closed up, and if the Government cancel all existing policies, what will become of the mines? What will become of the men? Those are the points I wish members to consider carefully. The defeat of this measure will not relieve the mining companies of one iota of their obligations under the Workers' Compensation Act. "Amend the Workers' Compensation Act and repeal the third schedule," some one will say. Is that a fair suggestion? Is it a suggestion that the Government could be reasonably asked to adopt? It may be possible, later, after deep thought and serious consultation with all parties concerned, to grapple more efficiently with the problem. But the only remedy for the present is the Bill and the whole Bill. There is no other remedy that can be immediately and justly applied, and failure to recognise the fact may create entanglements and produce effects that are beyond the mind of anyone here to foresee. The administration of the measure will be in the hands of an officer whose qualifications as an actuary and whose integrity as a public servant have never been questioned, and who has already made a wonderful success of Government insurance of various kinds, including this very class of business. He may not be able to make ends meet—he thinks he can—but if he fails, the burden on Consolidated Revenue is likely to be infinitely less than it would be by any other process that could be followed, except such a one as would impose intolerable burdens on the mining industry. I have no more to say. I leave the Bill in the hands of members of this House, and I ask them to pass it as it stands, without any amendment, as the only means available, for the present at any rate, of overcoming a position that is surrounded with difficulties.

Question put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|              |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes         | .. | .. | .. | 12 |
| Noes         | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
|              |    |    |    | —  |
| Majority for | .. | .. | .. | 1  |
|              |    |    |    | —  |

#### AYES.

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. J. Cornell   | Hon. E. Rose       |
| Hon. J. M. Drew   | Hon. A. J. H. Saw  |
| Hon. J. Ewing     | Hon. H. Seddon     |
| Hon. E. H. Gray   | Hon. H. J. Yelland |
| Hon. E. H. Harris | Hon. J. R. Brown   |
| Hon. J. W. Hickey | (Teller.)          |
| Hon. W. J. Mann   |                    |

#### NOES.

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter     | Hon. J. Nicholson     |
| Hon. V. Hamersley     | Hon. H. A. Stephenson |
| Hon. G. A. Kempton    | Hon. H. Stewart       |
| Hon. Sir W. Lathlain  | Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom |
| Hon. J. M. Macfarlane | Hon. A. Burvill       |
| Hon. G. W. Miles      | (Teller.)             |

#### PAIRS.

| AYES.           | NOES.               |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Hon. J. E. Dodd | Hon. W. T. Glarheen |
| Hon. G. Potter  | Hon. J. J. Holmes   |

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 10th November, 1926.*

| Questions.                                       | Old Men's Home | ... | ... | ... | PAGE   |
|--|----------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Water Supply, North Perth                        | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2074   |
| Federal aid roads                                | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2075   |
| Annual Estimates: Department of Education        | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2076   |
| Public Health                                    | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2092   |
| Aborigines Cattle Stations                       | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2098-9 |
| Goldfields Water Supply                          | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2099   |
| Government Refrigerating Works                   | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2105   |
| Kalgoorlie Abattoirs                             | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2105   |
| Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale Yards            | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2105   |
| Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage | ...            | ... | ... | ... | 2105   |

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

### QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie): 1, Did the authorities controlling the Old Men's Home recently refuse to take delivery of some potatoes on account of their size and quality? 2, Was this matter subsequently referred to the Tender Board, who compelled the people in charge of the home to take delivery?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: 1, No; but the Master reported that potatoes supplied by the contractor were unduly small. 2, The Tender Board investigated the complaint but saw no necessity for action against the contractor unless further cause should arise.

At that particular time potatoes were scarce. The Tender Board investigations went to show that Government institutions were being supplied by the contractor with potatoes of a fair quality.

### QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, NORTH PERTH.

Mr. J. MacCALLUM SMITH asked the Minister for Water Supply: When may the residents of North Perth expect to be supplied with reasonably clean water?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLY replied: It is assumed that the question is prompted by occasional occurrence of discolouration in the water at North Perth. The particularly bad occurrence of rusty water yesterday morning was caused by the turning on of water from Mundaring, necessitated by the increasing demand. The mains were flushed yesterday, and further flushing will be done as found necessary. The deposit and accumulation of rust in the pipes during periods of low consumption cannot be prevented, and when consumption increases, these deposits are disturbed and cause the discolouration complained of. Flushing is to notify at once any appearance of discolouration the only remedy when the discolouration occurs, and the department invites consumers' attention so that the mains may be flushed at once. Increasing consumption as summer advances will reduce, if not altogether remove, the appearance of discolouration.

### QUESTION—FEDERAL AID ROADS.

Mr. CORBOY (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Will the Minister supply the House with information relative to the roads proposed to be dealt with under the Federal aid roads scheme. 2, Will he see to it that each member is supplied with necessary information regarding the roads to be dealt with in each electorate?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: It must be understood that the whole of the roads involved in the five-years' programme constitute a big list. If it will suit the convenience of members, I will have made a duplicate of the map presented to the conference and, with your permission, Sir, will have the map hung in the Chamber so that members may see just what roads are included in the five years' programme. Further, for

the convenience of members I will have the list of roads approved in each electorate sent to each member, so that he shall have the information desired.

### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1926-27.

#### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

*Department of Education (Hon. J. M. Drew, M.L.C., Minister); Hon. J. Cunningham, Honorary Minister, in charge of the Votes.*

*Vote—Education, £605,438.*

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM** (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [4.35]: The total expenditure is estimated at £605,438, being £10,229 more than last year. The estimated revenue shows a rise of £229, making an estimated increase in the net expenditure of £10,000. In 1921-22, in 1922-23, and in 1923-24 the department's net expenditure was £1 11s. 8d. or £1 11s. 9d. per head of the population each year. In 1924-25 it fell to £1 11s. 1½d., and in 1926 to £1 11s. 0¼d. The estimate for the current year is £1 10s. 10½d. per head of the population. The number of primary schools open at the end of the year was 794, five high schools and the School of Agriculture bringing the total to 800, exclusive of the continuation and technical schools. The total enrolment was nearly 53,000. During the year 44 new schools were opened and seven others that had been closed were re-opened. On the other hand 34 were closed, and children from five of those were provided for by driving contracts, whilst the others have the correspondence classes. In all, 1,187 children are being taught entirely by correspondence. The correspondence teachers are now undertaking work of high school standard, and in addition children in every small school can receive advanced tuition from the correspondence staff. On the group settlements 13 new schools were opened during the year, the total group settlement schools now being 64. The total enrolment in primary schools does not grow very fast, but its distribution alters rapidly. During the last four years the enrolment increased by 2,037. If those additions were in large town schools, they would be comparatively inexpensive,

but in those four years the number of schools increased by 108, while driving contracts have taken the place of about 20 more schools. We have therefore the expense of 128 additional small schools, which are far the most expensive type. There has been a gradual decrease in the number of children attending large schools on the goldfields. If 50 children leave a large school, it may mean only a reduction of from four to six pupils in each of ten classes. This does not, of course, lessen the cost appreciably, but 50 children forming three new schools would add to the cost of the department by approximately £800 per annum. In addition, attendance at our full high schools has increased in four years from 700 to 1,200 children. Our teachers are gradually becoming better qualified, and the number of unclassified teachers is decreasing which, of course, adds to the salaries total. It is intended during this financial year to arrange classes for apprentices at the technical schools during working hours, in accordance with the Arbitration Act. The Arbitration Court and the trade committees composed of employers and employees are being consulted respecting the establishment of those classes. No reduction in wages will be permitted. It is intended to remove the junior technical school from the Technical School buildings, where the accommodation for it is totally inadequate. This will enable the department to undertake an extension of technical school work, for which there is no room at present. Some of the trade classes are especially in need of expansion. The board of classifiers has been reconstituted and now consists of a member of the administrative staff of the Education Department, a member, not a public servant, appointed by the Minister, and a member elected by the Teachers' Union. Previously a representative of the Education Department, together with a representative of the Teachers' Union and the Director of Education, constituted the classifying board. That has been altered, and a Bill is now before the House for the purpose of giving legal enactment to the board as newly constituted. The Estimates also include provision for the reclassification of officers under the Public Service Act, which has added £1,185 to the salaries section. The reclassification of the teachers' service has not been included, but will need additional provision. This will give members some idea of the activities of the

department during the year, and also a forecast of the departmental activities during the current year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is much the same as usual, of course.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: There have been several alterations in respect of scholarships for the betterment of the children qualifying for those privileges. Whereas previously payment was withheld until the course had been finished, arrangements have now been made for payments in advance. Instances have been known in the past where parents of children were not in a position to take advantage of the scholarships won by their children, owing to their being unable to meet the cost of sending their children to the schools for which they had won scholarships. The Minister for Education has now made certain alterations which will give a measure of justifiable relief in this direction. I commend the Estimates to the attention of members.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.44]: I realise that this department is not under the control of the Honorary Minister. He has told us that minor alterations have been made in the system, and that there has been nothing of a startling character. Our system as it is to-day has been in operation for years. It has been improved a little as time has gone on, and necessarily so. During the last Administration several high schools were built, one at Northam, one at Bunbury and another at Albany. The buildings were suitable for the purpose. These establishments are doing wonderful work, and providing opportunities for children who could never have had those opportunities but for the establishment of these schools. The equipment also is good. I hope next year I shall be able to build one or two more of these schools.

The Minister for Works: Are you thinking of becoming a contractor?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When we take a contract, we carry it out. Our contract will be to govern the country. It was the contract of members opposite, but they have not carried out the terms and conditions of their contract. These schools are doing great work, and enable children in the country to have much the same advantages as those who attend the Modern School. I hope it will be possible to provide accommodation so that the children

may be properly housed when they come in from the country to these centres. It will cost a great deal of money to provide these buildings, and they will be troublesome to run as boarding schools, but something will have to be done. The Northam centre is a big one, and accommodation for the many children involved is limited. The people make every effort to provide accommodation, and are doing their best in that direction. The same thing will be necessary at Albany as well as at Bunbury. Probably we should also have similar accommodation at Geraldton, where there is a high school, but not enough in the way of buildings. Our population is small and our revenue comparatively limited, but we have to maintain a standard of education equal to that of the bigger States. We have in some measure to keep pace with the advancement that is being made the world over. Education is everywhere receiving a great deal of attention. In the countries of coloured races, such as India, China and Japan, education is freely indulged in. Competition is facing nations as well as the individual. Since we are responsible for the education of our children, we must meet the circumstances that have arisen. We must improve our methods and give our children a better chance. We have much to do and a limited revenue with which to do it. We cannot, therefore, do all we would like to do at once. We must keep in mind the fact that if our children are to hold their own with children educated elsewhere, we must give them every opportunity. Our children ought to get a chance, even in small centres. Every child is provided either with a school to attend or correspondence classes, which were established by Mr. Colebatch. These classes are working satisfactorily and successfully, and showing excellent results. We must have more primary schools. There are more children to be dealt with. If our population has shifted, it has shifted into the country. The families that have come here must be provided for. Many people who have left the goldfields have taken their families to the country, and this has necessitated the establishment of new schools. It is to be regretted that the Kalgoorlie schools are not what they were owing to the falling off in the number of children there. They are big schools and well equipped. Please God, we shall have ever more children to educate in the near future. The cost of education per head of the population has fallen a few

pence, because there are a few more people to bear that cost. In actual fact, the expenditure on education is mounting up year by year, sometimes due to increased costs, but always due to the opening of additional schools. That is as it should be. The Minister tells us that 44 new schools were opened last year. Probably a similar number were opened in the previous year, and more still in the year before that.

Hon. J. Cunningham: In two years 93 new schools were opened.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This means that the people are spread about the country. The number of children on the groups is greater than it was before.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Last year more schools were opened than in any previous year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is not due to any effort on the part of the Minister.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I do not say to what it is due.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It may be due to the Minister for Lands. It is a splendid thing to have these children in the country. Some of the new schools were opened in the metropolitan area, but most of them in the country districts. It is a good thing people are settling on the land, where their children can be brought up and where they will be able to do more useful work than can be done in the city. Every new school means additional cost. Though the cost per head has come down by  $10\frac{1}{2}$ d., this only means that there are more people over whom the cost can be spread. In the country children are leading wholesome and natural lives. They are being prepared, without the aid of technical schools, for the calling I hope they will follow upon the land. When going through the country one sees many of these children, and cannot help being impressed by their appearance. Every Minister for Education has done his best to improve the method and standard of education. The expenditure on the Estimates must be increased by the additional salaries to teachers. It is only to be expected that the salaries will increase, because this sort of thing is going on throughout the service. The necessity for this is due to the increased cost of living, artificially raised by the high tariff. The cost of everything one wants is added to, and it has become impossible for a man to live upon the salary that once en-

abled him to obtain all the necessities of life. House rent, food, clothing and everything have been affected by the tariff, which seems ever to be jumping up. Almost weekly there is a change. As the tariff goes up, the cost of living goes up. While the Federal Treasurer benefits by the tariff, the State Treasurer finds his costs automatically increasing, although he gets no part of the money that is raised by the increase in the rates. Up to now we have managed to carry on, and I hope we shall always be able to do so. Education is one of our great responsibilities, but it is a costly one. Very few of the charges that have to be met by the State are contributed to by the Federal Government. It will thus be realised what the collections by the Federal Government mean to the State. The Federal authorities have not provided for police protection, education, charities, or any nonproductive expenditure. The post offices pay their way, and taxation and Customs also pay. I suppose defence does not produce revenue. The State, however, is left with practically all the non-paying services. With ever-increasing cost we have to carry on services that really provide for the future of the country. True, we have just now a large road grant, but towards that we have to contribute a considerable amount. When it comes to building railways and establishing towns, it is all State responsibility. One would like to be able to acquaint the Federal authorities fully with the needs of the State, making them feel that we do not want doles but that we want an opportunity to collect enough money to carry on our services in the manner that we think fitting. The other day there was opened a school at Muresk, which is not connected with the Education Department. There, however, we shall educate young people who will influence cultivation and production in Western Australia. At Narrogin there is also an agricultural school. We want more of our education carried on in the country. Country influence should be brought to bear upon our children. There is no room in Western Australia for an army of shorthand writers, and there will not be room for many more clerical people. Naturally, there is room in all trades; every trade wants strengthening with apprentices. Many of our young people should be learning trades; but the safest thing for them is to learn something of the life on the land, where alone opportunity is to be found for the many to obtain that

freedom which is so desirable. On the land alone can men be their own masters in any number. Therefore our efforts should be directed to that end. By the use of our lands and by the assistance which the State gives we can take families and place them in a position to provide a competency by their work. That can only be done on the land. For the life on the land people need to be educated just as much as those who go into offices or take up professional work. While we are apt to think of the man on the land merely as one who grows wheat, we must bear in mind that he has also a considerable amount of business to do. The training at the agricultural schools and colleges should be directed towards fitting our young people for that life. The system that the Minister found on assuming office continues. The changes that have been made are infinitesimal. So it is with the Government departments. There is nothing novel in the proposals set up by the Estimates, or in the speech of the Minister. Things are going on as they went before, probably because there is, in the opinion of Ministers, not much room for improvement. I should like to see high schools established in other country centres. However, that will come in time. I do not know there are any items on these Estimates that I wish to discuss. Salaries eat up the expenditure for the most part, and those salaries are fixed not by Parliament but by the authority set up for the purpose. I am delighted to learn from the Minister that so many new schools are being opened, but I regret that the additional registrations are so few. The spread of our population certainly means that children are leaving the more populous centres for broader fields, and that must in the end make for good. Boys and girls brought up in the country are better equipped for country life than can possibly be the case with those brought up in our larger towns. I have nothing at all to object to in these Estimates. The expenditure has increased by £10,000, but that was only to be expected. We must keep abreast of the times and equip our young people for the life that is ahead of them just as young people are being equipped in the richer and more populous countries in order that they may be better able to face the world's problems. I hope the Government will keep in mind what the State's duty is in that regard. The people of this country know full well that there is no better investment than the £600,000 they spend annually on education. No expendi-

ture on the Estimates works greater good than the money spent in this way.

