

The CHAIRMAN: In my opinion he has that power under the existing Act. That is on the question of redundancy. The question of relevancy is quite another matter. I will give my ruling in this way: I rule that the proposed new clause is relevant, and I leave it to the good sense of members to say whether or not it is necessary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I asked for your ruling on this point because it has been held that the proposed new clause is not relevant. However, that is not my own opinion. In view of your ruling on the point of relevancy, I have no objection to the proposed new clause, although there is already ample power in the Act for the Chief Electoral Officer to do all that is necessary to carry out the administration of the Act. Nevertheless the proposed new clause will give direct power to our Chief Electoral Officer.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

*House adjourned at 7.47 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 27th October, 1927.*

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

### QUESTION—SEPTIC TANKS, GOVERNMENT POLICY.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that, in at least one instance, a local authority in the Claremont electorate hesitates to proceed with the septic tank scheme on account of uncer-

tainty, as to the future policy of the Government, regarding the extension of deep sewerage? 2, Will he define the Government's intentions in this regard?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, The position in regard to deep drainage was defined in reply to a question on the 4th instant, which was as follows: "It is considered that no portion of the area from North Fremantle to Claremont is sufficiently settled to make it practicable to instal a payable sewerage system at the present time. A tentative scheme of sewerage for the area North Fremantle to Subiaco has been prepared. The estimated cost is roughly £530,000 for the immediate future and a further £100,000 to complete as the area develops. A plan is being prepared showing the areas that would be reticulated under this scheme with a view to estimating the revenue."

### QUESTION—STATE PSYCHOLOGIST.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health: 1, Has any report been prepared by the State Psychologist covering the activities of last year? 2, If so, when will it be available? 3, Has the establishment of a psychological clinic justified itself?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Yes. 2, Probably next week. 3, The hon. member will doubtless feel, after a perusal of the report, that the activities of the clinic are justified.

### BILL—INFLAMMABLE LIQUID.

*Report of Select Committee.*

Mr. Lambert brought up the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Inflammable Liquid Bill.

Report read and ordered to be printed.

### BILL—MENTAL TREATMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.38]: Without exception members will support the second reading and subsequent Committee consideration of the Bill. The question of insanity is of considerable interest and difficulty. I understand there are two

factors operating regarding the cause of insanity, one being heredity and the other stress. Every individual has his or her breaking point and if the stress is too great, mental disturbance and possibly insanity follow. A very fine article appeared in the London "Daily Telegraph" of the 14th July, 1923. It was read by Mr. Angwin in this House. It is so apropos that I am sure hon. members will be pleased to hear it again. It reads:—

These are times which make heavy demands upon mental and nervous energy. It is surely plain to all—for private experience and the distressing cases which too often force themselves into publicity offer proof enough—that in the interests of the national vitality we must use to the full the knowledge which modern science has brought. That means—to put the case simply—that public opinion must be taught to regard mental disorder as preventable and remediable disease. The practical corollary, the provision of wholesome conditions of life, and of adequate opportunity of treatment and cure, will then be secured . . . Sir Maurice Craig emphasised that to remove the stigma attaching to mental disorder is the indispensable condition of improvement in the mental health of the nation. He complained that hitherto we have said to the sufferer in effect, "I can do nothing for you until you have become insane, and then I can look after you, may be, for the rest of your life."

The article continues—

What he urged was that provision should be made to give curative treatment for mental disorder, and that, of course, means the establishment of clinics in general hospitals or elsewhere for cases in their early stages.

An interesting report of the work of Miss Stoneman, the Government Psychologist, appeared in this morning's "West Australian." Miss Stoneman refers to the difficulty that exists in connection with mental treatment and draws attention to the need for it at a much earlier period than is customary at present. In her report she said:—

In Western Australia there is no legal impediment to inter-marriage between feeble-minded persons. One feeble-minded mother, aged 32, died recently after giving birth to her fifth child.

The work of the psychologist will, I believe, be much to the advantage of future generations. The need for taking action in respect to the alleviation or cure of children suffering from mental disabilities will be generally recognised if the work of the psychologist is to be as effective as we desire it to be. The question is a very complex one, as indeed is the whole subject of

insanity. The trouble can best be dealt with, as indicated by the Government Psychologist, by being taken in hand at the earliest possible moment. The question of intermarriage of persons who are mentally defective is referred to by Miss Stoneman in her report and that has a direct bearing upon the number of those who suffer from mental disorders. It has been said that not only in human life, but in animal and vegetable life as well, the whole progress and robustness of offspring is determined by generations that have gone before. In no branch of study in that regard is that more pronounced or more easily proved than in the case of insanity. The study of the mind is the highest and most difficult branch of scientific inquiry. There are many forms of insanity—idiocy, imbecility, melancholia, exaltation and dementia—and every phase presents a problem of the greatest difficulty. When we consider the stress of modern conditions, the struggle for existence and the competition in business, it is not remarkable that in so many instances the brain should falter and become incapable of performing its functions. The stresses are severe on both male and female. With women it is a particularly difficult matter, and I believe that chronic disability with them arises mainly because proper care has not been provided for them. The mental reception home should provide a sovereign remedy and permanent cure for many patients. Numerous members of Parliament have urged the importance of establishing a mental reception home. In this respect Western Australia has lagged behind other countries of the world and I believe it is the only State of the Commonwealth where reasonable provision has not been made.

Hon. G. Taylor: I question whether any other State of the Commonwealth was so far advanced when its population was equal to ours.

The Minister for Health: The other States had nothing like it at the same stage.

Hon. G. Taylor: When the other States had a population of only 370,000 they were not nearly so far advanced as Western Australia is.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is so, but it is not an adequate answer to the demand for such an institution. It is a matter for regret to anyone who has given it consideration, and to no one more than to the ex-chairman of the Perth Hospital Board, the member for Mt. Margaret.

Hon. G. Taylor: Considering the population, we are doing wonders for our people.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not agree with that; I consider we have been very backward. The observation ward at the Perth Hospital has afforded one of the most awful examples of "how not to do it" to be found in any country.

Hon. G. Taylor: I shall tell you something about that.

Mr. SAMPSON: Long before the present year the observation ward was the subject of criticism.

The Minister for Health: And long before the present Government took office.

Mr. SAMPSON: Even before the previous Government took office. This is not a party question; it is one that should receive the consideration of every member. Mr. Angwin on many occasions raised his voice in favour of a reception home. He was a member of the Royal Commission that a few years ago presented an excellent report and a number of recommendations. I daresay members have read the report, but it is worth re-reading. On the subject of a mental home the report states—

It should be away from the environment of Claremont and situated in a reasonably accessible position as far as the centre of population is concerned. A breezy position on the river, or high above it, is desirable. An area of land of approximately 10 acres would be of advantage so that some degree of privacy could be obtained. In the first place the institution should be erected for 35 males and 25 females, distributed into two wards on each side; but the buildings should be so planned that additions could be made from time to time, say, by two convalescent cottages each to contain 15 to 20 patients; but such additions will be determined by the volume of work which the hospital attracts and as population increases.

Many more equally interesting observations are to be found in the report, but consideration for time prevents my reading them. I have specially referred to the passage of the report suggesting provision for 35 males and 25 females. The Minister, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said the building being erected at Point Heathcote would accommodate 36 of each sex, or 72 persons in all. The point is that equal numbers are being provided for. Let me quote the record of admissions to the mental ward of the Perth Hospital, commonly known as the observation ward. The figures indicate that the report and recommendations of the Royal Commission, which consisted of Dr. W. Ernest Jones (Chairman), Mr. H. B. Jackson

and Mr. Angwin, have been lost sight of, or else some other reason has influenced the Minister in providing equal accommodation for the two sexes. The figures supplied by the Chief Secretary are—

| Year. | Females Admitted. | Males Admitted. | Total Admissions. | Certified and transferred to Claremont. |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1924  | 118               | 287             | 405               | 61                                      |
| 1925  | 119               | 304             | 423               | 93                                      |
| 1926  | 111               | 310             | 421               | 146                                     |

The totals for the three years were 348 females and 901 males. It may be urged that some of the patients were perhaps suffering recovery from indulgence in liquor, but the disparity is striking. There were nearly three males to one female. Speaking on the Address-in-reply debate on the 6th August, 1924, I dealt with the need for a reception home and the following discussion with the then Minister for Lands (Mr. Angwin) ensued—

The Minister for Lands: There was no necessity to spend £60,000, according to the plans approved by your Government. We want a home, not an institution, something similar to that which they have in the Eastern States.

Mr. Sampson: All I want is that such a home should be provided as quickly as possible. I would be quite satisfied to have one like the Enfield institution (in South Australia), which cost £26,000.

The Minister for Lands: The local institution was to have cost £60,000.

Mr. Sampson: That is unnecessarily expensive.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Why did you approve of it?

Mr. Sampson: Surely the Honorary Minister knows that the Colonial Secretary is not the Treasurer. How could I approve of that expenditure? For the sum of £26,000 the Government of South Australia have erected a place that is a home in every sense of the word. If one had a near and dear relative there, one would not suffer the dreadful shock that is experienced by putting a relative into the Perth observation ward.

The Minister for Lands: I asked you 18 months ago to send for the plans from South Australia, and I also asked Mr. Broun. The South Australian place cost half the money you wanted to spend on palatial buildings.

Mr. Sampson: I have never pressed for palatial buildings, or for a large structure. A building can always be added to. We do not require a big institution, because there are not many people concerned. There are, however, sufficient persons affected to make this a matter of importance. If we consider these people we shall doubtless reduce the number who are passed into the Hospital for the Insane as certificated mental invalids. The home at Enfield is delightfully situated, and is sympathetically administered.

I have read that—

Mr. Marshall: In order to make a speech.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, to give the hon. member a little information.

Mr. Marshall: There is a lot of information, but not much intelligence.

Mr. Angelo: Your time is wasted on him.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is useless to throw pearls before certain animals. Mr. Angwin gave great consideration to the subject and I have always attached importance to his opinions. Consequently the reading of the excerpt was justified. Notwithstanding the disability arising from the lack of a mental reception home, our people rank high for mental equilibrium in comparison with those of the other States. In South Australia the proportion of insane to sane is the lowest of all the States, and Western Australia ranks next. In 1926 the proportion of insane to sane in South Australia was 1 to 442. In Western Australia the proportion was one to 324; in Queensland one to 297; in New South Wales one to 274; and in Victoria one to 266. Although South Australia is in the best position, Western Australia has reason to congratulate itself in respect to the numbers, in spite of the dreadful conditions that have prevailed up to the present. At Point Heathcote, the site of the mental home, we have an outlook that could not be improved upon. Generally speaking, those concerned are to be congratulated that such care was used in respect to the selection of the site.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yourself you mean?

Mr. SAMPSON: I was working up to the point of offering congratulations to the ex-Premier (the Leader of the Opposition) upon having approved of Point Heathcote, and thereby bequeathing to posterity a site for the alleviation, and I hope the cure, of a larger percentage of mental cases, that otherwise might become certificated and chronic.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You got that in very well.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have taken the opportunity on various occasions, even this week, of visiting Point Heathcote. I have noted the work that is being done there, and enjoyed the wonderful view and the delightful situation. This location will indeed provide a sanatorium for those who are suffering from mental sickness. It is a location that is incomparably superior to that of the Enfield Reception Home in South Australia and the reception home in Brisbane, and I

daresay it is superior to any of the others. I wonder whether the name Point Heathcote should be used. Always, in a comparatively short period, a sinister atmosphere or stigma attaches to any name that is associated with a hospital for those who are in mental distress. I am in some doubt as to whether another name would not be an advantage. It is perhaps a matter to which the Minister might give some consideration. A word or name other than that denoting the locality might be considered. I suggest Hopetoun.

The Premier: A name for the home and not the locality. There is no need to mention the locality.

Mr. SAMPSON: It might be called the Hopetoun Home, or the Hovea Home, or some other native name might do. If it were a home for any other purpose possibly even the name "Collier" might be appropriate.

The Premier: What a compliment!

