

include freehold so as to be in conformity with the amendment that we carried at an earlier stage.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What amendment do you propose?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That in line 1 after "which a" the words "freehold or" be inserted.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I see the hon. member's point. Should we not include the words that we previously included in subparagraph (v.)?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not think that is necessary.

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Amendment, as amended, put and passed.

Progress reported.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—NATIVE FLORA PROTECTION.

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland, read a first time.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.

Second Reading.

Order of the day read for the resumption from the 6th November of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

House adjourned at 9.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th November, 1935.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—WHEAT.

Commonwealth Grant to Necessitous Farmers.

Mr. PATRICK asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is it correct that the Commonwealth grant to necessitous farmers was provided for farmers whose crops failed last harvest? 2, Is it intended to allocate the unexpended balance of the grant this year? 3, Is it correct that Agricultural Bank clients only are now receiving benefit from the fund?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, and proved to be necessitous as set out in the Commonwealth Act. 2, The money can be expended only in accordance with the Commonwealth Act, and if there proves to be a balance—which is not anticipated—the Commonwealth Government will have to be consulted regarding its disposal. 3, No; no discrimination of any sort was or is being made.

Bulk Handling Legislation.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to intro-

duce this session a Bill to deal with bulk handling of wheat?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Premier) replied: Yes. The Bill is now in course of preparation.

QUESTION—ROYAL DUTCH AIRWAYS.

Facilities at Wyndham.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Premier: In view of the announced intention of the Royal Dutch Airways to extend their service to Australia, and bearing in mind the great advantages likely to accrue to Western Australia if the airport is established in our State, will the Government offer every reasonable facility to the Dutch company in their enterprise and also bring the Wyndham airport up-to-date and made suitable for the requirements of the company?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Premier) replied: The Dutch companies concerned have already been interviewed on behalf of the Western Australian Government, and the advantages of Wyndham as an airport stressed. The matter of bringing Wyndham airport up-to-date and made suitable for the company is one for the Commonwealth Government. If definite proposals are put forward all possible encouragement and assistance will be given fullest consideration by the State Government.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [4.35]: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, the 20th November, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and orders of the day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

This is the usual motion that is presented at about the current stage of the session. I believe the date on which we propose that Government business shall take precedence is much later this year than it has been in the last six or seven years. The legislative programme of the Government is well advanced in both this House and in the Legislative Council, and we do not expect members will be asked to sit, as has been the practice in past years, almost up to Christmas Eve, with several all-night sittings prior

to closing down the sessional programme. There is not much legislation that the Government propose to introduce during the remainder of the session, but that which will be brought forward will be of first-class importance, and we desire members to have sufficient time within which to give proper attention to the measures. It is rather a pity that private members who have motions or legislation to be placed before the House did not take advantage of the position earlier in the session. On many Wednesdays we adjourned at a very early hour because there was no private members' business to be transacted. I notice that now, a few weeks before the session may be expected to close, a crop of motions and Bills is indicated by private members, and it is quite unfair for them to introduce such matters towards the end of the session. The Government desire the work of Parliament to close during the first or second week in December. There will be ample time within which to give consideration to Government business and private members' business that now appears on the Notice Paper. On the other hand, I would not encourage members to bring forward more business for consideration unless they desire to sit right up to Christmas Eve or afterwards. As to the date on which similar motions have been moved in previous years, I have had a return taken out and I find that motions to accord Government business precedence were moved in various years on the dates indicated:—1927, October 26; 1928, October 23; 1929, October 31; 1930, October 22; 1932, October 26; 1933, October 18; 1934, November 7; 1935, November 12. As it is practically the middle of November when the motion is placed before members this year, I have no trepidation in asking the House to agree to it.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.38]: I was glad to hear the Minister say that he proposes to give private members the necessary opportunity to discuss the business that they have on the Notice Paper now, but I was rather surprised at his statement that it was unwise for members to introduce their business belatedly. Simultaneously with the notice he gave of his intention to move the motion he has placed before the House, Ministers gave notices of motion for leave to introduce six new Bills. In addition to those Bills, we know from answers given to questions in this Chamber that the Govern-

ment intend to introduce two other important measures. If the Minister can accuse members of acting belatedly in presenting their business, we, in turn, can accuse the Government of being equally negligent.

The Minister for Justice: That is not so. We have presented a lot of legislation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We have closed the sitting at an early hour on days when Government business was before the House. It has been a habit all along to introduce legislation belatedly, and that tends to necessitate late sittings, which the Minister says the Government desire to obviate this year. We have no knowledge of the contents of the Bills that are to be introduced, but two—one dealing with bulk handling, and the other with the aborigines—will probably be substantial measures.

The Minister for Justice: The Bills of which I have given notice are consolidating measures.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I presume there will be some minor amendments as well, and in those circumstances the Bills may not take very long to deal with. We have assisted the Government, as far as an Opposition can, in transacting the business of the House, and we are desirous of giving them an opportunity fully to deal with the legislation that will be introduced. At the same time I do not want Bills to be introduced belatedly because under such conditions we cannot pass good legislation. It is unwise to indulge in all-night sittings if we can arrange our business without adopting that course. There is no objection to the motion, and as the Minister has pointed out, it has been moved at a late stage, probably the latest in my experience as a member of this House. Generally speaking, however, we are anxious that all Bills shall be brought down at a stage of the session that will give us an opportunity fully to consider them.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.40]: I have no objection to the motion, but I take exception to the Minister's statement. He has been a member of this Chamber for a long period, and he knows full well that frequently a private member has to move motions or submit legislation almost impromptu, so to speak. He may be confronted with a position that necessitates action being taken almost straight away, and he may have no knowledge of the subject until a few days before he has to present the matter in Parliament. On the other hand,

the Government have a pretty complete knowledge of what legislation they propose to introduce. That applies particularly to the more important type of measure. If we look at the Lieut.-Governor's Speech we see that there are several Bills of importance, if we may judge from the references to them, that have not yet been presented, and I believe they will make their appearance later in the session. If the Government desire private members to act promptly in presenting their business, the Government themselves should set an example and bring down their legislation early in the session. After all, that which is presented by any Government represents the important legislation to be dealt with. In past sessions I have not known any Government to be obstinate and neglect to give private members an opportunity to deal with what business they desired to bring forward. I do not think the Minister was correct in charging members with presenting business late in the session, particularly as the Government themselves have been so lackadaisical with regard to their legislation.

The Minister for Justice interjected.

MR. MARSHALL: I have looked at the Lieut.-Governor's Speech and there are two or three Bills mentioned there that we have not yet heard of.

MR. RAPHAEL: They are yet to come.

MR. MARSHALL: The Government have a knowledge of what legislation they intend to introduce.

The Minister for Justice: There is plenty of time for Government business to be dealt with.

MR. MARSHALL: We are to deal with the Bill for the bulk handling of wheat. The Government have had the report of the Royal Commission before them for a long time.

The Minister for Justice: And you consider that contained all the information we required?

MR. MARSHALL: Not exactly, but it probably contained the bulk of the information on which the legislation will be framed. I desire that private members shall receive reasonable consideration, and at least courtesy. I do not say that the Minister for Justice acted discourteously, but he did accuse private members of submitting their business belatedly. When he formulates such a charge, we can with greater reason advance a similar accusa-

tion against the Government, who have not bestirred themselves in that respect. On several Tuesdays and Thursdays when Government business was dealt with, we adjourned before tea, at tea time, or at an early hour of the evening. Those adjournments were made because the Notice Paper showed there was a shortage of business to be dealt with. In those circumstances, the Government cannot say that private members will be solely to blame if the session should continue until Christmas Eve. Personally I am not much concerned how long the session lasts, provided that we can deal with legislation in a proper way. During this session, the Government have been equally dilatory in bringing legislation before the House.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton—in reply) [4.45]: I do not think the member for Mt. Marshall has any right as he has done to charge members of the Government regarding the business of the House.

Mr. Marshall: I am charging you with regard to your statement.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: My statement was that the Government generally expect private members who have business to bring before the House to introduce it at least by the middle of October. On this occasion the Government have not considered it necessary to bring down this motion until a later date than that of the last seven or eight years.

Mr. Marshall: Notice of motion was given to-day of which the member concerned had no idea until a week ago.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: An opportunity will be afforded to discuss such matters. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the extensive programme of legislation and the desire of members on his side to assist the Government to get it passed. The Government are pleased that legislation of such importance has been dealt with so expeditiously. We do not wish to chide anyone about delay.

Mr. Marshall: Your statement did.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No, my statement was that if members desired to get their motions or Bills through, they should introduce them by the middle of October.

Mr. Marshall: Sometimes we cannot do that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am not referring to matters of urgency, which could be introduced as urgency motions. What I desired to point out was that the Government could not afford the time to consider motions or legislation introduced by private members towards the close of the session. In 1932, I think, the session consisted of three periods, each period separated by a few weeks, and in the last two periods private members were not permitted to introduce business except at the discretion of the Government. There was no discourtesy on my part. Members are aware that in every session there is a last-minute rush to complete the business, and comparatively unimportant matters are allowed to stand over. If members wish to have their business dealt with, they should introduce it early in the session. However, I have given the House an assurance that an opportunity will be afforded to discuss all the business on the paper, but I ask members to understand that in the event of the motion being carried, there will not be much chance of dealing with new business, as the intention of the Government is that the House shall sit for another three or four weeks at the outside.

Question put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Nulsen, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Miss Holman (Forrest) on the ground of ill-health.

BILLS (6)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Supreme Court.
- 2, Limitation.
- 3, Legal Practitioners Act Amendment. Introduced by the Minister for Justice.
- 4, Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 5, Public Service Act Amendment.
- 6, Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Water Supplies for the Minister for Labour.

PRIVILEGE—INACCURATE PRESS REPORT.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.51]: I rise on a question of privilege regarding an

incorrect report of Thursday's proceedings published in the "West Australian" of Friday. I opposed an amendment moved by the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) and the "West Australian" reported me in a manner incorrect and untrue. The report is likely to create a wrong impression among members of the Country Women's Association in my district, an organisation that is doing a wonderfully fine work. The newspaper report began—

Mr. J. H. Smith (Nationalist, Sussex)—

I do not know where they got the constituency of Sussex—

opposed the amendment. He said that he did not believe in petticoat government. He doubted whether women's organisations wanted a woman on the board.

The following is an exact account of what took place:—

Mr. J. H. Smith: I oppose the amendment. I do not believe in the proposal.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: You do not believe in petticoat government.

Mr. J. H. Smith: All of us are governed by our womenfolk. Probably the amendment would not be accepted as a compliment by women. The appointment of a woman to the board should not be mandatory. If the Government consider that two representatives of the consumers should be women, they will appoint two women. There is no power under the Act to prevent a lady from being appointed to the board. However, I do not think the ladies desire such appointments.

The Minister in charge of the Bill used practically the same words afterwards, and the amendment was defeated by a very large majority—almost three to one. I trust that since I have directed attention to the matter, the "West Australian" will publish a correction in fairness to me. Otherwise, the report will do me great injury in my district. I have a great respect for the women. The Country Women's Association is doing much good work in my district.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—NATIVE FLORA PROTECTION.

Third Reading.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.55]: I move—
That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.56]: The Bill provides that a proclamation shall

be issued by the Governor defining the area over which the measure will operate and also the variety of native flora which may not be picked. After the decision of the Committee the other evening, I hope the Government will give effect to the wishes of the House by excluding private lands from the operation of the proclamation. I think the Government can accept that as an instruction, in view of the vote taken the other evening.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan—in reply) [4.57]: I do not think there is any need for me to make further comment at this stage. The Bill has already suffered sufficiently and I hope it will be passed without further injury.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.58]: As the Minister explained when introducing the Bill, this measure will merely continue the operation of the Act for another year. That is really all it aims to do, but I should like to point out that this is a voluntary form of taxation which the people have accepted, and they are evidently subscribing to it very generously. The public, however, ought to know that of the money they subscribe, only 48 per cent. is allotted in prizes, 15 per cent. is absorbed in expenses and the balance is available for distribution. That balance, of course, is of very great benefit to the Government, because it relieves them of the responsibility for providing a large sum of money which otherwise they would have to find.

Mr. Raphael: And also provides help for many who would not otherwise receive help.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot answer for that and the Government can answer for themselves. I think the Commission

might review the amount of commission now being paid for the sale of lottery tickets. They are allowing agents 10 per cent. and, judging by the very large advertisements appearing in the Press, the agents must be making a good deal of money from it. They are advertising extensively, not only in the newspapers, but also over the air. If they can afford to do that out of the commission received, it might be possible to give a little more money by way of prizes. I hope the Minister in control will take this matter up with the Lotteries Commission. I should also like to know whether the Minister approves of these lotteries before the Commission put them on the market. It is provided, under the Act, that he shall first give his approval. The Act also provides that there shall be set out in detail how it is proposed to allocate the money. The Commission have the very substantial credit balance of about £50,000. I admit some of this money is earmarked for the King Edward Maternity Hospital, and other purposes. I presume all that has been submitted to the Minister. There is, however, still in hand an unallocated £15,000. The Act definitely provides that the Commission shall set out in detail how they propose to distribute the profits. I do not believe the section concerned is applied, it is more or less a dead letter. I should like the Minister to tell us whether that is so, and whether he has approved of the lotteries being held. He must accept certain responsibility in connection with this legislation, but I am afraid it is passed over to the Commission, and that he is not accepting the responsibility required by the Act. In looking through the allocations that are made, and at the information supplied to the Press, as well as by the Minister, I have come to the conclusion that some of the allocations are outside Section 2 of the Act. This section sets out what are charitable purposes. Section 19 provides that the Minister may, at his discretion, allocate £250, provided it comes within Section 2, that is, the definition of "charitable purposes." I have come to the conclusion that the term "charitable purposes" is being stretched beyond what is provided by Section 2.

The Minister for Water Supplies: Of which do you complain?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will go through the lot when we are in Committee. I did not think the Minister would question it.

The Minister for Justice: It is you who are questioning it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I did not think he would question my statement.

Mr. Raphael: He has called your bluff.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is surprising how some people can see amusement in things that are not funny. I have read the statement made by the Minister, according to "Hansard," and also the information contained in the Press. I can give a number of instances of what I have in mind, when we are in Committee. It is my duty to bring under the notice of the House what I believe to be a stretching of Section 2 of the Act. I presume the public are quite willing to have this voluntary form of taxation. By means of it a great deal of revenue is raised, and this relieves the Treasury of the necessity for finding between £40,000 and £50,000 a year for charitable purposes. In the circumstances, I do not propose to offer any objection to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.4]: I should like to know why this measure is being brought down for 12 months only. The Act is either right or wrong. If it is right, and the Lotteries Commission are doing valuable work, I cannot see why it should be continued for only another 12 months. If it is wrong, it should be dropped altogether; but if it is right it should be made a permanent Act. This is not emergency legislation. Why is it necessary for the Act to be continued only for one year, and then to go through the same procedure to have the Act extended for another 12 months? The Commission are doing good work. There may be some complaints, but I suppose there always will be. I know that benefit is being derived by many people who otherwise would not get any benefit. The Act should be made permanent.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [5.5]: I support the second reading of the Bill, and concur in the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). The appointment of a chairman and members of the Lotteries Commission should be taken out of the probationary period of 12 months. Like other boards and administrators, they have to define some policy, and provide some method of control. To be faced with a tenure of office of only 12 months is hardly fair to them. The members of the Commission have

proved themselves to be good administrators. They have been eminently fair in their allocations of the fund, as between city and country. I speak with knowledge concerning my own electorate. If any request that was made warranted the concurrence of the Commission, the Commission was liberality itself. Another thing is the overdoing of the advertising of these lotteries, both in city and country. A lottery is not inherently bad, and there is nothing wrong with gambling of that type. There is, however, a lot that is wrong with the thrusting down people's throats of that sort of thing at picture shows and elsewhere, as well as in the newspapers. Some of the agents of the Commission must be very affluent people. The other day I noticed two columns in the "West Australian" setting out how many prizes this, that or the other agent obtained, and pointing out that people could do very much better at the "Black Cat" over the road, or elsewhere. The whole thing is reaching the stage of the ridiculous. A curtailment of that form of advertising is long overdue.

Mr. Warner: The cost of the advertising does not go to the Commission.

Mr. BOYLE: It comes out of the 10 per cent. commission. That is a very high rate to pay. On the occasion of the last lottery, the agents divided between them in commission about £1,837. The services rendered for that money are not commensurate with the amount paid.

Mr. Raphael: There are many agents in the country.

Mr. BOYLE: There should be fewer agents, especially in the metropolitan area. There seems to be no difficulty about getting hold of an agency for the selling of these tickets.

Mr. Raphael: It provides work for people.

Mr. Sleeman: It is difficult to secure an agency.

Mr. BOYLE: If it is difficult now, it has not been difficult in the past, judging from the number of agencies that have been allotted.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You cannot get one in the metropolitan area to-day.