**MR. E. B. JOHNSTON** (Williams-Narrogin) [5.7]: I notice that the Education Estimates, which last year amounted to £594,509, are this year increased to £605,438. No one opposes the expenditure. On the contrary, everyone supports it. It is gratifying to learn from the Minister that the increased expenditure is partly caused by the necessity for new country schools. No work is more important than that of the Education Department, who I hope will continue to establish new country schools wherever they may be required. In some cases there are only seven or eight children available for education in a locality, but their parents are doing a great work in land settlement; and I therefore hope that the policy of providing new schools will be not only continued but also liberalised, so that not even a small number of country children will be left without the advantage of a primary education. It is the policy of this State to ask people to go out on the land, and nothing is more disappointing to an out-back settler than to find his children are not receiving the same education and the same chance in life as children in populous centres. Undoubtedly the Education Department are doing a great work. I regret that the Government have not during the past 2½ years started any new high schools. It is only a few years ago, during the term of the previous Government, that three new high schools were established at Bunbury, Albany and Northam. Those establishments are highly necessary, because it is important that country children, as they grow up should have the advantages of a secondary education without being compelled to go to the metropolitan area to receive it. Mr. Colebatch, as Minister for Education, took a keen interest in the establishment of high schools. We have to thank that gentleman also for the great improvements made at the Narrogin school of agriculture during his regime at the Education Department. A few months before Mr. Colebatch went to England as Agent General he visited Narrogin, and there a request for the establishment of a high school was brought before him. A very fine site of 25 acres has been reserved for that purpose in the town. Mr. Colebatch inspected that site, and told the people that in his opinion Narrogin should be the next place to receive a high school. He added that Narrogin's geo-

graphical position and other advantages entitled it to be the next town in the Great Southern district to obtain such an establishment. From the aspects of population, central situation, and climate, it is necessary that a high school should be built at Narrogin. Private enterprise is doing a great deal in erecting large buildings in that town, but I am sorry to say that the Government offices there are lagging behind. The Government offices at Narrogin are, in fact, obsolete. I hope Ministers will take into consideration the establishment of a high school at Narrogin during next year. The friends of the Government would not like to have it said that they had been in office for three years without establishing one high school. I hope the Government will proceed with the erection of a high school at Narrogin before meeting the electors in March. At all events, Mr. Colebatch expressed the view which I have quoted, and which I commend to the present Minister for Education. I noticed a few weeks ago that a deputation from Northam had waited upon the Minister for Education with a request that a hostel for the accommodation of the children attending the Northam high school should be established. Immediately afterwards I received a letter of protest from the Narrogin Municipal Council. They protested against the request from Northam that a hostel for the accommodation of students should be provided in connection with the high school there whilst other districts were in need of high schools. That resolution of protest, I submit, is a wise one. There is no necessity at all for the building of a hostel at Northam, as private enterprise is prepared to provide accommodation for the students. It is within my knowledge that at present in Bunbury, Northam and other centres where high schools are established very deserving widows and other worthy people are earning a livelihood by putting up students attending those high schools. I trust the Government will not enter into this new field of State trading without the approval of Parliament. Especially do I hope that hostels will not be established at great expense in localities which have high schools, while other districts have no high schools at all. It seems to me far more important to establish high schools at suitable places throughout the length and breadth of the country, than to have the benefit of hostels, where high schools already exist. At any

rate, a written intimation was forwarded to the Education Department that if a high school is established at Narrogin, private enterprise will supply the necessary accommodation for the students.

The Minister for Lands: Better have the high school at Wagin.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I wish to say a few words about the Narrogin school of agriculture. Most excellent education is being provided there for a large number of boys under the direction of the head teacher, Mr. Shugg, and a highly competent staff. It is true that the Government lately established an agricultural college at Muresk. Everyone applauds that long-delayed decision, and is glad that the institution has been opened. I take it that the school of agriculture at Narrogin will bear much the same relation to the Agricultural College at Muresk as the Modern School bears to the University. The accommodation at the Narrogin school of agriculture should be increased, because it undoubtedly offers a great training for boys who, when they reach the age of 16, can enter the Muresk Agricultural College. It will be a splendid thing to give such boys the benefit of a two-years' course at the Narrogin school of agriculture as a stepping stone to the Muresk Agricultural College. It has always seemed to me that the branch of education respecting which our State lags behind, is that dealing with agriculture. There have been so many applications for admission to the Narrogin School of Agriculture that the Government have been compelled to appoint a small committee to select the most deserving of those desirous of entering the institution. We would be wise to spend more money on agricultural education and less on the tuition afforded boys and girls for clerical positions, such as typistes and clerks. Excellent work is being done at the Narrogin School and I hope the Government will extend the operations there because I am convinced more boys will desire to enter, in view of the establishment of the Agricultural College at Muresk.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [5.16]: I wish to comment briefly on the vote. I have a distinct recollection that a few years ago some hon. members used to look upon the increase in the Education Vote with considerable alarm. One hon. member said that if he could have his way he would cut

down the Vote by one-half. He divided the Committee, but was badly left in the minority. The reason I mention that fact is that I hope to see, during the next few years, a still greater increase in the Education Vote. If Western Australia is to advance along the natural paths, it can be fostered only by the establishment of schools in back country areas. If any hon. member were to take the trouble to visit the outback parts of the State he would notice the wonderful progress that has taken place in those areas, particularly by means of the provision of schools. During the last week-end about 200 men, women and children assembled in a small corner of my electorate to participate in the opening of a school that had been constructed by the department. The one that had been opened by the previous Minister for Education had outgrown its usefulness, and the Government have had to erect in its place a school double the size. I was sorry that no member of the Government was able to be present to perform the opening ceremony. The people of that district realise that Parliament has been very generous in providing schools and up-to-date teachers. Ample evidence was furnished at both the North Lake Pingrup and the South Lake Pingrup schools of the standard of education being taught by the teachers. In fact, the samples of the children's work displayed on the walls of the school would have done credit to children attending metropolitan schools. That indicates the fact that the education available to the children in the outback centres is along the right lines. I hope that the system established and fostered by the previous Government and the present Government will be continued. I hold no brief for the establishment of a high school at any particular centre in my electorate. I believe in those schools and I hope the member for Williams-Narrogin will have his desire and that a high school will be established as he suggests. Before that is done, however, I hope that increased consideration will be given to the small outback centres where eight or nine children may be resident in a district. I have in mind one centre respecting which an application for a school was declined recently on the ground that no funds were available and that there were not sufficient children to warrant the establishment of a school. The first duty of Parliament and of the Government is to see that the parents of child-

ren in the outback centres have educational facilities enabling their boys and girls to obtain the benefit of knowledge, thus encouraging families to remain on the land. To-day no father or mother can afford to take the risk of remaining in a centre where their children cannot receive the education that is so necessary in these strenuous times. In fact, they will not take the risk. The vote has been increased by a few thousand pounds and that is not to be wondered at in view of the great increase in the population of agricultural centres as well as of the metropolitan area. So long as the system of free education continues, and I approve of it, the natural corollary following upon the increase in population is the necessity for increased educational facilities, with an augmented vote on the Estimates. I wish to pay a tribute to the present Minister for Education, as well as to his predecessors in office, upon the establishment of such a fine system of education and the building up of such a splendid staff, for that work reflects credit upon the State.

**MR. BROWN** (Pingelly) [5.21]: I am pleased to notice that the Vote has been increased by £10,229. That cannot be regarded as a large amount when we consider the progress made by settlement, more particularly in the outback parts where the population is increasing by leaps and bounds. When a man takes up a block he does not like to be parted from his family for long, and almost immediately he erects a shelter and gets his wife and family with him. Anyone who has travelled through the back country will bear me out in that statement. It is astonishing to see some of the shacks in which families live. There are one or two matters regarding the Education Vote to which I desire to refer. It is well known that the driving allowance has been reduced and no one having an income of over £400 is permitted to receive the allowance. I understand that the figure is the gross income and not the net income. That is where the injustice comes in. A man on the land would be poorly off indeed if his income did not amount to £400. After deducting expenses, however, it will probably be found that such a man is in debt. Despite that fact, under the decision of the Education Department, it is impossible for such a man to secure the advantage of 6d. per child per day, which is the amount of the driving allowance. In many districts, too, there are larger schools where, better

teachers and better accommodation are available. Parents realise that it is better to send their children to such institutions rather than to small schools, with the result that they are paying out of their own pockets the expenses in connection with driving their children to school. I believe this is a mistaken idea on the part of the Education Department, and they should not be so careful regarding the driving allowance. There is no necessity to be so exacting, because if the parents did not send their children to the larger schools at some distance from their homes, the department would be forced to provide a number of schools at the various centres affected. The department does not have to incur any expense in connection with the sending to the larger schools of the children I refer to, but when the parents concerned have made application for the driving allowance, their claim has been disallowed, because their gross incomes have been regarded as being over £400. Such an attitude on the part of the department is not in the best interests of the State. I have been informed that parents have to show their taxation returns before their application for the allowance will be allowed. A farmer who is in receipt of £400 gross per year will be working practically at a loss. I have also had some experience regarding the accommodation for teachers in the outback districts. In some instances the accommodation provided is very poor. It is impossible for it to be anything else, because one of the last things a settler will do is to erect a decent house. For one thing he has no money to pay for a decent house. Despite that, there may be a few children in the locality, and if it is desired to have a school established, the first problem confronting the settlers is the finding of a room for the teacher. The Education Department have ruled distinctly that they will not send a teacher to a country district unless there is a room available for her. I do not object to that, for I think the teacher should have a room to herself. On the other hand we have teachers who will adapt themselves to country conditions, while others, more accustomed to town life, refuse to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances. Those who come under the latter heading very soon tire of country life, and they advise the department accordingly that the accommodation available is not up to the standard. I think the position should be fully explained to teachers before they go into the country



districts. They should be told that the accommodation in many instances is very rough, and that it is quite possible that in some of the less developed centres the teacher may have to share a room with a young girl. If the teacher refuses to do that, the effect is that the school has to be closed, and the children deprived of the advantage of any education at all. I think the difficulty can be overcome because many teachers like the life in the country. I am positive that people in the outback areas will do their utmost to make the teachers comfortable. I know that vehicles are placed at their disposal in order to take them about the district, and to various functions that are held. I am sorry that there are teachers who will not adapt themselves to country conditions, and that schools have had to be closed because the accommodation for a teacher was not regarded as up to standard. Another matter relates to the children who win scholarships entitling them to go to high schools. An allowance of £30 per year is paid to those children. Very often the winner of such a scholarship is the child of poor parents. When the child goes to the centre where the High School is, whether it be Perth, Albany, Northam, or elsewhere, he has to be boarded out, and £30 is not sufficient to maintain him. It is soon found that it costs another £30 or £40, and on top of it there are the added expenses attached to the purchase of books. It would pay the State to be more generous, and where the department and the teacher realise that a child possesses exceptional talent, we should recognise it is worth while looking after such a child. If such children can pass certain examinations it will be in the interests of the country to grant them additional allowances to keep them at school. Under existing circumstances many parents are compelled to take their children away from school as they cannot afford to keep them there. Then there is the medical examination question. According to the regulations, all children attending State schools have to be medically examined one or twice a year. In the country districts it very often happens that the doctor will examine a school and then forget all about the children for a considerable time. Some of the small country schools are established 10 or 20 miles away from where the medical officer resides. Those children do not have any medical examination at all. Only when the children complain of illness or are suffering

in some way does the position become acute, for the parent, owing to the absence of medical advice, is not in a position to know whether the child is suffering from some serious injury or complaint that would be disclosed if an examination were held. It should be compulsory to convey such children to the medical officer for medical examination at least once a year. Then if they were suffering from defective teeth or defective eyesight, the parents should be informed so that they could obtain medical attention. It behoves the Government to see that the children obtain the best possible education. The men and women pioneering the back country and blazing the trail are living under conditions of great hardship, and should receive the utmost consideration from the Government. I hope our teachers will realise that they should do their best to ensure that the children receive the best education.