Hon. G. Taylor: Coming from the Opposition, too.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I second that.

Mr. Lutey: What about "Sampson"?

Mr. SAMPSON: I will not unduly press my last suggestion.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You got home that time.

Mr. SAMPSON: It would be a great honour to have one's name associated with a home.

The Premier: We might make it a hyphenated name such as "Collier-Sampson."

Mr. SAMPSON: Hyphenated names are in disfavour. One name carries a message, whereas perhaps if a second name were added some confusion might result.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Its meaning might be misunderstood.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am not going to complain about the cost of the building. I understand the difficulty the Minister has had to face in securing the approval for the necessary expenditure. In view of Mr. Angwin's statements, and the references to the Enfield Home in South Australia which cost £26,000, and in view of the fact that provision is made for the accommodation of 36 of each sex rather than on the lines of the report of the Royal Commission on Lunacy, I feel justified in drawing attention to the variations that have been made in these matters. The final cost of the building is to be £98,688. The portion at present under construction for 36 pat-

ients of either class, that is 72 in all, is to cost £58,318. That is the estimated cost. It is possible that the work will be done within the estimate. I would appreciate some expression of opinion from the Minister with respect to the variations from the definitely expressed statement of Mr. Angwin, who, in season and out of season, if there is any out of season in such matters, urged that the sum of £26,000 would be sufficient. The Royal Commission recommended that provision for 35 males and 25 females would, for the time being, be ample. The question of the proportion of patients in the Perth observation ward is of first importance in making these comparisons. Indeed, that is the only opportunity we have of doing so. It may be that in his reply the Minister will give members the information asked for. He should tell us what has prompted the variations.

The Minister for Health: They are prompted by the local branch of the British Medical Association, the head of which was at that time in charge of the Perth Public Hospital; and they were also prompted by the experience of the admissions to the institution during the previous three years.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am sorry the Minister was out of the Chamber when reference was being made to the name to be given to this institution.

The Minister for Health: Call it "Point Sampson" instead of "Point Heathcote."

Mr. SAMPSON: Perhaps that would be some acknowledgment of past efforts, for I did work hard towards securing a mental reception home. I quoted the figures of admissions to the mental ward of the Perth hospital during the past three years, and these were 348 females and 901 males. There is a big disparity, and one that I think justifies the suggestion that we should have some explanation as to why the suggestions of Mr. Angwin were not carried out. I am pleased that the mental reception home is under construction, and by June next it is expected to be completed. The work is certainly being well done. It would be wrong to say that it is being done unnecessarily well. I do not know that we could have a work of that description too well carried out. The selection of the site gives effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, which were kept closely in view when consideration was being given to the purchase of the land. The Royal Commission said that the land

should be located in a lofty situation, and indicated that there should be a broad sweeping view. This location possesses those qualities. Members who have visited the site will agree that it could not be improved upon amongst all the sites on the river irrespective of whether they have previously been taken up or not.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is the only place.

Mr. SAMPSON: The previous Government resumed the land. It contains 2 acres, and cost £7,000. There was an allowance of £1,000, this amount being charged to the Water Supply Department because on the hospital site there is a storage tank containing water for distribution in the Point Heathcote district. I am pleased at what is being done, and I feel that with the completion of the home there will be removed from Western Australia that stigma that has hitherto attached to it owing to the great and unsupplied need for a mental reception home. Because of that institution the number of admissions to the Claremont Hospital for Insane must undoubtedly be reduced. I am sure that the effect of patients being able to receive treatment at the mental reception home before they reach the stage when certification is necessary will result in a high percentage of them being restored to a normal state of health. That is an excellent condition of things, and one with which we should all be gratified. I am especially thankful to the ex-Treasurer, Sir James Mitchell, for making the necessary funds available, and also to the present Government for having proceeded with the building.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret [5.16]: The Bill really does not require speeches to support it and the Minister need not worry about its passage. For my part I am rather sorry that the Bill could not have been so drafted as to provide for the establishment of a home without anything of the mental hospital about it. The institution should represent a halting place and testing place on the way to the Claremont Hospital for Insane. A good deal has been said about the mental ward of the Perth Hospital; but, coming down to tin tacks, there was never any provision made at the hospital for a mental ward. The manner in which the No. 12 ward came to be used as a ward for mental patients was that 17 or 18 years ago patients now sent to No. 1

ward were put into the lockup at Roe-street. That practice began when the Roe-street police station was first established. It happened that persons dumped into Roe-street late at night were found dead in the morning. This caused investigation to be made, and the board of management of the Perth Hospital thought something might be done to assist that type of people. Accordingly No. 12 ward was set apart for the first stage of mental treatment, instead of the lockup being used for that purpose. At that time the hospital authorities had no intention of using the ward as, strictly speaking, a mental ward; but it developed into that, and was provided with a padded cell. I speak from memory, and without having had any experience of Perth Hospital matters for the last two or three years; but I am in a position to state that a large percentage of the admissions to No. 12 ward were the outcome of alcoholic excess. It is not justifiable to give out the figures quoted by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) as showing the proportions of males and females who were mentally deficient and in need of such a home as that contemplated by the Bill. There should have been some segregation or dissection of the figures. It might have been stated that 300 male patients were in No. 12 ward, and that 150, or 90, or 60 were in the ward for only a week or two, the object being to give them treatment to enable them to recover from the effects of alcohol or delirium tremens.

Mr. Sampson: That brings the comparison back to the same position.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Not at all. If it is published that the mental ward of the Perth Hospital treated 901 males and 348 females for mental troubles, the conclusion will be drawn that Western Australia has a very high percentage of mentally deficient people, especially in view of the fact that this Parliament has been debating a measure dealing with such cases.

Mr. Mann: Those people are mentally disordered, not mentally deficient.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: A large proportion of the patients in the mental ward at the Perth Hospital are there because of alcoholic excess, beyond any doubt whatever. I have seen them myself; unfortunately I knew many of them personally. The ward, I repeat, was never intended to be a mental ward; but it was better for the patients than the Roe-street lockup.

The Minister for Health: Or many of the country lockups.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes. Patients came to that ward at the Perth Public Hospital from all parts of the State for observation.

The Minister for Health: That is correct except as regards Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: True, they did not come from the Eastern Goldfields.

Mr. Sampson: The whole position has been most regrettable.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The system grew. The home contemplated by the Bill will fill a want which I regret was not filled many years ago. The want did not continue because of any lack of energy on the part of the board of management of the Perth Hospital in applying to the various Governments for the removal of the No. 12 ward from the institution. Indeed, at one time the board contemplated removing it themselves and letting the Government find a place for the patients in question, who were objectionable to the ordinary patients, inasmuch as the inmates of No. 12 ward were given to roaring and groaning. From the aspect of those patients themselves the No. 12 ward was objectionable, because they could not come on the verandah without encountering the stare of the morgue. The board of management were aware of these facts, but the fault did not lie with them. The Government told the board that there was no money available for the making of better provision for the patients referred to. The fact is that everybody was looking too high, not being satisfied with the establishment of a suitable place in a suitable locality, for the time being, at a cost of say £10,000 or £12,000. Indeed, £5,000 would have obtained a better ward than No. 12, and in a suitable locality. However, people wanted to wait until an amount like £100,000 was available. In the next breath the same people said that the mental ward at the Perth Hospital was a standing disgrace to the State. It is now said that this Bill will remove a stigma. I contend that Western Australia is not wanting in consideration for its people. I know Australia as well as most people know it, and I venture to say that no other Australian State when its population was the same as that of Western Australia now is made anything like the same provision for its people. In introducing the Bill the Minister said that the proposed institution would be a kind of halfway house and would take the place of the Perth Hospital mental ward. In my opinion, when this home has been established the No. 12 ward at the Perth Hospital should cease to exist,

at all events as regards receiving patients with any sort of mental trouble.

The Minister for Health: That will be so.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The change will be highly acceptable to the board of management, the medical staff, and the patients of the Perth Hospital, and also, I believe, to the public generally. From what I have heard, the proposed site for the home is excellent. Notwithstanding what the member for Swan has said on that point, I remember that when the matter was being discussed previously, the Government of the day were tramping into this bend of the river, and into that bend, and the residents were continually hunting them out. The residents would not stand the idea of such an institution being placed in their neighbourhood. At last Point Heathcote was decided upon because there were only half a dozen pioneers of that locality, pioneers who had made it a cosy, pleasant and acceptable place of residence. There were not enough of them to hunt the Minister away when he went to Point Heathcote for a site.

Mr. Sampson: There was a Class A reserve at Point Heathcote.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I know that, but I also know that there were only a few people in the locality. They were greatly disturbed about the home being located there. However, that is beside the question. Had there been the same density of people at Point Heathcote as at other sites which were inspected, the Minister would have been chased away from Point Heathcote. I do not want hon. members to take credit where it is not quite due. I know that I myself was much concerned about the proposed institution. I was hoping that such a home would be built before I left the Perth Hospital Board. I have been off that board for three or four years, and the subject is only now being dealt with.

Mr. Panton: Your successor has been on the job ever since.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The whole board of the Perth Hospital have agitated the matter. The member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) knows that No. 12 ward has been most objectionable to the board of management, the medical staff and the patients. The amount provided should be sufficient to make a reasonable start in coping separately with patients of this class. One cannot help agreeing with the Minister and others that a person suffering from mental weakness needs treatment just as much as

does a person suffering from bodily ailment. If it be the Government's function to provide hospital accommodation and treatment for sufferers from bodily ailments, it is equally incumbent upon the Government to provide accommodation and treatment for the benefit of persons suffering from mental weakness. It seems the Government have come to that way of thinking, and the proposed step is a most laudable one for any country to take, showing that the State has a broad view of its responsibility to its people. No principle is involved in the Bill, and no argument is needed to pass it. Indeed, there really is no necessity for any debate. If any feature of the Bill needs alteration, that can be done in Committee. Without speaking further on the subject, I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to

Clause 3—Voluntary patients:

Mr. SAMPSON: Will the Minister explain the significance of the words "any person suffering from mental or nervous disorder"?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I shall not attempt to explain those medical terms, except to say that in my opinion they mean any person who, in the opinion of a qualified medical man, is, in plain English, not all there, is suffering from some mental trouble.

Mr. Sampson: But this refers to voluntary patients.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am quite aware of that, and I hope there will be many voluntary mental patients of the kind that to-day neglect themselves, or are neglected by their friends, because there is no institution for their reception and treatment. The clause should pass as printed.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Of my own personal knowledge I can say that on various occasions men have come voluntarily to the Perth Hospital for admission to what is known as the mental ward. Those were men who felt that they needed care and treatment after a heavy drinking bout. Generally they had been in the bush for length-

ened periods, possibly for years, and, having come to town, had imbibed too freely for a week or ten days. Such men came to the hospital to ask the physician what was wrong with them, having a pretty good idea of the cause of their trouble. The physician used to put them in No. 12 ward. After a very few days there the patient would go out fully restored. I presume the framers of this Bill had something like that in their minds. These people can go up voluntarily, and if suitable patients for the institution, they can be admitted on the doctor's word for a course of treatment.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—Involuntary patients:

Mr. BROWN: I should like the Minister to explain this clause. Suppose a man complains to a justice that one of his neighbours is not mentally sound; has the justice power to commit that man to such a home for six months?

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. BROWN: It seems to me the clause does give a justice power to commit a man to this mental home. It may be a question of one neighbour quarrelling with another, and reporting him to a justice as being mentally unsound. We ought to be very careful about this.

Hon. G. Taylor: The condition of the patient must be certified by two doctors.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am a little in doubt as to the proviso relating to a certificate in the form of the schedule. It seems to me the form given in the schedule does not altogether meet the case.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is quite all right. It is necessary to have it there against special cases. The Bill prohibits anybody from being committed to the institution for a longer period than six months, and it may be deemed necessary in the interests of the patient to extend that period. So the proviso makes provision for an extension of the treatment, but two doctors must certify that the extension is required.