Mr. BOYLE: I should like to see them curtailed in the metropolitan area. When the Government first brought down this legislation, they promised it would do away with the importuning of the public for the purchase of tickets, such as was going on

in every alleyway in the city, in window recesses and other places. To-day we find at practically every street corner and in every window invitations to the public to "purchase your ticket here." I would also draw the attention of the Government to the lack of a proper definition in Section 2 of what is a charitable object. It does not seem right to expect the Minister to be the arbiter concerning all objects of charity. Quite recently I supported an application on behalf of a public school in my electorate. This school is distant from the railway line about 21 miles. It suffers all the disabilities of isolation. The Parents and Teachers' Association asked for assistance for the school with respect to a wireless set. Wireless is now past the stage of being an amusement, especially in country districts. It is fast becoming an essential, because it removes that feeling of isolation which is the most killing factor amongst isolated farmers in the State. It may be commonplace in the city. One has only to look at the number of wireless licenses that have been granted to see that 80 per cent. of them are held by people living within 50 miles of the General Post Office. I hope the Government will take into consideration an amendment of the Act to permit of well-authenticated applications from parents and citizens' associations being entertained, especially in remote places. Wireless sets are to-day of very definite educational value. In Committee I intend to move for an amendment along these lines.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.11]: I support the last speaker concerning the publicity that is given by agents of the Lotteries Commission with regard to prizes and the conduct of lotteries generally. One of the reasons advanced for the introduction of the Act was the discreditable sights seen at every street corner, and along the main streets and by-ways where people with collection boxes, tickets, cross-word puzzles and other things were gathered to get money out of the public. This type of thing had reached a most objectionable stage. It was understood that occurrences of this nature were to be abolished. To-day one has only to pass some of the establishments of the agents of the Lotteries Commission to see some very unseemly advertising. I know of one

place outside which there is a kangaroo of almost life size associated with the words "Hop in, Mum." This form of advertising has been adopted to catch the eye with a view to inducing people to buy tickets there.

Mr. Sampson: There is nothing objectionable about a kangaroo.

Mr. MARSHALL: But it does not look nice. We can blame the advertising for many forms of gambling. Horse-racing is encouraged by the long epistles that appear in the morning Press dealing with gallops, trials and racing generally.

The Minister for Mines: It is necessary information if you want to bet.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the information were not forthcoming, people would not want to bet. It should be sufficient for any agent who is selling lottery tickets merely to have outside his establishment the letters "Licensed by the L.C.C.," standing for "Lotteries Control Commission." Instead of that we have all this window advertising, the footpaths congested, and people wanting to know what tickets have been drawn.

Mr. Hawke: Evidently it pays to advertise.

Mr. MARSHALL: Bearing in mind the huge sum of money that is paid out in commissions, I suggest that the Lotteries Commission would be well advised to pay wages for the selling of tickets. An enormous sum is paid to the agents every month through the sale of tickets on one lottery. That money would be ample to employ six or ten men in the selling of tickets, and provide them with a reasonably good wage. I understand that one agent gets as much as £100 out of each sweep.

Mr. Raphael: But he pays wages out of that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am doubtful as to the amount of money he pays away in wages. When there are three or four ticket books lying on the counter and people are writing out their own tickets, not much expenditure in wages is necessary. I suggest there are people who cannot qualify for the invalid pension and are unable to obtain sustenance who, so long as they are of good character, could be employed as ticket-sellers in congested areas. I admit that in isolated localities the present system would have to be retained. On the other hand, in the cities

the Lotteries Commission would be well advised to pay for the service direct instead of allowing a percentage on tickets sold. If the appointment of ticket-sellers in place of agents would mean a column or so less in the newspapers advertising winners, that would commend the change to me. Undoubtedly the lotteries are doing much good, but why we should be asked every session to continue the system I do not know. If it is right, let the Act be placed on the statute-book permanently, subject to the personnel of the Commission being changed at fixed periods. There is no occasion to have the measure brought up annually. There is nothing wrong in lotteries. All other countries have the system.

Mr. McDonald: Not England.

Mr. MARSHALL: If England has abolished lotteries, it is only recently. State-controlled lotteries were adopted in England.

Mr. McDonald: They were abolished scores of years ago.

Mr. MARSHALL: According to information I quoted in moving the second reading of the Betting Control Bill, large public works were built in England out of funds provided by State lotteries. The Government would be well advised to make the Act permanent and give the Commissioners some security of tenure.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The Act is here for keeps, anyhow.

Mr. MARSHALL: Men who are there for only 12 months cannot give the same enthusiastic application to the job as they would if they were in it permanently. I object to the advertising indulged in by some agents, and I would much sooner have the Commissioners permanent than for a year only. No member of the Commission can feel secure under present conditions, and a policy cannot be formulated by men not long enough in their positions to give effect to it.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.20]: I support the second reading. Certain phases of the subject, however, might well be considered by the Minister in Committee. What has made annual re-enactment necessary has been the attitude adopted by another place towards the personnel of the Commission. At the inception let me congratulate the Government upon their selection of the present chairman, Mr. O'Mahoney. If the whole of Australia, not only Western Australia, had been canvassed

for applications, a more suitable chairman could not have been selected.

Mr. Marshall: What about Mr. Clydesdale?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We do not want to discuss Mr. Clydesdale.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Mr. Clydesdale is no longer chairman.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not discuss Mr. Clydesdale.

Mr. RAPHAEL: For once I agree with you, Mr. Speaker. I agree that it is wrong to discuss Mr. Clydesdale.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. RAPHAEL: This Bill should be acceptable to another place if it provided for the continuation of lotteries for three years at all events. In Committee the Minister might consider the advisableness of altering the Commissioners' tenure. Much has been said about the appointment of ticket-sellers. Perhaps a little more consideration might be given by the Commission to what is being done by their agents. In my own district, despite the fact that Parliament has legislated to the effect that no one must sell Tattersall's tickets in Western Australia, one agent is selling State lottery tickets in conjunction with Tattersall's tickets. At least one member of the Lotteries Commission has been made acquainted with that fact. As to advertising, I had the opportunity to investigate the operation of the corresponding Act in Sydney. Advertising has been practically abolished in Sydney itself. There one must go to the main office to procure a ticket. That system would do away with most of the advertising here. But would subscribers to the lottery benefit by the abolition of city agents? Like other members, I claim that the portion of the subscriptions which is allotted to prize money is wrong. In my opinion, if there is any over-subscription to a particular lottery, nothing should be taken away from the over-subscription to be put into charitable donations. If a lottery is over-subscribed to the extent of £500, only about £240 of that amount comes back in prize money. That is wrong. The public subscribe with an open mind, knowing full well that portion of the money contributed is to be utilised for charitable purposes. It is evident that the public subscribe willingly; otherwise the lotteries would not be the success they are. But a fair proportion of

the money subscribed should go back to the public in prizes.

Mr. Lambert: You are on sound ground there.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I hope that in Committee amendments will be carried laying down that at least 60 per cent. of the money subscribed should go back to subscribers. It has been stated that far too much money is spent in advertising. I suppose it is the same in connection with running lotteries as in any other walk of life—if one does not advertise, one does not get on. The agent for the sale of lottery tickets who advertises most, using the air as well as the Press, brings in more subscriptions. It is like a snowball gathering momentum. The advertising started in a small way. Then there was active competition on the part of agents, and so the advertising grew. This increased advertising resulted in the sale of more tickets. Thus the thing goes on. The Government must now take definite action, or the advertising will expand still further. I do not often agree with the Leader of the Opposition, but this afternoon he was on definitely sound ground.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I must have been wrong if you agreed with me!

Mr. RAPHAEL: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition made a mistake in being on sound ground. Reading through the list of donations made by the Lotteries Commission, I have had the pleasure of seeing an amount granted to the hon. member's electorate.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Where?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Leader of the Opposition knows as well as I do. In urgent cases I have applied for allocations to my own electorate. After proper investigation, a donation was granted in each justifiable case. The Lotteries Commission have done marvellous good during the years of depression by assisting those who could not have been assisted otherwise. I hope the Minister will be prepared again to give the Legislative Council an acid test, and then another place might agree to extend the life of the Act by three years.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Müllington—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply) [5.27]: A few questions have been raised to which I desire to reply. There is the question whether approval has been rightly given to donations. Before each of the main lotteries, the charitable objects in view

have been submitted to the Minister set out in proper form, and have been approved. It is not practicable to set out the charitable objects of each lottery before it is drawn, as by the strict letter of the law should be done. As will readily be seen, that is impossible. Every application for a donation before being granted has to be properly made and properly approved. The Leader of the Opposition suggests that too wide an interpretation is given to the term "charity," that we do not adhere strictly to the definition in the Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You agree with that, do you not?

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE: That is the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You agree that that is so?

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE: Just a moment; allow me to continue. The member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) said the definition was not sufficiently wide. That hon. member wishes to include State school requirements in it. I consider that would be altogether too wide an interpretation, setting up a highly dangerous precedent. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to which particular donation he objects. All donations are carefully considered before being made, and though they do not come within—

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is all I want you to admit.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE: —the original definition of "charitable object," they do fall within the discretionary power of the Minister.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There is no discretionary power.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE: The hon. member has to show me that a mistake has been made. It is a question of the Minister's judgment, and may I add that donations are invariably made on the recommendation of the Lotteries Commission. As regards smaller lotteries, sweeps and raffles, I have always insisted on their being submitted to the Minister; and I understand that the present Acting Minister has adopted the same policy. So that the Minister does know of all applications for permission to run these small affairs. As to the Commission paid to ticket sellers, I am disposed to agree that ten per cent. is too much. Although the total commission

amounts to 15 per cent., the lotteries are really run on very economical lines, because 10 per cent. of that 15 per cent. has been paid to the agents. Originally it was decided that the commission should be 10 per cent. Prior to the advent of the Lotteries Commission, up to 20 per cent. was paid on the sale of tickets in other lotteries, so great was the competition between the promoters of those various lotteries. Consequently at that time it was considered fair to limit the commission paid to the sellers of the State lottery tickets to 10 per cent. Personally I think it is excessive. Because it is a generous commission, there is keen competition amongst the agents, and a good deal of advertising is done by them. I do not know if we have anything to do with the suggestion that sometimes the advertisements are of an objectionable character, for certainly that is not confined to the sale of State lottery tickets. However, we cannot deal with it in this measure. Someone suggested that we have not completely eliminated all other lotteries from the charitable field. I have to admit that we have not entirely put an end to the tenure of the lotteries of various organisations which were in existence prior to the passing of the Act. The idea was not only to do away with those appeals, for it will be remembered that in the beginning lottery tickets were sold openly in the streets: that, certainly, is something we have discontinued. The Commission as far as possible have run the thing as decently as it can be run, and I hear very few complaints.

Members: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE: I remind those who had thought to move amendments to the measure that the only permissible amendment would be in respect of the period of extension. We endeavoured last session to get the measure extended for five years in order that the board might formulate some policy and, with the surplus over and above what is needed for the ordinary charitable requirements, carry that policy into effect. At that time the idea of the Commission was that the surplus should be devoted to the building of free wards in connection with the Perth Public Hospital. I do not remember whether this House objected, but another place certainly did object to the proposed extension of the period. It must be remembered that the present Act is the result of agreement be-

tween this and another place, as arrived at by a joint committee of both Houses. So the Government do not propose at this stage to throw the whole thing into the melting pot. The Act was agreed upon after a very acrimonious discussion, and it is operating very nicely and with very few complaints. This Parliament objected to a term longer than one year. I should say the Government would favour a longer period, but we are not attempting to impose our views on the House, for we have accepted the policy laid down by Parliament. Certainly the Act is far removed from any suspicion of partisanship. It was agreed to by both Houses of Parliament, and all that we now ask is that its term of operation shall be extended for one year. I wish to make it clear that the approval of the distribution of funds is in every instance properly and officially given. There is nothing slipshod about the way in which the lotteries are run, and those allocations that strictly do not come within the definition of "charitable purposes" are recommended by the board and approved or refused by the Minister. Also all the small lotteries, raffles and so forth, are sent to me in the form of a list, and I carefully scrutinise them, and they have to be approved by me. I really think that under the present management—

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am not complaining of the management.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I believe the present management have the utmost confidence of the public. We have accepted the policy laid down by both Houses of Parliament, and just now we do not wish to bring up any debatable question. This measure is simply to extend the period of operations of the Act from 1935 to 1936.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 21 of the principal Act:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not wish the Committee to misunderstand what I said on the second reading. I pointed out that the Commission were stretching the definition of "charitable purposes" as provided in the

Act. I agree that many of the allocations made are well outside the scope of the definition, and I think the Minister agrees also.

The Minister for Police: They certainly do not come within the definition of "charitable purposes."

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We may all agree that they are worthy objects for assistance, but I think it would be better to extend the definition. Some of the boy farms, I think, ought not to come under this definition, but to say that they are not worthy of assistance would not be just. All I am worried about is that if once the Commission get outside the law, it may be difficult to prevent them from going still farther afield and doing what they like. I have here the published lists of distributions.

The Minister for Police: That in itself is a safeguard. The whole of the distribution is published.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not say there is any hole and corner business, but the Act sets out clearly for what purpose the money shall be used, and we have gone outside that. I think that, next session, it would be wise to broaden the definition.

Mr. Hegney: Leave it stand over until next session.

The Minister for Police: Yes, I prefer that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of course you do, because there will be a change of Government in the meantime, and so you will not have to worry about it. The Minister has agreed to my contention that the Commission have gone beyond the law, and so I have nothing farther to say.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and, on motion by Mr. Stubbs, read a first time.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1935-36.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 5th November on the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and

on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise, Minister).

Vote—Agriculture, £80,165 (partly considered):

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [5.42]: I was pleased to hear the Minister introduce his Estimates in such an all-embracing manner. It seems to be usual to refer to the housing accommodation of the Agricultural Department. I am keenly disappointed that provision is not made in the Estimates for proper buildings for this department. In a leading article in the "West Australian" a few days ago the writer suggested that it would be another two years before this department was properly housed. Undoubtedly the officers of the department are the worst housed in the Commonwealth, and are carrying on under very great difficulties. A few weeks ago I had to take a visitor from the Eastern States to the Agricultural Department. When I was in the East that same gentleman had taken me to visit some of the departments over there. I did not feel any sense of pride in taking him along to our Agricultural Department, and I hope more keenly than ever that the time is not far distant when we shall have proper housing accommodation at the department. I remember that the newly appointed Minister, when speaking on these Estimates last year, used strong language in his denunciation of the housing of the department. I sincerely hope he will have sufficient influence to ensure an early start being made with the new buildings. We have the opinion of Sir David Rivett that it is impossible for his department to render that help which is so necessary whilst our laboratory accommodation is so limited. There is another matter to which I would draw attention and that is that the report issued by the department which has just been presented to us is for the year ended 30th June, 1934. For every other department we have had reports for the year ended the 30th June, 1935. I cannot understand why the report of the Department of Agriculture is so late. It is very misleading, and on account of its being a year old it is somewhat valueless. Here we are almost at the end of 1935 and we have just received the report for the year ended June, 1934. I hope the Minister will explain why his depart-

ment—such an important department, too—is not able to submit a report of more recent date just as other departments do. I am glad the Minister has been able to introduce his Estimates when, generally speaking, the outlook as far as prices are concerned is better for those engaged in primary production than it has been for some time. I join with other members in expressing my appreciation of the work done by the officers of the department. There is no doubt about their enthusiasm, and despite the difficulties and disadvantages under which they are obliged to work, it does not seem to damp their ardour, and they are always willing to help with advice or visits to districts they are invited to inspect. I should like to say a few words in connection with the dairying industry. Here again it is pleasing to see that prices have improved, and that the prospects of the industry are brighter than they have been for some years. I had a look at a dairyman's return yesterday and it showed that he had received 1s. 4d. a lb. for his butter fat. Another one received 1s. 3d., of course, for choice butter fat. The Minister knows well that the Manufacturers and Producers' Association which fixed the price of butter fat has ceased to exist and it is now a case of the factories giving what they please. I believe there will be a greater competition for cream than there has ever been. Probably the going out of the association that fixed the price will be in the interests of the producer. In the past money has been held back for 12 months, whereas now it looks as if the producer will receive the full value for his cream each month; but on account of the keen competition which is likely to take place, I hope the department will see to it that the quality of butter turned out by the factories will not suffer. We know that in the past cream has not been paid for according to grade. I think, however, there is greater danger at present of cream not being paid for according to grade than there has been for some time. Therefore I feel greater supervision will have to be exercised over the factories than before because if we are to hold the local market, which is by far and away the best market, it is necessary that the quality of butter should be maintained. Factories should be compelled to turn out a certain percentage of choice butter, and they in turn would see that the producers sent along the right quality of cream. In this State dairying is

still practically in its infancy, and the Minister probably knows that in New South Wales the Superintendent of Dairies has power to close a factory which does not turn out a certain percentage of choice grade cream; and because of that power that State produces the greatest percentage of choice butter in Australia. I do not urge that anything so drastic should be done here, but it is essential, in view of the growing competition, that proper supervision should be exercised over factories. I should like to ask the Minister how he proposes to take the dairying poll in the early part of next year. Is it his intention that every grower should register, and that a roll should be prepared? It is necessary now that the producers should know exactly what the position will be regarding the taking of the poll. I am pleased that the Minister has been able to make more money available for herd testing. There is no question that herd testing is having a beneficial effect on the dairying industry throughout the State. I know that the Minister has had deputations in connection with this question, and I agree that herd testing should be extended to all herds. For instance, the Minister knows that at Narraggin State Farm there is an Ayrshire herd, and if at one of our agricultural colleges the Government declare that Ayrshire cattle have to be bred, then it is difficult to understand why herd testing is not provided for that particular breed of stock. In the belated report of the department, it is said that we have three cheese factories operating in the State. Of course we know there are at least four, and it cannot be denied that the four are operating at the present time, and that they are capable of turning out all the cheese required in the State. I ask the Minister whether it is possible to do anything further to encourage those factories and to prevent the dumping of cheese from the Eastern States. If the factories could be given some protection—perhaps the local board which was created last session might be able to assist them—it would be of considerable advantage. So I hope that if the Government can do anything in the direction of persuading the traders to purchase the local article, they will do so. I also draw the Minister's attention to the condition of those engaged in the potato industry at the present time. Whilst at the Waroona-Hamel Show on Saturday last a deputation waited on the Minister for

Lands and drew his attention to the very serious position in which those engaged in the industry found themselves. I noticed in to-day's paper that one truck of potatoes in the market was passed in at £3 10s. per ton. There is no doubt about it that those engaged in that industry are suffering severely.