**MR. THOMSON** (Katanning) [5.31]: In various sessions the Education Vote has evoked considerable discussion and among the questions raised has been that of whether we are getting full value for the money expended. The Leader of the Opposition has urged that a hostel should be erected for children at the Northam High School, and the member for Williams-Narrogin has maintained that the erection of a high school was of greater importance than hostel accommodation. No doubt each member could support his views with sound arguments. The expenditure on education is increasing. That must necessarily happen, because we are developing the country and must provide at least reasonable facilities for the people who go into the backblocks and undertake the pioneering work. I am one of those who at times have wondered whether we are getting value for the enormous amount of money we spend on education. The estimated expenditure for the current year is £605,000. Let members bear that in mind, and then consider an amazing statement published in to-night's issue of the "Daily News." It reads—

Boy Engineers. Shortage in State. Positions going begging. "I hardly think it can be generally known that very excellent opportunities exist in Western Australia for youths who desire to be trained for the engineering profession. The outlook is particularly bright, and so far as can be reasonably forecast, the future should prove extremely attractive to those desiring to follow this profession," said the

Public Service Commissioner (Mr. G. W. Simpson), in an interview this morning. "At the present time, we have openings in our own State service for at least eight junior men, carrying a commencing salary of £324, in addition to other positions carrying a higher remuneration. The very limited number of students who will be finishing their University career both this and next year makes it imperative for us to look around for other ways of augmenting our staffs. This means that we will have no alternative but to seek to import men, either from the Eastern States or from Iloma. The very excellent training which junior engineers receive in this State should make Western Australia particularly attractive. In all the other States, engineering work is now so divided that a young man entering any particular department is confined exclusively to that particular branch of engineering work, whereas in this State all sections of engineering, including railway construction, harbours and rivers, sewerage, water supply and irrigation are dealt with under the direction of the Engineer-in-Chief. It stands to reason, therefore, that a young engineer has an opportunity of following any particular line of engineering which he may find he is especially adapted for, but in any case, his experience is such that it fits him peculiarly should he leave the State at any time to accept positions that may arise elsewhere, in almost any direction in the engineering profession. Professor Whitfeld, of the University of Western Australia, has been consulted with regard to this matter, and although he is very desirous of training Western Australian youths to follow these positions, the number of applications for entrance coming forward to the University is, unfortunately, very limited. I have repeatedly informed the public through the Press of our desire to give preference to our locally-trained men, but when conditions arise as indicated above, it leaves no alternative but to go outside the State in order to secure our requirements."

I cast no blame upon the officials in charge of the department, but those statements certainly constitute a serious indictment against the education system. There is something wrong that we should have positions offering exceptional opportunities to young men, to whom we have given free primary, high school and University education, and should find it necessary to go to the Eastern States or the Old Country to secure capable men to fill those positions. It is perhaps beyond the ability of a layman to devise ways and means whereby better results may be obtained, but the fact remains that in spite of all the educational advantages provided by the State, valuable situations within the State must be filled by outsiders. I hope the department will find a way to overcome this disability. If the youth of Western Australia are not prepared to take advantage of the

facilities provided by our high schools and University, we should consider the advisableness of altering the curriculum. Dealing with the question of education is like handling a prickly pear. If one raises a question as to whether we are getting value for the money expended, he is apt to be charged with being an opponent of the education system. Still, we owe a duty to the children attending the primary schools and that is to ensure to them better facilities than they are enjoying at present. The departmental regulations are broad and generous, but what a contrast it is to visit a high school with its palatial accommodation and many facilities and then a primary school only 20 or 30 miles away conducted in a hovel and devoid of necessary facilities. I do not use the word offensively, but many of our outback schools are hovels compared with the palatial accommodation provided in the larger centres. Excellent teachers are found in the small schools doing good work, but they have to work in unlined structures that in winter are rigidly cold and in summer most damnably hot. Frequently in summer time the teachers are compelled to take the children out of the buildings and give the lessons in the shade of trees.

Mr. Teesdale: What about 117 degrees in the Roebourne school?

Mr. THOMSON: I am not at all antagonistic to higher education, but the accommodation in our country schools should be improved and made as comfortable as funds will permit. All Governments have been generous to education and I have never known of the facilities being curtailed. It is our bounden duty to ensure that primary education is provided first of all, more particularly in the outer districts. Perhaps it would be opportune to consider an alteration of the present system, which apparently has failed in some respects. In suggesting that, I cast no reflection upon the department. One of the great problems confronting us is that of peopling the vacant spaces. Every Government has had to face the problem of opening up and developing the unoccupied areas. We are asking men and women of culture to go into the back country and live under conditions that often are the reverse of comfortable. I know of a number of people who have reluctantly left the land, because decent educational facilities were not available for their children.

Being outside the limits of driving distance, the children had to be sent into towns to receive their education. Later the mothers went into the towns to look after the children, and then the fathers became dissatisfied, and the result has been that scores of men who started life on the land have returned to the city. Had more liberal educational facilities been available in the country, those men would have remained on the land. Our present system induces young people to seek city culture and evince a desire for soft jobs. The work of opening up and developing the land is not a collar-and-cuff job. A man engaging in it has to take off his coat, roll up his sleeves and work, not 44 hours a week, but from daylight to dark and even later if he wishes to make a success on the land. Members when travelling through the country have met men and women who were experiencing all the hardships inseparable from the initial stages of land settlement. We take off our hats to those people and wonder why they tolerate such hardships. It is only British determination and the prospect of making good that keeps such people on the land. One of the greatest difficulties confronting them is that of getting their children educated. Greater attention should be devoted to ruralising the curriculum with a view to inducing more people to live in the country districts. Let me quote briefly from the report of the Education Department for the year 1925:—

The development of special rural schools depends upon the special training of teachers, so that adequate staffs can be supplied and maintained. The headmaster of one of these schools must be a man with strong rural interests, and needs special skill and knowledge apart from the ordinary training of a teacher. I want the Honorary Minister to direct his colleague's attention to the following paragraph:—

If we can provide courses of three months' duration at the School of Agriculture, we shall be able to do much for the efficiency of these schools.

I can see no reason why the department cannot make a three months' course available for those desirous of taking an interest in rural schools. Therefore I commend that part of the Directors' report to the Minister's serious consideration. Let me quote another part of the report on page 12 dealing with physical training—

A school of instruction for many lasting for more than a fortnight was held at the

Teachers' College in July. A three days' school for women teachers of country schools was also held at the college, the time being devoted mainly to rhythmic work and first-aid. Demonstrations were given to groups of teachers at various country centres.

If we can find time to give our men a fortnight for instruction in physical training, and if we can give our women teachers three days of rhythmic, surely we can find time and money to provide a course of rural education extending over three months. In years past we have not given sufficient attention to agricultural education; we have carried on the old system of teaching for the city without any regard for rural work. I am pleased that the previous Government took initial steps towards the establishment of an agricultural college at Muresk, and I am also pleased that the present Government have carried on that good work and that the college is now an actual fact. Agricultural education should have had greater prominence seeing that we have been spending millions of pounds in agricultural development. Let me draw attention to another paragraph in the report of the Director of Education dealing with the conveyance of children to school—

Even when schools have been supplied for such small collections of children as are required under these provisions, many settlers find that their children have to travel a long distance to reach them. Here again the Government assist them. If the parents arrange to drive their children to school regularly, they can, if they are in need of such assistance—

I draw attention to those words "in need of such assistance"—

—obtain driving grants to help to defray the cost. A grant of 6d. per day can be obtained for each child under nine years of age who is driven more than two miles, and for each child over nine who is driven more than three miles.

That regulation was brought into existence by the previous Government, and I regret that the present Government have seen fit to alter it. I wish to draw attention to the position of those who reside in the country and who are compelled by virtue of being some miles away from a school, to drive their children to school in the morning and drive them home again after school hours. On a conservative estimate, this procedure means an additional charge on the individual of at least £30 annually. I defy any person to keep a horse and sulky on less than £30 a year. Yet we find that the de-

partment have arrogated to themselves the right to say that if an individual receives up to £400 a year and no more, they will grant him 6d. per day for each child.

The Minister for Lands: Any man who has any love for his children will drive them to school.

Mr. THOMSON: No one should know better than the Minister the difficulties that people in the country are often faced with. Is it a fair thing to ask a man to leave his work in order to drive children to school in the morning and to do so again to drive them home in the afternoon? This involves an hour and a half or two hours daily, and many people in the country can ill afford that time. We also find this in the report—

In some localities, where the conditions are favourable, the Education Department, instead of establishing a small school, provides for the driving of a number of children to a larger school. Horse-drawn vans and motor vans are both used for this purpose. The children are carried free without any expense whatever on the part of the parents. Such arrangements are made only when the establishment of a new school can be thus avoided, or when an existing school can thus be closed without increased cost.

I strongly approve of that system, because it means that by having a larger school it is possible to give children better educational facilities. I cannot understand the Government; they provide a grant of 6d. and yet if one has an income of £403, he is not permitted to partake of that driving allowance. Our educational system is free; we can send our children to the High School and to the University but we should give more consideration to those who reside in country districts than is given under the existing regulation. It is a recognised principle that educational facilities should be given to the fullest extent to our rising generation, and I urge the Minister to reconsider the question of the driving allowance. At times things are done that savour of a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy. There are many school buildings that are not of the A1 at Lloyds class, and of necessity the department remove them to other districts. I would like to see the schools made more comfortable than they are at the present time. I wish to pay a tribute to the young teachers who go out into the country to educate the children. In my opinion they are improving year by year, and I say without hesitation that quite a lot of the work exhibited at the country shows I have

attended recently has been a credit to the girls who have been teaching and to the scholars who have been taught by those girls. This proves that the training given by the department at the Teachers' College is successful and that the country districts are benefiting by it. I hope the Minister will note what I have said regarding the driving allowance. It should be altered, and the department should provide better facilities for our teachers to acquire greater rural knowledge than it is possible to do by putting into effect the suggestion contained in the Director's report.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [6.0]: Apparently this year there has been no necessity for the Director of Education to hunt up the usual statistics showing what other countries are spending on education. Nor have we had to-night the usual criticism of the amount spent in this State. The director seems to have sensed the new position and saved himself the trouble of getting the figures from other countries. The fact that we have no fewer than 50 new schools erected is an indication of the progress the country is making. We have been told something about country teachers. In small country centres generally the teacher becomes a sort of social leader, if she is of the right type. From what I have seen in small schools, the teachers are filling a very useful position, not only in the making of the school a sort of social centre, but also in the very fine work they are doing in conducting experimental plots and things of that sort. A good deal has been said about the medical examination of school children. On the Medical Vote last night I touched upon the subject, and I should like to repeat that illustration from British Columbia. There 39,362 children from 17 rural districts were examined, and of that number 32,730 were found to be defective. Many of the defects were very slight, but others were quite serious. The result of the examination was that most of the cases were taken in time and, in consequence, there was an appreciable brightening up of the children, an all-round improvement. Those figures are published in the report sent me by the Under Secretary for Agriculture in British Columbia. It is astounding that there should have been so many defective children amongst those examined. I am afraid a similar state of affairs exists here. A paragraph in to-night's paper comes as a

surprise to me. The complaint I have heard has been that young fellows can find no openings in the engineering trade.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the general opinion.

MR. GRIFFITHS: Yet to-night we hear that there is a lack of cadets in that trade. Possibly it is that the lack of openings has discouraged young fellows from going in for the engineering course. I know a young fellow, a chemist, who, having got his degree, served his apprenticeship, after which he could not get a suitable position. He wrote to the Eastern States and was offered an attractive position in Adelaide. He had a couple of years there and has now started in business for himself. So we educated that young fellow for the benefit of South Australia.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You were educated in the Old Country for the benefit of the people in this country.

Mr. Withers: Surely a man can go where he likes after he comes of age.

MR. GRIFFITHS: I was surprised to hear the complaint made by the member for Wagin as to schools of eight or fewer. Where there are 10 scholars, full provision is made by the department, and where there can be an attendance of eight the department does all that can reasonably be required of it. If there are fewer than eight children, an assisted school can be started with the aid of the department, and for those who cannot get a school at all there are the correspondence classes. The tribute paid to the Education Department to-night is well deserved, for the department tries to fill all the requirements of the country districts. It must be remembered that the provision of schools in widely scattered districts is a very costly obligation, and it is to the credit of the department that they have been able to cope with it as well as they have done. I should like to see this consolidated-school idea more fully in operation. I have seen the very good effect of it in certain districts. It enables the children to get a far better education than they would get by attending smaller segregated schools. As to what was said about the driving allowance, it must be remembered that the amount is really the gross income, and very often at the end of the year the man is in debt. Whoever framed that regulation cannot have properly understood what a farmer's income really is. I hope the Education Department will give full consideration to this consoli-

dated-school idea. In one part of my electorate the people intend to approach the department to have this system brought into operation.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [6.10]: I am pleased to see the number of schools has increased this year with the increased prosperity of the State. Mention has been made of the high schools and the necessity for establishing hostels for the boarded-out children. At Bunbury everybody appears to be satisfied, because the parents are fortunate enough to secure for their children good accommodation with local residents. Moreover, the children at that school have made good progress. With all that, there are certain things relating to the Bunbury High School that need consideration. For one thing, I should like to know from the Minister on whose authority it is that one firm has the supplying of all blazers and other costumes for the school. Apparently no competition is allowed. One store gets the whole of the supplying of uniforms, to the prejudice of those who are sending their children to the school. One local trader showed me a sample of the material he had submitted to the department at a certain price. The material was markedly superior to that in the blazers supplied by a rival firm. Yet the man with the superior material had offered to supply blazers at 15s. each, whereas the firm who are actually supplying the blazers charge 27s. 6d. for them. That is not fair to the parents, and I trust the Minister will endeavour to find out whose fault it is. Again, boys attending the school have to pay 15s. as a sports fee, and are required to provide themselves with a sports uniform. It is all very well for the boy that goes in for sport, but I am in the unfortunate position of having a boy who takes no part in sport and never gets a game. Yet we have to pay the 15s. fee for him, and buy his sports uniform in order that he may go and look on at others practising sport. I do not think that should be necessary. I am pleased to see an increase of £280 for manual training and cookery. It is often claimed that we are educating our children in one direction only, namely commerce. This manual training for boys, and cookery for girls, is a corrective to that general tendency of education, and I am pleased to see an increase for those two branches of practical study. In one part of my electorate a teacher is taking a very keen inter-

est in the boys, teaching them manual training under the most primitive conditions. The result is a great credit, not only to him but also to the boys.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. WITHERS: I was dealing with the lack of accommodation for manual training in some of the country schools. The work done is a credit to those in charge, notwithstanding the lack of accommodation. Students at country high schools suffer in respect of the technical side of their education as compared with the children in the metropolitan area. I have previously drawn attention to a necessary improvement in this respect, but nothing has yet been done. Although there is a fair amount of education provided for boys in the country the standard could be improved. There are small schools in my district, at which only a few children are in attendance, just sufficient to justify the department in establishing a school. Although the school many not be large the children are entitled to some degree of comfort. I trust the department will keep that in view. Because of the limited number of children available it is sometimes thought the expenditure is not worth while. In such schools children have often suffered from the cold in winter time, and from the heat in summer time. I hope this matter will be attended to. I know the department is concerned about the accommodation for country teachers. The matter is a difficult one to overcome. Seeing that the department are trying to make amends in this direction I will not labour the point. When girls have studied to become teachers, and are asked to go into the country, and they find that the accommodation is not what it might be, we can understand that they are a little discontented. I know of girls who have taken up the profession but because they were sent a long way from their homes they decided to follow some other vocation. The department might take into consideration the time that some teachers spend in outback districts. Some of them have good certificates which would justify their being placed in better schools, but they are kept in small districts because there is no room for them elsewhere. The difficulty could be largely overcome if these teachers of equal grade were interchanged one with the other. I know of several cases of this sort which would jus-

tify such a scheme as this being put into operation. It has been said that our boys are leaving the State in order to get occupations elsewhere. That should not be necessary. We are training our boys to become engineers. There is also bound to be a fair number of engineers coming from the old country. If they are migrants and are establishing themselves in Australia, I suppose we cannot deny them the right to work. Once they are established in an industry they cannot be expected to make room for our local boys. Some skilled men have come here with the object of going upon the land, but have preferred to follow their own particular calling. I am pleased to see the progress that education is making in the State.

