

mission and when their appointment was only being talked of, I met Mr. Mann in the street and told him he would be very foolish to accept appointment on the Lotteries Commission because, if he and his colleague did so, they would lose their seats under the Constitution and render themselves liable to a penalty.

Mr. Hegney: Did not the member for Nedlands advise them on the legal position?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know what the hon. member told them.

Mr. Hegney: He told the House.

Mr. HUGHES: The point is that I told Mr. Mann, and he can be put into the witness box to verify my statement.

Mr. Raphael: That would not make it true.

Mr. HUGHES: My interpretation of the law happened to be true. Because the Government were not prepared to allow the judge to adjudicate, they stepped in and interfered with the jurisdiction and tried to alter the law. My opinion was much sounder than that of the member for Victoria Park. I have no doubt that, if Mr. Mann were put on his oath, he would say that I warned him beforehand. I suppose he was justified in acting as he did, if he obtained advice from the member for Nedlands on the questions of law, for the member for Nedlands is an eminent lawyer who stands high at the Bar. As a matter of fact, I had some difficulty in beating him in my first case. I have no doubt that, if I am allowed a full investigation into the licensing business, as to how and why licenses are allotted, it will be of some service to the State. If the hon. gentleman wants to curtail and hamstring the inquiry by himself fixing the terms of reference, of course we shall get nowhere, because the essential information will be excluded. If I am not allowed to put my references in, it will be a very lopsided inquiry indeed, and will not convince anybody but the hon. gentleman who wants to be convinced.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.13 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 10th September, 1936.*

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

### QUESTION—REPURCHASED ESTATES.

Hon. W. J. MANN asked the Chief Secretary: 1. How many repurchased estates have been re-valued during the past two years? 2. What is the total amount of reduction made (a) in capital, (b) in interest? 3. In what districts have these re-valuations and reductions been made? 4. When will the remaining repurchased estates be re-valued?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1. Fourteen. 2. Capital, £94,394; interest, £120,719. 3. Victoria, Avon and Swan. 4. Six more estates will be re-valued in the near future. It is not intended to re-value estates where the blocks should have already been freehold, or where, from the knowledge already available in the department, it is obvious that the estates are not over-valued.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Eighth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. G. ELLIOTT (North-East) [4.30]: In speaking to the Address-in-reply I propose to concern myself chiefly with the goldmining industry. It is very satisfactory to know that the industry is making a steady annual increase in gold production, the relative figures for the past seven months, compared with the same period in 1934 and 1935, being—

1st January to 31st July, 1934—	372,288 ounces.
1st January to 31st July, 1935—	318,349 ounces.
1st January to 31st July, 1936—	458,524 ounces.

Taking into consideration the fact that the large producing mines are steadily increasing their ore reserves notwithstanding the large tonnage treated monthly, and that several properties are responding satisfactorily to

development work preparatory to the erection of their own treatment plants, one can safely conclude that the annual gold production of the State will increase for a number of years before the peak period is reached. When we consider the enormous area of gold-bearing country in this State, extending as it does from Ravensthorpe in the south to Pilbara in the north, a distance of about 2,000 miles with an approximate width of 300 miles, it gives one some idea of the future possibilities of the industry. A very great extent of this vast tract of country is covered by an over-burden of cement, clay or other material which defies surface prospecting, but I fully believe that with scientific investigation, such as a proper geological survey followed by a system of diamond drilling, many other mines would be discovered. Seeing that a geological survey of the northern part of Australia, in which this State will share, has been deemed advisable I should like to bring under the notice of the Government the possibilities in such a survey of our known gold-bearing areas, having regard to its great potential value to the State.

*[The Deputy President took the Chair.]*

I again find it necessary to refer to the charges made by the State batteries for the treatment of ore raised by prospectors. In reply to my recent question in this House, the Chief Secretary stated that the treatment for the year ended 30th June last had resulted in a profit of over £12,000, and that this profit was more than absorbed in payment of ore cartage rebates. I want to be quite fair and so will acknowledge that this concession made to prospectors in this State in the cartage of ore is much more liberal than that in any of the other States; but I would also say that this concession is an urgent necessity and must not in any way be tampered with. The work of the prospectors is of the greatest value to the State, and they thoroughly deserve any assistance they get in carting their ore to be crushed. But I must once more enter a strong protest against the charges levied for the treatment of residues. Payment on only a 75 per cent. extraction, and the deduction of 2 dwts 8 grains—at the present price of gold, worth over 16s.—per ton is much too high. The reason usually given by the Mines Department for these deductions is that the residue