Mr. Stubbs: Over-production?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. Some time ago a deputation waited on the Minister and asked that there should be some orderly form of marketing in connection with this industry.

Mr. Lambert: Another board?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. The deputation asked for the appointment of a board. If the Minister were engaged in that industry I am sure he would support the appointment of a board for the purpose stated. I am aware that the Minister has had a great deal to think about and much work to do since he assumed control of the department, but I assure him that the potato industry is one to which he ought to give immediate attention. The Minister for Lands told the deputation at the Waroona-Hamel show that he would bring the request of the growers under the notice of the Minister for Agriculture. The Minister for Lands has had to leave the city on other business and possibly he has not been able to confer with the Minister for Agriculture. I trust the Minister for Agriculture will give serious attention to this question when it does come under his notice. He might be able to render assistance by ascertaining whether markets are available in the Eastern States and if any assistance can be given to the producers to export. It is not possible for the producers with their limited finance to ship potatoes to Melbourne or Sydney without some assistance.

Mr. Lambert: That is the job of the producer.

Mr. McLARTY: If the Minister were to render some assistance he would be doing much to encourage those who are already engaged in the industry.

Mr. Lambert: We are drifting into a helpless sort of condition.

Mr. McLARTY: I am afraid the hon. member's knowledge of the potato industry is very limited. If he realised the serious state into which the producers have drifted, he would be more sympathetic.

Mr. Lambert: Why do not they exploit the dehydration of potatoes?

Mr. McLARTY: I am merely drawing the Minister's attention to the serious position in which these people find themselves. Within the next few weeks he will probably be bombarded with deputations who will ask whether anything can be done. I also wish to refer to the position of the citrus industry. During the last few weeks an attempt has been made to bring about the greater consumption of citrus fruits. This would probably do some good. The difficulty, however, is to know what to do with the tremendous glut during the wet season. Hon. members would be staggered if they were aware of the quantity of fruit that goes to waste in this State. If we could bring about a better system of distribution we might be able to eliminate a great deal of that waste. It might be possible to work in with the Railway Department as is done in the Eastern States, where fruit is sold extensively on the railways. The waste which we permit to go on helps in a great measure to spread the fruit-fly pest. In referring briefly to irrigation matters, I desire to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that when irrigation areas were first established, a promise was made that an experimental farm would be established in one of the areas. The Minister's predecessor in office, Hon. H. Millington, favoured the idea, but he thought that, in addition to an irrigation farm, a dry farm should also be established. A number of experimental plots have been established here and there, but they are not satisfactory. Farmers do not like the idea of having to visit other farmers continuously and take up their time. If there were an experimental farm where plant-breeding was carried out, farmers could visit the place and see what work was being done. That would be of advantage to the farmers and to the Government as well. Another matter that should receive attention is the fact that young farmers' clubs are being formed throughout the agricultural areas; they should be assisted in every possible way. I congratulate the officers of the department on the manner in which they encourage these young men, to whom they deliver lectures. The young people form their own calf clubs, etc., and that will certainly help them to become better farmers. No doubt the Minister knows that in Queensland clubs of this description are encouraged in every possible way. The young fellows go to Brisbane where officers of the Agricultural Department lecture to

them on stock diseases, pastures, and so forth, and then the lads return to their own districts and deliver lectures to the farmers and the young people who had not the advantage of the visit to the capital. I hope something of the sort will be carried out in Western Australia, because these clubs should be encouraged. Anything that will make for better and more scientific farming should be promoted.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [6.3]: I congratulate the officers of the Agricultural Department on the excellent work they have done, and are doing to-day. I am glad to see the substantial increase that is provided in the Estimates for the Vote to deal with pests that are prevalent—I refer particularly to the emu—in the agricultural areas. I noticed with much concern the statement in this morning's "West Australian" that a bonus had been paid on the beaks of 27,000 emus in the wheat areas. Unfortunately, there is no question that this pest has come to stay. The war that was waged by the Defence Forces of Australia a few years ago has evidently left the emus thirsting for fight. To my mind, the pests would be better dealt with before they reached the wheat areas proper. Recently a medical man who travelled from the Murchison put it on record that he had literally to push his car through thousands of the pests that were so weak that they could hardly get out of the way.

Mr. Hawke: He must have been on Emu beer!

Mr. BOYLE: If the pest were dealt with in the drier regions, we could cope with it with better results. Those of us who have travelled through the wheat areas in recent times must have been struck by the virility and strength of the emus in that part of the State. It means that the birds are now in a position to wage successfully their fight for existence. That fight is, of course, at the expense of the wheatgrower. Our minds have been exercised regarding the ravages of toxic paralysis, and I note that the Vote for work in coping with that disease has been increased by £1,514. Will the Minister inform the Committee as to what treatment has been meted out to Mr. Edmonds, of the Bolgart district? Mr. Edmonds is well known to me. I have been credibly informed that he has evolved a cure for toxic paralysis. His assertions

have been backed up by Mr. Vernon Hamersley, a breeder of sheep of standing in this State, and by the Duracks, of the Wagin area. I understand Mr. Edmonds has been granted what seems to me a very poor reward. He has been given a license to practise as a veterinary surgeon. In my opinion, Mr. Edmonds' efforts could very well be backed up by the department. Incidentally, most of the money derived from the profits of the Rural Credits Department of the Commonwealth Bank have been allocated on the basis of one-half to the reserve of the department, and one-half to grants to Agricultural Departments throughout Australia. I draw attention to the fact that from this source £186,000 has already been granted to Agricultural Departments throughout Australia for various purposes. There is in that fund a balance of £60,000 odd to-day, and it seems to me a most deplorable state of affairs that the Bank Board or the bank's officers should be able to set aside visible profits of close upon £60,000 and starve the Agricultural Departments of Australia in whose favour and for whose benefit that fund was established. In introducing the Vote, the Minister referred to the world wheat position to-day. I am glad that the Minister regards that phase as one of the major problems he has to deal with. To-day there is a fresh setting out of the position with regard to the marketing of products, particularly wheat. Western Australia consumes 8 per cent. only of the wheat produced within the State, leaving 92 per cent. for export to the markets of the world. It is obvious to those who take any interest in this question that the European markets to-day are closing against us. In Britain, the normal import of wheat represented 126,000,000 bushels annually. To-day Britain is producing 50,000,000 bushels, which brings the total consumption up to 176,000,000 bushels. I regret that our exports to Britain are not expanding. We must look increasingly to the Far East, to which we can export more of our primary products. The Minister referred to the engagement of Dr. Samuel to advise upon the production of the type of crops most suitable for the Far East.

Mr. North: Does not Japan grow her own wheat now?

Mr. BOYLE: No, that is quite wrong.

Mr. North: Is it?

Mr. BOYLE: The step taken by the Minister is in the right direction, and in furthering that objective he will have whatever help I can render him. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) referred to Japan, and suggested that that country was to-day producing all the wheat for her own consumption. Japan imports about 20,000,000 bushels of wheat and, strange to say, she is growing just about the quantity that Britain is able to produce. In addition to that, the Japanese, who in the past differed altogether in their food requirements from the British people, produce 350,000,000 bushels of rice per annum. I have had peculiar opportunities to examine the position regarding Japan at the source in Australia. I am proud to be able to refer to as my friend, Mr. Kamimura, the manager in Australia for Mitsui Ltd., whose headquarters in the Commonwealth are in Melbourne. Every time I visit that city I avail myself of the opportunity to see Mr. Kamimura and discuss such matters with him. I was informed by another Japanese gentleman that within a period of 30 years the weight of the average male Japanese has increased by 11lb., and it is the considered intention of the Government—it has been since 1904, after the Russo-Japanese war—to bring particularly the men of the Japanese race more in conformity with European standards, and they recognised that that can be done only by laying down a far-reaching policy for the feeding of the populace. To-day the Japanese are looking increasingly to Australia for their wheat. In consequence, preparation for a change-over in respect of our exports from past conditions to those of the future is imperative. We must look increasingly to the Far Eastern markets to absorb our produce. Whether we like it or not, we must recognise that to-day Europe is becoming more and more self-sufficient in the uneconomic production of wheat in particular. The Far Eastern races are looking to us, and we should be ready to assist in building up our trade with them in every way possible.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Will not those races increase their production, too?

Mr. BOYLE: Yes; but the productive area is so severely limited in Japan that it is impossible to do much more than is being accomplished to-day. Manchukuo is quite unsuitable for the production of wheat.

Mr. Cross: But they have imported millions of tons of soya beans.

Mr. BOYLE: They use that bean for the extraction of oil, but as a food it does not suit the taste of the Japanese.

Mr. Cross: They can make a hundred different articles from the soya bean.

Mr. BOYLE: I am not prepared to argue that point with the hon. member, because, from conversations I have had with those who know the real position, the Japanese are particularly anxious to increase their meat diet and the consumption of wheaten bread by the people. Their tastes are becoming more in accordance with those of the European. There is a great disposition to turn from the soya bean and to look for their diet in other directions. I notice that the Estimates provide £370 for assistance to the poultry industry. I have no fault to find with that. In regard to the provision of a home price for wheat, an indignant poultry-raiser wrote to the Press recently and took exception to the fixation of a home price. In all kindness, I would like to inform those connected with poultry-raising that for years past the wheatgrowers of Western Australia have provided them with 500,000 bushels of wheat at what was euphemistically called *London parity*. That meant to the wheatgrowers 1s. per bushel below the cost of production; so the poultry-raisers have had a gift from the wheatgrowers of £25,000 per annum.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. BOYLE: I compliment the Department of Agriculture on the tremendous increase of sheep in the agricultural areas. I suppose one can give a little of the credit to the department. There are 5,200,000 sheep in the agricultural districts, representing 48 per cent. of the total number in the State. I wish to refer briefly to the experimental farm at Wongan Hills. This is one of the bright spots in the administration. I think it will be found that the productivity of the light lands will increase from year to year. The average wheat yield from the State farm at Wongan Hills over a number of years is 13 bushels, but this year it is expected to be 18 bushels. There is no doubt that the management of that farm has been really good. As one who has interested himself in light lands to a considerable extent, I pay tribute to the officers on that farm

for the excellence of their work. Reverting to the Eastern trade, there has been an event of transcending importance in China which will have a tremendous effect on the export of primary products from Western Australia. I refer to the action of the Chinese in standardising the value of their money to the pound sterling. That question was forcibly brought home to me some three years ago. The Chinese were large purchasers of our wheat and the difficulty we experienced at that time was that the Chinese did not know the value of their money from day to day. They had to pay Australia in British sterling because the value of their own currency fluctuated so greatly. To-day we have stabilisation. I know that I shall be getting on dangerous ground when I speak of financial advice being received in this country from overseas. That advice, however, is to the effect that a Chinese reserve bank has been established and the bank will stabilise Chinese currency and bills of exchange to British sterling. This action has already excited hostility in Japan and for obvious reasons, because the Japanese regard China as their particular dumping ground. This State will benefit greatly from the standardisation of the Chinese monetary system to the pound sterling. Let me conclude by again congratulating the department on the excellent work being done in the interests of the primary producers of the State.

[Mr. Withers took the Chair.]

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [7.35]: At the outset I consider it fitting to extend congratulations to the new Minister for Agriculture. We all know that he has done very much to assist agriculture in this State, particularly in the raising of tropical fruits. It appears to me that the amount of money set aside for officers of the department, £35,258, is out of all proportion to the activities of the department. In many ways the department is of great use. In the manufacture of fertiliser, however, sulphur plays a very important part, and the question of obtaining the sulphur locally is one that might well be investigated. Of all the arsenic used for fungicides in this State, not one pound is used in Western Australia to establish a secondary industry. The Esti-

mates have been discussed fairly fully, but there is one phase to which I wish to refer. The Premier and the previous Minister for Agriculture complained from time to time about the housing accommodation for officers of the department. I believe that the Government Botanist is accommodated at the Observatory. I have yet to learn, as I have stated repeatedly in this Chamber, that we can afford to indulge in the luxury of a Government Astronomer to little or no purpose, and to have him occupying valuable buildings when they could be used for a very different purpose. I hope the Government will realise that a small State like Western Australia has more useful functions to carry out than that of maintaining an Observatory and a Government Astronomer. If the office were abolished, as I understood was intended some time ago, we could have a highly qualified chemist located there to undertake work that ought to be done, while other officers accommodated in the present obsolete building could also be housed there. It is not my intention to discuss items, beyond expressing surprise that of the total of £60,000 odd for the department, £35,258 is provided for officers. How long we should continue to appoint officers for the different branches of the department is not for me to say, but I presume that the Minister, in replying, will give some indication as to whether all those officers are required.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [7.40]: The vote now before us is one of the most important to the State. But for the wealth produced from the soil, the city of Perth would not have attained the dimensions it has reached. Western Australia is essentially a primary-producing State, and as the years go on, with the advance of science, we shall be able to bring into production land that a few years ago was considered to be worthless. Let members consider how subterranean clover has revolutionised the carrying capacity of large areas of country in the South-West. The present Minister has been in office for only a brief period, but I wish to pay tribute to the manner in which he settled down and took charge of the department. Early in his career as Minister, I called on him and explained that farmers in my electorate desired to obtain as much information as possible from his officers, and

suggested that if a number of farmers could be brought together once a month at Wagin, he should send down experts in rotation to give them advice on many matters on which they desired information. The Minister readily acceded to my request and the number of letters that reached me from farmers afterwards indicated the success of that movement. To give one illustration: Several farmers considered that an address by the poultry expert would not be very interesting, but on the occasion of his visit the hall was packed, and for 1½ hours he addressed the people on features of the industry. This has resulted in great interest being taken by farmers in the production of eggs as a sideline. Mr. Baron Hay gave an interesting address on the management of cows, and he was followed by the plant pathologist, who indicated what could be accomplished by growing certain grasses in the areas of the Great Southern. Altogether, the stimulus thus given to the greater production of wealth has been marked, and I consider that in the near future the results will exceed even the expectations of the experts who have addressed the meetings. I hope the Minister will throughout all centres see that the officers are made available to those who need their services. I feel sure that good results will accrue from such a policy. We have a first-class set of officers connected with the Agricultural Department, all of whom are imbued with the aim and object to discharge their duties to the best of their ability, and incidentally to give lectures that must be not only of great interest to the farmers but provide the means whereby they may successfully carry on their operations. I wish the Minister and his officers all the success I am sure they are endeavouring to achieve. I congratulate him and his staff on the work they are doing.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [7.45]: I listened with interest to the remarks of the Minister in presenting his Estimates. I have always been interested in the work of the Department of Agriculture, from the time when it was merely an agricultural bureau and the staff consisted of a secretary and a junior. In those days the staff was housed in a little room in the top storey of the old "West Australian" newspaper office. From that time on the department has never looked back. Synchronising with the advancement of different phases of agriculture the department