MR. MANN (Perth) [7.35]: I congratulate the Minister for Health on having appointed a psychologist. It is strange that the lady in question, whose duty is to improve the minds of children, should come under the Health Department, rather than under the Education Department. I hope that will not lead to overlapping and confusion. I thank the Premier for having granted a sum of money to provide for a special teacher at the foundling home. That institution must have a big percentage of mentally deficient children. The ordinary teacher might be quite efficient in the tutoring of normal children, but may fail when it comes to the question of handling backward children. In their case it would be wise to provide special teachers for the backward children. These children are at a disadvantage from the point of view of heredity and environment, and are greatly handicapped when they come to face the world. It is the duty of all Governments to do their utmost to give these children the best opportunity that can be given to them for the development of their minds. There was recently a conference in England of eminent men to discuss this very question.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member had better deal with this matter on the next vote.

Mr. MANN: I am dealing with the training of mentally deficient children.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The hon. member is dealing with the matter from the standpoint of the benefit these children will get from proper tuition by the appointment of some theorist in psychology. That could better be dealt with on the next vote.

The CHAIRMAN: That is so.

Mr. MANN: In that case I will reserve my remarks on this subject until later.

Hon. J. Cunningham: It is a matter of making your remarks under the right heading.

Mr. MANN: Perhaps the Honorary Minister would prefer that I should say nothing. His wisdom is so great that it is hardly necessary for me to say anything. I find that children educated in the metropolitan area cost on an average about £8 per head, while in the country districts the cost is £18 17s. 1d. per head.

Mr. Lindsay: Let us all come back to the city.

Mr. MANN: I do not desire that. All the speeches on this vote have been in the direction of advocating more country schools. The greater proportion of the education vote is being spent in the country.

Mr. Thomson: All the wealth is coming from the country districts.

Mr. MANN: In addition to the large amount spent on education a sum of £63,000 was spent by the Public Works Department in the interests of education, and most of that money went into the country.

The Minister for Lands: That does not come out of this vote.

Mr. MANN: It is all in the interests of education.

The Minister for Lands: It is a public works cost.

Hon. G. Taylor: Education costs altogether almost £700,000.

Mr. MANN: There is a lack of accommodation at the James-street School. It is overcrowded, so much so that the department have to make use of two or three small cottages in the same street. Classes are carried on there, and the children have to go backwards and forwards to these cottages. The department might well consider the advisability of erecting more adequate accommodation, upon a better site.

The Minister for Works: They are Government buildings.

Mr. MANN: Yes, but these buildings could be better used by a department which must of necessity be in the city. The school itself could be placed a mile or half a mile away from the centre of the town. It is not right that a large school, such as James-street, should be in the centre of the city. There is no ground for the children to play in. They have to use the streets for their games and

recreation. If the school were moved to the north, a mile or half a mile, more ground would be available and the present buildings could be used by the Government for some other department to much better advantage. Because the standard at James-street is a high one children go to it from the suburbs.

The Minister for Lands: If I could build seven miles of railway out of the money it would cost to build a new school very much more good would result.

Mr. MANN: That may be so. The Minister may be able to get seven or eight miles of railway, but he would very soon save the cost of the school in the rent he is now paying for departments scattered all over the city.

The Minister for Lands: You are two years behind. The Government are not paying any rent at all now.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is the capital cost, all the same.

Mr. MANN: The Government are now constructing buildings for their departments, and they will have to construct more very soon. I suggest that the Government take over the James-street school buildings and, instead of constructing another building for some department, use that school building for departmental purposes and build a new school.

Mr. Heron: And make the children pay additional train fares.

Mr. MANN: No. There is not much difference between getting out at Mt. Lawley and getting out at Perth. The hon. member surely does not suggest that for all time that school must remain in its present location.

Mr. Heron: The location is highly suitable.

Mr. MANN: It is highly unsuitable. Accidents have frequently happened to young children attending the school, because of the trams and the heavy traffic. The locality is not at all suitable for a school.

Mr. Heron: Very young children do not go to the James-street school.

Mr. MANN: Children of all ages attend that school. It is surrounded by public houses, and is close to the Roe-street lockup.

The Minister for Lands: Let us shut up the public houses.

Hon. G. Taylor: Shut up the lock-up.

The Minister for Lands: If the public houses are shut, we shall not want the lock-up.

Hon. G. Taylor: At all events, do not close the school.

Mr. MANN: There is another matter to which I had intended to refer, though I fear the Minister may again suggest that it comes under the Health Vote. That matter is the appointment of another teacher at Seaforth. It has been suggested that there are too many children at Seaforth to receive proper attention from the number of teachers available there.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I can assure the hon. member that that matter was brought up by the psychologist before a board representing all the departments, and that the Education Department have been recommended to increase the number of teachers at Seaforth.

Mr. MANN: It is pleasing to find one Minister capable of giving information and willing to give it.

The Minister for Railways: That wakes me up.

Mr. MANN: I shall reserve further remarks I desire to make regarding mental defectives and the Health Department to another vote.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [7.51]: I wish to say a few words regarding the driving allowance, to which reference was made last session and also, I believe, in the previous session.

The Minister for Lands: Likewise this session.

Mr. SAMPSON: The position remains as it was in 1924, when the variation in method was introduced. Unquestionably, from an educational standpoint country residents suffer disabilities. In order that a person may obtain the assistance which the driving allowance represents, a claim must be submitted stating that the family is not in a position to meet the expense. The 1924 report states what is practically the position now—

Even when schools have been supplied for such small numbers as are required under these provisions, many of the settlers find that their children have to travel long distances to reach them. Here again the Government assist them. If the parents arrange to drive their children to school regularly, they can, if they are in need of such assistance, obtain driving grants to help to defray the cost.

That position savours of charity. One section of country residents is placed at a disadvantage as compared with another section.

The income tax, I have always understood, was imposed for the purpose of securing from the more fortunate a return of part of their earnings. I claim there should be no distinction between sections of the people as regards the driving allowance. The variation which has been introduced is wrong in principle. An anomaly exists, and I hope that with next year's Estimates the old method of allowing the driving grant in the case of children over nine years living more than three miles from a school, and in the case of children under nine years of age living more than two miles from a school, will be re-adopted. The position formerly was that no claim was necessary. That is as it should be. To put in a claim is to do something which savours of a request for charitable assistance, and it is repugnant to every Australian. Tributes are being paid to-day, as they may very properly be paid, to the great majority of our teachers for the manner in which they join in sport with the children. I recently had opportunities at Gosnells and Sawyer's Valley to note how the teachers come from places as far distant as Pinjarra and Cannington in the one case, and Chidlow's and Baker's Hill to Swan View in the other, in order to take part in school sports. These facts show that the teachers are more than teachers in the ordinary sense, that they are good pals with the pupils. To this feature I must largely attribute the good results which are secured by the schools. In passing it is interesting to note the good work being done by the Education Department in another direction. I refer to the provision of young lady teachers for many of our country schools. The Roleystone school has been particularly fortunate in this respect.

Member: Are the lady teachers good-looking?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, and also remarkably skilled in household ways. Three young lady teachers have been sent to Roleystone, and one after the other they have been married. That is a very good thing, and the district feels very grateful to the Education Department. To-day there is a male teacher at Roleystone school. He is an excellent teacher, but there is just an element of doubt among residents of the district whether they would not prefer the young lady teachers to continue. I may also refer to the matter of school stationery and school books. Some criticism has resulted from a statement issued, I understand, by the department with regard to the books



used in schools. A number of manufacturing stationers in Perth have put in special machinery for the manufacture of school books, and now there is understood to be more than a possibility that the Government will prohibit the supply of stationery and school books from other sources than the Government Printing Office.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is wrong. Let the manufacturing stationers compete with the Government Printing Office. The chances are that then the children will be provided with cheaper stationery and cheaper text books.

Mr. Teesdale: Not made in the gaol, I hope.

Mr. SAMPSON: There are still numbers of books being imported into the State for the purpose of enabling pupils to pursue their studies. If the Government desire to extend their operations in the supply of school requisites, they might give consideration to the local production of these imported works. Whether it is possible for them to do so in competition with the imported article I cannot say, but the matter is worth looking into. In place of competing with private industry to the grave injury of people who have put in special machinery for the manufacture of school books, let the Government compete for the purpose of rendering the importation of school books and stationery unnecessary. I hope the Minister will give consideration to that aspect.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [7.58]: On this vote I wish to mention one or two parochial matters. I believe I am a rare offender as regards bringing parish pump matters into the Chamber. That is no credit to me, but is due to the peculiar centrality of the electorate I represent. There are two schools of which neither is actually within my electorate, though both are right on its borders, and of course serve it. I refer to the Thomas-street school and the Newcastle-street school. I have a small matter, not of complaint but of remark, as regards each of them. A month or so ago the Thomas-street school held a demonstration of work by the children, and I induced the Premier to go along with me to that demonstration. The hon. gentleman had a magnificent reception. There were 500 children

present—delightful children too—and they applauded the Premier to the echo, not because he was Mr. Philip Collier, or because he was the Leader of the Labour Party, but because he was the Premier. Indeed, it did one good, and got one out of the rut of party strife and party politics, to see the way those children, the majority of them probably children of people who do not vote Labour, accepted Mr. Collier as Premier of Western Australia and gave him a rousing reception. As a matter of fact, my political gorge, if I may use such an expression, was inclined to rise on account of the warmth of the reception, which I was almost inclined to think had been rather overdone. However, the Premier was pleased with his reception and delighted with the display he witnessed. As a result, "the acid was put on him," and he practically promised he would find money in order to harden the surface of the totally inadequate playing ground. Rubbishy gravel has been spread over the sand and it wears through, the playing ground being quite unsuitable for so many boys and girls. I would like the Honorary Minister to make a mental note that the Premier half promised that a small sum of money would be provided for this work. As to the Newcastle-street school, the Government recently decided that it should be closed. I introduced a deputation from the Parents and Citizens' Association in connection with that school, and after a lengthy argument, the Minister for Education finally agreed that if a suitable site could be found, he would arrange for an infants' school to be erected in the immediate vicinity. The chief complaint of the association was that small children under nine years of age would have to walk for a distance of two miles in order to receive their education. The Minister considered that the provision of a site would represent a way out of the difficulty, and that suggestion was readily accepted. I hope the Honorary Minister will see that the Minister for Education does not forget that proposal. Although the Minister did not definitely commit himself, I believe he will stand up to the assurances he gave. I hope a suitable block in the vicinity of the present school will be found shortly and that the Government will provide the money to erect the infants' school, so as to obviate the necessity for the little children walking for such a long distance.

Mr. Thomson: What do you regard as a long distance?

Mr. DAVY: Of course the member for Katanning at once compares the country with the town!

Mr. Thomson: No, I do not.

Mr. DAVY: What is a long distance in a town, from the standpoint of danger, is a short distance in the country districts. I have no doubt that many children in the hon. member's constituency have to travel five or six miles, or even more, in order to attend school.

Mr. Griffiths: They are used to it.

Mr. DAVY: But the parents get a driving allowance.

Mr. Thomson: No, they do not.

Mr. DAVY: The point is connection with the children in town walking such a distance is the danger from traffic. The whole point of the representations made by the deputation was that little children would have to travel a long distance through a very busy part of the metropolitan area. That is wrong, and should be avoided.

Mr. Panton: And the school to which the children will go is already overcrowded.

Mr. DAVY: That is another important point. The Thomas-street school may take a few more children, but when the Premier visited that school, one of the first of his remarks was that the playing ground was ridiculously inadequate for the children there. Some of the children will have to go to the James-street school, but that is already crowded. The other school to which they will go is at Leederville and that is the only one of the three where there is sufficient ground available to enable additions to be constructed to accommodate a larger number of children. However, if the infants' school is provided in the vicinity of the Newcastle-street school, the chief complaint of the parents concerned will practically vanish, although they would be better pleased if the present school were retained. Although fewer numbers have been attending that school for some time past, there is an attendance still of approximately 400 children, so that it is a matter of some importance. I hope the Minister will take a note of these points and make representations to the Minister for Education accordingly.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.5]: I desire to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that the time is opportune for attention to be given to the provision of educational facilities at Wiluna. I have mentioned this matter previously, but at

that time Wiluna was, and had been for some considerable time, practically at a standstill. That being so, there was some justification for no action being taken then, because it was expected that important developments would take place and that a larger school might be required. Wiluna has now become a big centre and on the mine near the town itself over 120 men are employed. As an indication that the hand of Providence has moved in regard to the development that is taking place in this State, the pastoral industry has shown signs of expansion at the same time. Thus there are a large number of men employed in and around Wiluna. Most of those men are accompanied by their wives and children and the first encouragement that should be extended to people living in such a remote centre is the provision of educational facilities for their children. I do not desire to attack the present Government or any other Government regarding the attention given to this matter. I admit that Wiluna has been at a standstill for a long time and the school has been allowed to get into a most dilapidated condition. It suffered from a cyclone some time ago and repairs were carried out in a haphazard fashion suitable to the occasion. The facilities available comprise a few old boxes and desks that have been there for decades. The whole environment is the reverse of pleasant and is not altogether sanitary. I will not say more, beyond directing the attention of the Minister to the unsatisfactory position, and the necessity for investigations being made with a view to providing more suitable educational facilities that are so necessary. I have already drawn attention to the fact that Wiluna is the furthest inland town in the State, being 220 miles from a railway on one side and 142 miles from a railway on the other side. Thus the town is very isolated, although people can live there who are used to a hot climate.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.10]: Some months ago the Chief Secretary paid a visit to the central school at Cottesloe. So impressed was he by what he was shown that he readily promised to provide a small sum of money to enable the local Parents and Citizens' Association to continue the improvements they had made. A sum of £30 or £40 only is involved. The local association spent about £200 in improving the grounds attached to the central school,

but were unable to provide a pump and tank necessary to enable them to water the grounds. The Minister promised that he would make available the sum I have mentioned in order to admit of the work being continued. The members of the deputation have been awaiting the introduction of the Estimates in anticipation of the amount being provided. I have the authority of the department and a reply to a question I asked in the House recently, for saying that consideration was to be given to the matter, subject to other works that had to be undertaken. I am content to draw the attention of the Minister to the position. As to the Eric-street school, I am pleased that the department are going ahead with the erection of additional facilities at a cost of £900, in order to provide urgently required accommodation.