coming from the battery is too coarse to obtain a higher extraction. I do not consider this a valid excuse. In these times, with modern treatment processes for residues, it would be a very simple matter for the State batteries to instal the necessary machinery for the finer grinding of residues to enable a much higher extraction to be obtained, with consequent benefit to both the prospector and the State. The next question I desire to mention is the payment of compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act and the Mine Workers' Relief Act to men suffering as a result of their work in the industry. At the present moment I do not intend to stress the matter very much, for the following reason: During a visit by the Minister for Mines to the goldfields some time ago, Mr. Munsie met the Eastern Goldfields Tributaries' Association and the A.W.U., and thoroughly discussed with them the question of more adequate compensation for sufferers from industrial diseases. Mr. Munsie promised to investigate the position with the object of bringing down an amendment to make the payment to beneficiaries, after their allotment of £750 had been exhausted, adequate for a man to live upon. At present the amount paid under the Second Schedule of the Mine Workers' Relief Act is 25s. per week for a man and his wife to live on, and after his death his widow receives from 10s. to 15s. per week. A single man also receives the 25s. per week. These figures speak for themselves. The proposed amendment is that these amounts should be raised by £1 per week, and I feel sure that when this House has to consider the proposal it will meet with no opposition. I desire to refer now to the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. This institution is of great benefit and assistance to the goldmining industry. If it were possible to assess in monetary value the assistance it renders to the industry, its very great importance would perhaps be more fully realised and appreciated. The work of the school has become more and more arduous during the past three years owing to the development in mining, and the consequent increase in attendance of students to over 600. The work entailed is very heavy, particularly as it cannot be confined strictly to the teaching hours. To give the fullest value by way of instruction and training to stud-

ents in mining work, geological survey, mining investigation, and other practical work, tuition has been given at week-ends by the masters when students are not engaged in earning their living. The salaries paid to the staff are not adequate for the specialised instruction that is given. It is work that only highly trained practical men can do, and it is impossible to obtain the like elsewhere in the State. A further necessary alteration in the present arrangements is the placing of the School of Mines under its natural department, the Mines Department, with a board of governors conversant with the work, and a separate allotment of moneys for the maintenance of the institution. The last question I intend to deal with is one of very great importance to the mining industry, that is, the necessity for drastic amendments to our present Companies Act. I brought this question before the House last session, and the Chief Secretary said in reply to my remarks—

The matter of amending the Companies Act to prevent the flotation of wildcat companies is one requiring close and careful consideration, and it was not possible to do anything during the present session.

It certainly is a matter of urgency requiring close consideration, and it would, I am sure, meet with approval from all sections of the community if the Government could be prevailed upon to take the necessary steps. In practically every other State some attempt has been made to tighten up the Companies Act owing to the abuses of the past few years.

Hon. A. Thomson: It is long overdue.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: I do not intend to repeat the arguments I used last session in connection with this question, but will mention one or two instances out of the many that have come under my notice since showing the glaring methods adopted by unscrupulous company promoters owing to the gaps in our company laws.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think Mr. Parker pointed out that a matter of this importance would require to be taken up by the Federal Government.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: When speaking before the annual meeting of the Australian Mines and Metals Association a few

months ago, Sir Colin Fraser put the condition of affairs very clearly when he said—

Much good cash has gone down the drain in prospects which never had a chance of success from the outset. The credulity and cupidity of a section of the public, the greed of the promoter, the gaps in our company laws and regulations governing prospectuses and share dealings are in the main to blame.

There are many gaps in our company laws, and, where provision is made for the protection of investors, there appears to be no machinery in operation to punish the offenders. To illustrate the lengths to which unscrupulous promoters and directors will go, I will quote two instances. A company was floated in July, 1935, to take over two leases north of Menzies. These two leases were reported on by a man signing himself as a consulting mining engineer. He included in his report, when speaking about the open cuts on the property, the following:—

It will be possible to continue to work this lease as an open cut for a further 12,000 tons of ore of an average assay value of 52.8s. gold per ton. The open cut tonnage of approximately 20,000 tons with a recoverable value of 47s. 6d. gold per ton should show a net profit over direct charges of £28,000. Possibilities of this strong ore body continuing to the south past the known ore exposures appear to the writer to be extremely good. The writer had a costeen put in at a point 80 feet south of the open cut that showed a width of ore of 30 feet, of an average assay value of 8.6 dwt. gold per ton. This costeen was in virgin ground, and indicates what may be expected on this end of the lease as a result of systematic prospecting and exploration.