has gone ahead with the times, and already it has done remarkably well in assisting in that development. The Minister is fortunate in that this year he will have at his disposal an increased amount of money to spend. I hope full value will be received by the agricultural community for the increased expenditure. Unfortunately the season in a large portion of the agricultural areas has been disappointing. Something like a million acres of country, seeded in wheat, will produce less than 50 per cent. of the normal crop. That will be a big blow to the wheatgrowers themselves. It comes on top of about five years of depressed prices for the commodities that the farmers have been producing, and will deal them a great blow. I am sure those farmers will need all the sympathetic consideration that Governments can mete out to them to enable them to carry on. It is certain that those who are not deserving of assistance at the hands of the State, the financial institutions which have been backing them, have long since been weeded out. Not many are left, particularly in those areas which have been struck this year by a dry season. A few years ago we produced 53,000,000 bushels of wheat. This year the estimated yield is about 20,000,000. A considerable proportion of the 53,000,000 bushels was produced in those districts where less than 50 per cent. of the normal crop will this year be harvested. Some of the districts that usually put up the best wheat averages will be the districts that will produce little or no crop this season. The Federal Government, as well as various State Governments, have, during recent months, been particularly concerned with the question of the man on the land. Numerous conferences have been held, and attended by Ministers representing the State Governments in co-operation with the Federal Governments. We are told it has been decided that a home price for wheat for human consumption in Australia is to be imposed. It looks as if the delay that has occurred in the different States will render it practically impossible to fix the human consumption price for this year, and as if the flour tax to which we are now becoming more or less accustomed will have to be reimposed. Reference was made by the Minister to the fact that we now had a record number of sheep, something over 11,000,000, and that our wool production last year had aggregated about 88,000,000 lbs. When we

consider that a few years ago the average production per head of sheep in this State was about 5 lbs., and it is now about 8 lbs., it will be seen how much our pastoralists and agriculturists owe to the officers of the Department of Agriculture who have been advising them. It speaks volumes that so much progress should have been made and that our flocks should have been built up to such an extent. It must be remembered that last year's wool production, which was a record for the State, had unfortunately to be placed on the market at very unprofitable prices. Prices are going up now, but owing to the unpropitious season, both in the pastoral and farming areas, the production will be down to a considerable extent. Although we had a good season last year and had a record wool production we received low prices. This year, with our low production, our prices are likely to be higher, but in the long run those engaged in the production of wool will get very little more for their clips than they did last year. Owing to the difficulty of carrying on our wheat production, due largely to low prices, and the lack of finance accorded by the Government and financial institutions, our farmers engaged in agriculture will, in many cases, have to change over from wheat-growing to mixed farming, and engage in the production of sheep and fat lambs. That will be fairly costly, and can only be done gradually. I endorse the suggestion that the Minister might be prevailed upon, or if he has not the money, that the Treasurer or those in control of the Commonwealth Bank might be persuaded, to find a sum of money to subsidise the purchase of high class rams for the use of farmers who wish to change over from wheat to sheep. The policy of subsidising the purchase of bulls has been of remarkable benefit to the dairying industry, and the subsidising of the purchasing of stallions has made a great improvement in our horse breeding industry. By the same token I consider that the subsidising of the purchase of rams in the case of those who are unable to secure first-class rams for themselves in the early stages of their association with the industry would be well worth the while of the Government. Our export lamb trade has been built up quickly and satisfactorily. The lambs we have sent to the Smithsfield market have been favourably commented upon by those in a position to know. The "Swan-down" brand which has been affixed to the

best type of lamb that has been exported from Western Australia has very few equals and no superiors on that market. If we are going to improve the quality of our export lambs and get a greater percentage of our farmers producing high class and high grade export lambs, we should not lag behind in doing what we can to assist them in purchasing better quality rams than they are able to buy out of their own resources. With the development of pastures in the wheatbelt, and the growth of that very early strain of subterranean clover mentioned by the Minister, it is certain that the production of export lambs will develop considerably. I am glad to learn that the subterranean clover is getting out into the wheat areas and doing well there. That should greatly assist in the export lamb trade. Any assistance that can be rendered to our farmers will, I am sure, be amply repaid. Wherever we go in the Eastern States, or whenever we get into correspondence with people in the Eastern States, we hear of the tremendous losses experienced by the farmers through the presence of large quantities of noxious weed. In the past we have been reasonably free from them in this country, but it behoves the department to be vigilant and see that none of the worst types of weeds are imported here from the Eastern States. The Minister referred to the skeleton weed. It would be very wise not to be at all lax about keeping this weed out of the State. From information I have from some of the other States, I understand it has cost farmers thousands of pounds to get rid of it. Once it gets a hold it is almost impossible to eradicate it. Already we have enough pests without increasing the number. I am sure that any activity the department may display in this direction will be worth while. The recurrence of the codlin moth is of vital importance to the apple-growing industry. I understand this is the eleventh occasion on which there has been an outbreak of this much-dreaded apple pest, but it has been overcome in every instance. The department are to be congratulated upon this fact. I understand there is no other country in which there have been outbreaks of codlin moth where it has been possible to deal effectively with it. I wish also to refer to the ravages of the rabbits. Unless something is done by the Government to assist in keeping down the rabbit pest, I am sure the country will be the loser in the long run.

Whilst I agree it is the duty of every owner of land to keep down the pest on his own farm I hold that it is entirely unjust and inequitable that farmers should be called upon by the Government and the country to keep down the pests on land not belonging to him. In the South-West division, where all our farming properties are situated, no less than 22½ per cent. of the land is either Agricultural Bank abandoned properties, Crown land, roads or reserves, or other unalienated Crown property. Very little assistance is given to farmers to cope with the pest on that type of land. Surely some greater assistance should be given. In that part of the State where I live there are huge areas of sand plain, the property of the State. Thousands of rabbits make their home there. The long strip of country which extends almost from Perth to Geraldton is the country I have in mind. Where the good land is adjacent to unalienated sand plain, all Crown land, the farmers are faced with a tremendous problem. The task of dealing with rabbits on their own properties is heavy enough, and is as much as they can cope with. No sooner do they eradicate the rabbits on their own farms than the pest is replenished by rabbits bred on those Crown lands. It would be fair and equitable if other parts of Western Australia, not taxed to-day to cope with the pest, made some contribution, so that the Government might provide local vermin boards with subsidies to enable them to cope with the problem. The matter is of equal importance to every member of the community, and is not solely the concern of the particular farmers in the areas mentioned. The emu pest also has been referred to as causing much damage this year. That is due largely, or mainly, to the fact that there has been so extremely dry a season on the Murchison, causing the emus to come south. It is remarkable that the Government have seen fit to offer a bonus for the destruction of the birds—an action which I certainly agree with—and at the same time to impose a royalty on the skin of another pest, which has done as much damage as the emus have. The Premier recently said he hoped soon to be able to remove the royalty on kangaroo skins. That would be a wise step. It is utterly wrong to pay a bonus for the destruction of one pest while imposing a royalty on the skin of another pest that is doing just as much damage as the emu. Will the Minister be good enough

to say what is the present position regarding the negotiations that have taken place between his department, the University, the Royal Agricultural Society, and various organisations for the provision of new laboratory facilities in the interests of our agricultural community? I do not wish to take any part in the discussion and the criticism in this regard, but I do desire to assure the Minister that the question is vital. Thousands of agriculturists throughout Western Australia are anxiously awaiting the provision of those additional laboratory facilities, so that the problems of a scientific nature the agriculturists are up against shall have some reasonable chance of solution. Unless those extra facilities are provided, we shall have to go on for a longer period than ever putting up with the disabilities under which we labour as the result of lack of knowledge of these matters. I understand discussion has taken place on more than one occasion between the institutions I have mentioned. I understand also that the University, with the assistance of the Commonwealth Bank, is prepared to provide some facilities which can, by a certain amount of co-operation between the Minister's department and the organisations most nearly concerned, prove of great advantage. May I ask the Minister what stage the negotiations have reached, and whether there is a reasonable prospect of the facilities being provided in the near future? The matter is of such vast importance that every year's delay means heavy losses to our agriculturists. I desire to pay a tribute to every officer of the Agricultural Department, because I believe all those officers are doing a wonderful work in the interests of the various phases of our agricultural industry. In fairness to the officers, as well as in fairness to the agriculturists, additional facilities should be furnished. The matter is, I understand, altogether beyond the possibilities of solution by the State Treasurer; but if the Commonwealth Bank and the University and other bodies concerned can do anything to bring about a solution, they will have deserved well of the Western Australian people. The officers of the Agricultural Department are housed in a miserable little building. I believe they would be prepared to go on putting up with any resultant inconvenience for the time being if additional facilities whereby the scientific officers of the department could be of greater use to the agricultural industry than is possible at

present were provided. The inconvenience to all the officers is great, but the loss to the State is very much greater, by reason of the lack of laboratory facilities which other States are fortunate enough to possess but in which Western Australia has so far been woefully lacking.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.5]: If there is any truth in the old saying that you should beware when all men speak well of you, the Minister certainly has cause to exercise a good deal of discretion. With other members I congratulate the hon. gentleman on the progress which is being made by his department. I desire to refer briefly to some of the difficulties facing our small farmers, particularly those in the Bickley Valley, where the growers recently suffered the effects of a serious storm. The results are having an extremely bad effect—an effect much worse than originally believed. At the outset it was hoped that within two years the trees which were so seriously damaged by the storm would be back to normal; but time has shown that two years will not do what is needed. In fact, the intervening period is bound in many instances to be one of very small production indeed. The trees are not blossoming. The effects of the storm having been so serious, the trees are lacking in heart and lacking in growth; and only heavy dressings of suitable fertiliser can bring them back. As it is, the appearance of the trees, apart from the growth—which is not great—would almost suggest that they have been heavily thrashed with sticks. Even the native gums and jarrah trees in the track of the storm have also suffered severely. That of course will have no effect on the orchardists, but it indicates the seriousness of the trouble. I realise that it is your sympathy, Mr. Chairman, on this subject and your courtesy in regard to it, that permits a lengthy reference to be made to it. However, I shall bring it up again on the Lands Vote. In the meantime let me express my belief that the Minister is sympathetic. I am hopeful that consideration in the form of a vote from the rehabilitation fund provided by the Federal Government will be extended to the small farmers, so that they may again earn their own living. It is unusual, almost unprecedented, for a small farmer to be as-

sisted. In fact, apart from public gifts and the donations made by the Lotteries Commission, there has been no help. Still, the chapter is not yet closed, and I trust something will be done. I trust, further, that it will be possible for the Minister to secure sufficient funds to allow fruit inspectors to do their job as I believe they would do it if sufficient transport were provided for them. As I understand the position, a certain amount of money is provided on a mileage basis; but long before the area has been effectively covered that amount has been expended. I realise that something is being done by the appointment of honorary inspectors, but I have always doubted whether that system can get us very far. It is not to be expected that an orchardist will take action against his neighbours; and that, really, is what the appointment of an honorary inspector postulates. In most branches of agriculture we have experimental farms, but for fruit-growing and vegetable-growing practically nothing has been done. In Canada the consideration given to producers is not limited to the wheat and sheep farmers, but those who are small farmers receive equal consideration where settlement is close and there is a comparatively heavy population. In Western Australia those engaged in agriculture, vegetable growing, fruit growing and dairying exceed the number engaged in wheat growing. Some consideration should be given to the small farmers, and practically the whole work of the Agricultural Department should not be restricted to any particular phase or section. I join with other members in expressing gratification at the fact that the codlin moth is being controlled. That is exceedingly difficult. People come here from the Eastern States and it is utterly impossible to go through all their luggage, the consequence being that a codlin moth infested apple or pear is liable to bring this dread disease upon us. Therefore I endorse all that has been said in acknowledgment of the efforts put forward by the department. Undoubtedly the measures taken by Mr. Sutton, Mr. Wickens, and those associated with them to prevent codlin moth securing a hold here are most praiseworthy. It would be a dreadful thing if the position were otherwise, because next to the fruit fly there is no worse or more

troublesome pest that the orchardist has to face. I am glad that the Fruit Fly Advisory Board are still meeting, and I am sure the Minister will not lack sympathy and co-operation for recommendations submitted by that body. There has been, I learn with regret, an outbreak of fruitfly in the orange crop at Carnarvon. I have no doubt whatever that the Minister is giving his attention to that problem. We must not forget that two or three years ago evidence of fruitfly was found in Queensland bananas. I can only hope that everything possible will be done to prevent the bananas produced in the Carnarvon district from becoming affected. There is down south of Fremantle, in the Coogee and Naval Base districts, a noxious growth known as the Apple of Sodom. It is a hard-striving plant and will grow under most difficult conditions, and I am told it provides a host for the fruitfly. I have personally gathered some of these apples and have watched larvae in them develop. Whether it is the true fruitfly I am unable to say, but I am afraid it is so. I hope the Minister can secure sufficient funds to have these Apple of Sodom plants grubbed out. Unless they are thoroughly grubbed out, they will certainly grow again. The increased invasion of fruitfly in grapes and apples, as referred to in the report of the Department of Agriculture, is alarming, and makes one feel pleased that the measure brought down by the Minister last session, and held up in another place, has this session passed, and I hope its provisions will be carried into effect in the near future. The Minister has a difficult job, and if he can control the fly he will be deserving of the best thanks of every member of the community. There is no country in the world better suited to the production of fruit than are Western Australia and California. If our fruit will stand up to comparisons with the Californian product there is every reason why the utmost vigilance should be exercised in protecting it. Our apiculturists, are progressing. To-day there are over 1,200 registrations of bee-keepers and small farmers concerned in the production of honey. In spite of that, there are still considerable importations from the Eastern States. The Western Australian Beekeepers' Association has done good work, but we should be lacking in appreciation if we failed to mention the efforts put forward by Mr. Wiltoughby Lance, the Government expert, an

earnest, hard-working man, to whom the beekeepers owe a great deal. No work in connection with apiculture is too great for him, no distance, however long, would prevent him from doing everything within his power for the industry. A few months ago he had his long service leave and spent it visiting the beekeepers in the Norseman district and on through that country along the trans-Australian railway to South Australia and Victoria. He returned by another route, giving further consideration to his work and picking up a number of beekeepers. So, as I say, to-day we have more than 1,200 beekeepers registered. I gratefully acknowledge the work Mr. Lance has done, and no doubt he is the right man in the right place. And the department is doing considerable work, apart altogether from their efforts put forward by Mr. Lance. I refer now to the importation of the Carniolan queen bee. The Carniolan bee is more or less a friendly bee. It is a fact that through all the centuries since bees started to work for man they have been regarded as ferocious insects, and have not altered their habits; but, as I say, the Carniolan bee is comparatively friendly, and more tractable than other bees. So with the importation of this new strain the industry should reap considerable benefit. It is a fact that Western Australia presents great opportunities to beekeepers. There are thousands of tons—I am not exaggerating—of nectar wasted every year because there are insufficient hives. Beekeeping is an industry which is very fascinating, apart from the standpoint that there is very little money in it, but it is developing in Western Australia, and I am glad to pay a tribute to the department, through the Minister, just as I acknowledge the work of those who have made the improvement possible.

MR. BROCKMAN (Sussex) [8.22]: This being one of the most important departments of State, I should like to say a few words about it. I particularly wish to refer to the housing of the staff of the Agricultural Department. We all know they are very poorly housed. As our industries progress we are in need of more scientific research work, and I hope the Minister will be able to find sufficient money to assist the department in that respect. During the last few years there has been considerable development, particularly in the southern portion of the State, but with that develop-

ment and the introduction of various grasses it becomes necessary to cope with a number of pests that follow the increased development of the country. In that respect the department has done a great deal, but there still remains much to be done, and for years to come the research work of the department will have to go hand in hand with the development of the various branches of our great agricultural industry. The Minister, I am sure, is well aware of that, and will take into consideration every requirement from that point of view. There are various sides to this comprehensive department, and I should like to touch upon one of which no mention has been made by previous speakers. I refer now to the rabbit pest, which comes under the control of the department. In our part of the State rabbits are becoming very numerous, and I am afraid that if they are allowed to continue without the settlers receiving any assistance from the Government, many of those settlers will be almost wiped out of existence. Unfortunately in the South-West we are in very difficult country when it comes to the controlling of a pest, for we have so much running water and such areas of green pasture that we are unable effectively to poison rabbits in that country, while it is also exceedingly difficult country to fence. Fencing seems to be the only successful method of annihilating the pest. However, down our way it is going to be a question of controlling the pest, and I hope the Minister will be able to assist us to some extent as, for instance, in the procuring of suitable poisons. The problem of butter fat was comprehensively dealt with by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty). I am sure the increased prices have given encouragement to people to carry on the industry, whereas previously they were becoming discouraged and even despondent. It is a great thing for the State that the manufacturing control has been broken up, and I am sure the result will be increased prices in the future for the primary producers in that industry. But a great deal remains to be done in regard to transport. At Nannup we have only two train services a week, and large quantities of cream are being sent in to the factories, and of course it is impossible for people to supply the choicest grade of cream in those circumstances. However, it is possible that we shall overcome that difficulty by means of motor transport. In

that direction I think the department might well render some assistance in the way of improved roads. I should like to congratulate the department upon their work in attacking the wasting disease in the Denmark district. I was there a few years ago and was greatly impressed with the havoc wrought by that disease. It was breaking the hearts of many settlers and, indeed, it became necessary to transfer a number of them into my district. I am pleased to hear that the difficulty has been overcome by research work and that the settlers there are now getting good results. I sincerely hope those good results will continue. There are many other matters that require looking into by the Minister. The cheese-making industry was referred to by the member for Murray-Wellington. Also the bacon factory work requires attention, and I hope the Minister will pay regard to that and see if something cannot be done, particularly in the marketing of our products. I feel that a great deal of our products should be consumed in goldfields areas. Until recently our butter had scarcely any sale at all on the goldfields, but since there has been an improvement in the quality a good deal is being used there, and certainly every inducement should be offered to goldfields buyers to consume our products. Then we will have to rely less on the oversea market, although that has been a great help in keeping our prices as they are. Herd-testing is of great importance to the dairy farmer, because it takes no more to run a high quality cow than it does to run an indifferent cow. That matter requires the earnest consideration of the department. I dare say the Minister has already gone into that question, because I am sure he realises the necessity for herd-testing. The distribution of breeds of cattle under the zone system has always seemed extraordinary to me. Some years ago, when the zone system was first started, Friesian cattle were sent into warm districts, whereas the Jersey herds, which should have been zoned in a warm climate, were sent to the South-West. I am afraid that many of the difficulties experienced by our dairymen have been due to the fact that the right cow was put into the wrong zone. Perhaps now with the improvement of our pastures, those people may be better off and better qualified to do what is required. I do not intend to dwell on the subject, but I do wish to con-

gratulate the department on the work they have done and the Minister on the manner in which he introduced the Estimates. He showed that already he has a grasp of the work which is his. We know that he has a very efficient staff and I venture to predict that he will do his utmost to meet the requirements of the various industries that come under his control.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [8.31]: I regret that the Minister has not a larger vote and I sympathise with him on the amount of work that he will be called upon to do with the comparatively limited funds at his disposal. The Department of Agriculture has done wonderful work already under the Minister.