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM** (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie—in reply) [8.12]: I thank the Committee for the manner in which they have dealt with the vote. Almost every member has expressed pleasure at the work being carried out by the Minister and the departmental officers. I have arranged for a full copy of the debate to be furnished to the Minister for Education. Mr. Drew has given his assurance that any suggestions submitted by members of the Committee will receive consideration, for he is only too pleased to receive advice from people interested in the education of our young. The report of the debate will include the suggestion by the member for Swan who is desirous of turning the Education Department into a matrimonial agency in the interests of the Roleystone district.

Mr. Sampson: I am glad you are with me in that.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The report will also contain the misdirected representations of the member for Perth, with which we are promised a repetition when the Health Estimates are under discussion.

Mr. Teesdale: The pamphlet will be interesting.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: With these few remarks I am content to allow the Vote to go through.

Vote put and passed.

*Department of Public Health, Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Honorary Minister, in charge of the vote).*

*Vote—Public Health, £32,974:*

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE** (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [8.13]: In submitting the Estimates for the Public Health Department, I do not intend to take up much of the time of the Committee. I will deal briefly with some of the new ventures that have been started by the Government. The expenditure last year on public health was £29,532 and the revenue amounted to £9,500. For the current year the expenditure is estimated at £32,974, an increase of £3,442. The increase in respect of public health activities has been principally due to three causes. The greatest increase is due to the additional activities in school hygiene. Last night the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), when speaking on the Estimates of the Medical Department, quoted figures showing the defects discovered by the medical examination of school children in America. I think I have had more statistics on the subject sent to me during the last two and a half years than has the hon. member; I receive them from all parts of the world and am interested in them.

Mr. Griffiths: I am glad to hear that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: We have a medical officer who is as interested in school hygiene and preventive medicine as is any man in the Commonwealth or the Empire. I refer to Dr. Dale. If there is an enthusiast, it is that gentleman. During the regime of the previous Government there was only one school medical officer, who did splendid work. Unfortunately she rarely went out of Perth. It was impossible for any one officer to examine even 50 per cent. of the school children in the metropolitan area, much less the children in country schools. Last year a time came when that lady felt that she could not carry on under the existing system. It has been decided, therefore, that she shall remain in the department as a half-time officer. The increase in the estimated expenditure for the current year is due to the appointment of two additional medical officers, one for the metropolitan area and one for the country area—particularly the agricultural districts. We have also made arrangements for Dr. Nelson, a lady doctor of Kalgoorlie, to do the goldfields districts. This work will take some time, and people must not be disappointed if the school medical officer does not appear at their particular school immediately. We shall now have three

doctors devoting the whole of their time and one devoting half her time to school inspection, which is a considerable advance on the one officer that we had in the past. Recently a school dentist has been appointed. In the two preceding years I asked for such an appointment, but the finances would not permit of the Treasurer approving it. The school dentist is at present examining the children at one of the metropolitan schools. When he has completed that work he will examine the children at one of the Fremantle schools. Then he will take three or four country schools in different districts.

Mr. Teesdale: Whatever you do, do not let him go to the North!

The Minister for Works: If we did, the cannibals might get him.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: By those means we expect to get a fair idea of the average condition in different parts of the State. Apart from exceptional cases, the dentist is not examining any child over the age of eight. Everyone will admit that children over the age of eight should be dentally examined, but the department were of opinion that if attempts were made to examine all the children up to the age of 14, it would take ten or fifteen years to do the work and then we should get nowhere in particular. By starting at eight years, the dentist will have sufficient information to show what is actually required for the children of eight years and under. He will not lose sight of any child once it has been examined, so that in five years all the children in the schools will have been examined. That method was adopted in Victoria. The dental department attached to the Education Department of Victoria advised me that if we were just embarking on this venture, we should restrict the examination to children of eight years and under; otherwise we would get nowhere. Dr. Dale approves of this arrangement, and I am prepared to accept his advice.

Mr. Teesdale: Will the older children be examined at all?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Only in exceptional cases. The medical profession state that it is a first-class investment for the Government to spend money on the care of children's teeth. There are many complaints from which people suffer in after life that would be prevented if the teeth had been cared for in the earlier years of life. Another activity which the Govern-

ment are encouraging is that of child welfare work. We have in operation nine child welfare centres, whereas three years ago there were only two. It is the policy of the Government that wherever any town or section of a town is prepared to comply with the conditions laid down, the Government will subsidise it to the extent of £100 a year for the establishment and maintenance of a child welfare centre. The first of the conditions is that the local authority shall subscribe a sum equal to 25 per cent. of the money subscribed by the local people. I consider that members of road boards and municipalities should take an interest in the health of the community they represent, and the best way to get them to take an interest is to make them pay something.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why do you collect taxes?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: To provide the £100 subsidy. I am asking the local authority to provide 25 per cent. of the money subscribed by the residents.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why should they have to keep on subscribing such money?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is in the interests of the people and many of them are doing it. I hope that in the near future four more centres will be established. One of the first centres started outside Perth was at Northam.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I thought you were still talking of the dentist. I acknowledge that the child welfare centres are doing wonderful work.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The only other centre in the country is at Kalgoorlie. For years the Silver Chain League has conducted an infant health centre at Kalgoorlie. When the conditions attaching to the Government subsidy were announced, the Kalgoorlie centre had a nurse who was doing excellent work. She, however, was not trained in child welfare work, and when application was made for the subsidy, I was unable to grant it. The second condition is that a nurse fully trained in child welfare work shall be employed, and the third condition is that the centre shall conform to the rules and regulations of the Infant Welfare Association.

Mr. Mann: We have to send our nurses to Victoria for training.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes; we have no child welfare training school here, but we shall have one in the near future. We have

had great difficulty in getting nurses fully trained in infant welfare work, but that difficulty is being overcome. We now have a fair number of nurses trained in this particular work. Two or three matrons of different hospitals, when their long leave became due, utilised it to go to the training college at Sydney for three months' training in infant welfare work.

Mr. Mann: At their own expense?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Long leave was due to them, but I am paying their salaries for any extension of time they may require. The matron of the King Edward Memorial Hospital is one of those who underwent the course of training. The Silver Chain nurse at Kalgoorlie was not qualified in child welfare work. The infant health centre was carried on under the Silver Chain for another 18 months, when the need for a fully qualified nurse was realised. As soon as one was obtained, I paid over the subsidy of £100. Since then the residents of Kalgoorlie have subscribed sufficient money to send the other nurse to Sydney for a course in child welfare. Another matter that has received attention is the appointment of a psychologist. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) asked why the psychologist had been placed under the Health and not under the Education Department. When representations were made for the appointment of a psychologist, I asked the departments interested whether there was any necessity for the appointment. The reply was that there was not sufficient work in any one of the departments to warrant the appointment. That applied to the Lunacy, Education, State Children and Gaols Departments. What was wrong with the suggestion of the whole of the departments amalgamating and employing a psychologist to do the work of the lot? I put up that suggestion with the result that a conference was held at which there were present representatives of the Lunacy Department, the State Children Department and the Gaols Department. A psychologist was appointed and there is now a board to advise me in connection with the work of that psychologist. On that board there are representatives from the Education Department, Gaols Department, Lunacy Department, and State Children Department. The creation of the department will involve a very big expense; there is no getting away from that. These things, however, have to be built up by degrees. As a matter of fact, to do all that is necessary would

mean an outlay of at least £50,000. That money cannot be found in five minutes. We can, however get things ready. The psychologist has done good work to date. The first thing she did was to examine the children in the orphanages. There is a percentage of those who need special care and attention, but unfortunately we have not many teachers who have been trained for the purpose of treating or teaching children of that class and it is necessary that we should endeavour, and we shall endeavour through the Education Department, to get teachers to take up that branch of the work. I am hoping that we will not experience any difficulty in that direction. It is not much use getting teachers if we have not the institutions in which the children can be taught. There is a good deal of work yet to be done by the psychologist before the Government are justified in expending any great amount of money in the building of an institution. The first thing to do is to get legislation through because we have no power at present to deal with mental deficient. Until we place such a measure on the statute-book, there is going to be difficulty. The psychologist is getting together copies of the legislation in existence in the other States and she will draft a Bill to meet the requirements of Western Australia.

Mr. Mann: The only State that has seriously taken up the matter is Tasmania.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. But New South Wales and Victoria are also now taking it up seriously. By way of interjection I informed the member for Perth that the question of the appointment of an extra teacher for the Seaforth Home had been considered. The psychologist went there and saw what was being done. She came to the conclusion that the place was understaffed and that there was too much work for the two teachers to do. Whilst the Salvation Army are conducting the institution, the Education Department are providing the teachers, one of whom is a psychologist. The first thing I want to see established in Western Australia regarding this department is a home for girls. At present we have no place in which to detain mentally deficient girls, where they can be taught or treated in any shape or form. One of the first things that I will endeavour to get done will be the provision of an institution wherein to train and teach these girls. I am advised that it will be a matter for the psychologist and the doctors to certify, and unless we have legis-

lation there will be no power to act. It may be absolutely essential to take a child away for its own protection as well as in the interests of those with whom the child has associated. Unfortunately, at the present time we have not the power to do that. If anything of the kind is done, it must be a voluntary arrangement.

Mr. Mann: A good many parents would take advantage of that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am prepared to admit that, but it is a bit risky to start to do very much on definite lines. Some parents realise that treatment is necessary and there are those who make appointments and bring their children along to be examined by the psychologist. Unfortunately, there are others who do not realise the importance of the matter, whilst some resent being told that a particular child may not be normal. There is not much more that I can say on these Estimates. Irrespective of which Government comes back, I hope that for the next few years at all events, money will be spent in the direction of curing the sick and that perhaps more will be spent in the direction of preventing sickness. We have started out on those lines and that policy should be continued in the future.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [838]: I am glad to hear what the Minister had to say about an important function of government. Child welfare is all-important and good work is being done at Northam.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Splendid work is being done there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Everything at Northam is good. The Minister is quite right in endeavouring to keep the people healthy. When I interjected that the Government ought to pay, I thought the Government were becoming a little too prone to levying special taxation for special purposes. The general taxation ought to be enough to cover the expenses of the Health Department and the other departments of the Government. At Northam it is only a small amount that is received, merely £25, and the people there have to supplement the Government grant. I believe nurses can be got to undertake this work for very small remuneration. I hope that this work will also be carried on in other places. Young mothers particularly get the help of these nurses and it is a great comfort to them and a benefit to the children. In Perth we have had baby clinics for

some years, but in the country not until lately. Some years ago a deputation asked for a sum of money to enable clinics to be started in Perth.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You granted £200 a year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am pleased to know that the work is being done and that it is being carried into the country. All Governments are anxious to do whatever they can to maintain the health of the people and the present Minister appears to be no laggard in that respect. It is fortunate for the State that he is taking such an interest in the matter. I rose merely to commend the Minister for the work that he is doing and also to speak a word of praise for the nurses, which work, I happen to know, is of the utmost value, especially to young mothers.

**MR. GRIFFITHS** (Avon) [840]: I was pleased to hear the Honorary Minister's remarks in connection with the administration of the Health Department and also what he had to say on the subject of medical inspection of schools. The appointment of three full-time and one half-time doctors is a distinct advance. In respect of child welfare there is an association of ladies in this State who make the subject a strong feature of their work, and it will be gratifying to them to know that steps are being taken by the Minister to increase the number of welfare centres from two to nine with the prospect of more.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [843]: The Salvation Army at the Seaforth Home are doing very good work. I can quite understand the anxiety of the Minister with regard to backward girls and I was pleased to hear what the Minister said respecting an institution for these girls. I hope it will be possible at a later stage to find the necessary money. I do not know whether the Eastern States are going in for this.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Only Tasmania.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is only in recent years that psychology has received so much attention. In the past, the backward boys and girls had to remain backward. When a child of ten had the intelligence of a child of six, it never received consideration; indeed the condition of the child was not realised. I join with the Minister in hoping it will not be long before what is being done for the boys will be done also for the girls. It is surprising the work the backward boys

of Seaforth are able to do. Many of them, backward in general matters, are remarkably advanced in particular matters, as, for instance, music, joinery, drawing, painting, and so on. I hope it will not be long before the dentists are able to give services in country schools, where children are at a great disadvantage as against those in metropolitan schools.

**MISS HOLMAN** (Forrest) [8.48]: I thank the Minister for Health and his departmental officers for the assistance they have given me, and I congratulate them on the good work they have done generally. Many complaints that I touched upon when dealing with the same Vote last year have since been remedied. I am pleased to note that the dentist has started work, and that his services will be extended to some of the country schools. I am afraid it will take one dentist a long time to do the whole lot.