#### Summary.

Positive Ore Tonnage.	Probable Ore Tonnage.	Possible Ore Tonnage.	Total Tonnage.
41,825	41,254	35,260	118,338
Gross Value.	Gross Value.	Gross Value.	Gross Value.
£113,703	£130,136	£89,702	£333,531

Sufficient ore is now broken to justify starting the battery at once. A steady run of ore of an average assay value of 60s. gold per ton can be assured for the next 3½ years for a battery of five stamps.

The present five-head battery is, of course, inadequate for a mine of this proportion and further additions would be justified.

In conclusion, I wish to say that this is one of the best available properties that I have looked at in Western Australia. A large quantity of oxide ore is assured, and sulphide ore has been exposed and the possibility of proving a further large tonnage of both oxide and sulphide ore is excellent.

One would naturally conclude from such a glowing report by an apparently reputable

man that the mine would at least prove good, but after a short and inglorious run the company went into liquidation in 1936, less than 12 months after the flotation. The investing public, gulled by this glowing report, lost their cash. In many cases, even if a mine has a chance to make good, we find that the greed of the promoters has crippled such chances, because of the scandalous proportion of the amount of capital subscribed that has gone into their pockets. I will quote one case of that sort. A company was floated about two years ago to take over some goldmining leases in the Wiluna district. This company had a nominal capital of £25,000, of which £18,000 worth of shares were issued to the public. Incidentally, an insufficient amount of capital was raised to give the mine a fair chance in development and plant erection. It did not even get a chance with the £18,000, because out of that amount the promoters and vendors got £10,000 in cash as well as 20,000 paid-up shares of 2s. each. So that £8,000 only was left to meet the needs of development and plant, a state of affairs which foredoomed the company to failure. Needless to say, liquidation followed, and again the public had to pay the piper. I am now going to quote another instance from a report, which I consider to be a gem amongst the innumerable documents that I have examined. I would commend it to anyone who is bent on collecting prospectuses. This report is signed by a person describing himself a mining engineer and geologist. I will read some of the statements he made concerning a property which was put up for flotation purposes. I am pleased to say it did not come to anything notwithstanding the enthusiasm that was displayed. This report contains the following remarks:—

From indications on these hills it would seem that large ironstone caps and parallel leaders of ironstone run the length of these hills, and with the country rock form a vast lode of formation, which in size and extent when properly developed would outclass Wiluna and challenge the Golden Mile for wealth.

There are at least 36,000,000 tons to go to the battery down to the 1,000ft. level, and the prospect of much richer average when depth is reached.

In your properties down to 3,000 feet, quite a reasonable depth, there should be some five or six hundred million tons of formation, and when the whole belt is examined, who shall dare say that in quantity it does not far exceed the Kalgoorlie belt? The lode formations may in time be looked upon as the main source of Western Australia's gold supply.

He goes on to make some wild and exaggerated statements, and adds:—

Whatever scheme of capitalisation you adopt, ever bear in mind the vast potentialities your property possesses, and aim for at least 2,000,000 tons a year output. If you are fortunate to find that the whole hill can be mined economically, then even a greater output may be considered, and your working costs will reduce as your output goes up.

I think your property is fully justified to have the most serious consideration of those who deal with wide lode formations, and that you have sufficient evidence at surface to justify exhaustive examination to decide the best treatment of the ore and its development.

And what will be your profits if only you obtain 2 dwts. profit? Why, approaching a million a year, and why not 4 dwts. in bulk.