Mr. Marshall: He is still young.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister may be young in appearance or young in office, but all the same he has already shown that he has a grasp of his job, and that he will prove to be an excellent administrator of that department. In introducing his Estimates he gave the members of the Committee an idea of the grip he has of the activities of the department. What pleased me more particularly was the manner in which he protected his officers. I believe the Director of Agriculture is doing a great job and that in many instances he has a thankless position to fulfil. Some people claim that he is entirely a wheat man. I believe he understands the wheat problems of this State, but he has also made himself conversant with all other forms of agriculture. From the Director down, all the officers are capable men, particularly the Superintendent of Horticulture. I congratulate the Minister on having got through Parliament earlier in the session the Plant Diseases Act. This is going to be a great boon to the fruitgrowers, and will be the means of exterminating the great menace which threatened the whole of the industry. I am satisfied that the ravages of the fruit fly throughout the whole of the area from Bridgetown to Mt. Barker would have had a disastrous result if the Government had not seized the opportunity to introduce legislation to do away with the breeding grounds in the metropolitan area. If those grounds had been permitted to exist, they would have sounded the death knell of the industry. A great deal has been said about herd-testing, and reference has been made to the condition of the potato industry. Unfortunately, it is not possible

to solve a difficulty such as that which exists at the present time in connection with the potato industry by the mere appointment of marketing boards.

Mr. McLarty: They can help.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The hon. member knows that primary producers' organisations held several conferences in the South-West last year, and the outcome was that they asked the Government to introduce legislation to prohibit farmers from growing potatoes. How impossible that would be. The whole thing boils itself down to a question of supply and demand, as the member for Claremont told us the other night. Again there is the difficulty of the Minister not being able to get more money for his department. The position to-day regarding potatoes is that it is almost impossible to find a market for them. It is deplorable to see the glut that exists. I intend to speak on the Lands Estimates and will advance a suggestion regarding Empire settlement and Empire trade. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie interjected several times while the member for Murray-Wellington was speaking, and in one of those interjections asked why an attempt was not made to dehydrate potatoes. Doubtless if we had a dehydrating plant we could send our potatoes to various parts of the world. Unfortunately, however, the question of finance again comes in. Who would be prepared to finance such a scheme? With regard to the dairying industry, it is pleasing to know that the price of butter fat has improved 2d. or 3d. a pound. I think it will go on increasing, since we have broken down the gentlemen's agreement which existed. Everyone knows that the producer in the past has not been receiving the full value for his product. The manufacturers' board met and fixed the price month by month, but the proprietary companies have at last broken away from each other, with the result that the producers are getting a better price for their butter fat. There was a fixed price of 1s. in the last month of the existence of the board, but when the South-West Co-operative Company broke away they paid the producers 1s. 1½d. Now the producers are receiving 1s. 3d. per lb. and my friend the member for Murray-Wellington states that in some instances the producers have received 1s. 4d. I have always said that competition is the

life of trade, and we know that while agreements are in existence the producers will always be robbed. I wish to say a few words on the subject of our experimental farms. It is the most regrettable thing that there is not one in the South-West. There are eight altogether, including one at Denmark.

Mr. Brockman: There is one at Busselton.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No.

Mr. Brockman: There is one there.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Since when?

Mr. Brockman: It has been there eight or ten years.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have never heard of it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: As a matter of fact, they were awarded a prize at the Royal Show.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The State experimental farms are at Avondale, Merredin, Chapman, Denmark, Wongan Hills, Salmon Gums, Ghooli and Dampawah. There should certainly be an experimental farm in the south-western portion of the State. I go further and say that an agricultural college should be established there. There is the Muresk Agricultural College and a school at Narrogin, and surely, with all the money that has been expended in the south-western part of the State, where we have an assured rainfall, land which is the finest in the world, and perfect climatic conditions, with millions of acres of undeveloped country, the question of an experimental farm in that part of the State should not escape the consideration of the Government. My friend from Sussex brought up the question of zones and the different classes of cattle which should be put in the different zones. The officers of the department have been dealing with this question for many years, and they have declared a Guernsey zone in the lower part of the South-West. Older settlers, favour the milking Shorthorn for that part of the State. So far as I can see, the Denmark experimental farm is breeding Guernseys and they have to a great extent been a success. My friend says that Jerseys will not succeed in the South-West, but I assure him they are doing very well from Bridgetown north. I cannot speak for the Busselton area. An experimental farm in the South-West could determine the type of pastures that would grow there,

what grasses would be suitable for the particular climatic conditions. We have proof that the cockspur is satisfactory and I might tell the Minister that I am greatly surprised and pleased at the wonderful growth that the pastures have made. And again I urge him to see whether he cannot go further with regard to research work. What has been done has proved a boon to the State, and of course a boon also to those engaged in agriculture. We know of the harm that is being done by the red mite and other pests, but we can say nothing but good of the work that has been carried out by the officers, and if more money were available I am sure that even better results would follow and they would be in the interests of the State generally.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [8.46]: I support the views expressed by the member for Irwin-Moore in connection with the rabbit pest, particularly on Crown lands and abandoned farms. The position is that a great number of farmers are endeavouring to eradicate the pest on their own properties, but they find themselves in difficulties because of the rabbits that come from outside. I know of one man in the district I represent who had considerable success with rabbit bait, but from the Crown lands outside, the pest came in again stronger than ever, and a lot of his effort was of no avail. The conferences of local bodies in the Great Southern districts have frequently requested that some assistance should be given to country vermin boards in connection with this matter. They have argued, and I believe they are right, that this is a national matter. As it has been said in connection with the tramways that the tramways profit is public gain, and that the tramways loss is the public loss, so in the same way the loss caused by the rabbits to the farmer which is an individual loss, is also a State loss, and the result is not only a loss to the district, but to the State as well. While I do not suggest increased taxation to cope with the pest, I think it would be a reasonable proposition for the Government to give consideration to making a sum of money available for the purpose of subsidising local vermin boards in their efforts to eradicate the vermin on Crown lands and reserves. I am sorry the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie expressed the views he did regarding many officers of the Agricultural

Department. As a matter of fact, I was quite pleased to see that there has been an increase in the number of officers from 96 to 101. The work they have been doing, and will continue to carry out, thoroughly justifies yet another increase. I trust the Minister will take no notice whatever of the contention that the number of officers should be reduced. We have heard a lot about experimental farms, and I put it to the Minister that if there is one place in respect of which consideration should be given to the establishment of such a farm, it is the lower Great Southern area. I refer more particularly to the country south of Wagin and down to Cranbrook. Generally speaking, there is a rainfall there of approximately 17 or 18 inches. It is an area where the production of wool is great, and I need not tell members what the production of that commodity is worth to Western Australia. In addition there is considerable production of dairy produce. Two factories have recently been opened at Katanning. One is in full swing, and the other will be in operation shortly. The quantity of cream produced in that neighbourhood is substantially on the increase. Further down, the production of fat lambs becomes a matter of great interest, especially now that there appears to be a possibility of better handling facilities being provided at Albany. While the country around Mt. Barker and on to Kojonup may be satisfactorily served by subterranean clover and such other fodders as have been found of advantage there, it will be remembered that the rainfall is greater in that area than further north and east. I know of no specific fodder that has been found to be of definite advantage in those latter parts. The productive capacity of the average property could be greatly increased if the right type of fodder could be found, and any such increase in productivity derived in consequence would be of advantage not only to the district itself but to the State. Many growers are carrying one sheep to three acres or less, whereas I believe, if the right stock ration could be found, they could carry three sheep to one acre. In the net result it would certainly be found that an experimental farm could be established in that neighbourhood with great advantage, notwithstanding the excellent work that has been carried out by the local agricultural adviser with regard to private experimentation. I think the establishment of an experimental farm there would be of inestimable advantage.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply) [8.48]: I appreciate very much the kindly references made to the Agricultural Estimates. There is little to reply to, but I can assure members that all matters referred to by them will receive my attention. There are one or two subjects I will deal with, especially the remarks of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) regarding cheese and potatoes. The hon. member asked whether I, in my capacity as Ministerial head of the Agricultural Department, should not do something to restrict the importation of cheese. Surely he has not given the matter much consideration. He should be well aware that under Section 92 of the Constitution, inter-State trade must be absolutely free. For that very reason all forms of marketing legislation should receive most serious consideration, particularly at this stage. Owing to the cases already to be presented to the Privy Council, we do not know how much or how little of the marketing legislation throughout the Commonwealth will break down when the matters are dealt with and the judgment of the Privy Council announced. With regard to his complaint regarding potatoes, it is not for me to find markets for commodities that may be over-produced for the time being. I commend to him this thought: That much disorder in marketing is due to disorderly production. Unless those who are engaged in producing a commodity for which there is no immediate market, give some consideration to marketing arrangements prior to growing the product, they will always be faced with the problems of marketing and over-production, together with concern as to what the Government intend to do.

Mr. Doney: But over-production is largely a matter of climate.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: And it is also a matter that the domestic side of the industry requires to deal with. Those engaged in the industry must set their own house in order. The member for Kataning (Mr. Watts) mentioned the rabbit problem, and said that the Government should make further money available to deal with the pest on abandoned properties. The Estimates show that provision is made for an increase in that particular Vote. That increase is solely for the purpose of assisting in the eradication of the pest on abandoned properties, and I desire to mention that fact specifically. It is rather striking

that some members desire increased activity in the field, whereas the suggestion has also been made that the staff should be reduced. If we were to endeavour to give effect to the many requests made this evening, it would certainly be necessary to increase the staff by 100 per cent. Although the Vote is in excess by £80,000, when we compare the amount voted with the funds available in other States and the salaries paid to officers there, it must be acknowledged that the Agricultural Department is performing most creditable work with the money available, the housing, and the staff at our service.

Vote put and passed.

Vote, College of Agriculture, £8,340—agreed to.

Public Utilities:

Vote—Aborigines' Native Stations, £6,808:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: One or two items require some little explanation. The increase in the Vote is merely for the purpose of providing additional stock to the aborigines' stations to assist in making them more self-supporting. Some disappointment has been felt regarding the crops, particularly on Munja Station, where it was hoped that a greater yield of peanuts would have been reported. Apart from the increased provision for stock, the Vote is along similar lines to that of last year.

Vote put and passed.

Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking. £105,370:

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The total provision in the Vote is £105,370, showing a reduction of £22,999 on the actual expenditure for last year. The provision for operating and general expenses, £91,000, shows a reduction of £9,931. Interest and sinking fund on debentures show a reduction of £14,488, and the total reduction on these two items is £24,419. That is less a slight increase in the provision for salaries amounting to £1,420, or a net decrease of £22,999. There was an excess of £17,931 last year on the amount voted. This was accounted for by the increase in wages due to the cessation of emergency legislation as from the 1st January. The quantity of water pumped for the year 1934-35, showed an increase of 74,000,000 gallons over the preceding year, which is reflected in the increased revenue obtained,

namely, £13,403. Great progress has been made during the year on improvements to the main conduit. Seven miles of wood pipes and 12 miles of new steel pipes were laid, as well as 32½ miles of the old locking-bar pipes that were renovated and relaid. A total of £280,000 was expended from Loan funds on the relaying and improvements to the main. For the current year works, estimated to cost £316,200, are set down as necessary and are included in the Loan Estimates, the principal works being—

	£
Renovation of main conduit	227,000
New mining extensions to which the mining companies interested are contributing	35,000

These figures do not include the proposed extension to Norseman, respecting which the companies interested are negotiating. Turning to the revenue section of the Estimates, salaries show an increase of £1,420, being portion of the general increase of salaries to which I have already referred. Interest and sinking fund on debentures stand at £2,820, showing a decrease of £14,488. That is accounted for by the balance of the debenture capital outstanding on the 30th July, 1935, which was £2,759, and interest falling due on that amount to the 28th September. £28, so that £2,789 only is required to clear the debenture capital as at the 30th September, 1935. The provision originally made was to clear the capital with interest to December. The estimated revenue is £200,000 and the actual revenue received last year was £187,949, showing an increase in the estimate of £12,051. The revenue last year, but for the unfortunate cessation of mining operations, would have shown an increase of at least £8,000 on the amount actually collected. This year it is confidently expected that the revenue, as I have already indicated, will be at least £200,000. The buoyancy of the mining industry generally might even slightly increase that figure.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Regarding the charges for water supplied to dairymen on the eastern goldfields, it has been the practice of the department to provide for milk railed from the metropolitan area to Kalgoorlie, and that milk is made available at prices affected by the concession allowed in the reduction in freight. Not only is there that reduction in freight from Perth to Kalgoorlie, but the concession carries with it the privilege to return the empties

free of cost. That is the treatment meted out to dairymen, but at the same time the Government are charging them the full price of 7s. per thousand gallons for water. Like most people concerned with the supply of milk in drier areas, the dairymen have suffered hardship during the last few seasons owing to the sparse rainfall. They have repeatedly requested a concession by way of a reduction in the price of water during the dry period of the year. It has been the practice to give relief to dairymen of the eastern goldfields when dry seasons occurred. As a result of the policy of granting concessions to retailers on the goldfields as against those people who produce milk from their own cows, the dairymen are having a bad time. Will the Minister investigate the matter and see if it is possible to make a reduction when water supplies are scarce? We do not desire to see the fields dairies go out of existence because they have done considerable pioneering work. Not only are they a benefit to the goldfields people in supplying fresh milk, but they provide a market for the producers of chaff, bran and pollard. Action should be taken to reduce the high price of water. Some years ago during dry periods the price was reduced to 5s. 6d. per thousand gallons. At present there is a rate of 5s. 6d. per thousand gallons to certain traders in the goldfields districts. That privilege should be extended to the dairymen. If it is not, another of our industries will go out of existence. When the cheap product was put on the market with Government assistance, the dairymen experienced increased difficulty to keep going.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Kalgoorlie Abattoirs, £3,440—agreed to.*

Vote—*Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £28,572:*

Mr. THORN: Shall I be in order in bringing under the notice of the Minister the new regulation to be enforced to govern the inspection of carcasses? We are much concerned about the new regulation.

The CHAIRMAN: That comes under the Health Act, does it not?

Mr. THORN: It concerns the abattoirs.

The CHAIRMAN: It concerns the markets controlled by the Health Department.

Mr. THORN: Very well.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, £95,878:

Mr. NORTH: What is the cause of the delay to the work on Stirling Highway? The highway has been widened as far as the Claremont council chambers, and I understand that there is some idea of altering the main to Fremantle. Is that what is holding up the new work?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: I have no information on the point but will make inquiries. The Fremantle supply and the Buckland Hill reservoir supply will be improved when we get the 24 inch main laid on the south side of the river. The old main was only 8 inches and the new one will make a big difference. The metropolitan supply has been materially improved since water has been drawn from the Canning scheme. We are pushing ahead with the laying of the 24 inch main on the south side of the river and hope it will be completed this year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I should like some information as to the size of cisterns used for sluicing the sanitary services. In London I noticed that very much smaller cisterns were used. Their use would cheapen the system to householders and the quantity of water used would be reduced. Since the new meters were installed many complaints have been made regarding charges for excess water. It might be possible to reduce the quantity used for sewerage purposes. Will the Minister ascertain from his officers whether a smaller cistern could be used here?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Is the quantity used for each flush governed by the size of the cistern? A by-law insists that two gallons be used for each flush, and our cisterns hold more than that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If one gallon were sufficient it would mean a big saving.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: We insist upon two gallons being used for each flush. I will make inquiries as requested by the hon. member.