**Hon. S. W. Munsie**: He could never do it.

**Miss HOLMAN**: During some of my recent visits to the country I have heard complaints as to the impracticability of taking full advantage of the medical examination of school children. As the result of such examination, the doctor suggests to the parents of the children that certain treatment should be given, as for instance dental treatment or treatment of the eyes, but unfortunately the parents cannot afford to send their children to Perth for that treatment, and so the children have to carry on without it. I have here a statement showing what is being done in Queensland. It reads as follows:—

The Queensland State Government have just inaugurated a travelling dental clinic for the benefit of citizens in far outback country centres, and especially for State school children. The new department will be under the administration of the Education Department. It is operated as a road motor vehicle. The clinic was sent straight out to Charleville, in the South-West, from where it is now working across country to Taroom. Its chief function will be to make departmental dental service available to the people in remote areas. Attention will be especially focussed on pupils of the department's correspondence school and pupils of itinerant teachers, not situated within access of established schools. The Minister for Education (Mr. Wilson) said the demands of children would receive foremost consideration, but in isolated parts where there was no practising dentist, cases of urgency amongst the adult population would receive such treatment as was practicable. In all cases, however, children would have prior claims.

That seems to me a very good idea, and I shall be pleased if the department here decides to set up something of the sort. I should like to ask the Minister whether further consideration has been given to the proposed abolition of the £15 premium that nurses in the King Edward Memorial Hospital have to pay.

**MR. WITHERS** (Bunbury) [8.51]: I, too, wish to express my appreciation of the department. I have found the Minister most sympathetic in all matters pertaining to health. I am pleased to think that, partly as the result of a few remarks I made last year on the Bunbury Hospital, when we were discussing this Vote, and partly through the assistance received from the Health Department, we have now established in Bunbury a committee that is likely to be very helpful indeed to the Government hospital. Last year the hospital Saturday and Sunday appeal realised only £48, whereas this year it realised nearly £100. It is very pleasing to know that the increased assistance given to outback hospitals is due principally to the fact that the Minister took advantage of the entertainments tax for the assistance of hospitals. But for that action, I am advised, the Government would not have been able to give a pound for pound subsidy to the hospitals. I congratulate the Minister heartily on his good work.

**MR. MANN** (Perth) [8.54]: I desire to congratulate the Minister on the special interest he is taking in child welfare and in mentally deficient children. I have occasion daily to see the operations at the East Perth branch of the Child Welfare League. From early morning till late afternoon scores of young mothers visit that centre and receive instruction as to the treatment of their children. I agree with the Minister that it is far better to prevent sickness than to cure it. I hope the time will come when the Minister will be able to realise his desire to establish a pre-natal ward at the King Edward Hospital.

**Hon. S. W. Munsie**: It will be opened on the 17th of next month.

**Mr. MANN**: I am pleasantly surprised to hear it. I was at one or two of the conferences held a year or two ago regarding the establishment of that ward, and I was able to do a little to push it along. As to

the mentally deficient children, the appointment of the psychologist is one of the finest things the Government have done. I know several parents of mentally deficient children who, of their own volition, have taken their children to Miss Stoneman for instruction. Recently I spoke to a father who has a boy eight years of age. When only 18 months old the child had meningitis, and was partly paralysed, which led to his becoming mentally deficient. That boy is now an expert swimmer, a good all round athlete, and is quite forward in many branches of sport. Yet he cannot apply himself to education, to anything requiring mental strain. The father has sent him from one school to another, and has had to take him away, either at the request of the teachers or because the teachers did not understand the boy and were knocking him about. His father took him to Miss Stoneman, who gave him a letter for the schoolmaster, directing that the boy should not be forced to try to keep up with the other scholars, or to undertake difficult lessons. Above all things Miss Stoneman said he was not to be thrashed at school. She predicted that when he reached 14 years of age his brain would so improve that he would make up a great deal of his lost time. Coming to this question of backward girls, Miss Stoneman told me recently she had a pathetic case, a girl 18 years of age who was quite out of the control of her parents. Miss Stoneman, having diagnosed the girl's case, said she was of opinion that if the girl could be placed in a home with good moral force behind her, someone who would understand her weakness, there would be an excellent chance of saving the girl. However there was no such place to send her to. Miss Stoneman told me she knew of several similar cases, and that it was essential that a suitable place should be found for backward and mentally deficient girls. Let me quote from a book written by Miriam van Waters as follows:—

In 620 cases of truancy in boys brought in 1923 to Juvenile Hall, the Los Angeles County Detention Home for the Juvenile Court, there were only 60 who were not in need of medical attention.

He goes on to say that truancy in children is an early sign that something is wrong with their mind. We know that the general thing to do with a child who stays away from school is to thrash him. The schoolmaster canes him, and when the

child arrives home the parent repeats the dose.

Mr. Marshall: I daresay you speak authentically upon that point.

Mr. MANN: It would not have done the hon. member any harm if he had been treated in that way. Only now we are beginning to apply ourselves to a study of this form of weakness in children. In years gone by we have given every attention to children born with deformed arms and legs, but the same attention has not been given to those who have had malformed minds, which cases it is so essential should be treated early. An eminent surgeon speaking at a conference in England recently drew attention to the fact that because of the advancement in industrial science it is more difficult to-day for a backward child or a backward man to find employment than it was in years gone by when most things were done by hand labour. To-day we are advancing in industrial science. It is a question of the survival of the fittest. Only the keenest workers that are available are employed, those who can apply themselves to working machinery. The mentally deficient are placed at a still greater disadvantage. We can well understand what would happen in the case of a weak minded person who found himself unable to do a job. He would not be strong enough mentally to fight against the position, and would go to the wall. What is needed is a home or a school—I do not like the term "home" as much as the term "school"—for educationable and employable children, those who are not too far backward to be trained, and have their minds developed so that they may receive sufficient education to render them employable. Some are so backward that they could not at the best take any employment. But there is a percentage who with proper training and education would be employable.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Many who would not be employable by outsiders could be sufficiently improved practically to maintain themselves and work in an institution, or on a farm.

Mr. MANN: That is so. Last night the Minister mentioned a case at the Old Men's Home, where there were some young men because there was no other place in which to put them. He said it was right and reasonable that these men should be given some kind of employment. I am very keen about this subject. I have had many years of



practical experience of these people and been closely in touch with them. I have watched them from the first inclination to go wrong up to the time when they have got out of hand. I have here a family chart that was prepared for me by two physicians. It embraces four generations. In the beginning a mentally strong man married a woman who had a slight weakness. After four generations the result is as follows: The first child committed suicide. A third child also committed suicide, the fourth had religious mania, and the fifth died in an asylum. Before the fourth committed suicide he married and had four children. Of these one was apparently normal, another was weak, another had delusions and died of phthisis, another died of brain tumor, and another was pregnant at the age of 15. The one that was said to be all right in her generation married. Of her children one committed suicide, and another attempted to do so. I present these facts to show the disadvantage that heredity brings to such people. Had they been under the care of a psychologist and received proper training from their youth upwards, the best may have been obtained from the worst. There may not have been the suicides, and the people who committed suicide may have had some mission in life. That brings me to the question of mental treatment and segregation. The time will come when we shall have to consider that point. But it cannot be done until the people are educated up to it, and realise the necessity of it in the interests of the community in general. I appreciate the endeavour of the Minister to administer his department to the benefit of these mentally deficient people, and hope that in the coming year he will be able to do even more than he has done in the past.

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE** (Honorary Minister—Hannans—in reply) [9.7]: I thank members for the manner in which they have received these Estimates. Mention was made of the disability of country people with regard to dental treatment. When a deputation from the Odontological Society and the Dental Association waited on me with regard to the establishment of a dental hospital in the metropolitan area, I asked them if they were prepared to reciprocate by having something done in the country districts. The president, Dr. Wilson, told me he would

undertake to circularise all the members in the State. Although I have not since seen him I have learned that he has received the consent of every registered dentist, provided we establish a dental hospital in Perth, as we have agreed to do, and the department supplies the material, to treat the school children in the country, as it is shown by the school examinations that they have defective teeth. That is a big step forward, and to a great extent takes away isolation from the country districts. The member for Forrest asked if the Government had abolished the £15 premium at the King Edward Hospital. I am not sure whether this premium, which was paid by unqualified nurses for a 12 months' course at the hospital, has been reduced or not. I am of opinion that it has been reduced to £10, and that the £10 that was charged to trained nurses for six months' training in midwifery has been abolished. We are now charging no fees to a trained nurse who wants to go in for midwifery experience. Some women who have had no previous training as nurses are desirous of becoming midwives. In future I wish to discourage such applicants. I know that in some cases women take on the work from sheer necessity.

The Minister for Lands: And some for convenience.

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE**: I want to see that every midwife who is trained in future is a qualified nurse. The sooner we can establish that and make it definite, the better it will be for the future mothers. Until recently a nurse who had three or four years' experience and was certificated, and desired to become doubly certificated and take the midwifery course, went to the King Edward Hospital. She received no salary, gave six months free service, and had to pay £10 for it. That has been abolished.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Public Utilities: Aborigines Cattle Station (Moola Bulla), £7,162:*

**MR. TEESDALE** (Roebourne) [9.12]: Some time ago I had occasion to make some comments with regard to this Northern cattle station. I have since had occasion to modify my views on the purchase of the station. I am now satisfied it is not likely to prove a bad investment. A first class man-

nger has been appointed. He is well up in stock, and has had a considerable experience of the Kimberleys. It is useless sending a southern manager to take charge of a northern station. The conditions are quite different from what they are in the south. The general opinion at the time was that the station was likely to prove disastrous, inasmuch as the cattle that were supposed to be there were considered to be very short in the tally. There has since been a bang-tail muster and already 1,400 cattle are in hand. After the country has been cleaned up it is possible the numbers may reach 1,700. This is only a small herd to start with. This station is not likely to be a great commercial success for some time. Four or five head of cattle are being killed every month for the natives. In contradistinction to the opinion of some pastoralists I consider they are fortunate, because if five head of cattle are killed every month on the station they will be saved that loss on their own stations. The natives congregate about this particular station. A good many of them are employed in effecting substantial improvements that will considerably increase the value of the property. With the aid of native boys the manager has erected a first class stock yard, comprising 200 or 300 sticks 16 feet long and 6 inches in diameter at the small end. This shows the class of timber that grows in the North. The job is a substantial one. The natives who are engaged in the work are being well fed by the State. Others are helping occasionally to the number of about 250. They are also fed and are doing good work. They are fed when they do work. When they do not work they get no tucker, which is perfectly right. The manager reports that he has some first class boys. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) and I have visited Moola Bulla station repeatedly. There are some fine stud bulls on the place, but no attempt appears to have been made by whoever may be responsible to sell them. If advertised they could readily be sold. Western Australia has been importing bulls from Queensland, but those bulls at Moola Bulla are equal to any ever imported. I think the number is 38, and the manager guarantees them to be pure-bred. An effort should be made to turn them into money. The neighbouring squatters would be only too pleased to avail themselves of these first class animals right on the spot, involving no expense in freight. It will be some time before the

Avon Valley cattle station becomes remunerative, but eventually it should prove a satisfactory investment. Any comments I offer are not necessarily hostile, but I question the advisability of starting a station in so remote a district as the Avon Valley, and also the prudence of tackling the natives there with so small a staff. A couple of hundred natives are in hand there now, and the staff might well be increased by two or three stockmen.

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM** (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [9.20]: The Minister is fully aware of the number of valuable stud bulls the Government have available. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) suggested that information regarding the bulls should be advertised for the benefit of north-western pastoralists. Within the past 12 months the Minister controlling the Wyndham Meat Works has made available quite a number of valuable bulls, but unfortunately, for some reason, the squatters have not seized the opportunity offered. The same remarks apply to the bulls at Moola Bulla station. Quite a number of imported bills are still on the hands of the Government.

Mr. Teesdale: There was enough outcry for bulls some years ago.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The position is as I state. The bulls on the Moola Bulla station have been advertised as available to the pastoralists if they require them. Up to date no applications have been received.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Aborigines' Cattle Station (Avon Valley), £1,723; Albany Cold Stores, £210; Butter Factories, £18,865—agreed to*

*Vote—Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking, £127,733:*

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [9.23]: When will the loan of £2,500,000 actually fall due?

Hon. J. Cunningham: In January next.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: On the 1st January, I believe. The interest on the loan will cease as from that date, which means that in future the scheme will be operated at a profit, and not at a loss as in the past. We were paying about £75,000 interest on the loan, and also about £75,000 sinking fund, though the sinking fund was abated while I was in London in 1922. The

scheme will henceforth pay, and I hope the price of water will be reduced, especially to the agriculturists. Goldfields consumers have had their annual water charges reduced by £45,000 already.

Hon. J. Cunningham: There can be no relation to the agriculturists because they are only charged on the capital cost of the extensions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know more about that than the Honorary Minister does, because I pay and he does not. The charge to the agriculturists is very heavy indeed. I am aware that interest and sinking fund on the cost of laying down the main is covered in each case. Until lately people wanting water from the scheme, and willing to pay 1s. per acre, secured supplies under agreement. Now the maximum rate is 1s. per acre if the main passes a property. If a property is within a few chains of the main, it is rateable for a certain distance back.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You are only just talking stuff for the purposes of the general election.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You cannot help it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I resent the suggestion. I do not need to talk election matter in this House in order to win the election. The Honorary Minister wants to be served; we on this side are endeavouring to serve. From now on the scheme will show a profit, and the goldfields have already had a substantial reduction. Perhaps the £45,000 annual reduction granted to the goldfields will have to be brought to account. I do not suppose it is included in the figures of this Vote.

The Minister for Railways: It is included in the Mines Vote.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This year only half the amount should be charged. When interest is no longer being paid, the scheme itself can stand that amount of £45,000.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Where did the sinking fund come from?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: From the taxation paid by all the people of the State.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Not from the scheme?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No. The general taxpayer paid about £2,000,000 altogether in meeting losses on the scheme during all the years it has existed. But

the general taxpayer now has the scheme, which is paid for. Therefore the water can be cheapened to the users. Apparently the Minister is in favour of charging a higher price than necessary for the water.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You fixed the price at 1s. per acre in the Belka district.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At the request of the residents. If the Belka people did not care to pay that rate, the scheme could not have been put in there. Now the scheme might be put in against their wishes, and they would still have to pay. That is the difference. However, I wish to discuss the position of the scheme after the 1st January, 1927. The amount contributed from the Mines Development Vote this year towards the cost of goldfields water should be not £45,000, but one-half of £45,000. If the revenue is £176,000 this year, there will be a profit of about £14,000—£49,000 less a half-year's interest. That is satisfactory, and it is especially satisfactory to know that the scheme is paid for.

The Minister for Lands: The scheme is not the only thing we owe for and are paying for.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, but I am referring to the scheme, and am not permitted to refer to other matters, like the Fremantle trams.