I do not think it would be advisable to read any more of this glowing report lest I should cause a stampede of hon. members to this wonderful Eldorado. Reports such as this, however, make one appreciate Mark Twain's definition of a mine as "A hole in the ground owned by a liar." The moral is quite obvious. There should be some recognised tribunal before which these baits for public money should appear before issue. It should have power to investigate published statements regarding leases and mines being floated into companies, with proper penalties for mis-statements for all parties concerned. The damage done to the legitimate development of our goldmining industry by the continuous flow of these wildecat companies into liquidation or recess is evidence of the need for supervision, not only in the interests of investors but for the protection of the State whose credit abroad and at Home is injured by these often fraudulent and predestined failures. In my endeavour to put forward the case for the Government to take the necessary steps to fill the gap in our Companies Act, I have only touched on the mines side of the question. To show that the commercial side is also exploited with the greatest impunity by the unscrupulous company promoter, I will mention one instance. On the 4th March this year a company called the Kalgoorlie Building and Banking Society Ltd. was registered at the Records Office, Perth, by a company promoter. A few days afterwards this promoter arrived in Kalgoorlie and opened an office in a central position. On the office window he had painted in large block letters the following:—"Kalgoorlie Building and Banking Society Ltd. Reserve capital £100,000." The following procedure was adopted by this company pro-

moter: On an application being made for the building of a house, the applicant had to lodge a deposit of £5 or over and contract to pay from 22s. 6d. to 30s. per week on the understanding that the company would undertake the responsibility of finding the money to build the house. In the course of a little over one month, this company received over £500 from various people—men working on the mines, and in one instance an unfortunate widow who paid in £25, all she possessed. A meeting of shareholders of the company was held at the Kalgoorlie office on the 20th April, 1936. According to the minute book, two shareholders were present, and proxies for the others, who were residing in Perth, were used. A resolution was moved that the company go into liquidation, and was carried unanimously. It might be of interest to state that the number of shareholders in this company was seven, holding one share each of £1, so that the subscribed capital in this company which stated it had a reserve capital of £100,000, was £7 only. The sequel is, of course, not hard to guess. The day the liquidation notice appeared in the local Press, the company promoter beat a retreat from Kalgoorlie to Perth, and thence to Sydney taking with him the £500 he had received from those unfortunate people whom he had gulled by his fraudulent statements. The worst part of the whole affair is that this fraudulent and dishonest company promoter gets off scot free because the onus of bringing him back to this State for trial rests on the people who were taken down for their cash. I have endeavoured to show by these few examples, out of many, the absolute necessity for something being done to amend our present Companies Act. The onus is on the Government to take the necessary steps to make good the many gaps in that Act.

**HON. J. T. FRANKLIN** (Metropolitan) [5.7]: May I be permitted to say how much I regret the retirement from the Leadership of this House of our esteemed friend, Mr. Drew. I am sure I am only expressing the opinion of every member in saying that we have lost from the Leadership a staunch friend, but I am delighted to know that he is still in the Chamber and sitting adjacent to me. I know he will at all times give us the benefit of his long experience. May I also compliment Mr. Kitson upon attaining full Ministerial rank. We feel in this

House that he is well qualified to carry out the duties of Leader of the House. I would like also to congratulate Mr. Gray on his appointment as Honorary Minister. These two gentlemen, I am sure, will make every endeavour to give satisfaction to the members of the House and to the State. Speaking to the Address-in-reply, there are many matters which could be ventilated, but I shall content myself with dealing with a few only. One thing which has been promised for a number of years is the introduction of a new Municipal Corporations Bill. I am pleased to see from the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that the Government intends to bring forward a new Bill. Very few people have a copy of the old Act, which is out of print. I hope when the Bill is before Parliament, and more especially in the lower House, the advice of those interested in the matter will be obtained. When it comes to this House—if it is not done in another place—I think we should have a special committee to go into the matter, in order to secure the assistance of those competent to give advice. In saying that I do not wish it to be inferred that members are not able to give full consideration to the question. Those who have to administer the Act, however, have for the past thirty years declared it to be obsolete, and their advice would be of considerable benefit to us in the framing of new legislation. It will be of no benefit adding a few sections to the existing law; this would have the effect of creating confusion amongst the existing bodies. Numerous conferences have been held on the subject of suggested new municipal legislation and a number of sensible amendments have been drafted. The local bodies would gladly submit these for consideration. I congratulate the Government on again appointing Mr. Davidson to the position of Town Planning Commissioner. Mr. Davidson has always carried out his duties without fear or favour to anyone. He administers the Town Planning Act in a capable manner, and we are therefore fortunate in having a gentleman of his calibre in charge of town planning. I am wondering whether in the near future people will awaken to the fact that we are making some great mistakes regarding the manner in which we are permitting buildings to be erected. I am alluding more particularly to the conversion of houses into flats. When I had the honour of being Lord Mayor of the City, there was a by-law—and it is still in