Mr. MANN: I am afraid that Subclause 2, if allowed to stand, will be practically unworkable in remote districts, where perhaps there is only one doctor within a radius of 300 miles. In the absence of a certificate signed by two medical practitioners, the evidence of two medical practitioners is essential before the justice can commit a patient.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Subclause 2 provides that a justice may accept as proof of a person's condition a certificate signed by two medical practitioners. In the absence of such certificate, the justice must hear the evidence of two medical practitioners. If a patient were taken before a justice, under Subclause 1 the justice would ask for proof of the patient's disorder, and if satisfied with the proof he would commit him to the institution.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: That is perfectly correct. Subclause 1 permits of a justice hearing evidence as to a patient's condition and if satisfied that in the interests of the patient himself, or of the general public, the patient should receive treatment, the justice can order treatment. But it may be difficult for the justice to see the patient personally. If so, he can accept the certificate of two medical men, or, failing that, take the evidence of two medical men, after which, if satisfied, he can commit the patient to the institution. The Bill makes provision for the compulsory reception of patients, not only in the institution at Point Heathcote, but also in any public hospital in the State. For it may be a case needing hospital as well as mental treatment. Subclause 1 gives the justice power to commit a man on evidence, without a medical certificate.

Mr. Mann: No, that is wrong. The two subclauses are meant to be read together.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: If that is the case I do not know what will happen in a case such as that suggested by the hon. member. Suppose someone is mentally unbalanced and the nearest second doctor is a considerable distance away. There may be a number of cases where it is not possible to get a doctor for a considerable time. Suppose a case happened at Hall's Creek, what would be the position then? The order of commitment is not an order to an asylum.

Mr. Latham: But the man is committed to six months' detention.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Nothing of the kind. A commitment to the institution may be voluntary, or a person may be committed under the full regulations by the certificate of two doctors. In either case the person may make application for discharge and be discharged within 10 days. Away out back where there is no doctor, would anyone take it upon himself to commit a person to an institution in Perth without sending him to a place where there was a doctor? If a case is brought before a justice, and if the justice is convinced that



the individual should have treatment, the justice should have the right to send that person on for treatment.

Mr. MANN: If the Minister's explanation is correct, it is very serious to think that a justice, without any medical evidence, should be able to send a man to a far away part of the State where the mental home might be.

Hon. G. Taylor: He will send him to a hospital where there is a doctor.

Mr. MANN: To-day we cannot commit a man for observation unless he has been examined by a doctor. The Minister has told us that Subclause 1 of Clause 4 is to be read by itself.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I think that is a mistake.

Mr. MANN: Yes. The two subclauses are meant to be read together, otherwise they will be unworkable. I suggest to the Minister that he should postpone the further consideration of the clause and consult the Crown Law Department. To make the clause workable, the word "two" should be deleted, because in the back country there may be only one practitioner.

Mr. ANGELO: The member for Perth is right. A little further down the clause we find that in the case of an extension of time, even where the Inspector General is satisfied that the patient should be kept a little longer, the justice is asked to get another certificate. The Minister would be well advised to postpone the further consideration of the clause and to obtain the advice of the Crown Law Department.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I am assuming that the contention advanced that Subclauses 1 and 2 should be read in conjunction, is correct. If it is not correct, it is certain to my mind that both those subclauses require to be amended, as does also Subclause 6, because Subclause 6 does not make it mandatory that the certificate of two medical practitioners shall be secured. It merely provides that the justice may require the application to be supported by the certificate of the medical practitioner. I am opposed to any system that will permit one person to commit an individual to a reception house or mental home. We are giving one man authority that should not be given to any single individual over another person. If the Minister's contention is correct, the clause should not be passed, but if, as I think, Subclause 2 should be read in conjunction with Subclause 1, the necessary safeguard is there.

When we come to Subclause 6, however, we should make it mandatory.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I have no desire to create a hardship for anybody. I am still of the opinion that Subclauses 1 and 2 should not be read together.

Mr. Mann: Then they require to be amended.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I admit that the wording is a little vague, and in order to make the position absolutely sure I shall consult the Crown Law authorities, and if necessary will recommit the Bill. If the legal advisers say that the clauses should not be read conjointly I will give the member for Perth an opportunity to move whatever amendment he desires.

Mr. MANN: If the subclauses are read together, the Minister will realise that there will be a difficulty in administering the Act in outback centres where there may be only one medical officer. In some instances it may be necessary to take a medical officer 500 or 600 miles.

The Minister for Health: In such a case, it would not be done. The Government would not go to the expense of sending a medical man 500 miles to see a person who is supposed to be mental.

Mr. MANN: Outside the northern part of the State the clause could be put into operation. Members representing distant electorates know that it would be necessary to travel hundreds of miles to secure the services of a second medical man.

Mr. ANGELO: The Bill will have to be read in conjunction with the Lunacy Act, 1903, and there it is provided that in cases of emergency a justice may act on the certificate of one medical practitioner. That gets over the difficulty.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If hon. members had a knowledge of the circumstances under which this class of patient has been received into the mental ward at the Perth Hospital in the past, they would appreciate the fact that the great proportion come from the back country where there is one doctor only. Those patients have to be admitted on the certificate of one doctor, but they would never be sent to the Hospital for the Insane unless the certificates of two medical practitioners were secured. I do not think there is a chance of abuse of the system under which an individual might be wrongfully detained and despatched to the asylum at the instance of scheming relatives. We have heard of such instances happening

elsewhere, where family estates were involved.

Mr. Kenneally: But we do not want to make it possible at all.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have had experience of the working of the Perth Hospital for 16 years, and I know that extreme care is always taken by the medical practitioners, both resident and honorary, in dealing with such patients. To send persons to the Hospital for the Insane is the last thing that medical practitioners care about doing.

The Minister for Health: I have received letters repeatedly from people in different parts of the State protesting that they were afraid of certain individuals, but that local doctors refused to sign an order admitting the individuals concerned to the asylum.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Even should a person be admitted to the Hospital for the Insane, the Lunacy Act provides that he can put his case before a magistrate and discuss the question of his sanity. I would not tolerate giving power to any individual to do an injury to another, but I do not consider our medical men are so evilly disposed that they would commit a patient to the Hospital for the Insane unless they were firmly convinced that he required attention. If a person in the country were to inform the local policeman that someone there was insane, and the constable, after making his inquiries, considered that the man was not quite right mentally, he would take the individual before a magistrate.

Mr. Mann: In such an instance the Bill would not be resorted to at all. Action would be taken under the Lunacy Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I think the member for Perth is looking for trouble.

Mr. Mann: I am not; I want to avoid trouble.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The member for Mt. Margaret has missed the point. Under the present Lunacy Act it is possible for a justice of the peace to commit an individual for detention, on his signature alone.

The Minister for Health: Not on his signature.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Yes, I am a justice of the peace and I have signed the necessary form.

The Minister for Health: But that was under the old Act.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I am referring to that Act. The Bill makes provision for a certain course of action. Having given power to a justice of the peace to commit a person to an institution for not more than

six months, we go further and give power to the justice, without consulting a medical officer, to extend the period during which the unfortunate individual shall be incarcerated.

Members: No, no!

Mr. KENNEALLY: The Bill merely says that the justice "may" be supported, and that shows it is optional.

Hon. G. Taylor: In some instances it is mandatory.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I prefer to take the ruling of the Supreme Court that has not been challenged. The court held that "shall" is mandatory and "may" is optional. Therefore I say that the justice has power to extend the period of an individual's incarceration without the necessity for consulting medical authorities.

Hon. G. Taylor: But it is not incarceration, it is detention.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I prefer to call it incarceration, because that is what it amounts to if we take away the liberty of an individual. It is essential that we should safeguard the position and guarantee that no injustice be done to the individual. In the course of my duties as a justice of the peace, I have been worried as to whether, in signing orders for individuals to be detained for observation purposes, I was doing the right thing. I took the trouble to satisfy myself of the justice of the procedure. I have been strengthened and relieved on occasions to find that what the member for Mt. Margaret said was correct. I found that at the hospital the patients were attended to by medical men who understood the position. I want some such provision made in the Bill. The proposal before the Committee provides a substitute that is fraught with untold possibilities against the interests of people who may be afflicted. It is my intention, unless we can arrive at an amendment that will provide the necessary safeguard, and not leave the responsibility in the hands of a single justice of the peace, to vote against the clause.

Mr. BROWN: I take it that the Act is administered by the police. When speaking earlier I referred to the fact that action might arise out of a quarrel between two neighbours. I can give particulars of one instance. Two neighbours quarrelled and one went to the local policeman and said that he was afraid of his neighbour who, he considered, was insane. The policeman spoke to the man and considered that he

was not insane. The neighbour insisted and finally the man was arrested and put in gaol. As a justice of the peace I had to go to the lock-up, a doctor was called in and he certified the man to be insane. I told the doctor that, in my opinion, the man was not insane. However, in view of the doctor's certificate I had to sign the necessary order and the man was sent to Perth for treatment. I asked the doctor why he had committed the man to the Perth Hospital. He told me that if he had allowed the man to go back to his farm where he subsequently committed a murder, he, the doctor, would be held responsible and he would not take the risk. The upshot of that business was that the man was back on his farm in three or four days' time. It was just a neighbour's quarrel and the man was quickly determined at the Perth Hospital to be quite sane. Yet because of the action taken in the country that man had to suffer the degradation of being arrested, lodged in gaol, and taken to Perth in custody of a policeman. In view of such instances it is obvious that safeguards must be provided. If the certificates of two medical men were required, the difficulty would be overcome, but in many country towns there is but one doctor. In such circumstances, if it were necessary to obtain the services of a second doctor, the unfortunate man might be kept in the lockup until such time as that doctor arrived in the township to inquire into his condition.

Progress reported.

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

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1927-28.

*In Committee of Supply.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Luty in the Chair.

*Department of Chief Secretary (Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister; Hon. H. Millington, Honorary Minister, in charge of the Votes).*

*Vote—Chief Secretary, £16,208:*

**HON. H. MILLINGTON** (Leederville) [7.33]: Last year the expenditure of the several departments controlled by the Chief Secretary and the two Honorary Ministers totalled £304,048. This year the request is

for £307,720, which is £3,672 in excess of last year's figures. The increase is due largely to the usual increments in salaries. The expenditure of the Chief Secretary's department is devoted mostly to welfare activities, or what might be termed domestic services to the community. I do not propose to refer specially to the far-reaching activities of the department but would like to mention the more important aspects of the administration. A notable matter is that the erection of the Point Heathcote Reception Home is proceeding rapidly. It will be ready for occupation at the end of July next. The completion of the building will enable us to inaugurate a much-needed reform in the treatment of people suffering from mental stress. Another innovation of a different kind is the establishment of a prison farm at Pardelup, near Mt. Barker. The property, which was purchased in June last, comprises 7,500 acres and is partly improved. Prisoners are now working satisfactorily on the farm.

Mr. Sampson: How many prisoners are working there?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I shall supply that information later when dealing with the items. Alterations and additions to existing buildings are now in progress. This work will cost £1,800 and will make the buildings suitable for the use of the prisoners and the purposes of the farm. Even at this early date it is quite apparent that the farm will be a most useful unit in the prison and reformatory system of the State. A decision of special interest is the discontinuance of the Observatory. From time to time it has been urged that the maintenance of the Observatory should be a function of the Federal Government. Prominent authorities have declared that the future astronomical work of the Observatory will be of a Federal character. Recently a conference was convened consisting of astronomers from the various States, the Federal Astronomer and members of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and they expressed the view that the Perth Observatory should be controlled by the Federal Government. The work of the Observatory is largely scientific and the State Government feels that they are no longer justified in carrying on this work. Accordingly provision has been made in the Estimates for only six months' expenditure, which will carry the Observatory on until the end of the

calendar year. Negotiations with the Federal Government have been proceeding for some time and they have been advised of our decision not to continue this institution after the end of December.