Mr. CROSS: On Saturday at the Cannington Show the Minister saw vegetables which had been grown under irrigation from the Canning River. About a year ago the then Minister gave an assurance that sufficient water would be permitted to come

down the river for such irrigation schemes. On Saturday the growers seemed somewhat perturbed. I would like an assurance from the present Minister that this matter is receiving attention. They say that the quantity of water coming down the river is not great. I told them that I thought any Minister would honour the undertaking of his predecessor. Regarding the 24-inch main which will cross the river near Canning Bridge, what steps are being taken in conjunction with the Works Department to open up the eastern approach to Canning Bridge? A new road is to be built from Clontarf to the bridge, and arrangements will have to be made to carry the pipes, each of which weighs nearly two tons, over the bridge. We do not want to have some trestle arrangement built alongside the present bridge, only to find that the eastern approach has afterwards to be widened. A fairly large deputation waited on the ex-Minister for Works who gave an undertaking that if it were possible to widen the eastern approach, that would be done. The whole work should be co-ordinated and done at the same time. I am of opinion that the existing piles would not carry the pipe line. We do not want a repetition of one department doing a job and another department soon afterwards altering it.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: As to the supplies of water for market gardeners along the Canning River, I discussed the matter with the engineer. Those gardeners have certain rights in water and irrigation, and the intention is to honour the undertaking given. I believe that the wall at the Canning Weir is only about 80ft. high, but about 6,000,000,000 gallons are impounded, which is more than any other two metropolitan supplies. Eventually that wall will impound 20,000,000,000 gallons or four times the quantity of Mundaring. If that catchment fills in winter, we shall be able to spare a little for the market gardeners. Some loss will occur in the summer months owing to evaporation, but that has been taken into account. As to co-ordination between the Water Supply Department and the main roads branch, both are under the Director of Works, Mr. Tindale. He is in control of all works and is over the hydraulic engineer. Therefore I assume that when laying the pipe line across the Canning River he will have regard for the other work contemplated, namely the new road from

Cloutarf. I have sufficient confidence in him to be satisfied that the work will be properly carried out.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Other hydraulic undertakings chargeable to revenue, £44,495; Perth City Markets, £700—agreed to.

Vote—Railways, Tramways, Ferries. and Electricity Supply, £2,837,000:

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS

(Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [9.15]: The Vote which includes railways, tramways, ferries and electricity supply represents by far the largest undertaking on these Estimates. It is estimated that the earnings of these concerns for the current year will be £3,976,000, and the expenditure £2,837,000. This does not include interest. The estimated cash receipts and disbursements for the year ended 30th June, 1936, are as follow:—Estimated revenue £3,350,000 (expenditure £3,400,000), net revenue £950,000, interest chargeable £1,050,000, giving an estimated loss of about £100,000. This was practically the same as last year, but is a considerable improvement on the deficits in the railway administration for the previous four or five years. For the second year in succession £100,000 has been taken out of revenue to repay moneys advanced by the Treasurer from Loan funds in connection with the rehabilitation plan framed some two or three years ago. I referred to this in connection with the Loan Estimates. We propose to spend under this plan approximately £500,000. This year we have spent £125,000. We shall be repaying £100,000 out of revenue of the money which has already been advanced. Actually the amount which will be debited to railway revenue, which will ultimately have to be repaid from the revenue of future years, will represent a net amount of only about £25,000. The revenue received for the year 1934-35 was £3,277,544. It will therefore be necessary to collect an additional £72,456 during the current year, to realise the estimated revenue of £3,350,000. The improvement up to mid-September last was £12,500, and from that it is assumed that the estimate will be realised. On a cash basis the balance for the year ended 30th June, 1935, after providing an interest bill of £1,028,569, showed a shortage of approximately £100,000. Therefore the net estimate submitted for the cur-

rent year is the same as that experienced in the immediately preceding year. This year the reduction in railway freights it is estimated will amount to £105,000. This year we shall feel the full effects of these reductions, which last year were only felt from the 1st March to the end of June. For the Railway Department alone the debit balance it is estimated will be about £100,000. This year we shall have the full effect of the reduction for the whole year. These are estimated to cost £100,000. Had the reduction not been made, we should be about £70,000 better off than we were last year. If the amount of tonnage carried on the railways this year is the same as that of last year, when the full effect of the reductions was not felt, we should be able to get round this financial year with a loss of about £30,000. The interest for the 12 months ending 30th June next will probably reach £1,050,000, an increase of £22,000 compared with the interest for the previous financial year. With regard to the sources of revenue for the Railway Department, in round figures these are estimated for the current year to be as follows:—The passenger and parcels traffic for 1934-35 earned £72,000 and it is anticipated will earn this year £740,000. Wheat last year earned £529,000, and it is expected to earn £530,000 this year. Members may wonder whether these Estimates will be realised. The Estimates were framed about the beginning of the financial year, based on our Budget requirements. No one knew up to the end of September what the harvest would be. Unfortunately we had a dry October, which was very likely to affect the returns. Even now we have estimates of varying dimensions with regard to the production of wheat. The Government Statistician issued his first estimate at about 22,000,000 bushels. He then dropped to 20,000,000, and feared it would be only 18,000,000. He then thought it might be 17,000,000, but I think the last estimate is 21,000,000 bushels. No one knows yet whether that will be realised. The possibilities are that with improved prospects compared with five or six weeks ago, the harvest will be 21,000,000 bushels this year, and this will give us the revenue I have just estimated. Last year local timber brought us in £286,000, and the amount this year is expected to be, on a conservative estimate, £290,000. The timber industry is now in full blast,

and bids fair to outstrip the production of last year. In that event, the railway revenue will increase considerably, and we shall derive a greater revenue than has been estimated. Local coal last year earned £127,000. It should be about the same this year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Most of the freight on coal is paid by the railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. A considerable portion of the coal is taken by the East Perth Power House. It is estimated that the earnings from livestock will be about the same as last year, £130,000. On all other goods the estimated earnings were last year £1,333,000, an increase of about £20,000 being expected this year. Miscellaneous and rents are estimated to bring in £5,000 more than the £175,000 last year. The actual earnings of the railways last year were £3,312,000, and the estimated increase this year is about £40,000. The expenditure is estimated to be approximately £52,000 greater than for the previous year. This increase is necessary to deal with the increased business that is forecast. No new additional railways are being added to the system, and none is anticipated. Although our wagon stocks on the 30th June this year were less than on the same date last year, this does not signify that our rolling stock has been neglected. Many old and antiquated trucks have been written off, and replaced with up-to-date wagons of greater capacity. The new rolling stock will materially assist in the economic working of the system. The load they will carry has increased considerably compared with the old rolling stock. We have a bigger proportion of load to tare than in the case of the old stock. Concurrently with the introduction of the Transport Co-ordination Act, the rates on a number of goods have been reduced by an amount aggregating £105,000. This is of material assistance to people in the country and on the gold-fields. In addition to this reduction, private siding rents for access to main lines were reduced from £35, £30, £25 and £20 per annum to a flat rate of £10, and a new method of maintenance was introduced. These easements illustrate the desire of the Government to assist the whole of the population by decreasing production and transport costs. The new arrangement has

been received with appreciation by all concerned.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: No benefit has been noticed on the Midland line from the reductions.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. We abolished the third-class rates and transferred them to the second-class rates. That was the highest rate we charged. There were what were termed A, B and C class rates, and first, second and third class rates. The third class rates averaged about 8d. per ton per mile. This rate has now been wiped out, and no such high rate exists in the railway rate book. The next rate was the second class rate. The third class rates were transferred to the second class rate. This gives an average reduction for all freights classified under these headings of about 1d. per ton per mile. This has had an appreciable effect on the cost of transporting many commodities, particularly to the goldfields and outback areas.

Mr. Marshall: I am not sure that the people are getting the benefit. I rather think the business people are getting it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There is that point. When charges are reduced by 1d. per ton per mile over 650 miles, for instance, it only means a reduction of £2 10s. per ton, or less than ½d. per lb. It is, therefore, difficult for business people to make any reduction in the price of the commodities they sell. Most businesses are run on the costs all round. When costs go up, there is an increase in the price to consumers, but when costs come down there is not always a proportionate decrease in the price. To a great extent we have to rely upon competition. If railway costs come down there should be a reduction in the price of the goods which are carried cheaper by the railways. At any rate, people will not be able to complain that the railway charges are too high. In connection with this particular classification of goods, the railway rates have been reduced between 12 and 13 per cent. A considerable proportion of second class goods has been reduced to first class, and first class to C class, and there has been a reduction in connection with the carriage of livestock over distances of 400 miles. A new goods rate book was issued on the 1st March last, and has been very much appreciated by cus-

tomers of the railways. Many alterations have been made to the goods rate book. The book became a mass of stickers which had been put on every time the rates were altered. It was very difficult indeed for people to understand it. An entirely new book has been printed, and is greatly appreciated by business people, and all concerned. There have been numerous improvements in the railway service during the past month. Although individually they appear to be of minor importance, collectively they have gone a long way to popularising the use of the service. Some of the items are as follows:—Better and cheaper refreshments. There has been a very rigid system of inspection, and the rates have also been reduced. It is claimed that the refreshment facilities now provide for better quality and lower price than ever before.

Mr. Withers: The pies have been reduced in size according to the price. You get them cold in some cases instead of hot.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And out of a bucket in other cases.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Other items are—Softer sleeping berths, hot water bottles in sleeping compartments during the winter months; new bogeys on the cars recently introduced on country services, which will overcome the rough riding of coaches; improvement in waiting rooms; the establishment of a parcels office in Wellington-street, and the delivery of parcels to addressees at certain suburban stations for a small fee; the speeding up of train services generally; a new stock train to Katgoorlie from Midland Junction after the sales, landing stock at Kalgoorlie 22 hours after departure, which has made for a considerable livening up of the stock traffic to the goldfields. Additional vans have also been specially constructed for perishable traffic. Further improvements are also in hand to ameliorate seating accommodation in second-class coaches and to make the second-class six-berth sleeping compartment four-berth. I am sure the member for Murchison will appreciate this.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But he does not travel second class now, being a member of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is so, but many of his constituents do. It was recognised that six persons sleeping in one compartment did not represent the acme of either hygiene or comfort. The

improvement is greatly appreciated, and will be extended.

Mr. Marshall: When you speak of six persons you are speaking of six adults, and not taking into consideration the children occasionally packed in.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. Dining cars are being renovated, whilst the introduction of Diesel-engined rail cars is now under consideration. On last year's Estimates I discussed the provision of faster train services for branch lines. It is recognised that the running of slow mixed trains, at the rate of six or seven miles according to the Leader of the Opposition—

Hon. C. G. Latham: No; but I said the train averaged eight miles an hour from Quairading to York.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We have obtained reports on rail cars operating in various parts of Australia. Plans and specifications have been drawn up, and we have gone so far as to call for tenders. Several tenders have been received, and when one is accepted a material improvement will result. It is anticipated that the ordering of six or seven rail cars will enable us to test out the traffic. When they are in full operation, we should see how they go. It is likely that instead of slow mixed trains we shall have a fast passenger service, by means of a rail unit taking passengers and parcels. These cars will go along at about double the rate of mixed trains—at about 30 miles an hour instead of 15. The effect will be to popularise those lines. We have, under the State Transport Co-ordination Act, a definite obligation to furnish the public of Western Australia with expeditious and comfortable transit, allowing them to get from one place to another without delay and thus enabling business to be speeded up.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Have you any idea when those rail cars are likely to be in operation?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Delivery can be made within a short time after orders have been placed. Tenders have been received, and the necessary provision has been made on the Loan Estimates.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Perhaps the only question is one of money.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We shall be able to make provision for that too. The only question to be decided is the acceptance or otherwise of tenders, and that

matter will be decided within a fortnight. Therefore we should be able to get the rail cars into operation some time during next year. It is proposed to use internal combustion engines for this traffic. We have tried out coal, and we consider the oil a great improvement. Railway officers have inspected systems in the Eastern States, where various rail cars tested at different times are being used. Our officers have decided that the system here proposed is the best. We propose to purchase one rail car fully constructed, and to manufacture the chassis and bodies of the others at the Midland Junction Workshops. Adequate water supplies are essential for railway working, and various proposals are being considered to improve these. Unfortunately, shortage of dam-filling rains depleted the supplies, and the water conserved in railway reservoirs totalled 159,000,000 gallons on the 30th June last as compared with 300,000,000 gallons in the previous year. This is the effect of the dry season on railway water supplies. Fortunately there have been some good rains since, enabling us to increase our supplies by about 7,000,000 gallons. The figures serve to show how serious the rainfall shortage was up to the 30th June last. Many improvements to the track have been carried out, such as regrading, reballasting, deviations, and storage sidings, which have gone a long way in reducing expenditure in operating results. These works were carried out under sustenance conditions, and while providing employment for a considerable number of men have proved a good asset. On the Loan Estimates I mentioned what money had been spent in this direction. One deviation or alteration returned its capital cost in two years. On the Collie line deviations involving an expenditure of £50,000 or £60,000 will return interest on their cost. So there is every justification for this work, which provided considerable reproductive employment at a time when it was needed, and has been to the benefit of the State generally. I have given the figures previously, but may repeat them—

Work.	Capital Cost. £	Interest. £	Annual Saving in Working Expenses. £
Kellerberrin-Bungulla deviation ...	25,157	1,027	4,767
Hines Hill bank deviation ...	9,141	373	
Meenar regrading and deviation ...	15,648	610	
Narngula-Mullewa deviation and regrading, 28 to 33-mile ...	25,100	1,025	1,865
Kooljeddah—Additional sidings to permit of building up loads of trains ...	1,415	59	2,408

The saving resulting from the last item, it will be observed, will represent about double the outlay in capital. Further works of a similar nature are being continued at Collie, Amery-Wyalkatchem, Indarra, Hulongine, and Mullewa-Yalgoo, all of which will show savings in works expenditure after allowing for interest and capital expended. With regard to belated repairs, following on the scheme introduced of overtaking arrears in maintenance which had occurred in the Railway Department prior to the present Government taking office, and which were estimated at £500,000, a further £116,000 was made available during the past year for this purpose. Adding the amount spent in the previous year, £120,000, it will be seen that £236,000 has already been provided. During the current year at least another £120,000 will be spent. This illustrates that the Government are seized of the importance of bringing the railway asset up to standard. By the 30th June, 1936, the greater part of the arrears will be overtaken. Although the money is being provided from loan funds in the first instance, revenue will be debited at the rate of £100,000 per annum. In fact, already £100,000 has been repaid, and provision is made on the Estimates now before the Chamber for the second payment. Turning now to the Port Hedland railway, although this line has never yet paid working expenses and interest combined, the Government realise that in the development of the North-West facilities have to be provided, and also that the cost of such facilities should not be unduly high. With this in mind, approval was given to the reduction of rates, on goods carried over the Port Hedland line, to the extent of £1,700 per annum. Another convenience which will be introduced almost immediately is the converted motor truck for the conveyance of passengers, mails, and small lots of goods. This truck, of which successful trials were made a few days ago, will fill a much-needed want and give quick and comfortable transport to settlers and others along this isolated system. Instead of getting on what is called the "Kalamazoo" and spending ten hours in the broiling sun, there will be a rail car with a hood over it. The car will travel fast, and will get from Port Hedland to Marble Bar in a very short space of time.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Will the camels be kept off the line?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I hope so. If the rail car strikes a camel, it will be very bad for the car. I understand that this rail car is a distinct and definite improvement, and one which will be greatly appreciated. We are quite justified in looking after people in the outback districts who labour under great hardships and unusually bad climatic conditions—some of the worst in the world. The expense will be repaid through the people in the district making far more use of the line than they have done hitherto. As regards tramways, the estimated results are—

		£
Revenue	290,000	
Expenditure	201,000	
Net revenue	89,000	
Interest	52,000	
Profit	£37,000	

Last year the actual results showed a surplus of £33,000, so that an improvement of £4,000 is anticipated.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Is that after paying interest?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, interest to the extent of £52,000. Turning now to the ferries, the revenue anticipated from their operation is £9,000, while working expenses, depreciation, and interest are estimated to absorb £8,600, which will leave a surplus of £400. These results are practically the same as those experienced last year. The estimated results of the electricity supply undertaking for the 12 months ending 30th June, 1936, are—

		£
Revenue	327,000	
Expenditure	228,000	
	99,000	
Interest	63,000	
Profit	£36,000	

The actual figures last year on a cash basis disclosed a surplus of £40,000. This year it is anticipated that the revenue will be greater by £5,000, but this amount will be absorbed in the preliminary expenses connected with the new plant. It is not a capital charge, and does not represent an asset. Therefore provision is made in the estimate for this amount. As members are aware, an additional gene-

rating plant which will practically double that now in use is in course of manufacture. A commencement is being made with the foundations at the power house to receive the plant, the first portion of which will arrive in February next. When the installation is completed the power house will be able to supply all requirements for many years to come. Previously when an additional unit was put in, before a year had passed there was a demand for a further increase.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Will this addition give an increase of power?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. This addition will nearly double the total capacity of the plant. Taking the whole of the concerns under this department, it will be seen in the summary at the foot of page 107 of the Estimates that, after providing for expenditure and interest, there will be a shortage of just on £27,000, which I am sure members will agree is a small amount when the service rendered to the public is taken into consideration.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [9.47]: I listened with attention to the Minister as he expounded the position of the railways. No doubt Opposition members must be appreciative of the work the railways are doing. It is significant that the railways are carrying at exceedingly low freights products of the supporters of the Country Party. With more reasonable freights the railways would be making wonderful progress. It was illuminating to the Committee when the Minister pointed out that £500,000 had been devoted to the rehabilitation of the railways.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But that was from Loan money?