existence—which provided that if it was desired to build, plans had to be prepared for submission to the Building Surveyor whose duty it was to ascertain the area of the land. Regarding private homes, it is necessary that the area of land should have 5,200 superficial feet of air space. I am wondering whether members of the public realise that in the conversion of houses into flats, as well as in new flats being erected, consideration must be given to air space. If any person wishes to build a cottage it is set out that there must be 5,200 superficial feet of air space on the land. Why, therefore, should not this apply to flats in a confined area? In respect to flats the air space should be not 5,200 superficial feet of land, but 20,000 superficial feet for flats for four families. I think we shall realise in the near future that a big mistake has been made. It is not good for the rising generation. Where are the children to play? There is no space for them in the back yards and they will have to play in the streets. That is something we should avoid if it is at all possible to do so. I could understand the building of flats if we were at all pinched for land, but in the metropolitan area there is any amount of vacant land suitable for residential purposes, and I sincerely hope that too many flats will not be erected. The Government, in their wisdom or otherwise, have decided to instal a trolley bus service along Stirling Highway to Claremont. Judging by correspondence in the Press, the residents do not desire that service, and I think the Government should consider the advisableness of dropping the proposal. If it is necessary to provide additional transport facilities, let the private companies do it. They are quite able and willing to do so. The tramway constructed along Stirling Highway some years ago has been a losing proposition from the day it was installed. Wherever possible we should allow private enterprise to cater for the wants of the people. Let me refer now to water supplies for the metropolitan area and country districts, emphasising the needs of the latter. We must congratulate the Government on the work they are carrying out to provide an up-to-date water supply for the metropolitan area. They have selected an excellent site, and the weir being erected will permit of the people of the metropolitan area being supplied for quite a number of years. The putting of that work in hand was a wise policy, and there is no doubt it will be ear-

ried to a successful conclusion. It was wise for two reasons. Firstly, it gave the Government an opportunity to provide work for the unemployed of the metropolitan area. Quite a large number of men are engaged on the work, and if the Government had not undertaken it, they would have had to spend more money, possibly on unproductive undertakings. This will be a productive work and a credit to the State. The second reason is that in constructing the work, the Government have enabled manufacturers to employ additional labour in producing materials required for the construction. I should like to make a suggestion to the Government. The £80,000 not required for trolley buses along Stirling Highway should not be paid into general revenue, or into any fund of that kind, but should be earmarked for the provision of water supplies in country districts. We in the metropolitan area, I am afraid, are a little prone to look after ourselves without considering sufficiently the needs of the country people. We should realise that the farmers deserve more encouragement than they are receiving; they deserve all the consideration we can extend to them. I am not blaming the Government for not having done more; they have done all that was possible, but if there is any chance of using that £80,000 for the installation of urgently needed country water supplies, I shall be pleased to support the project. We should consider the comfort not only of the farmer but of his wife and children, for in the hot weather they are probably unable to get enough water for a bath. We should make every effort to augment country water supplies.

Hon. A. Thomson: It would be the means of producing more wealth.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: That is so, and we in the metropolitan area would benefit from the increased production. I regret that the question of the responsibility for providing public hospital accommodation is still unsettled. When I retired from the Lord Mayoralty two years ago, I thought it would not be long before the local authorities reached a decision regarding the provision of a hospital for infectious disease cases. I still maintain that it is the duty of the Government to provide hospitals. The Government might retort, "Why put everything on to us?" If the local governing bodies undertake the provision of such a hospital, they will have to strike an additional rate to