Mr. Sampson: We shall then have the building for some other purpose.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The conference of astronomers were unanimous in the view that owing to the geographical situation of the Perth Observatory, it would be eminently suitable to carry on Federal work. The work done by it has an interest not only for this State but for the whole of the Commonwealth. The astronomers were of opinion that an observatory on the western coast of the continent and another at Canberra would be sufficient to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth and should be controlled by the Federal authorities. So far the Federal Government have not communicated their views to us, and the decision rests with them. However, the Estimates provide for only six months' expenditure. That of course does not mean the Observatory will be closed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You had better be careful!

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: It merely means that negotiations are being continued with a view to getting the Federal Government to undertake their just obligations and liabilities.

Hon. G. Taylor: You had better be careful and not make it indefinite.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: We have indicated definitely the attitude of the State Government by providing money for only six months. There is nothing indefinite about that. If the Observatory is to be kept going, the next move rests with the Federal Government. The Observatory undertakes activities of importance to the State in the shape of time signals and tide surveys, but those things might well be undertaken by the Federal Government who administer the Navigation Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I hope you will not close the Observatory.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: We all hope it will not be closed, but it is high time the question was finalised.

Mr. Sampson: It is properly a Federal obligation.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Of course it is.

The Minister for Justice: Western Australia is the only State that has an Observatory.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Negotiations have been carried on for years, and it is hoped that finality will soon be reached. I do not propose to deal with the nine or ten departments administered by the Chief Secretary. If members desire any information, it can be supplied when the items are being discussed.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Aborigines, £23,126—agreed to.

Vote—Fisheries—£5,603:

Item—Chief Inspector, £600.

Mr. SAMPSON: Can the Minister give us any information about the development of the fishing industry at Carnarvon?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I should like the Minister to deal with the activities of the Fisheries Department. The expenditure last year was £5,448 and this year we are asked to vote £5,603. The revenue of the department last year totalled £8,537.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I want to know where the fish are.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: During the year there has been increased activity in the fishing industry. A cold storage plant has been erected by a local resident at Denham, Shark Bay, and over 60,000 lbs. of fish has been disposed of.

Hon. G. Taylor: By the State, or by private enterprise?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: By private enterprise. Some of the fish was supplied to passenger steamers calling there and the remainder was forwarded to Fremantle for disposal. Supplies that reached the metropolis were up to the usual standard of quality. As in previous years a considerable proportion of the larger species were railed from Geraldton. For some time a company has been carrying on activities at Carnarvon with respect to shark fishing, and has been utilising the old treatment works there. Possibly this enterprise will develop into a fine industry. Those who are associated with it are experts. The latest information we have received is that a larger company has been floated with a substantial capital, and that a new vessel has been purchased. With the new equipment it is proposed to go more actively into the business. Negotiations are going on for the purchase of the old meat works.

Mr. Mann: Which means taking over a valuable asset from the Government and turning it to good account.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: It is a valuable asset for those who are anxious to utilise it, but it would be of no use to most people. If this company had been obliged to start off scratch, it might not have been deemed advisable to begin operations at Carnarvon. I believe the presence of these old works induced the company to choose that centre.

Hon. SIR JAMES MITCHELL: I am glad to know the Chief Inspector of Fisheries has done such good work during the last few years. The waters of the North are teeming with fish, but the people of the State cannot get enough of it for themselves. We are not fishermen and we are not sailors, so that our fishing industry is left largely to foreigners. I hope the company referred to by the Honorary Minister will have a successful career. I know of no industry that is likely to be of more value to the State than this one. If it is successful at Carnarvon probably others of a similar nature will be established along our coast. The products of the shark are of great value, not only the oil, the flesh and the fin, but the hide. When the ladies are able to buy the hide, converted into leather, no doubt they will use it not only for boots and shoes but for dresses. Material made of this substance will last a lifetime.

Mr. Pantou: That would not suit the ladies.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It can be dyed from time to time and made to look quite nice. I am glad the meat works, which apparently are not wanted by the squatters up there, can be put to satisfactory use in the way indicated. Possibly it will be found practicable to treat the dugong and the turtle also at Carnarvon. Before we had a Fisheries Department, back in the thirties, men were sent up to Shark Bay to see if it would be possible to secure sharks' fins for export, but they reported that no sharks were available. This new company has made it abundantly clear that sharks do exist there in great numbers. I was astounded to learn how much each shark was worth.

Hon. H. Millington: These experts know all about the movements of sharks.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and they are very easily caught. The Chief Inspector has a great deal to do with the pearl

fisheries and the whaling industry. I hope that before long, as a result of his efforts, we may be able to secure an abundant supply of fresh and smoked fish for our people. Our coast line extends for thousands of miles. Our population is small, and we should be able to get any quantity of fish at a reasonable price. At present we import it from the Old Country, South Africa and New Zealand, whereas our own fish could be smoked and cured and turned to satisfactory account. There is more wealth in the sea along our northern coast than we can get from our lands there, but the people have not taken the wealth that is there for the taking. Possibly the outlay required has retarded the development of the fishing industry in the North. I understand that the whaling industry has been a success, and I believe the shark industry will also be of great benefit to the State. I hope it will lead to the establishment of other works along our coast. Our waters should not be allowed to go to waste as has been the case in the past. There are great possibilities about the export of edible fish from this State.

[Mr. Lambert took the Chair.]

Mr. ANGELO: It is disappointing to find the Chief Inspector of Fisheries visits the North only at rare intervals. I believe he had not been there for nine or ten years until he found it necessary to go there last year. That was not his fault. He has been trying for years to pay periodical visits to that part of the State in order to inquire into the operations of pearling in Broome and Shark Bay. He should go up there often and personally superintend this industry, and see what developments could be brought about in the fishing industry. I am not saying anything against him for he is a good officer, but he has not been given the opportunities that should have been afforded him to make investigations into the progress and development of these enterprises. He should carry out his functions as chief inspector and not as a clerk. He should visit the North at least once a year. The Honorary Minister referred to the freezing chamber that has been established at Shark Bay. I have rather bad news for him. The man who established the place put about £2,000 or £3,000 of his own money into the concern. He was prepared to mortgage all he had to the Government if he could borrow a

matter of £200 or £300 from them. The member for Roebourne and I interviewed the Council of Industrial Development but the assistance required was refused. Since then he has been living from hand to mouth. Only the "Koolinda" is capable of carrying large quantities of fish in a frozen condition to Fremantle. The "Koolinda" went ashore and it was not possible to get more than 25 per cent. of the value of the fish that had been got ready to send away. Since then there has been no opportunity to ship away any more fish. One of the Singapore boats could have carried a little. The Government sent the Chief Harbour Master up there to have the channel reopened. The master of the Singapore boat was telegraphed to and notified that the channel had been reopened, and that he could lift between seven and 10 tons of fish if he would call at the port. That he refused to do. It means that the fish are still lying there. If we were on the State Shipping Service Vote I should strongly advocate the purchase of another vessel. The fishing possibilities at Shark Bay are not realised as they should be in the South. A private establishment such as this shows that with right methods Shark Bay could supply the metropolitan area with all the fish it needs, provided adequate transport was available. The chambers of the plant can hold only ten tons, but each time the "Koolinda" was available her chambers were filled with fish. The men did not have too much success with the freezing and shipment of their early consignments, but with experience they made their venture profitable. The stranding of the "Koolinda," however, has thrown them right back: they now have £400 or £500 worth of fish on hand, and they cannot pay wages due until they sell the fish. The industry gave temporary but much-needed employment to a good many Shark Bay pearlers, the local pearling industry being at a low ebb. A pool for pearl shell and pearls has been suggested, and I trust that when something concrete is submitted to the Government they will assist in getting the pool established. I am glad mention was made of that larger industry which has already gained a footing in Carnarvon. Up to the present the work done by the Marine Products Limited has been purely of a prospecting nature. The industry is to make a real start when the factory ship arrives from Home—it is hoped at the end of November or the beginning of December. The company have been operat-

ing with three little launches which are quite unsuitable for the work, but which they were compelled to buy when they decided to make Western Australia the field of their operations and Carnarvon the centre of the new industry. I am indeed pleased that the Premier, when approached by these people with a request that the meat works be acquired, showed himself most sympathetic. The hon. gentleman has done all he possibly can to assist. The meat works will never operate in the line for which they were designed. In the first place they are too big, and in the second place it is doubtful whether the surrounding country holds sufficient stock to enable the works to operate successfully in frozen and canned mutton. But certainly they will be made good use of when the new industry has become established. It is a pity that much of the machinery will have to be scrapped, but it will be replaced by machinery suitable for the new industry. Hon. members will probably have read in the English Press an account of the factory ship which is being equipped at Home. She will bring out with her no less than ten launches specially built for the work, and it is expected that one of these new launches will do as much work as the three unsuitable launches now in use are capable of. The company expect to deal with from 30 to 40 tons of shark and other fish daily. That shows to what extent the industry can be carried on in the North. And with our 1,500 miles of coastline north of Carnarvon it is not this company alone that will operate. The success of the existing company will mean the establishment of many more companies; and the directors of the existing company will be only too pleased to see other companies come along, because, like the farmers, those engaged in the industry will have their principal markets oversea and will not compete one against the other. I have heard it asked, how long will the sharks last? Dr. Ehrenreich, who has made a lifelong study of the industry, estimates the migration of sharks past Carnarvon at two millions per day. People may say, "That is drawing the long bow; how does he know?" A few months ago the doctor was showing me a book containing photographs of the various species of sharks throughout the world—about 400 varieties. He pointed out the 40 or 50 varieties he had already identified at Carnarvon. Drawing attention to one particular shark he said, "This will be a very valuable shark for our purposes, and I expect him here in

ten days." Later he pointed to the hammerhead shark and said, "This also is a very valuable shark, and he will be here in three weeks' time." Eleven days later the doctor took me down to the jetty and showed me a shark of the species which he had expected a day sooner; and in three weeks' time, exactly, the hammerhead sharks came along. The doctor certainly impressed me with the belief that he knows what he is talking about. Every portion of the shark is to be used. The hide will be made into skin. All the flesh will be treated; the present process is sun-drying, but dehydration is to be used. The product will be sent to the Far East for sale as an edible. Every consignment which had been sent to the Far East from the inception of the industry up to the time I left Carnarvon brought a higher price than the last, a fact which shows that Eastern people are getting more and more accustomed to this food and are valuing it more and more highly. The fins, as we all know, bring a high price in China; and the oil is a most valuable product. The remainder of the shark will be converted into fertiliser. But the shark is not the only fish the company will deal with. There is a big future for the turtle industry, an opinion shared by the doctor. He has not been fishing for turtle, but a dozen to 20 per day have been caught in the shark nets—the right kind of turtle, which makes the most delicious soup the world has ever known, and also makes an extract regarded as more nutritious than even Liebig's. Again, there is the dugong, a fish little known to the doctor, but one with which he is now experimenting and from which he expects to produce fine bacon. Dugong oil is of high commercial value. The doctor also has great hopes of edible fish—the huge shoals of big sea mullet and other fish of that class. He told me he was absolutely astounded to find Western Australia had such splendid fish as our sea mullet and kindred varieties, which are most suitable for canning purposes and also for smoking. The doctor may be optimistic; but he thinks that when the industry is fairly established, there will be no further need for importing Scotch haddock or other Old Country fish. He also assures me that when the factory ship arrives and operations are in full swing he will employ 600 men. That forecast produces in me certain misgivings as to who is going to represent Gascoyne in future. However, fishermen have a sense of honour, and I trust they will realise that I have done a great

deal towards getting the fishing industry established at Carnarvon. Even if I do go and a good industry is established, I shall not have been here in vain. The employment of 600 men means that the great majority of them will each bring along a wife and perhaps one or two children. The result will be the doubling of Carnarvon's population in 12 months, and that will be the first step towards what many of us have been striving after for years—the getting of a larger population in our far North for defence purposes. I feel certain that the establishment of this company will not be an isolated development. If the company should prove a success, then our 1,500 miles of coastline will afford scope for many similar companies, which will provide that part of Western Australia with five or six times the population it has at present. Further, the men will be of the right kind, men accustomed to the sea, and therefore well adapted to create a nucleus of defence for our shores. I am very pleased indeed to support the vote and again I express the hope that the Government will be able to make arrangements for the Chief Inspector of Fisheries to pay more frequent visits north to enable him to ascertain how these industries are progressing. By doing so he will be able to keep the Minister and the Government more fully informed of the possibilities of the fishing industry in northern waters.