The Minister for Lands: They are not paid for yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And never will be because of the extensions that will be required, and other matters as well. I hope it will be found possible to reduce the price of water. I know that the Minister has increased the rate per thousand gallons.

Hon. J. Cunningham: We have done nothing of the kind.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think the Minister has.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I give you my assurance that it has not been done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At any rate, the charge for excess water in the farming districts is much greater than it is in the metropolitan area. I am not finding fault with the Minister, although I could do so at great length, but I trust he will be reasonable.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I am the most reasonable and best tempered man in the House.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is only one man in the House who thinks so. However, I trust the Minister will reduce

the price of water because the more stock we keep, the more revenue will come into the country. The Minister for Railways, who represents the Geraldton constituency, knows that a harbour is being constructed there at considerable cost. The people of the State have to make themselves responsible for the work and it will be a good investment in the end. It will not pay directly, but indirectly. I hope that the Minister will realise that work done in some parts of the State will be for the good of the whole State, although the returns for a long time may not be sufficient to cover interest and sinking fund charges.

The Minister for Railways: The Geraldton harbour will pay eventually.

The Minister for Lands: We will make the charges so that it will pay.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Perhaps the present Minister will do so, although I would not adopt that course. I would make the charges as light as possible.

The Minister for Lands: We would follow your footsteps regarding the Harbour Trust charges.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Undoubtedly the Geraldton Harbour will prove beneficial to the whole State and no one will object to facing a loss on the scheme for a time in order that developments may follow to the advantage of the State as a whole. The scheme under discussion has done much for Western Australia. It is true that we have had to contribute a lot of cash towards it, but it is necessary to sink money in these schemes in order to get money out of the work that is accomplished.

The Minister for Railways: If we cannot get the money from the earnings of the schemes, we must get it from taxation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And no one will say anything about it. When the Minister sees a possibility of doing so, I hope he will reduce the charges, provided he can make sufficient allowance for upkeep, which may become more expensive as time goes on. It has been found possible to make the pipes in connection with the goldfields water scheme last longer than was expected, and, of course, the farmers are taking a great deal more water now than formerly.

Mr. Griffiths: The consumption is practically fifty-fifty as between the country areas and the goldfields.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the point is that the pipes are being used to their full capacity.

The Minister for Lands: And the farmers are not charged a penny for the cost of the pipes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are charged for extensions from the mains. I think the charges imposed upon people who draw their supplies direct from the mains in the country districts are too high, although it is a different question when it comes to delivering water to a distance of 20 miles from the mains. Again I express the hope that the Minister, when he has no longer to provide for interest, will be able to reduce the cost of water.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.40]: Reference has been made to the wiping out of the loan in connection with the goldfields water scheme in January next. I believe the sinking fund will be sufficient to cover the loan. Figures supplied recently by the Engineer-in-Chief show that the scheme is wrongly named now. The daily supply taken by the goldfields represents 1,750,000 gallons and the agricultural areas and country towns take a similar quantity. Thus the supply is on a fifty-fifty basis. The original mileage of the pipe line was 466, but that has now been extended to 1,454 miles, so that there has been an increase of practically 1,000 miles of mains. I had intended speaking much along the lines of the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. At a country gathering recently reference was made to the great scheme undertaken by Lord Forrest and Mr. C. Y. O'Connor and the opinion was expressed that it was a pity no great monument had been erected to Lord Forrest's memory. Mr. C. J. Moran, who was present, said that the pipe line and other public works represented the best monuments that could be secured to perpetuate the memory of Lord Forrest.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Hear, hear!

MR. GRIFFITHS: In view of the extensive increase in agricultural pipe lines, a review of the position is opportune.

The Minister for Lands: These lines have never paid; they impose a charge upon the people.

MR. GRIFFITHS: The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the time had arrived when something should be done, and if that is at all possible we hope it

will be done. A sinking fund is being provided to cover the expenditure and, apart from renewals, I presume the sinking fund will wipe out the original cost of the extensions. The necessity for review arises particularly where men are taking up new holdings and have not arrived at the stage where their farms are fully developed. Immediately an extension is carried out, the farmers concerned are taxed upwards of £50 for their water supplies. During the early stages of development that is a heavy burden. The position should also be reviewed regarding the excess charges levied. For instance, the charge for excess water in one district is 6s. 8d. per thousand gallons, yet the charge in another district quite close to that one is only 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons. I cannot see where the justice of such differential charges comes in.

Hon. J. Cunningham: To what districts are you referring?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: To the Hines Hill and the Belka districts. When the imposts are such as to cover the first charges, I consider the excess rates should be the same for all such extensions. There is another small complaint that the Minister may be able to rectify. I refer to the system of measuring water in the country districts in cases where the meters are out of order. I have a copy of a notice that was sent out to a farmer and in my opinion it does not indicate good business. The notice in one instance read as follows:—

Re Meter 1332. Please take notice that your meter went out of order between 30th June, 1925, and 16th July, 1926

The Minister will observe that that covers a period of over 12 months during which the meter was out of order. Yet meter rent was charged all the time! Should not these meters be read once a month or at least periodically? Why should they not be repaired within a week or two? In another instance the notice read as follows:—

The consumption between 30th June, 1925, when the last reliable reading was taken, and 16th July, 1926, when registration re-started, is estimated at 18,300 gallons, in accordance with by-laws, and you are charged accordingly.

The owner says it is quite impossible to estimate the quantity of water used in a month or during any particular period of the year. A man might have stock in his paddocks during one year, and not in the next. He said that judging from this experience, the meters were put in merely to

enable the department to collect the rents without registering the quantity of water used, and that the department protected themselves by falling back on the regulation that enabled them to estimate the quantity of water used. Another meter about ten chains distant was out of order for over eight months, and the experience of the owner there was similar. Perhaps the Minister will be able to ascertain why meters are allowed to remain out of order for such a long time. I am grateful to the Honorary Minister for what he has done for the people outback. There was no electioneering business about it. When I approached him and explained the position of the people at Bodallin, he realised their difficulties. As with the previous Government, he was unable to do anything at the time owing to lack of funds, but he told me that when money became available, he would do what he could. The money became available, this extension was one of the first undertaken and the people were duly grateful for it. Prior to that they had to pay for water to be carted distances of 20 to 24 miles.

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM** (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [9.48]: I promise the member for Avon that the matters he has brought under notice will be investigated with a view to giving satisfaction to the consumers. As to the redemption of the loan, I am not sure of the date, but I believe it is the 1st of January of next year. Regarding the price of water to settlers connected by extensions with the 30-inch main, the Leader of the Opposition is fully aware that the extensions were undertaken at the request of the settlers. For years there has been the practice of the Goldfield Water Supply Department to make such extensions only on a requisition signed by two-thirds of the settlers representing at least 50 per cent. of the land held. Prior to the amending last year of the Goldfield Water Supply Act extensions were made by way of special agreement and at the request of the settlers. When the Act was amended last year a simple provision was inserted that extensions should be made only at the request of at least two-thirds of the settlers representing 50 per cent. of the land held. It will be recognised, therefore, that the Government have not forced these extensions into any area, but have received an application from the requisite majority of settlers. Those settlers are called upon to pay no charge whatever to cover interest and

sinking fund on the original cost of the goldfields scheme. The only charge made for agricultural extensions is sufficient to cover interest, sinking fund and maintenance charges, roughly 8 per cent. on the capital cost of the extensions. The Leader of the Opposition said provision was made in the amending Act passed last year to levy a rate of 1s. per acre. That is not correct. Provision was made that not more than 1s. per acre might be charged.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I explained that.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member did not; he left the Committee in a haze. His statement was not at all clear.

Mr. Teesdale: It was clear enough to us.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The actual position is that since the amending Act was passed last year, extensions have been made at a cheaper rate than 1s. per acre.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Keep on talking until I get a copy of the Act.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: During the regime of the Mitchell Government an extension from the 30-inch main was carried into the Belka agricultural area and the rate fixed by agreement was 1s. per acre. That is the maximum rate charged for any extension from the 30-inch main into an agricultural area. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that that rate was arrived at by agreement between the department and the settlers who required the water. Many extensions in the Walgoolan area, in Westonia and other districts between Merredin and Southern Cross, made within recent years, are rated as low as 4½d. per acre, though some range as high as 10d. per acre. I have already pointed out that no charge is made to settlers to cover interest, sinking fund, or maintenance charges on the original goldfields scheme.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Except those who get the water direct from the 30-inch main.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: There are very few such settlers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are a good many.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Each consumer is called upon to pay a holding fee of £5. to cover the initial cost for the domestic supply. Even after the redemption of the main loan there is no possible chance of granting any reduction of the rate charged for agricultural extensions because we charge only sufficient to cover the actual capital cost of the extensions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What do you charge for excess water?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I shall deal with that presently. Each extension stands on its own. Years ago all settlers east of Baker's Hill and west of Merredin then supplied by extensions from the 30-inch main were charged a flat rate of 5d. per acre, but some years later, I believe during the administration of the Mitchell Government, the rate was reduced to 3d. per acre. The excess water rate was fixed at 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons. That accounts for the statement of the member for Avon that at Hine's Hill the rate is 2s. 6d., while on a newer scheme put in during the Mitchell administration, the excess rate is fixed at 6s. 8d. per thousand gallons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Half a crown.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No, 6s. 8d.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Anyhow, I was not Minister for Goldfields Water Supply.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I should be only too pleased if it were possible to reduce the price of water to the whole of the consumers connected with the goldfields water scheme.

Mr. Thomson: You are rating as high as £33 on a holding through which the main passes.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The settlers asked for and agreed to the rate. If anyone is rated at £33, he must have a fair acreage of land, seeing that the original charge was 3d. per acre. If a man in one of the older settled areas has such a large holding, he is in a much better position to meet the charge than is a settler in one of the newer districts.

Mr. Thomson: I am referring to one of the newer districts.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: When people ask for a service from the State to enable them to make a success of their holdings, and they agree to meet the annual charges for the capital expenditure, where is there any reason for complaint? The people themselves are satisfied. I have received no complaints from the settlers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They know it is useless to complain.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: They are satisfied in the knowledge that they have an insurance against drought conditions. Formerly it was most difficult for them to farm their holdings successfully, because a water supply was not available. With a water supply they are able to carry on their busi-

ness with a greater measure of confidence and also a greater measure of success.

Hon. G. Taylor: And more assured success, too.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The member for Avon said this was a wonderful scheme. We all acknowledge that, and know that it reflects great credit upon those who inaugurated it some years ago. It confers great benefit upon the people, and will continue to do so. There is a quantity of water still available daily from the Goldfields Water Supply for additional agricultural purposes. All that water will be used up between Merredin and Southern Cross. Land settlement is going on apace there. Clearing operations are also well in hand, and this year many farmers between those centres will be making a fine success of their holdings. Several extensions have been made within the last 12 months, and will continue to be made in the interests of land development between Merredin and Southern Cross. I have endeavoured to clear up some misrepresentations unintentionally brought before members by the Leader of the Opposition.

Item, Operating and general expenses, including cost of work to be reimbursed, £98,000:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The operating charges must increase with each extension. The cost is not heavy where the farmer takes water direct from the main. Many farmers object to the payment of these rates because they have water supplies of their own.

Hon. J. Cunningham: All vacant blocks in the metropolitan area are charged with water rates.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The operating costs will increase, because people have to take water they do not need. I hope the Minister will endeavour, when the interest bill has no longer to be met, to reduce these charges.

Mr. SAMPSON: During the regime of the late Government approval was given for the supply of water to Parkerville, but through a misunderstanding the people were unable to avail themselves of the opportunity of getting it. Will the Minister be prepared to give them that supply? The people are willing to guarantee enough money to cover both interest and sinking fund on the undertaking. All that is re-

quired is a sum of between £3,000 and £4,000.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The matter is receiving consideration. The department must first have regard to the urgent needs of the community. A considerable sum would have to be guaranteed by the people of Parkerville. The experience of the department of these guarantees has not been too happy. Before making any extensions, in which a large amount of capital is involved, serious consideration would have to be given to the proposal. Residents of this district have not been able to pay much owing to the sparseness of the settlement. The revenue from rates would not meet the cost of the undertaking. We must conduct the department on businesslike lines, and any agreement that is made would have to be a sound one. We are always prepared to consider those who need a water supply. We have quite a number of applications for extensions from the 30-inch main. No matter how desirous we may be to meet the wants of the people, these applications cannot always be granted, on account of financial considerations.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have pointed out time after time that the people concerned are prepared to find the necessary funds. A number of residents who were previously prepared to put up guarantees have been supplied from the York-road by means of, I think, a 1½-inch pipe. The effect has been to some extent disastrous. The whole of the residents of Parkerville, including the Parkerville Home, could have been supplied with water by gravitation from Mount Helena. The position now is that four or five of the large consumers in the district are supplied by the pipe from the York-road. This means that the people of Darlington and Glen Forrest, who have to depend on the York-road supply through, I believe, a 3-inch pipe, will at a much earlier date than would otherwise have been the case find themselves in need of water. A 3-inch pipe carries only a limited supply. Parkerville is under grave disabilities in this matter. The giving of consideration to the matter by the Minister is not satisfactory unless the work can be done and water provided.

The Minister for Lands: The consideration means about two millions additional money. The work is necessary, but the funds are not available.

Mr. SAMPSON: No engineering difficulty is involved.

Hon. J. Cunningham: There is a financial difficulty.

Mr. SAMPSON: That financial difficulty the Parkerville people are prepared to meet. They have signed guarantees, and have increased the amounts of them. However, their position has been rendered more difficult by the temporary scheme referred to, for which I blame the department, though not the Minister. The temporary scheme has meant the delay of a permanent scheme which would have given satisfaction to all the people of the district. One would have thought that the desires of the people, buttressed by guarantees, would have received the serious consideration of the department, especially as the amount involved is but small. I must continue to urge that Parkerville be provided with a water supply. It is within two or three miles of the Mundaring pipe line, and within a few miles of the Weir itself; and yet the Parkerville people are unable to secure water. I understand there is grave dissatisfaction regarding the charge levied for water at Darlington and Glen Forrest. The charge is the wholly unreasonable one of 5s. 6d. per thousand gallons. At Guildford, I understand, the charge is 2s. 6d. If the same water were brought to Perth, the charge for it would only be 1s. 6d. or 1s. 3d. It appears that the further one is from Perth and the nearer one is to the point of supply, the higher the charge becomes.