enable them to meet their liabilities. Under the Act, the local bodies have to pay 8s. 7d. per day for every patient who is sent to an infectious diseases hospital for treatment. That might not sound very much, but it amounts to a large sum for the local bodies. For the city of Perth, it means a sum of £700 a year. One unfair feature is that a man from a country district might be residing in Perth for only a week when he is found to be suffering from an infectious disease and is ordered into hospital. The Perth City Council have to pay for his upkeep, although he is not a resident of the city and pays no rates to the city.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is, provided he is not in a position to pay for himself.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: That is rather misleading. In the majority of cases no patient pays. When people are sent to the hospital the local authority pays, and it is almost impossible for the local authority to secure a recoup when the patients recover. I had information from the City Treasurer this morning that very few of the patients meet their liabilities. I think the Government should undertake this responsibility. A hospital tax is already imposed, and if it were necessary to increase the rate a little, I do not think the public would object. Money for the various hospitals must be raised, and if the local authorities have to raise it, they will have to budget for it at the beginning of their financial year. Thus it amounts to six of one and half-a-dozen of the other, whether the Government or the local authorities do it. I do not wish it to be thought that I am poking my nose into other people's business, but I should like to refer to the development of the North. That part of the State requires a great amount of assistance. I am pleased that we have in this House members who are thoroughly competent to look after the interests of the North, and to urge its development as far as the funds available will permit. Arrangements should be made with the Federal Government to allocate a larger amount of money for the further development of the North. It would not be necessary for the Commonwealth authorities to send officials here to administer the fund, because we have representatives who know the North from A to Z and are in a position to advise what is best to be done.

Hon. G. Fraser: They carry a fair weight, too.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: As regards their "bingeys," undoubtedly they do. I regret that when we had an opportunity to appoint a Federal Senator recently we did not select one of those gentlemen. The North certainly needs a representative in the Senate, and the presence of one there would undoubtedly be advantageous to the State. I gather that during the present session legislation will be introduced that will benefit the State and make for its further progress, and so far as I can do so, I will assist the Government to get such legislation placed on the statute-book.

**HON. H. TUCKEY** (South-West) [5.28]: I should like to join with other members in expressing regret at the defeat of Mr. R. G. Moore and Mr. Yelland. I also join in the congratulations extended to the two newly-elected members. It is pleasing to me to note an apparent desire on the part of members to complete this debate without unnecessary delay. Year after year the debate has occupied a great deal of time, which, in many instances, might have been used to greater advantage. The debate has already been concluded in another place, probably in record time for that House. The Lieutenant-Governor's Speech is not very informative if one is looking to the future. The most serious omission is absence of any reference to a policy that would encourage people to come to this State. Our small population is a very serious disadvantage, and while I do not advocate bringing people here indiscriminately, I do consider that every effort should be made to inaugurate a scheme that would encourage people to come here and increase our numbers. To my mind, this is not a matter for the State alone. It should be a matter for the Federal and Imperial Governments as well. A few weeks ago the Minister for Lands said that the results of land settlement in Western Australia had left the State Government stone cold. I think the Minister, on that occasion, should have said "State farming" or "group settlement." It appears to me that the time has already arrived when the Government should give further consideration to the subject of group settlement. The Agricultural Bank Commissioners are being severely criticised, but Parliament is responsible for the Act which they are administering. That Act has not been amended. I understood, when the Agricultural Bank Bill was passed here last session, that all Agricultural Bank clients

were to be brought under one scheme, and financed and managed; but that does not appear to be the case. In the circumstances I support Mr. Thomson in his contention that group settlers should have an appeal board, which in special circumstances would make recommendations to the Agricultural Bank Commissioners. The Act controlling transport should also be amended to improve conditions in outlying districts. In my opinion the measure definitely penalises people outside the metropolitan area, and an early opportunity should be taken to review the whole matter. The Act is far from being perfect. If a person drives to the traffic office on the 1st day of July in order to renew his driver's license, and in doing so meets with an accident, then no compensation under insurance may be claimed, because the driver is not licensed. In my opinion it should be sufficient for the driver to be competent. Another serious question is that of accidents. If fatal accidents continue at the rate at which they are now occurring, before long no one will be left to pay license fees. Next I desire to say a few words about fruit cases. For some time past fruit-growers have experienced difficulty in obtaining their requirements in that respect. The main difficulty seems to be that it does not pay sawmillers to cut fruit cases except as a side line and from waste timber. The ordinary sawmill cannot do the work economically, not being equipped with planing machines and other apparatus essential to the turning out of the article cheaply. I consider that the fruit-growing industry of Western Australia is of sufficient importance to warrant the reservation of portion of our jarrah or karri forests for the purpose of establishing a State mill to cut fruit cases only. We should aim at getting fruit cases supplied at a much cheaper rate than the present one. I regret the necessity for drawing attention to matters connected with the fishing industry. It would appear that for many years Governments have done their best to wipe out what ought to be a highly valuable industry to the State. I ask the Chief Secretary, in replying, to state why the department was removed from Ministerial control and placed in the care of an officer of the Premier's Department. With all due respect to Mr. Shapeotti, I do not think that should have been done. I can remem-