MR. SAMPSON: Recently I had an opportunity, through the courtesy of the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), to pay a visit to Shark Bay and was able to see the operations being carried on there. A very fine refrigerating plant has been installed. I do not know much about fish, but I was considerably impressed with the work carried on at Shark Bay. An immense quantity of fish is brought to that port and treated for storage in the refrigerator. It was an eye-opener. I was surprised to learn soon after I returned to Perth that although requests had been placed before the Council of Industrial Development for financial aid, no assistance had been forthcoming. We hear a lot about developing Western Australian industries and providing markets for our own products, but in this instance there is a lack of opportunity because of the need of funds.

The Premier: We have had some experience of similar experiments, you know.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am aware that we had some experience regarding a floating canning works, but I cannot recall any other effort being made to establish refrigerating and smoking works for the treatment of fish on such a basis as to be likely to succeed.

Mr. Angelo: There was one instance in which the man concerned lost £11,000 of his own money. He could not get men to work.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have never seen an engine running more sweetly than the one at the refrigerating plant at Shark Bay. The whole business seemed to me to offer every possibility of success but the company need financial assistance. I hope the Council of Industrial Development will extend some consideration in that direction. The people there are dependent to a great extent upon pearl shell and fishing. The treatment of fish caught in the bay and elsewhere will afford great assistance in the development of that part of the State. It might be worth while for the Director of the Tourist Bureau to pay more attention to Shark Bay. It is a veritable El Dorado from the standpoint of sportsmen. There is shooting, yachting, unlimited fishing and plentiful supplies of the edible, as well as the pearl, oyster. There is also a good hotel.

Mr. Angelo: The Deep Sea Fishing Club are arranging a trip for next April.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a wonderful place for a holiday, and the people are very hospitable.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is that why so many politicians were there last March? I believe the Premier was there.

The Premier: I passed at a distance.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the Committee are concerned about the Premier passing by Shark Bay.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope further consideration will be given to the request for financial assistance and that the company will be able to carry on with still brighter prospects of becoming successfully established. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, there is a splendid market for our fish and at present people buy English fillet, but they have a suspicion that if it were properly labelled they would not eat it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It was refreshing to hear the latter portion of the member for Gascoyne's remarks. The earlier portion of his speech was rather depressing. He spoke about the failure of the

meat works, of which we are well aware. We voted something like £60,000 to assist that concern. We also remember there was an attempt to establish a fish canning industry, but that, too, fell through. Most of the enterprises were spoken of in glowing terms during the early stages of their operations.

Mr. Griffiths: Was there not an attempt to establish canning works at Mandurah?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The member for Gascoyne evidently has great hopes of the successful carrying on of the shark catching industry at Carnarvon. I hope it will succeed. I do not feel like pinning my faith to fishing for financial success, because I know the private companies are not as financial as the State and cannot stand losses to the same extent. I was associated with the Government that opened up the fishing industry in the North, but we could not make a success of it.

Mr. Angelo: You did not provide the necessary transport.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have heard several reasons for our non-success. I remember reading a statement made in the Legislative Council that the reason for the failure was that before the Government embarked upon the industry they made no arrangements with the fish to bite in eight hours! I can only assume that the member for Gascoyne and the company to which he has referred have made better arrangements. I hope the operations will be successful. In the past companies have not been able to succeed because they could not get their supplies away. The transport was inadequate. Even to-day, I understood the member for Gascoyne to say, there are six or eight tons of fish awaiting transport.

Mr. Angelo: But that is at Shark Bay.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Unless arrangements are made by which transport facilities will be assured, the company will not be able to carry on successfully.

Mr. Angelo: The shark products are treated there and can be shipped at any time. The difficulty arises in connection with the fresh fish.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I was referring to fresh fish.

Mr. Angelo: They will be canned.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope the hon member will be able to secure transport facilities that will assist the industries up North, and that he will be able to devise some means for securing Government assistance.



Mr. GRIFFITHS : I do not wish to appear to be butting into a discussion on a subject about which I do not know much. I call to mind the first time the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) spoke about these operations, and I remember that hon. members treated them as a joke. Newspapers I have received from the Old Country contain informative articles about the industry and have brought Carnarvon prominently before the English people. During his remarks, the member for Gascoyne referred to 1,500 miles of coastline along which the fishing industry could operate. We have 4,350 miles of coastline in Western Australia.

Mr. Angelo: I was referring to the coastline from Carnarvon.

Mr. GRIFFITHS : We know we have vast areas in the Great Australian Bight where fish are plentiful, as well as up North. Among the fish the hon. member referred to was the dugong. The oil from the dugong is strongly recommended, and is used successfully in cases of consumption. From personal experience I know it is a fine remedy for rheumatism. The member for Gascoyne stressed the importance of the shark-fishing industry, which will not be dependent upon the two State steamers for transport facilities. When we realise what the successful development of the fishing industry will mean regarding the future of the North, we ought to consider whether we should not put forward a bigger price when we consider conceding that part of the State north of the 26th parallel to the Commonwealth Government. I am pleased at the prospects of success, and I wish to give the member for Carnarvon a word of praise for his enterprise.

Vote put and passed.

*Votes—Registry and Friendly Societies £10,715, Gaols £25,905, Harbour and Lights and Jetties £25,025—agreed to.*

*Vote—Lunacy and Inebriates, £104,312:*

Mr. SAMPSON: I notice there is here a grant of £100 provided for the After Care Committee. It will, I am sure, assist in the splendid work carried on by that committee, but I should like to know whether the grant is a maximum, or whether it increases in accordance with the amount subscribed by the public for the committee.

Hon. H. Millington: It is a maximum.

Mr. SAMPSON: Having in view the fine work this committee are doing, I thought that possibly some day the amount could be increased in accordance with the support given by the public.

Mr. Kenneally: What grant did the hon. member make when he was Chief Secretary?

Mr. SAMPSON: I think the amount has remained the same for some time. However, I am not putting this up from a party standpoint.

Mr. Kenneally: It suggests that the hon. member is a better critic than an administrator.

Mr. SAMPSON: The after care of patients is of greater importance than any criticism.

The Premier: Have you any knowledge that this amount is not sufficient?

Mr. SAMPSON: I know that the After Care Committee have to exercise the greatest economy.

The Premier: Has the sum been found to be insufficient? Why ask for an increase if you have no knowledge that the amount set down is not sufficient?

Mr. SAMPSON: The amount provided is appreciated, but I thought that as an encouragement to the public to assist in the good work of the committee, the subsidy might be increased in accordance with public subscriptions.

The Premier: In my experience, the greater the Government assistance the less do the public subscribe.

Mr. SAMPSON: With other members, I desire to assist those patients who have left the hospital. It is only by the mercy of the After Care Committee that some of them are enabled to remain outside of the hospital.

Mr. MANN: The Premier asked the member for Swan if he knew whether or not the amount was sufficient. It is only about one-fourth of the money the After Care Committee require to keep them going.

Hon. G. Taylor: Where do they get the balance?

Mr. MANN: They hold an appeal each year. Last year Mr. Watson, of the "Worker," gave £60 from a fund that he and others had, and the Ugly Men gave £100.

Mr. Kenneally: Where did Mr. Watson get his £60 from?

Mr. MANN: I can tell the hon. member, if he really wishes to know. It is intended this year to work in three nights at the White City for the After Care Committee, between the Labour appeal and the Ugly Men's appeal. If that can be done they will get sufficient, plus the £100 here set down, to carry them through. This committee do wonderful work, not only with the women discharged from the Hospital for the Insane, but also with the men. I have known them persevere with a man for months, getting him a position and, when he lost it, keeping him for weeks, getting him another position, and sending him away to it. The member for Swan was quite right when he said they use the greatest economy in the expenditure of their moneys. Of the many grants made by the Treasurer during the year, none is more worthy than this one. I am sure if the committee had approached him and put up their case as I know it, this item would have been £250 instead of £100.

The Premier: Such an increase might result in the efforts of people outside slack-ing off.

Mr. MANN: I do not think so. The committee consists of very fine men and women who, I know, would not slack off in any circumstances. An increase in the subsidy would enable them to do more than they can do at present. Mrs. Casson is the secretary of the committee. I commend that committee to the Treasurer for the very fine work they are doing.

Vote put and passed.

#### *Vote—Observatory, £902:*

Mr. DAVY: I am sure, Mr. Chairman, the Committee are in deep distress in that this year we are not to have your annual speech on this Vote. I assume the reason is that there is so substantial a reduction in the Vote that you have come to the conclusion that your efforts in the past have at last borne fruit. I should like to know from the Minister just what the decrease means. I understand the idea is that the Observatory is an activity that ought to be undertaken by the Commonwealth. But I should like to know how it is proposed to achieve that object. Also I should like to put this aspect of the thing to the Minister—it was raised many years ago: It is the possibility that if the Commonwealth will not take over the Observatory some arrangements might

be come to with the University whereby at a very much reduced expense the University might carry on the activities of the Observatory.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: As I pointed out previously, this matter has been under discussion for a long time. In March last the Council of Scientific Research, a Commonwealth body, held a conference and went into the whole question of observatories throughout Australia. One of their recommendations was that the Commonwealth should take over the observatories. From an astronomer's point of view the Perth Observatory and that at East Canberra are two that should be controlled by the Federal authorities. The work carried out at the Perth Observatory is of value, not only to Western Australia, but to Australia as a whole. The work done is largely of a Federal character. For instance, the Perth Observatory is responsible for the survey of the tides on the North-West coast. We say that should be, and could well be, the work of the Federal authority. It is true the Commonwealth Government have not agreed to take over the Perth Observatory; but having regard to the Federal value of the work done at that institution, it may reasonably be expected that the Federal Government will take it over. Negotiations have been proceeding for some time and representations have been made to the Federal Government that they should give effect to the findings of the conference held under the auspices of the Council of Scientific Research. So we are backed in our attitude by the highest authorities. The course we have taken is the only one calculated to bring the issue prominently under notice. The State Government have declared that after the end of the calendar year no further funds will be available for the Observatory. I presume the Federal Government will then be prepared to continue the Observatory. Certainly the State does not propose to carry on after this year. However, if the Commonwealth Government have any regard for the advice tendered them by experts and specialists, there will be no need for a cessation of activity at the Perth Observatory.

Mr. Davy: Are the experts there going to be out of a job after December if the Commonwealth take it over?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Unless they, too, are taken over by the Federal authorities.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not so much concerned as to whether the Government have made provision to carry on the Observatory after the end of the year, but I am concerned as to what is going to become of the valuable site of the Observatory. I presume it will be handed over to the Commonwealth if the Commonwealth take over the Observatory. Certainly the site is eminently suited to the purposes of an observatory.

The Premier: The best in the State.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Government should keep a jealous eye on that property. We are not viewed too favourably by the Federal authorities and I am not prepared to give over to their control one of the picked spots of the metropolitan area. If supplies are cut off after the 31st December the Federal Government will have to come to the rescue or the Observatory will be closed. In any event, I want the Premier to treat the Observatory grounds as a valuable site that should not be passed over to the Federal Government on easy terms.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote State Children and Outdoor Relief, £104,510:*

Item—Payment to women on whom children are dependent, £58,100:

Miss HOLMAN: I should have liked to see an increase in this item, in order that a larger allowance might be made to women who have children dependent on them. For some years the amount provided has been 9s. per child per week, and I am of opinion that 12s. 6d. would be little enough. Even that sum will not keep a child, but the additional 3s. 6d. would be of considerable help. Many deputations have approached various Governments requesting an increase, and I hope that an increase will be provided shortly. I should like the Government to introduce a system of pensions for widows who have children and also for widows who have no children. When women with children undertake work to supplement the departmental assistance, portion of their earnings is often deducted from the allowance. A mother may have four children and be in receipt of 36s. a week from the department, but if she earns more than a certain amount it is deducted from the 36s. The sum of 36s. is not sufficient to pay for rent and clothing and all the wants of four children, and if by working she could earn a few shillings, she should be encouraged

to do so in order that her children might be better clothed and fed. The basic wage for a man, his wife and a family of three or four children is £4 5s. a week, on which sum they are supposed to be able to live in reasonable comfort. Yet a family that have lost the breadwinner are supposed to be able to live on a much smaller sum. I hope the Minister will increase the allowance to women as soon as possible.