Mr. MOLONEY: If so, it is wonderful to think that at the end of three years it has been recouped out of revenue. It is truly extraordinary when we realise the difficulty confronting the railway system, and with the railways, the tramways, the ferry and the electricity supply. The tramways, notwithstanding their enormously heavy interest load, have made a profit this year of £37,000. Yet they are classified by many as dusty old rattle-traps. It only goes to show what a wonderful public utility they are. To keep abreast of the times it is essential that, instead of cumbersome petrol driven buses usurping the place that should be occupied by the neat trolley buses operated by our locally produced electricity, from our own

factory, we should vision the extension of the power house and think that in the future if we were to embark on a policy of enlarging the fleet of trolley buses, that profit of £37,000 would be considerably augmented. Even the ferries conveying people to South Perth have made a profit of £400 this year. No doubt the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) when he realises that this utility is showing a profit will be able to tell his constituents that it is as the result of the action of the present Government in speeding up things generally.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Tell us what profit the trolley buses made.

Mr. MOLONEY: In regard to the electric light supply I have a grudge against the City Council for charging the municipality in my electorate under a contract which we desire to abrogate, but unfortunately it is not possible, for these contracts must not be touched. Despite the fact that the people have been mulcted in heavy payments it is not possible for Subiaco to secure redress. But we find that this utility also showed a profit of £36,000 on the year's operations. The interest bill on the railways, the tramways, and the electricity supply, represent in the aggregate £1,165,500. It means that despite all this, our various activities have shown a substantial profit. That they did not show a still greater profit was not because they were not functioning well and truly, but because the burden of interest is too great upon them. During the administration of the previous Government all the railways were allowed to go to rack and ruin. That is an absolute fact.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We would not say anything else.

Mr. MOLONEY: For a Government to come into power and find that the railways have deteriorated to the extent of £500,000 through sheer neglect is a very saddening experience. Every person in the community recognised that the railways had been allowed to go to rack and ruin, yet the present Government have fulfilled all their promises and have rehabilitated these State concerns, which are now showing a profit. So when it comes to the question of deficits, it redounds to the credit of the Government that they have been able to reduce the deficits from the millions of the previous Government to £167,000 this year, and in addition have put men into work. It shows the great capacity of the present Government. That there should have been a deficit of

only £15,600 on the whole aggregate working of these public utilities, is evidence that the Minister and his staff are proceeding on the right lines. The East Perth power station, which comes under the administration of the Minister, is a utility through which the Government have taken firm steps towards implementing the desire of the people to secure cheap electricity. It will be only a matter of time when the railways, if they are to compete with other modern means of transport, will have to be electrified. As population increases and the development of the State increases, it will be necessary to electrify the railways in the metropolitan area. Then, instead of the old cumbersome carriages and coaches of to-day, there will be smaller, more compact vehicles on the rails, and they will soon be able to compete with petrol-driven buses that import fuel from beyond the seas.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What profits did the trolley buses make last year?

Mr. MOLONEY: They come under the heading of "Tramways" and the tramways showed a profit.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But what profit did the trolley buses make?

Mr. MOLONEY: They come under the heading of "Tramways." I am not conversant with the exact figures of the earnings of the buses.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But they would have made a profit, would they not?

Mr. MOLONEY: The institution of any new system involves the necessity for that system to pay its way. If the trolley buses did not make a profit, it was not their fault. The trolley buses are functioning as an experiment, and the experiment is productive of good for the people. Those buses are not running on any favourable route, such as the Perth-Fremantle route. If they were they would show a huge profit. Instead of that we have them running right alongside the railway. Even when I desired that they should function on the Dalkeith route, we found that the troglodytes of this House were averse to it, and were patronising the private interests in the Metro and other buses. The result was that the line was pulled up, and the private buses were put on, while the trolley buses were left to run alongside the railway line and terminate beside a railway station. The trolley buses have no straight run.

Mr. Thorn: Whose policy was that?

Mr. MOLONEY: They were introduced by the previous Government, and placed on a route where it is not possible to make them pay, as compared with a route offering a longer run. Whoever instituted the trolley buses, they are a perfectly good utility and should supersede many of the antiquated things that will be used, possibly in the future. When we can get electric power produced from our own coal instead of using imported petrol from America, Persia and elsewhere, it is our duty to get that power. We should utilise those things we produce here, give our miners work, and also work to men at the East Perth power house. In the erection of the new plant at the power house there is ample scope for the greater use of electricity. This is taking the broad aspect of things. I now come to my own district. Since I have been a member of this Chamber I have advocated two things, along with other matters. The most important is the bridge at Dalglish. I have asked for this bridge ever since I was returned as the member for Subiaco. I see no provision on the Estimates for it, but I hope if possible it will be proceeded with. It is also desirable that the Axon-street bridge should be widened; possibly this is a responsibility of the local authorities. It is a very important avenue. The fire brigades have to use it in the event of a fire from Leederville. It is essential it should be cleared for traffic. It is a positive disgrace. It is not a reflection upon the Government but upon the two municipalities concerned.

Mr. Thorn: We would not expect you to reflect upon the Government.

Mr. MOLONEY: If it were a question of dried fruits, the creation of a monopoly, or something that meant increased prices or the establishment of a close preserve, the hon. member would support it. No one can complain about the Government with regard to increased provision for electric light and power. These bridges may not appeal to members possessed of a national turn of mind, but they constitute a live question to the people concerned. In order to traverse the railway line, people have to knock pickets off the fence and run the risk of being prosecuted and fined £2. It is no laughing matter for them. Children have to walk a mile until they reach the subway, and come back a mile until they reach the spot they would be on if facilities were given to them to cross the line.

The Minister for Railways: You will get the bridge.

Mr. MOLONEY: In view of that assurance, I will conclude by hoping that the promise of the Minister will be carried out at the earliest possible moment.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.5]: The air of quiet confidence with which the remarks of the member for Subiaco were made was very gratifying. I wish I possessed the same confidence as he has. I am sorry there has been no reference to railway crossings, or to what it is proposed to do to protect the public. This question has been brought up on many occasions over a long term of years. Neither is there any reference to the installation of an efficient lighting system on railway engines. Many of them are still equipped with the ante-diluvian kerosene lights. This undoubtedly adds to the danger at crossings. There have been almost unlimited conferences and deputations to the Minister and many questions have been asked in Parliament. I hope the Minister will give the Committee some information as to what it is proposed to do to reduce the danger the public face at railway crossings, and because of the poorly lighted locomotives. I refer particularly to unprotected crossings, which are so very dangerous. I am surprised at the period required for the provision of additional generating units at the Government power house. It is a disturbing reflection that so many years have gone by since it was first stated that the generating capacity of the power house was to be increased. I know about the difficulty of securing money, but when the money was secured I cannot understand why so long a time should be necessary to provide the essential equipment. It appears it is to take two years in which to assemble the plant. I know the Minister is sympathetic in respect to the need for extensions of electricity. The position remains that, with an odd exception, there have been few or no extensions. I wonder whether the generating capacity of the new plant can be depended upon to do what is necessary, and whether the existing plant will be sufficient to provide for requirements until the new plant is in working order. If the old plant breaks down, what will happen? We have been told over a period of years that the existing plant is at the peak of

its generating capacity. I have been amazed that it should have continued for so long. Surely it would pay to scrap the old plant. Seeing how long it has been in existence, working for 24 hours a day, I am convinced that if the Electricity Department had to stand up to competition, it would never do so, and that the power station would be faced with a serious loss. The time expended in purchasing the plant is a subject deserving of criticism. The purchasing is cumbersome, slow, and questionable. We have recommendations, and then the recommendations are reviewed, and thereupon the opinions of certain engineers in the Old Country are obtained. Then someone is sent to London from this State. When everybody has pretty well forgotten all about it, we hear that the plant has been purchased. Now we are informed that in two years' time it will be installed. I hope it will, but I must admit that any youthful confidence I once possessed has been by the passage of years more or less dispelled. I am sorry the public works board which was debated here some years ago was not established. I am sure that had it been, the Minister would have been greatly relieved, and those who want current would be well on the way to having their desire. I do criticise the delay, but not for one moment am I reflecting on the Minister. I regard the delay as an essential accompaniment to Government control. Money has to be found, after long effort; and then purchases are made, again after further delay. We see in connection with the Government electricity supply of this State perhaps the gravest criticism that can be offered on Government control of any utility.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [10.12]: I desire to ask two or three questions regarding these Estimates. In view of the successful results of regrading railways and the practical advantages which have accrued and the profits which are shown above cost, how much could the Minister for Railways spend if he could get the money? Some years ago it was stated by Colonel Pope that millions spent on the railways would not only improve the running but would return interest through reduction of running costs. Is the Commissioner starved of millions of pounds that he could expend to great advantage on the system?

The Minister for Railways: We are keeping him going reasonably well.

MR. NORTH: It seems to me the railways could be run far better if only they could secure the same pecuniary accommodation as private railway managements get. All these successful gradings and additions to rolling stock go to show that the huge utility is held up for want of funds which cannot be furnished by the Loan Council. An interesting return might be compiled in this connection. I suggest that the Commissioner be asked how many millions he could spend to advantage in reducing running costs and consequently freights. As regards tramways, in my district considerable interest is taken in the trolley buses. The Minister might state what the results are from their use in East Perth, leaving aside the question of profit, and whether the Government purpose to extend the trolley bus system. Will the addition at the East Perth power house sound the death knell of the overhead wire system from Collie which was talked of many years ago?

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [10.14]: I notice that the efforts of those in charge of the railways to improve the system are meeting with success, due in some measure to the practical monopoly given to the department by the State Transport Co-ordination Act. I also notice, however, that wheat freights, which were advanced by 2s. in 1919-20, representing an increase of 18 per cent., have not been reduced. Evidently the Government do not intend to reduce them. This evening the Minister referred to reductions in freights of about 12 per cent.; but it must be borne in mind that in 1919-20, when wheat freights were increased by 2s. per ton, wheat was realising at sidings from 6s. to 8s. per bushel. To-day Western Australia has, I believe, the highest wheat freights on this continent. I know that statement will be disagreed with, but I have here a table giving the New South Wales average of 282 miles at 5.40d. per bushel, the Victorian average of 187 miles at 4.29d. per bushel, the South Australian average, short haulage mostly to Gulf ports, 81 miles at 4.21d. per bushel subject to a reduction of 20 per cent. paid by the South Australian Government from the Treasury into the Railway Department, and the Western Australian average of 151 miles at 4.10d. per bushel, to which has been added for bulk handling sidings a further .25d. per bushel, and this is for a comparatively short haul-

age, not quite the average. Another matter to which I ask the Minister's consideration is that of a special freight on timber, particularly second-class timber, by instituting it from the forest areas into the wheat belt. We are now, I hope, approaching a rehabilitation of the wheat industry in Western Australia; indeed, I have confidence that we are. This will entail the repair of ravages and damage caused by neglect, quite unintentional but enforced during the past five years. Recently a constituent of mine had occasion to reply to an advertisement from the Wycheliff Timber Mill, quoting second-class timber at a particularly reasonable price. He found that that timber cost him £6 2s. 6d. on trucks, and that the railway freight on it, second-class timber, amounted to £6 14s. 6d. The two items, of course, have a relative bearing to the distance covered; I quite admit that. During the off season I think it would be an economic measure for the department to secure freight by conveying timber of this type into the wheat belt. It could be used by the farmers, who are at their wit's end to restore dilapidated buildings and unfortunately also dilapidated houses. In many cases, during the period when the railways are not busy, trucks could be employed on this particular business. We have a low rate on superphosphate for back-loading during the wheat season. It is no use laying trucks up if they can be used. The Railway Sawmill, which cuts timber for the department, must have a tremendous quantity of second-class or other suitable timber that could be used in assisting another industry. I notice with a good deal of curiosity, not idle, the running of trains in the metropolitan area. There is the old idea of first-class and second-class carriages—first-class carriages invariably empty, second-class carriages carrying passengers. Alongside we see buses running all one class, and the same remark applies to tramways. What is the idea of having first and second-class on our railways nowadays as in the old snobbish times when people differed so much in society that one section had to be provided with first-class accommodation for a journey of six miles and another section had to travel in another class? I hold that the time is long past when such a distinction, at any rate in the metropolitan area, should have been abolished.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: They get more revenue as a result of that practice.

Mr. BOYLE: That is not so, because the people who used to travel first-class felt their position keenly, and their isolation was such that they now prefer the second-class. The result is that the department are engaged in hauling empty first-class carriages and thus adding to the general mileage charged by the department.

Mr. Rodoreda: That is not so.

Mr. BOYLE: Another matter I have been concerned about for some time is that more sympathetic consideration should be given by the department to the conveyance of children from the farming areas to the coast in summer time at specially reduced rates. It may interest members to know—I am not speaking in any exaggerated form whatever—that I doubt whether 80 per cent. of the children in the wheat belt have yet seen the coast. It is a sad commentary on our boasted civilisation of to-day that the womenfolk and children in the farming areas, through force of economic circumstances, cannot afford the high fares that are necessary to enable them to visit the coast. They have to live when they come down, and the railways that carry their produce, their wool, wheat and so forth, mean nothing to most of them in that respect.

The Minister for Railways: You know that specially reduced rates have been provided.

Mr. BOYLE: But even those rates are considerably higher than they should be.

The Minister for Railways: If they were down to 1s. they would be regarded as higher than they should be.

Mr. BOYLE: I do not agree with the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: The fares are reduced by one-half.

Mr. BOYLE: But the people cannot take advantage of even those fares.

The Minister for Railways: They are taking advantage of them.

Mr. BOYLE: It means imposing an unfair burden on the rural dweller, because the railways charge the users the whole of the interest in connection with the system through the rate book. In other words, £1,050,000 is levied by the department for the payment of that interest bill, and that means that 30 per cent. of the entire revenue of the department is derived from the users of the system. That creates a most unfair burden on the people in the rural areas. This question has been taken up in Queensland, and

will shortly be the subject of legislation in Victoria. In the former State £9,000,000 was written off the capital cost of the railways and transferred as a burden on to the general community.

Mr. Cross: But the State will still have to pay the interest bill.

Mr. BOYLE: I quite agree, but the whole community should bear the burden. The amount was not written off the public debt of Queensland, but the transfer in the manner I have indicated means that the impost is less burdensome on the producers. In this State the interest is charged through the rate book, just as are the locomotive charges.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. BOYLE: Evidently that is so. The only amount that would be transferred to the general community would be the deficit on the railway working for the year, and last year that represented £167,000 only. I hope the Minister is correct in his prediction that railway revenue will balance this year, and that it may, indeed, show a profit. I would point out, however, that that profit can only be shown by the raising of the amount I have indicated, namely, £1,050,000, representing 30 per cent. of the revenue. The time is long overdue for the writing down of a proportion of the capital cost of the railway system that has to be shouldered by the general community. The metropolitan area contains approximately 50 per cent. of the population of the State, and the people here largely travel by motor cars, trams and other forms of transport that are available. If people residing in the city wish to travel through the country, they usually proceed by motor car. That leaves the whole of the burden of our railways to be borne by the rural dweller.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.25]: I rise with a great deal of hesitancy because I feel sure there will not be much left for those who grow beef, mutton and wool 700 miles or more inland, if what the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) desires is conceded. One would think that the only people in the world to be considered were the wheatgrowers. If their difficulties are acute when they operate within 200 miles of Fremantle, surely the member for Avon can appreciate the frightful burden carried by people operating a thousand miles or more inland. The hon. member says the people of the State should accept the responsibility of

writing down the capital cost of the railways, and that the consequent burden should be placed on the shoulders of the community. If his electors receive that consideration, how much more so are the people in my electorate worthy of the same concession? His proposal means placing on the shoulders of people in those far-distant parts of the State an increased burden, although they already have to pay the awful rates charged now. Who will carry the responsibility of the extra burden the hon. member suggests? The beef man in the Kimberley area? The mutton-grower in the East Kimberley, Murchison, or Lower Murchison areas. The woolgrower in my electorate?

Mr. Watts: No, the people in Perth.

Mr. MARSHALL: In those circumstances, I am prepared to give the matter some consideration. That will be a problem for the Minister to solve, and I do not see how he can do it.