ber when the Chief Inspector of Fisheries had, in addition to his staff of inspectors, an office staff comprising an accountant, one or two clerks, and a typist. I understand that now he has only a part-time typist as his office staff. That fact gives an idea of how the department has been cut down. The department showed a decent profit for over 20 years, but instead of the industry being assisted and protected, successive Governments have used the departmental revenues for other purposes. The State went to a great deal of trouble in obtaining the present Chief Inspector of Fisheries from the Eastern States. It is generally recognised that an excellent choice was made; but the officer has never been given the ghost of a chance, because as the departmental head he has never had two hob to call his own. There are only eight inspectors to do the whole of the work between Broome and Albany. One of these inspectors is detailed to skins; so there are only seven men available for the remainder of the work. The inspectors have no transport facilities whatever—not even motor cycles. To demonstrate how difficult it is for them to do their work under such conditions, I would point out that should an inspector in Russeton be notified that poaching is taking place on the Blackwood River, he is obliged to travel by train to the locality. Augusta is 60 miles away, which means practically a day's journey; and by the time the inspector reached the closed waters, the poachers would have disappeared. Under such conditions there might just as well be no inspector at all for that district. I could quote many similar instances, and could say a great deal more on the subject. However, to be brief, I say that the Fisheries Department has never had a fair deal. I desire to commend the excellent work done by the Fish and Game Society, a body that appears to be using every effort to improve matters; but unfortunately for many years past Governments have not done their part. I agree with the stand that has been taken by the Minister for Agriculture regarding the payment of a bonus on foxes. My feeling is that the bonus should be continued as long as possible; in fact, many people would pay a higher vermin rate rather than that the bonus should be discontinued. We have been told that this is a suitable time



to complete the construction of Parliament House. I do not share that view. On the other hand, I consider it is high time proper consideration was shown to the officers and staff of Parliament by making their accommodation habitable during the hot summer months. If at all possible, that additional accommodation should be provided in accordance with the original plans. A great deal has been said about providing full-time employment for sustenance workers. The Mitchell and Collier Governments did all that was possible in the circumstances, and I understand the same policy is being carried out by the present Administration. Originally many people had to accept relief work on account of being thrown out of employment by the depression. I do not consider it fair to expect the Government now to provide those people with full-time work irrespective of whether the work is reproductive. There has always been a small army of Government workers. I remember that years ago, at certain seasons, the State had to provide relief work. If, however, we make it a condition that the Government shall find permanent employment for all those workers to-day, we shall be asking the State to do the impossible. Recently I attended a meeting at a centre near Donnybrook. At that meeting two farmers said that they had tried to get two men for four months' work at the rate of 10s. per day and keep. None of a number of sustenance workers employed in the locality at that time would accept the positions, because, they said, after they had left the farmers they would have to stand down for some time before the Government would put them on again. Thus the two farmers were unable to obtain the labour they needed. That state of affairs should be remedied. I fail to see why something cannot be done in the matter. It appears altogether wrong that farmers should go without labour while at their very doors the taxpayers are employing men. In conclusion, I desire to commend the Government for their generous treatment of the South-West during Labour's last term of office. The Government have spent a large amount of money on development work which will prove of the greatest benefit to the State. Particularly have the Main Roads Board opened up a large area of country by making various roads practicable

which at one time were quite impassable. The people throughout the South-West greatly appreciate the activities of the Main Roads Board. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.41 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 10th September, 1936.*

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

### QUESTION—BIRD PEST.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1. Has his attention been drawn to a paragraph in the "West Australian" of the 2nd September relative to the shooting of a starling at Gingin? 2. If so, has it been ascertained whether there are a number of such birds in the district? 3. If the answer to No. 2 is in the affirmative, will he take immediate action to have them destroyed, and also take action to prevent their further entry into Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1. Yes. 2. The matter is being carefully followed up by the departmental officers and the local vermin board. 3. Every effort is made to prevent the introduction of this bird, which has been declared vermin, into the State.