Mr. SLEEMAN: This question has been ventilated on several occasions during the last few years. After the remarks that were made last year, I expected something would be done. According to the Estimates £61,000 was voted last year and £58,118 was expended. This year £58,100 has been provided, a small decrease on the actual expenditure of last year. It is impossible to keep a child on 9s. a week. It costs 11s. 1d. to keep prisoners in the gaol and yet a widow cannot buy commodities as cheaply as can a large institution. During the last few weeks questions have been asked about the cost of keeping the inmates of various homes. For the Old Women's Home, Fremantle, the cost per inmate was 5s. per week for food only, Old Men's Home 6s. 0½d. for food only, and the Hospital for the Insane 5s. 5½d. for food only. The cost of cooking is not included in those figures, but a widow who has to buy in dearer markets has to purchase wood for cooking, an expensive item, and also meet the still heavier item of rent. I agree with the member for Forrest that widows who earned a few shillings to augment the assistance given by the Government have been approached by the department to forego portion of the assistance. That is no incentive for the women to help their families; rather is it encouragement for them to stay at home and refrain from helping them. I hope that during the present year a few more shillings will be granted to help these women to keep their children.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Of the total vote £94,282 deals with payments for the maintenance of children and the aid of orphanages.

The Premier: It is a large sum of money for this State.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is. That leaves a sum of £10,000 for salaries.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you think 9s. is ample?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not complaining of, or opposing, any of the arguments advanced by the member for Forrest or the

member for Fremantle. If the Government grant a widow 9s. for each child and she is anxious to earn additional money in order that the children may enjoy greater comfort, the Government should not impose any restriction on her.

Mr. Angelo: Would not she neglect her children by going out to work?

Mr. Griffiths: That is the argument.

Miss Holman: What could she do with 36s. a week for four children?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have as much sympathy for a woman who has lost her husband as has any other member. If the Government could see their way to grant 15s. a week I should be pleased. The question at present under consideration is that of the Government preventing widows from supplementing by their own work the 9s. granted for each child. It has been said the reason for the restriction is that the mother might neglect her children.

Mr. Angelo: It would depend upon the age of the children.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: A mother who was so concerned about the welfare of her children that she would go out and work for them would not be likely to neglect them. One that would neglect them would be much more likely to remain at home. Women who are prepared to work in order to make their children and homes happier are not the sort to neglect the children. It would be a contradiction of terms to suggest otherwise. The Government should abandon the practice of probing into the question of widows' earnings. If the Government are satisfied that assistance is necessary, the recipient should be permitted, if she so desires, to supplement the amount. I believe the Federal Government impose a somewhat similar restriction on old-age pensioners. If the Government found that a woman, by going out to work, was neglecting her children, they could step in and protect the children, but that would rarely happen. Mr. Watson, the officer administering the department, is always sympathetic. I have known him for many years and have had occasion to bring many sad cases under his notice. If he errs at all, it is on the side of being over-sympathetic: there is a risk of people imposing on his generosity. Consequently, no fault is to be found with his administration. The Minister naturally wishes to keep a tight grip on the finances, and as a result of that the head of the department may be restricted to some extent. Unless the pre-

sent Treasurer differs from his predecessors, I dare say he frequently reminds Ministers to go slow in the matter of expenditure.

The Premier: I never do that!

The Minister for Justice: He is pretty hard when one wants a little more money. I can tell you that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope the Honorary Minister will convey to the Chief Secretary the views that have been expressed here tonight.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I think we can discuss the item without criticising the officers administering the vote or the Government.

Mr. Davy: Do not be afraid to criticise the present Government.

The Premier: There is no scope for it.

Mr. KENNEALLY: If the member for West Perth had been attending to his work this afternoon he would have noticed that I was not backward in criticising the Government.

Mr. Davy: The mantle of the previous member for East Perth has fallen on his shoulders.

Hon. G. Taylor: What a difference between east and west!

The Premier: "East is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet."

Mr. KENNEALLY: I cannot follow the views of the previous speaker. We cannot judge this work by the amount of the vote. If the amount, as he said, is large, doubtless the need for assistance is great. In many cases I have found that the vote does not operate fairly in the case of womenfolk who have to keep their children. The utmost they can get under the regulations is, in the case of a woman with four children, 45s. a week, and then the mother is treated as a child for the purposes of the allowance.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

Mr. Mann: If the children are attending school the department pay for all school requisites, I think.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The interjection of the hon. member does not count for much, because the children cannot eat the books and cannot satisfy their hunger with them. It is, therefore, essential that the grant should be sufficient to enable the mother to keep herself and her children in comfort and pay the rent. That cannot be done on 45s. a week. If members think that is possible, they are indicating to the Arbitration Court that it knows nothing about the work

on which it is engaged. We must take into consideration the amounts that are necessary to enable women, who have the responsibility of their children, to keep them in a position of comfort. I wish to pay a tribute to the officers of the department for the manner in which they carry out their duties. They are courteous and most willing to give every possible assistance.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are very anxious to help.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Yes, but they are governed by the regulations. The question could well be reviewed by the Minister, because the allowances were granted when the State was not in the position it is in now. When the position of the State improves still further, one of the first considerations should be to increase the allowances in the case of widows who have to keep their own children. In the other States a system has been introduced whereby the widow's responsibilities are separately recognised apart from the aid that is given to State children. If we cannot do that here, we should see that the responsibility of the widow is recognised by increasing the amount granted to her children.

Mr. BROWN: I am glad the Government have made provision for widows and their dependents. Many pitiful cases of the position in which widows find themselves have been heard of in this State. In every town people know of widows who are suffering extreme hardship, more particularly when they are left with little children dependent upon them. A family of four is small, and if a woman has only four children she is still young. She has a better chance of re-marrying than a single woman.

Mr. Marshall: Are you posing as an authority on the matter?

Mr. BROWN: Any young widow has a better chance of marrying than has a single girl.

Hon. G. Taylor: What! With four children?

Mr. Angelo: She is generally a merry widow.

Mr. Griffiths: Beware of the widows, said Weller.

Mr. BROWN: If a woman is left a widow with a number of small children she cannot very well go out to work. The Minister should not confine himself to an allowance of 9s. a week. That is altogether too small. I believe that when a woman becomes a widow she has a better

time than when she was a wife. She certainly wears better dresses.

Mr. Angelo: You will be inducing women to become widows.

Mr. BROWN: Indeed, many husbands are an encumbrance upon their wives. People have said to me, "I have never seen Mrs. So-and-so, so well dressed. She could not dress like that when her husband was alive."

The Premier: And on 9s. a week!

Mr. BROWN: Very often when she becomes the breadwinner she displays more ability to look after herself and the children than was possessed by her husband. On the other hand there are many sad cases. I know of one elderly woman who was left a widow and she had two children. She is too young to receive the old-age pension, and no doctor will certify that she is incapable of working. She is dependent very largely on charity. Something ought to be done for her. Her boy was at the Modern School. Although he was only about 13 he told his mother he ought to leave school and help to keep her, which was a very noble thought on his part.

Hon. G. Taylor: They make fine old men, those fellows.

Mr. BROWN: We should be as liberal as possible in a case like that.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I am in full accord with the views expressed by hon. members except that I have no desire to be associated with the remarks of the member for Pingelly. There is room for increased allowances to be granted under the State Children Act, or as I hope it will be the Child Welfare Act. Existing subsidies are: for children under 12 months 11s. 2d. weekly; under two years 10s., and from two to 14 years 9s., whilst in the case of infants an allowance of 15s. a week is made. When referring to the allowances the member for East Perth was somewhat in error. He said that a widow and four young children would receive 45s. a week and have to pay rent out of that. That is not so. Before the amount to be paid is assessed, rates, taxes, rent and fares are deducted. The idea is to give a clear 9s. a week, or in the case of an infant, 15s. a week. Every effort has been made to administer the Act sympathetically.

Mr. Sampson: The position outlined by the Honorary Minister has existed for several years.

Mr. Wilson: It was brought in 2½ years ago.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: These are the amounts permitted under the Act.

Mr. Sampson: They are exactly the same as they were before.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I have received letters from various organisations asking that the allowances should be increased. We are all sympathetic in this matter, no one more so than the Treasurer. The vote on account of the Chief Secretary involves the sum of £307,000, nearly all of which is for free services. The Education Vote comprises £662,000, which is for free services.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Free services always absorb our taxation.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: These expenses are continually mounting up. Our public services are really more costly per head of the population than they are in most other countries. With all our desire to make increases in the direction outlined by members, the Government have been unable to find the necessary money. The question has been raised by the member for Forrest and other members, and it will receive sympathetic consideration immediately the opportunity arises. It can be claimed that the State Children Department are doing fine work not only with regard to payments to widows with dependents, but also with regard to the manner in which the welfare of neglected children is considered. The department constitute the mother and father of neglected children. Already orphans have been placed this year to the number of 100. That is better than having them placed in institutions or with foster mothers. In every possible way the welfare of the children has been attended to. We all regret it has not been possible to increase the subsidies, but we hope it will be possible to do so in the near future. We are not prepared to argue the question as to whether these amounts are sufficient or not. We merely say that with the money at our disposal we have done our utmost in the cause of charity. Now that the finances have been straightened out to a degree this, among other questions, will certainly receive the earnest consideration of the Government.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: People must be made to realise that the cost of the free services has for years past been hardly covered by the amount of direct taxation. Now, taxation reduces employment and throws people out of work; and therefore most Governments are at their wit's end to keep the wheels of industry revolving while meeting the expenses of administration. The difficulty of maintaining a family

has been increased artificially by taxation, and in other ways; and generally speaking the troubles of parents have become greater. In the matter of free services, as in all matters of that kind, we can only cut our coat according to our cloth. It is everyone's duty to make the position clear in that respect. Every member of this Chamber would be pleased to see the amount of the vote increased. The Treasurer, however, has his troubles as every other Treasurer has had and will have, in regard to free services. We wish to do all we possibly can for our children, and certainly as much as is done for children elsewhere in Australia or in the world. The State can have no better asset than children, and the more schools that are provided the better it is for the country. No one objects even in the slightest degree to such expenditure. Still, the Treasurer has to remember that he was specially fortunate in receiving unexpected revenue, revenue which may not recur next year or the year after.

The Premier: That is just the trouble. If I could be sure that the revenue was recurring, the position would be less difficult.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The only point I want to make is that the Premier will not find any member objecting to this expenditure or desirous of making political capital out of the difficulties of the position. There cannot be taxation without the creation of unemployment, so that what is given on the one hand may do considerable damage on the other. I hope the finances will prove sufficient to enable reasonable amounts to be paid under this vote.