The Minister for Railways: We cannot place a special tax on the people of Perth.

Mr. Cross: They have plenty to pay now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I view the matter in the light of facts. Western Australia has more miles of railway per head of population than any other country in the world. Thank goodness, the country lends itself to railway construction; otherwise our capital cost would have been much greater. Fortunately there are no engineering problems that would make railway construction more costly. Then, too, we must take into consideration the fact that for hundreds of miles our railways run through practically barren territory. Some of those lines were constructed to supply mining centres, and one can proceed for many miles and pass one pastoral proposition only. Let members compare those conditions with what obtains in a State like Victoria, where every mile of land has been fully developed and is producing all the wealth that is possible. In circumstances such as obtain in Victoria, the railways derive full value from existing conditions. On the other hand, in Western Australia people are attempting to produce wool 200 or 300 miles up the Canning stock route from Wiluna. Their position is extremely difficult, because they have to pay the maximum rates. There was a reduction in wool freights two or three years ago.

Mr. Coverley: What is the freight on wool now?

Mr. MARSHALL: About £7 a ton from Wiluna to Fremantle. So members will see that we get a terribly bad deal. We do not get the concessions that wheatgrowers get. Not that I am complaining about what the wheatgrower is receiving, but I should like members to understand that there are other producers in this State in no better position than the wheatgrower and yet getting no consideration at all. If anyone is to get consideration, I want consideration for those at the railway terminal. For instance, a settler within six months of taking up his land can get concessions on all sorts of farming requisites, whereas we cannot get anything like that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What concessions do you mean?

Mr. MARSHALL: Concessions on wind-mills and on houses. Consider the 715 miles of railway journey to Wiluna. Look at the extra charges for all those people living there who, on top of that, have to pay from £3 to £5 additional to have their commodities carted out by motor truck to their properties.

Mr. McDonald: Are they all poor up there?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know that they are, but I know that there are many a lot poorer than some of the lawyers in the city, some of whom it is said get concessions on the railway when going to places of amusement. It is not much that I want the Minister to do for us, but I do point out to him—

Hon. C. G. Latham: You get a reduction on cattle freight.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but I want to draw his attention to the conditions that long-distance travellers have to tolerate, particularly in the summer months when women and children are travelling, all the way from Meekatharra or from Wiluna. When women and children are travelling in fairly large numbers they are practically cooped up for two nights and the best part of two days in one railway compartment, and very seldom is any effort made in transit to clean out and fumigate the compartment. Children have to be given food on the trip, but there is no attempt on the part of the Railway Department to clean out and fumigate these compartments at given stations. One stationmaster at Yal-

goo was very attentive in that regard, and did some excellent work which was greatly appreciated.

Mr. Coverley: Do they refill the water-bags?

Mr. MARSHALL: When water bags are left on the train you can sometimes get them filled, but sometimes there are no water bags, and sometimes they are not filled when they are there. The Minister could well ask his officers to see that those things are attended to. It is a damnable trip, that 715 miles, more particularly since the trains do not travel fast. I am not arguing that we should run before we walk, because this country, I know, cannot afford speedier trains. But at least some form of comfort should be offered to travellers. I ask the Minister to see to it, especially on excursion trains, that women and children when travelling long distances shall have the satisfaction of seeing their compartments attended to at reasonable intervals. The stationmaster at Yalgoo used to manage to clean up the compartments, but no one else has attempted it. I am not asking the Minister to pay out large sums of money, such as the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) asked for; but these are the little things that would be much appreciated, especially by women and children when travelling long distances in hot weather, and perhaps without a drink of water.

The Minister for Railways: The water bags are always there.

Mr. MARSHALL: But not always filled. It seems to be nobody's business to fill them.

The Minister for Railways: You have only to make complaint, and the matter will be put right.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, I will make the complaint at once, before the excursion season starts. I am asking the Minister to see that it is done. There is another matter which would not mean any increased costs. I want the Minister to see what he can do in the provision of special stock trains from Meekatharra. The ordinary passenger train puts in from 75 to 78 compulsory stops on the run from Meekatharra, which is the rail-head for the North and North-West, and consequently the point whence the stock are railed. The ordinary passenger mixed train takes 33 or 34 hours to run from Meekatharra to Perth, and has from 75 to 78 stops. We have cattle-growers in the North who come along and get a special stock train, and strange to say that train should

have at least only ten stops, yet it takes longer than the ordinary train to do a journey 12 miles shorter. There is something wrong in the railway administration when we know that a train can stop from 75 to 78 times and yet travel 12 miles further and do the journey in less time than it takes the stock train that has only eight or ten stops en route. Some years ago the Minister and I were corresponding on this matter, and his own officers admitted that they could do the journey much quicker if everything ran to schedule. If things do not run to schedule it is the fault of some officer. Why the growers of the Murchison should have to suffer because of some neglect on the part of an officer in the Railway Department is altogether beyond me. I have all this information from a pretty reliable source. Cattle waste rapidly in railway transit, and the prices paid for the beasts when they reach Midland Junction show that the wastage represents the difference between profit and loss. And all this, simply because the officers of the Railway Department do not do their job. It would be better if some of them showed a little appreciation of who it is that keeps them employed. They seem to forget that patrons of the railway should be carefully considered. I have a lot of sympathy for the cattle growers when they overland stock for hundreds of miles and then have to rail them at Meekatharra and suffer all the inconvenience and unnecessary wastage in transit. I ask the Minister to take this matter up with the Railway Department because it is of vital importance to the producers that special stock trains should do the journey in much less time than is occupied by the ordinary trains. The stock trains have only about one-tenth of the stops of the ordinary trains and that would make up for the extra weight.

The Minister for Railways: You must admit that there has been a considerable improvement.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but that shows the lackadaisical attitude of the officers previously. Until a noise was made about it here, nothing was done. When references were made in Parliament and correspondence took place, the officers could see their way to improve matters, but no effort was made until a fight was put up. I regret that I did not keep a copy of a letter from the Secretary of Railways pointing

out that they could reduce the time by three to six hours, provided the trains ran to schedule. If a train does not run to schedule, someone is to blame for it. On one occasion I saw a stock train held up at Northam. I went to the owner of the stock and asked him why he was held up there. He replied that he did not know. I then inquired of the stationmaster, who told me that another train was coming through. When it arrived it proved to be a rake of empties going inland, probably for wheat. Yet a train laden with livestock for Midland Junction was held up until a rake of empty trucks had passed, instead of holding up the empties until the stock train had passed.

The Minister for Railways: How long ago was that?

Mr. MARSHALL: Some years ago, but that is likely to happen again to-morrow.

The Minister for Railways: Oh, no.

Mr. MARSHALL: I say it is. There is still room for improvement. It is some years since I caned up the department over the stock trains, but the prices now being received by producers warrant further reference to the subject. The matter should be given close attention.

The Minister for Railways: It is receiving close attention.

Mr. MARSHALL: Taking distance into account, those northern producers have to pay the highest rate of freight, and they are entitled to consideration, especially while their cattle are bringing such a low price.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: The stock should receive some consideration, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. I want the officers of the department to see that everything runs to schedule.

Mr. Hawke: Why have they a schedule if they do not run to it?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know. Let me refer to the charges for the transport of livestock. The Minister must admit that our charges, compared with those in other States, are fairly exorbitant, more particularly for distances over 400 miles. The Murchison line to Wiluna represents 715 miles. I have a letter from the Pastoralists' Association similar to that quoted by the member for Kanowna. I do not want to give the figures, but I think they can be accepted as accurate. The Government should give favourable consideration to the people who go outback.

The Minister for Railways: I think so, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: Some of them have gone 200 and 300 miles up the Canning stock route. They have to pay for transport to the railhead and then pay the highest freight paid by anyone in the State to get their produce to market.

The Minister for Railways: We have done a fair thing by making a reduction of £100,000 in one year.

Mr. MARSHALL: I think the Minister for Lands should give those people, who are game enough to go into that part of the country, land free for the first 10 years at least.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot discuss that on this vote.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have no desire to discuss it; I am merely making reference to the trials and tribulations of those people. I do not wish to deal with tramways at length because they concern the city. We should recognise, however, that the tramways, as a system of transport, must eventually go out of existence. We are all convinced of that fact. Before we spend any more large sums of money on tramcars, the Government should appoint a committee of experts to ascertain whether it would not be advisable to concentrate the present rolling stock on certain routes and gradually introduce trolley buses on the other routes. I do not want the Government to talk of scrapping the whole system and thus over-capitalising it, but they could ascertain exactly where the trolley buses could economically be introduced, and where the present rolling stock could advantageously be used. The existing trams could be run on those routes until they had no further value and then trolley buses could be utilised for those routes also. It would be short-sighted policy to continue for years to spend money on obsolete trams when we know that ultimately they must go. The change could be brought about gradually. How it is that the motormen on the trams do not figure in more accidents during the winter months is beyond my understanding. A motorman needs to be fairly hefty to stand the conditions, what with the wind and rain beating upon him. Practically no shelter is provided; the wind and the rain beat upon him and the rain blurs his vision through the glass in front of him. I marvel that there have not been more accidents during the winter. I sug-

gest that the Government should not spend any more money on tramway rolling stock but should gradually introduce trolley buses. As means of transport, the trolley buses are modern and the tramcars are obsolete. I am not as up to date in the methods of transport as are some of my colleagues behind me. No city of the Commonwealth can boast of having a complete transport system of trolley buses. Many other cities are still introducing the old electric trams.

Mr. Cross: They are being scrapped in London.

The Minister for Mines: They are scrapping trolley buses and installing trams today.

Mr. MARSHALL: Trolley buses are a more economical means of transport. It is not necessary to dig up the road to run a trolley bus service. No tram lines are necessary.

Mr. Rodoreda: Those are the best foundations for a road.

Mr. MARSHALL: On our sandy soil one can feel the buildings tremble when a tram passes. The Government would be well advised to look ahead and prepare for the future, rather than carry on with the present system. I hope the Minister will see that the people of my electorate are provided with clean railway compartments and plenty of fresh water when they travel, and also that special trains and reduced charges are provided for livestock.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.52]: I compliment the Minister and his staff upon the favourable Estimates that have been submitted. They present a very satisfactory state of affairs. On all the concerns except the railways a substantial profit is shown, and the deficit on the railways themselves will be about £100,000. Having regard to the heavy deficit which has been noticeable in the past, the state of affairs now existing in the railways is most satisfactory. The new commissioner is a young man and is giving excellent results. I feel sure his organising ability is being felt throughout the system. The railways are a very important part of our activities. The Minister pointed out that belated repairs are being provided for, and that a proper system has been laid down. The policy is a good one. A substantial sum has been provided for this purpose. The repairs fell behind in the case of previous Governments because no money was

spent upon them. The previous Government said this was due to high prices and the difficulties of the times. It is pleasing to know that the present Government are providing extra money for this purpose, and have laid down a definite policy to overtake the belated work. There is great activity in the railway system, particularly in the construction branch at Midland Junction. I think nearly as many men are now employed there as were employed at the peak time. I suggest, as many new members are now in this Chamber, and as our term is nearly up and some of us may not come back, that a party of members be organised to visit the workshops. Members are constantly visiting various industries in the city, but they are on a small scale compared with the Midland Junction workshops. The engineering capacity and capabilities of the workshops compare favourably with what is found in any other part of Australia. I have worked at the trade and have been employed in most of the engineering shops in the Eastern States. I have also seen the Clyde engineering works. My opinion is that the workmanship here compares more than favourably with anything that is produced in England or elsewhere. We used to import engines and boilers from England, but the local production is, in my opinion, superior to the imported article. I am pleased that the Government have adopted the sound policy of constructing our own rolling stock within the State. I now turn my attention to one or two parochial matters. The first is the supply of electric current to the people of Swan View. I have brought this matter before the department and discussed it with the officers, but so far without result. What is needed is a new transformer. I do not think the cost would be great, but this would give great relief to the people of Swan View and East Midland. The latter district has been making substantial progress. Many of the settlers are engaged in poultry farming and allied industries, and are living on their production from the soil. They require electric power. Because of the weakness of the current in the area, many are unable to instal electric pumps, etc. I hope some relief will be afforded in this direction. For many years there has been an agitation for the installation of a siding midway between Maylands and Bays-

water. Maylands and Inglewood are being rapidly filled up and transport is the great need. People will always go where they can get transport facilities. The local authorities and residents are doing everything they can to get a siding at Melville-street. Some time ago a deputation waited on the Minister, who said he would take up the matter again and see whether the proposition could be advanced any further. I hope attention will be given to this matter. I also wish to refer to two subways, one on the main road to Rivervale. Whilst the question was discussed with the Commissioner quite recently by the local governing association, I think a subway at the Rivervale crossing is a matter requiring immediate attention. To-day's newspaper reports a fatal accident as narrowly averted. Unquestionably on that main highway there should be a subway. The road lends itself to the construction of a subway; and the matter is one of concern not only to myself but also to members generally, seeing that this is a highway used by many persons not conversant with crossings and therefore apt to meet with disaster unless they keep a keen look-out for trains. The other proposal refers to the other side of the highway. It is proposed to do away with the railway crossing on the line leading to Belmont. Another subway should be installed there, and the Guildford-road should be straightened. That would obviate a crossing. I submit these various matters for the consideration of the Minister, and trust that at least some of them will receive attention.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [11.2]: I was interested to hear the Minister make reference to a fast stock train which has been put on from Perth to Kalgoorlie. The train was put on as the result of complaints made by stock-dealers in Perth and on the goldfields. Its purpose was to endeavour to meet some of the competition coming from the Eastern States. It was a good idea, but it would have been a better idea had the authorities, before fixing the schedule, consulted the people from whom they expected to get freight, regarding the starting time and the arrival time of the fast stock train. I am interested in the proposal to instal at some future time four-berth second-class sleeping compartments. It is an improvement long overdue. I trust that when it is made it will

not be associated with an increase in the charge for sleeping berths. Personally I consider that under existing conditions the charge of 6s. per berth in second-class carriages containing six berths is altogether too high. As to first-class sleeping berths, the charge of 15s. for end compartments in the new Reso cars is equivalent to taking money under false pretences. I do not know how those new cars are sprung, but certainly they are sprung quite differently from the old type of car, and are far less comfortable to ride in. In the end compartments of some of the first-class Reso cars no one can sleep, because of the vibration of the wheels and the oscillation of the springs. I was in one of them one night, and asked the conductor to move me to a second-class sleeper rather than stay in this one. It was impossible to sleep in that compartment, where one was tossed from side to side. On my mentioning the matter to the conductor, he said, "Yes, they are very bad, and I shall have to report the matter." Perhaps that particular carriage has been fixed up, but none of the berths on the ends of Reso cars is too good. Some time ago this Chamber discussed a Bill for the pulling up of a line at Bunbury; but I notice that the Brown Hill line can be pulled up without any Bill. Why is that? I have repeatedly raised here the possibility of restarting the train through the mines. Further, I have drawn attention to the necessity for some form of transport through Brown Hill and Trafalgar. I was hopeful that some consideration might be given to the restarting of that train, although various investigations into the subject have resulted in reports adverse to the two forms of competition, the tramways and the railways, there not being sufficient traffic for both. I appreciate the fact that the tramways, so far as they go, give a highly efficient service; but their terminus, so far as the Boulder Block line is concerned, is a long way from the biggest mine on the Golden Mile. Some 300 or 400 men employed on that mine have to walk about half a mile, after getting out of the tram, in order to reach the change room, where they change to go to their work. Some time ago I made representations as to whether some arrangement could not be made between the tramway company and the Railway Department with a view to permitting the tramway company to make use of the railway line existing between the Boulder Block and

Lake View. I suggested that points might be put in so that the tramway company could run their trams right up to the Lake View change room. The excuse made was, "It would be too dangerous, and we should have to put in signalling plant for about two or three trains a day running on that particular line." I am convinced that if the will had been there, the proposal need not have been turned down merely on the plea of any danger existing or because of the necessity for signals. That railway line is used very little, and is of the same gauge as the tramline. The tyres of the Kalgoorlie trams are similar to those used on the railways. Many of the tramlines in the Kalgoorlie service are what is called "T" rail, and so there would be no difficulty in tram cars running along the railway line. The State Transport Board, I understand, was brought into being for the purpose of instituting some kind of co-ordination. Though there are not many people living in Trafalgar, Brown Hill and Williamstown, all the people who do live there built their houses when there was a railway service along the Brown Hill loop line, which I see is now being pulled up. I should like the Minister to inquire whether the Railway Department or the State could in some way subsidise a motor bus service for the people in that area. A motor bus does run at the present time, but on rare occasions. The people who are living in the areas I have referred to built their houses when the Government had provided them with a railway service. Now those people cannot go to town unless they walk several miles or travel by a bus that runs twice a week and only once a day when it does run. Perhaps the Minister will make inquiries with a view to seeing whether the bus service cannot be subsidised so that a more frequent service may be maintained.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.12 p.m.