The Minister for Lands: The 5s. 6d. might represent less than 1s. 6d., by reason of the expenses.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know the number of people in the district is limited, but I have always understood that the present Government, like all Governments, wished to encourage people to live in the country or in the outer suburban areas. When the Darlington and Glen Forrest guarantees were put up, it was agreed, at a conference held at Chidlow, that a charge of 2s. 6d. per thousand should be made. That is recorded on the file. Nevertheless the department insist on levying a charge of 5s. 6d. The arrangement made should be honoured.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Government Refrigerating Works, £5,854:*

Mr. SAMPSON: What are the prospects of a modern refrigerating plant being in-

stalled at Wellington-street, or is the intention to continue working with the present obsolete plant, with regard to which complaints are widespread? The ventilation and refrigerating capacity are out of date and bad, and moreover the refrigerator is costly to work on account of the hand labour required for conveying stores in and out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member is fully aware that there is before Parliament a Bill for the establishment of a metropolitan market, which will include cold stores.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote — Kalgoorlie Abattoirs, £2,455 — agreed to.*

*Vote—Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £27,498:*

Mr. MANN: What reduction has been made in the charges of the Metropolitan Abattoirs as compared with last year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot state the exact charges, but a considerable reduction has been made.

The Minister for Railways: A very considerable reduction.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £141,484:*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [10.20]: All the big works in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply come under the heading of the Loan Estimates. The Estimates before hon. members now deal with revenue and cover the activities of the department more than the big works upon which we are engaged at present. Last year we had a phenomenal year and there was an average consumption of 8,600,000 gallons per day. During the year the record for the daily peak consumption was reached when 18,164,000 gallons were taken in one day. That record was considerably in excess of the previous greatest consumption.

Hon. G. Taylor: Or for any other city with an equivalent population.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, much higher.

Mr. Mann: Considering the nature of our soil it must always be higher here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think we must recognise that fact. Our consump-



tion must be more than in any other city of Australia from that standpoint, and plans have been made in recognition of that fact. We have tapped the four new sources of supply and were able to get through last year with very limited restrictions. The pipe lines tapping the Wongong, Churchman's and Canning Brooks all conveyed water to the city and despite the abnormal consumption and abnormal weather, we were able to get through with restrictions extending over less than three weeks. Those restrictions applied only to mechanical sprinklers.

Mr. Mann: Had the heat wave continued much longer, you would have been on thin ice?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Probably a lot of people would not have required any water at all had the heat wave continued, for they would have died. Had we known that the hot spell would have broken so soon, it would not have been necessary to impose any restrictions at all. However, the weather prophets advised us that there was no likelihood of any break in the weather and therefore the restrictions were imposed.

Mr. Sampson: During the worst period, did you take the whole of the water from the Canning?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. We did not do that from either stream. There will always be some water coming down the creeks. There is a lot coming down just now and at present we are not taking any water from Churchman's Brook at all.

Hon. G. Taylor: You used some bore water.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not since April last, when the bores were shut down.

Hon. G. Taylor: But you used the bores during the hot months.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I expect we will have to use them during the forthcoming hot months, but only for three or four months. One point about the streams is that there is plenty of water in winter, but little in summer when the water is required most. That means that we have to build large reservoirs to hold the water that flows during the winter months in order that it may be available for use during the summer. Until the period is reached when the big holding reservoirs are available, we will not be able to assure a supply to the city without some restriction. In view of the remarkably wet winter there is a possi-

bility of the streams providing a better flow during the summer months this time than was available last year. It is possible that during this summer there will be no restrictions at all, but we cannot be certain until the Churchman's Brook work is completed.

Hon. G. Taylor: When will that be?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We hope to impound next winter's rains in the Churchman's Brook reservoir. The core wall is finished to the level of the watercourse and it is now a question of building the banks. During the winter we had to slacken off operations considerably and we employed only sufficient hands to keep things moving. It was impossible to do any work during the wet winter months when the heaviest rainfall on record there was registered.

Mr. Sampson: Does the fact that land has been resumed back from the impoundage area mean that the flow will continue for a longer period?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, the experts say it depends upon the rainfall as to whether the ground will retain the moisture and the off-flow in the creeks continue.

Hon. G. Taylor: The late rains will help.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, because the ground is so sodden. The Engineer-in-Chief is not prepared to take any risk with the wall at Churchman's Brook, and I will not use any influence with him in that respect. If he considers the bank will not be safe to impound next winter's rains I will not influence him in that regard.

Mr. Thomson: You would be courting disaster if you did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He is a highly skilled man who is paid a high salary, and the decision must rest with him. No political pressure will be used to influence his judgment on that score. I am not in a position to say whether we will be able to impound the water there next winter, for the decision will rest alone with the Engineer-in-Chief. In his latest report to me, Mr. Stileman said that he hoped to be able to impound next winter's rains in the Churchman's Brook reservoir. If that is done, I believe our troubles regarding water shortages will be at an end. As soon as the Churchman's Brook reservoir is completed we propose to shift the work to the Wongong Creek site or the Canning site. Although it was originally intended that the next reser-

voir to be constructed would be at Wongong, which is a beautiful stream, the reservoir there will not be nearly as big as that to be constructed at the Canning. I believe Mr. Stileman is undecided which he will proceed with next. Trial borings have been put down at Wongong and good holding ground has been found. There have been many reasons for the delay at Churchman's Brook. The main reason for the delay, which will mean a considerable increase in the cost, is due to the fact that the original intention was to go down approximately six feet with the wall. It has been found necessary to go down 115 feet to find rock bottom. That is at the deepest part of the wall and was necessary in order to secure a proper foundation. They have had to go down 90ft. for the greater part of the wall although the original estimate was for 6ft. only.\*

Mr. Thomson: Were not tests made?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think so. A small shaft was put down and instead of striking solid rock, they got on a floater. No effort will be spared to complete the work as soon as possible, but whether or not they will impound next winter's rains there will rest entirely with the Engineer-in-Chief.

Mr. Mann: Have you got the work directly under Mr. Stileman, or is it under Mr. Parr?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Parr is Engineer for Water Supply, but he has to refer all decisions to the Engineer-in-Chief, who is now responsible for all engineering work. There was a time when the Engineer for Metropolitan Water Supply did things on his own initiative, without consulting the Engineer-in-Chief, but that no longer obtains. Once Churchman's Brook is finished, we shall be at an end in respect of supply, and shall then be able to keep up to the demand; that is, provided the Treasurer can find the money for the work laid out. We will go on with either Wongong or Canning, and the programme will take 12 or 14 years to complete.

Mr. Thomson: What do you now estimate will be the cost of the work?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Engineer-in-Chief is now going into the details. Of course the original estimate has been considerably increased since they had to go down 115ft. I have asked the Engineer-in-Chief to give me detailed reasons for the increase. The next

problem is that of discolouration. Although the supply is now there, the water is not on all occasions free from discolouration. Some months ago I formed a committee of departmental experts to investigate the problem. The committee consists of Dr. Dale, Dr. Simpson, and Mr. Parr, the engineer, who consults with Mr. Stileman, the Engineer-in-Chief. I have asked that committee to report to me on the best methods to adopt to overcome the discolouration. Those gentlemen have been taking tests and examining the position. It seems to be their general view that the bore water was the original cause of so much rust in the pipes. Now that the bore water has been stopped, the hills water, with its large percentage of oxygen, releases the rust and causes the discolouration. Another reason is that the smaller mains have been in use for so long that they are heavily corroded, and the increased pressure of the new supply is displacing much of the corrosion. If that is so, we shall have to replace all the smaller mains, which will mean an enormous expenditure that can only be spread over a number of years. So it will take a great deal of time to rectify the position.

Mr. Mann: The extraordinary thing is that the trouble is spasmodic.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so. The water may be all right to-day and greatly discoloured to-morrow.

Hon. G. Taylor: I have seen it in my home bad at 9 o'clock and all right at 11 o'clock.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have been systematically examining the mains and scraping and flushing them. Whenever we get a complaint, we have men to go out and examine and flush the whole of the pipes whence the supply complained of is coming. I have invited the public to send in complaints, so that we may trace the trouble to its source. I do not know what more I can do. I have the best experts available meeting regularly and discussing the position, and I know they are most anxious to do what they can to remedy it. The Engineer-in-Chief himself, I find, has lodged complaints about the supply to his own home. He has been investigating the position personally. No effort will be spared to remedy the trouble and secure a pure supply.

Mr. Davy: Is the rust harmful in any way?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, the medical men are agreed upon that.

Mr. Heron: But it is capable of staining clothes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have imported the latest appliances for chlorinating the water. They are affixed to the sources of supply at Wongong, at Churchman's, at Canning and at the Victoria Reservoir. So everything possible is being done to ensure a clear supply.

Mr. Davy: The discolouring matter settles in about a minute.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The engineers advise me that when the big draw-off takes place in the heat of the summer, the discoloration will disappear. It is only whilst there is but a slow draw-off through the pipes that the discolouration is there. Yesterday, of course, the water was pretty bad, but that, as I explained in reply to a question by the member for North Perth to-day, was owing to the fact that we had turned on Mundaring to supply part of the metropolitan area. Previously we had Mundaring shut off at Bayswater, and out to that point we were supplying from Wongong. The warmer weather brought a greater demand, and so we decided to draw a little more from Mundaring. That reversed the flow in the pipes as far as Maylands, and so accounted for the discolouration. That could not be avoided. I can only repeat that the officers are giving the problem close attention, and that no effort will be spared to secure a pure supply. As to sewerage, the Subiaco reticulation is well in hand. The tunnel for the outlet has been completed, the tanks are now in course of construction and we are commencing to work at the outlet to the ocean.

Mr. Davy: Will that cover the rest of West Perth?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, we are doing it in blocks according to the contour of the country.

Mr. Davy: West Perth is reticulated up to one side of Outram-street, but the balance to Thomas-street is not sewered.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The balance comes in the next block. The hon. member can see the plan at the office. As one block is finished, another will be commenced, and we hope to have all of it finished by next year. Provision has been made to continue the work until it is completed. Some of the houses in Subiaco have been connected. The scheme would have been in operation now but that the rough weather interfered with the work at the

ocean outlet. That work will take four or five months to complete.

Mr. Davy: Will the tanks be in the sand hills?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No they are a good distance this side of the sandhills. They are close to the old Subiaco depot beyond the Claremont Asylum, but the tunnel runs through the sandhills and continues beyond the rocks a couple of hundred yards into the ocean.

Mr. Richardson: That is the work you are finishing now?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes the work in the ocean could not be undertaken until the weather moderated. I signed a contract to-day for a supply of piles and the work will be completed in the course of four or five months—at any rate before the next winter sets in. As I have pointed out the metropolitan water supply has been greatly improved, though I am not satisfied with the quality of the water. From a health point of view there is nothing wrong with the water, but no one likes discoloured water, especially as the rates have been increased to meet the huge expenditure on the new schemes. I hope that the departments experts will soon find means to overcome the discolouration. The work of carrying the pipe line from the three new sources—Wongong, Churchman's Brook and Canning—into the city, work that cost in the vicinity of three-quarters of a million pounds, was carried out without any labour difficulties. Although increased wages were awarded and the 44-hour week was introduced, the work was completed for less than the estimate cost. That achievement is highly gratifying to the officers in charge of the work and reflects great credit upon all connected with it.

Mr. Mann: You are not too well satisfied with the extra anticipated cost to complete it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member is referring to Churchman's Brook. No one could foresee that difficulty. I have no desire to blame my predecessors. An estimate was given to the previous Government based on the assumption that the wall would have to go down only 6ft. As it is, we have had to go down 115ft. in the deepest part. Perhaps greater precaution could have been taken, but no man can see what is beneath the surface. We have connected Fremantle with the larger main and shortly we hope to link up Fremantle from near Victoria Park along the south side of

the river, so as to have a complete circle in the event of a breakdown. Thus we shall be able to supply Fremantle or the city from either side of the river and meet any emergency.

Mr. Davy: Can you see a sufficient supply if we get half a million of people in the metropolitan area?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The engineers have prepared an interesting chart. They anticipate that within 40 years we shall have to tap every one of the little streams between Perth and the Murray River at Pinjarra, and build reservoirs right along the hills, in order to provide an adequate supply for the city.

Hon. G. Taylor: I shall be pleased to see that work completed.

The Minister for Lands: That will be an opportunity for some of the young ones.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the new hills supply was turned on I told the public that the Engineer-in-Chief was investigating the possibility of training some of the water that now overflows Mundaring weir back into the Canning or Wongong catchments. Surveyors are or shortly will be in the field to investigate that scheme. The Engineer-in-Chief is satisfied that that end of the hills is rather over-reservoired for the quantity of water supplied while the Mundaring end is rather under-reservoired. If the water that now overflows the weir could be trained back the other way the Canning and Wongong catchments would hold it, and thus we could impound a great quantity that now overflows the weir and runs to waste.

Mr. Thomson: Have you a report from the Engineer-in-Chief as to raising the height of Mundaring weir?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No engineer in the department will stand that scheme.

Mr. Thomson: Not even the new Engineer-in-Chief?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know whether Mr. Stileman has examined it, but not one of the other engineers approves of it. We could get more water from Mundaring weir if we had a bigger pipe, but I think it would be wise to look for fresh sources of supply and leave the Mundaring supply for the agricultural districts. We do not want to see so much water running over the weir to waste, and if effect

can be given to Mr. Stileman's scheme, a lot of the overflow will be saved.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.52 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 11th November, 1926.*

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

### BILL—METROPOLITAN MARKET.

#### *Personal Explanation.*

HON. H. J. YELLAND (East) [4.35]: Under Standing Order 383 I wish to make a personal explanation concerning my remarks on the Bill. I had referred to the fact that the Producers' Markets had raised the charges from 5 per cent. to 7½ per cent. on the sale of products. I intended to convey the statement that the Producers' Markets had, in conjunction with other produce merchants, agreed to raise the cost from 5 per cent. to 7½ per cent. Because I did not make myself clear I feel I have in some way placed the Producers' Markets in a wrong light. My explanation makes it clear that the Producers' Markets were not responsible for the raising of the charges, but this had been done in conjunction with the other produce merchants, all of whom agreed to this with one exception.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 9th November.

HON. J. E. DODD (South) [4.36]: The Bill is long overdue. It will help to provide facilities for the people, and tend to bring the producers and consumers to-