MISS HOLMAN: While thanking the Minister for the information he has furnished, I must say that I have not yet come across a mother with children dependent upon her who has been allowed the amount of her rent in addition to the 9s. per child per week. If it is so, I am glad to hear it. I wish to put a case to the Minister and to ask whether anything can be done in regard to it. It came under my notice that a husband had deserted his wife and seven children, four being under 14. The husband was constantly being chased up by the police, and when he would not pay he was put into Fremantle Gaol. While at liberty and at work he happened to get hurt, and in assessing his compensation he claimed at the rate of 7s. 6d. per week for each of the four children whom he had not supported for years, and he drew compensation in respect

of them. Then he was again chased up by the police and once more put in prison for not meeting his just obligations to his wife and children. Thereupon the money that he had drawn for compensation in respect of these four children was lodged in the bank for him until such time as he should come out. That money cannot be taken from him, apparently. I should be glad if something could be done to get the money for the children themselves.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I wish to pay a tribute to the ability and efficiency of Mr. Watson and his staff. References have been made to the great care exercised by the department in placing children with foster parents or boarding them out. Those references are well merited, and I wish to relate an incident that supports them. An appeal was made to me from parents residing in the country who wanted to get control of their children, then in an institution. Mr. Watson, whilst very sympathetic, refused the application. I personally made a trip into the country to investigate the case. I took the parents by surprise, and on my return to Perth I again urged Mr. Watson to do something. He, however, evidently had become possessed of information that was not available to me; and, very courteously, he persisted in his refusal, saying he was not satisfied that the proposed change would be in the children's best interests. To make a long story short, Mr. Watson did not give up control of the children, and I find that the children are far better off to-day than they would have been had they been returned to their parents. Mr. Watson and his staff were able to get to the root of the matter, and to ascertain the exact position. I wish to bear testimony that Mr. Watson and his staff use the utmost care and tact in disposing of children that are left unprotected.

Item—Outdoor relief, including services incidental thereto, etc., £6,500:

Mr. SLEEMAN: The item shows a reduction of £3,977. Does the Minister think there is less distress this year than last? I sincerely hope that such a view is correct. "Coming events cast their shadows before," and the reduction points to a far smaller number of unemployed this year than last. Still, provision should be made for better treatment in some parts of the State than was given last year. In the metropolitan area things were fair, but at Fremantle men is a supervisor. He works out in the coun-

own could get no work would have starved had it not been for the Fremantle Ugly Men. Why has the reduction been made?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Having regard to our experience this year, the reduction is warranted. It is believed that the amount provided for outdoor relief will be sufficient, and therefore that amount appears on the Estimates.

Item—Incidental, £3,022:

Mr. SAMPSON: This item includes an amount for the Children's Court. I have heard it stated repeatedly, and I know it to be a fact, that the court is very inconveniently placed. Does the Minister know of any move towards securing more suitable premises? The present location, between Murray-street and Hay-street, so to speak in the back premises of both those streets, is bad.

The Premier: It is the same place as when you were in charge of the department. You find an extraordinary number of things that should be done by the present Government in the department you controlled.

Mr. SAMPSON: Time does not improve such a situation. Aborigines still cluster round the Children's Court, and certain people with very little if any work to do hang about the premises.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The matter was brought under my notice by a deputation of all the honorary justices, pointing out the inconveniences of the building and situation. The deputation even stated that the premises were not watertight.

Mr. Marshall: Storm water comes in at the back door.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: In addition there is no privacy. I promised the deputation that their representations would be considered. The difficulties in question we hope to overcome in due time. It is the present Government's desire to provide better premises not only for the Children's Court but for many Government departments. When the subject is being actively dealt with, the Children's Court premises will be regarded as one of the most urgent matters to be tackled.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—State Labour Bureau, £2,884:

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not know exactly who is responsible for the running of the Labour Bureau, but during the last 12 months no department could have been managed worse.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is managed by the Minister.

Hon. G. Taylor: By the unemployed.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the unemployed had managed it, they could have done it just as well as it has been done during the past 12 months. Several times during the year I have introduced deputations to the Premier and various Ministers in the endeavour to arrive at some satisfactory arrangement as to picking up men. The unemployed residing in the district of the member for Perth appear to be picked up freely, while the Fremantle unemployed are consistently forgotten. There have been one or two promises that Fremantle should get its quota at the picking up, but unless we were on the Minister's doorstep or making a fuss somewhere, Fremantle was left out of the picture. It seems that the more one tries to do, the less one gets. Only last week I was compelled to ask a question about the Labour Bureau, and the reply was that 86 unemployed had been picked up in Perth and eight in Fremantle. I do not know whether the latter figure is correct, but I can state that when men who attended the bureau next morning heard about it they expressed doubt whether even that number had been picked up in Fremantle. Is Fremantle henceforth to get its quota, or is it to remain out of the picture? If the secretary is the stumbling block, let us get a new secretary; if it is the Minister that is responsible for the position, let him wake up and see that Fremantle gets a fair deal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The only way to get over the difficulty is to provide work for everyone.

Mr. Sleeman: That is one way, but can you solve that problem?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, easily.

Hon. G. Taylor: The member for Northam did solve it a few years ago.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At Fremantle the workers depend largely upon the shipping, and that varies. Occasionally strikes have occurred there and that throws the labour market out of gear.

Mr. Sleeman: Unfortunately we get men drifting in from the group settlements.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know about that, but if that is the experience, it merely means that if a man goes off the group, someone else is sent down to take his place and that provides opportunities for the unemployed at the port.

Mr. Sleeman: They come out here, go on the land for a fortnight, and then drift in to Fremantle.

Mr. Sampson: What is the attraction?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member will remember that there are strikes at times at Fremantle and if they last for a few weeks, they cause much unemployment.

Mr. Sleeman: We do not have strikes at Fremantle.

Mr. Davy: What?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not so long ago that the workers there were heaving coal at the police. Then they decided that they would do no night work at the port. Certainly the latter trouble did not last for long. Such incidents disturb the labour market and create unemployment. It is well known that a seaport is always subject to variations regarding the demands for labour. I am always sorry to hear about unemployment anywhere, particularly at Fremantle. I presume the Labour Bureau at Perth is in touch with the Fremantle bureau and I suppose efforts are made to provide work for people. If there is work available for the Fremantle unemployed, I should think they would have the opportunity of securing it.

Mr. Sleeman: I should think so too, but they don't.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Fremantle has always said that, but I do not know that such statements are justified. I think the solution is to effect a change of Government.

The Premier: Is not that remedy rather drastic?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At any rate I think it would be worth while trying that experiment.

The Premier: But Fremantle would still have its trouble.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will give the member for Fremantle and others who are dissatisfied on the Government side of the House an opportunity to remedy the present position.

The Premier: If you are not careful they will be forming a new party.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am sorry to hear that it is probable a considerable number of men at present working on the roads will be put off shortly. Just now and for the next three months there will be a considerable amount of work in connection with the harvest and also at the har-



bour. We do not like to hear of a large body of men being put off because it means that so many more will be affected. I hope the difficulty under the Federal aid roads agreement will be overcome and that the Minister for Works will be able to achieve something in that direction when he goes to Melbourne. Of course the men must go where the work is to be obtained. They cannot expect to secure it in the metropolitan area. There are many married men about the city, and work must be found for them. The young men must go to the country. The officer in charge of the Labour Bureau, Mr. Hitchens, always has been a satisfactory officer who has carried out very difficult work.

Mr. Sleeman: He must have a bad memory.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think so, and he has done well. His object is to get men work that is available, but if jobs do not exist his position becomes impossible. It often happens that men will not go out to jobs that are available, and then the unemployed abuse the Minister.

Mr. Sleeman: That is the old story. It happens on rare occasions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have had some experience and I have known of men who said they would not go to work in the country. The officer in charge of the bureau cannot be expected to make jobs, but merely to fill them when he is advised of vacancies. I am sorry that it has been found necessary to erect an additional shelter shed for the unemployed.

Mr. Sleeman: It was necessary five or six years ago, but you would not provide it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It was not necessary then at all. The Labour Bureau should not discriminate in the employment of men. They should not discriminate between the man who pays for his union ticket and the man who does not belong to a union. Many of the unemployed have not the money with which to buy a union ticket and therefore they cannot secure employment. That is entirely wrong. I agree with the argument that men should not pay for jobs either through unions or through registry offices. Unfortunately we have allowed that principle to creep into the work of this department and the system of preference to unionists is wrong. It probably operates against the work that the bureau is called upon to do for private employers. I have protested

against preference to unionists and against this department being used to advance the interests of unionists against non-unionists, particularly when men are not in a position to take out a union ticket.

Mr. Sleeman: I am not surprised at that. I know of instances of men having been blocked from getting jobs because they were unionists.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope that is not so. If I were a worker I would be a unionist, but I would not be forced to join a union. No one should be forced to do so, nor should men be deprived of the opportunity to work because they have not taken out union tickets. I know the hon. member takes a deep interest in this work, but I know the way the bureau is conducted.

Mr. Sleeman: From an administrative point of view you may know something about the operations of the Labour Bureau, but you could not know as much as a representative of the workers about the actual working of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I represent an industrial constituency! There is not one man in the Northam electorate who is not an industrialist and a worker.

Mr. Sleeman: I did not say the farmers were not workers, and you should not try to make out that I said so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not mean to suggest that. The farmers have work to do and employ men, just as the stevedores have work to do at Fremantle and employ men as well.

Mr. Sleeman: Are you satisfied with the deal the unemployed at Northam get from the Labour Bureau?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not satisfied that the Government have always acted properly regarding the provision of work for the unemployed at Northam, but I have taken up a number of cases and in each instance they were attended to. The only trouble was that the men had to come to Perth to get jobs. Fremantle is in a more favourable position than Northam, because there is a bureau at the port.

The Minister for Mines: There is a bureau at Northam.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, but there is not the same chance there as there is in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Railways: We always reserve a certain amount of work for the people at Northam.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Work to be done in every country district should be done by the people there, and that was not so for a considerable time.

The Minister for Railways: The relaying of that line was done by a considerable number of Northam men.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course You grew wise with experience. During the first couple of years of your administration it was not so.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am pleased to know the unemployed of Fremantle are getting their fair quota of the pick-up work. The acute unemployment of a few years ago was one of the reasons why the present Government are in office.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is not so.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is so. Unemployment was very bad a few years ago. The position has since improved, but there is still room for further improvement. All I want to know is that the workers of Fremantle are getting their fair share of the pick-up work.

Mr. MANN: The member for Fremantle, in order to ventilate his grievance, attacked the secretary of the State Labour Bureau.

Mr. Sleeman: What did I say about him?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member said that if it was the secretary's fault, we should get a new secretary. The hon. member implied that it was the secretary's fault.

Mr. Sleeman: I want to know whose fault it was.

Mr. MANN: Well, you should find out. If you had sufficient interest in your work you would find out.

Mr. Sleeman: I am trying to find out. You get on the secretary's doorstep every morning.

Mr. MANN: I am in daily touch with him, and I find him most sympathetic. If ever I am unable to secure work for men, and they can get jobs in the country, he gives me passes to send them over the railway.

Mr. Sleeman: He has refused me the same concession, and that when there were 80 or 90 men outside the door.

Mr. MANN: Whenever I have had a bona fide case, a man with a job to go to in the country, the secretary has given me a pass for him.

Mr. Sleeman: Did you sign a guarantee that you would refund it?

Mr. MANN: The man himself has to refund it. I have had to furnish a guarantee, but have never had to pay up.

The Minister for Railways: I have.

Mr. MANN: Of course, the bureau will not issue a second pass for a man who has failed to repay the cost of a previous pass issued to him. I don't think they ought to. A man should keep his obligation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the men do.

The Minister for Railways: Over 80 per cent. of them do.

Mr. MANN: I have known of but one case of a man failing to pay. I rang up and asked the secretary to issue a pass for a man, at the same time giving his name. Mr. Hitchens said, "Just ask him if he had a ticket to Burracoppin some time ago." I asked him, and he admitted it. I asked, "Did you go to the job?" He said, "No." I asked what he had done with the ticket, and he said he had sold it. On the occasion when I had him in hand he and his wife were going to a clearing contract, and I prevailed upon Mr. Hitchens to issue them passes. Mr. Hitchens does good work and goes out of his way to help the unemployed.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: What has actually been done by the department during the past year is shown in the fact that there have been 13,073 applicants for work, and the bureau has found employment for 9,762 of them.

Mr. Sleeman: That is the Perth bureau?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: No, all the bureaus. Then there have been 3,089 fares advanced, representing £3,669, and of this amount 74 per cent. has been collected. That represents the work done by the State Labour Bureau.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, it is doing wonderful work.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Branches have been established at Fremantle, Northam, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Katanning, Wagin, Albany, Bunbury, Bridgetown, Collie and other places. Therefore, when the member for Fremantle suggests that Fremantle is not getting its quota of the work offering, the answer is that it would be most difficult to apportion the quotas to each of the many bureaus. The policy has been to employ on a job as many local men as possible, and to supplement those by others sent from Perth; for the unemployed of Perth represent the unemployed of the State, at all events to a large extent.

Mr. Sleeman: The same may be said of Fremantle.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: To an extent, yes, for the unemployed invariably drift into the towns. But it would be impossible to work out to a nicety the quota for each of the bureaux. Moreover, Fremantle is unfortunately placed in having seasonal occupations. There is a periodical demand that the State Labour Bureau shall find work for those thrown out of seasonal occupations in Fremantle. Special arrangements were made in respect of Fremantle, and it is unfair to blame Mr. Hitchens. There are many ways of minimising the unemployed problem—which is a world-wide problem—and the present Government have done their utmost in this direction. Had the Federal Aid Roads Agreement worked smoothly, I do not think there would have been any difficulty at all. There has been more activity through the various bureaux during the past year than at any other time within my memory.

Hon. G. Taylor: And more unemployed.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I will give the Leader of the Opposition credit for having been entirely sympathetic when unemployment was bad in past years. He realised the difficulty, and when we used to go to him and discuss theoretically the question of overcoming the difficulty, he was genuinely sympathetic. Despite all the difficulties, I believe the organisation of the State Labour Bureau is better than ever before.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think so. It is that you are so dashed satisfied with yourself.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The activities of the bureau have been widely extended. Many branches have been provided, not only to deal with the unemployed of Perth and Fremantle, but also to give country districts bureaux of their own.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who runs the branches? Some official, of course. The officials have always done it.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: It is not being done in the same way as in the past. The system has been extended. The officials have done useful work in placing people and in keeping us in touch with the number of unemployed in the respective districts. I am not disposed to throw any of the blame on the officials. It is most difficult to place the unemployed, but the officials are not to blame for that. They have done their utmost to secure employment for those out of work, but when things are bad the State Labour Bureau gets the blame. The bureau has had

a most difficult job during recent years, but the officials have endeavoured to sympathetically administer the department. The statement that fares have been refused is not correct. Whenever it has been shown that a man has work to go to in the country, his fare has been advanced. There has been no difficulty in that respect.

Mr. Sleeman: Why they would not even take one man's word! They wanted a written letter to show that he had work to go to.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Of course a man must have some prospect of employment before he gets a pass. When a man has a job to go to he is never refused his fare. So in that respect the State Labour Bureau has been of great advantage in minimising the evils of unemployment. Certainly the departmental officers have not been to blame for the problem. There are several explanations, but that is not one of them.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I find no fault with the State Labour Bureau, nor with its administration. The bureau has no work of its own; it is only there to try to find work for those looking for it. When there are unemployed looking for work, according to the theory of modern politics it is the responsibility of the Government to find work for them. Of course that is debatable, and I am not going to debate it to-night. Last year was one of the most prosperous we have had for some time and we are now looking forward to the biggest harvest we have ever had. With all that, and with all the money received from the Federal Government and under the Migration Agreement, we have had more unemployment this year than in any year for some time past. It is idle for the member for Fremantle to say that unemployment has not been worse this year than it was when the member for Northam was Premier.

Mr. Sleeman: I did not say that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member knows full well that during the last year of that administration the Trades Hall advertised for unemployed to march to the Esplanade, headed by the Secretary of the Trades Hall. In the "West Australian" morning after morning the advertisements appeared, and even men who were working on night shifts rallied around to make a decent sort of show.

Mr. Sleeman: You must have had inside information.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: What is the position to-day? The unemployed are chased away from the Government offices. Recently we

had a spectacle in this House unexampled in the history of any Parliament in Australia when the galleries were filled with unemployed and members on the Government side were advocating an extension of the franchise to give them a vote for the Legislative Council. What did they do? They stood up and said, "Give us work." Nothing like that occurred when the member for Northam was Premier.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, it did, in the Legislative Council.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Never.

The Minister for Mines: It occurred at the time he was Premier.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not know what happened in another place; I am speaking of this House. On that occasion we had an ocular demonstration and why cannot members on the Government side be honest and straightforward about it? They have had more unemployment with less reason for it than any Government that have ever been in power in Western Australia. They have had cheap money and many more financial wind-falls than any Government and now they prate about their administrative capacity. Everywhere one goes there are unemployed; there is not a town where one cannot find people out of work, and this when the State is enjoying unprecedented prosperity.

The Minister for Justice: Who was prating about it?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: What is wanted is a change of Government. We have the experience of what the member for Northam could do with little or no income. He found employment for all and there was none of the crying and wailing that we heard to-day. This vote used to go through without discussion.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister said the officials were not to blame. If the secretary is not to blame, the blame must be laid at someone's door.

Hon. H. Millington: What blame?

Mr. SLEEMAN: We were told that Fremantle would get its quota in all future pick-ups, especially for Government work, and now the Honorary Minister says that Fremantle gets its quota. Fremantle has never had its quota in the last 12 months, and it is useless for the Minister to say otherwise. When the promise was made that we should get our quota, it should have been fulfilled. If 100 men are picked up in Perth, Fremantle should have its quota.

Hon. H. Millington: What is the quota?

Mr. SLEEMAN: At least one-third.

Mr. Angelo: You will get a bridge at Fremantle presently.

Hon. H. Millington: You have had more than your quota.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We have never had our quota, and as the Minister is practically in charge of the Labour Bureau, he should know it. We have not had our quota in the last fortnight. I am looking for information, and the Honorary Minister now tells me that the secretary is not to blame and that the statement I made was not correct. The statement I made was absolutely correct. I was refused tickets for men who wished to go to the country. The Hon. W. H. Kitson and I both were refused tickets and Mr. Kitson had a terrible job to get tickets for two men to go to Yalgoo. The Labour Bureau adopted the attitude that it was a long way to Yalgoo and the fare was expensive. The two men supplied the names of those for whom they were going to work, but because they could not produce a letter stating that they had work to go to, they were refused tickets. One morning I approached the secretary of the bureau and he told me straight out it was only when there were no unemployed that the Government granted passes. At that time I had 75 to 80 men clamouring for work and though I told him of the number, he still refused tickets, and someone had to sign a guarantee before the men could get tickets. Will the Minister now say that my statement is incorrect? If a man goes along with a letter, the secretary will give him a ticket.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is necessary to take some precautions.

Hon. H. Millington: It is not tourist bureau.

Mr. SLEEMAN: To refuse tickets is unsympathetic to men who have empty stomachs and wish to get away to jobs in the country.

Hon. G. Taylor: You must admit that some men have polled on the department.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, but better that a few should poll on the department than that men who have work to go to in the country should be kept starving in the city. Five hundred years hence the department will still be polled on. What does it matter if a few do poll on the department so long as men are not kept here to starve? When a promise is made that Fremantle shall get its quota, I wish to ensure that the Fremantle men are not pushed aside while hundreds of

men are picked up in Perth. The hon. member said there were no complaints in Perth. Perhaps not, because the men of Perth can be continually on the doorstep. We are 12 miles away and cannot march our men up to the bureau, and so we are neglected. In future I hope we shall get our proper quota.

Vote put and passed.

*Department of Education (Hon. J. M. Draw, Minister; Hon. H. Millington, Honorary Minister in charge of the Vote).*

*Vote—Education, £662,189:*

**HON. H. MILLINGTON** (Leederville) [10.7]: The estimated expenditure this year is £662,189, being an increase of £15,128 on the expenditure of last year. The estimated revenue shows an increase of £485, making the estimated increase in net expenditure £14,643. In 1921-22, 1922-23 and 1923-24 the department's net expenditure amounted to £1 11s. 8d. per head of the population. In 1924-25 it fell to £1 11s. 1½d., and in 1925-26 to £1 11s. 0½d. Last year it rose to £1 13s. The reclassification and new scale of salaries added about 2s. 3d. per head of the population. This year the result of the appeals adds 2½d. more, but the estimated expenditure per head is about £1 12s. 10½d. The number of primary schools open during the last financial year was 825. In addition there were five high schools and the Narrogin school of Agriculture, besides the continuation and technical schools. The average enrolment in the primary and secondary schools was nearly 53,400, being 434 above the number for the previous year. Twenty-six new schools were opened during the year and 13 that had been previously closed were reopened.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why were they closed?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Owing to alterations, but the number is steadily growing. The total enrolment in the primary schools has not grown very fast for some years. The effect of the diminished birth rate during the war has been severely felt. There are now signs of an increased rate of growth, and the rise this year will probably be greater.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Since you came into office.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: With no great increase in the total number of children, the small schools have in-

creased and the distribution of children over the State has altered considerably. As the small schools are by far the most expensive, this adds largely to the cost. Correspondence classes have provided for 1,448 children beyond the reach of any school. The improvement in the qualifications of teachers and the decrease in the number of unclassified teachers employed has made salaries a continually increasing item. The total enrolment at continuation schools and technical schools is 5,900, making the total enrolment of pupils at schools managed by the department 59,000. The junior technical school will shortly be removed from the Perth Technical School, which will leave more accommodation for other than junior students there. Day classes were established in the beginning of the year for apprentices. In accordance with the provisions laid down by the Arbitration Act, these young people attend during the daytime for four hours per week. An appeal board was established during last year for teachers who may be fined, reduced in status or dismissed. Whilst the additional salaries awarded under the reclassification were included in last year's expenditure, the decisions of the appeal board were not given in time for the additional sums involved to be paid last year. The increases this year amount to £2,700. The Estimates this year provide for double this sum of money, as the arrears from last year have to be paid. I have much pleasure in submitting this vote for the consideration of members.

**MR. E. B. JOHNSTON** (Williams-Narrogin) [10.11]: I am rather surprised that the Government have discontinued the policy of building high schools in country districts. It was pleasing to know that during the period when the previous Government were in power the decision was arrived at to establish high schools at Northam, Bunbury and Albany. Those high schools have been built, and there is no question about their importance in the way of providing better education for children in the country districts.

The Premier: Can you suggest any other town in which one ought to be established?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I can suggest two towns at which the Government should immediately establish high schools. I think perhaps the high schools already established were not erected in the most suitable places. Had they been established in more central

positions they would have been availed of to a greater extent. It is a reflection upon the record of the Government that although they have been in office for four years, they have not initiated one new high school.

The Premier: We were the first Government previously to build any high school outside Perth.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Yes, on the Golden Mile between Kalgoorlie and Boulder. I take it that the Government, when they go out of office, would not like to be reproached with the fact that after their long years of office they did not establish a single high school in country districts where there is a demand for the higher and better education of children.

Hon. H. Millington: What about the farm school at Narrogin?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That serves an altogether different purpose. I know it is a good school.

The Premier: There is also a school at Muresk.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is an agricultural college, and a good institution. The crying need of the country is for more high schools. The two places which stand out as deserving of the Premier's consideration in the matter of high schools are Narrogin and Geraldton.

The Premier: You are very impartial. Which should come first?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If the Government decided to build them simultaneously they would be relieved from any responsibility of having shown favouritism. I discussed this matter with the Minister for Education, who insisted, quite properly, that a high school should be built quickly at Geraldton. There is no high school to serve the northern wheat areas.

The Premier: There seems to be a conspiracy between the Minister and you.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There should also be a high school at Narrogin which would be the centre for the Great Southern districts. Clever children in the Great Southern who have earned scholarships have at present to leave their homes, and go either to Northam or Albany if they wish to take advantage of those scholarships.

The Premier: Many of them would leave their homes in the Geraldton district if a high school were established there.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is necessary that the policy of building high schools should be continued. I urge upon the Gov-

ernment when bringing down the Loan Estimates to make provision for the two high schools I have referred to at Geraldton and Narrogin.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [10.15]: I should like to know what is being done about the Newcastle-street school. The Minister for Education entirely approves of the building of an infants' school there to take the place of the school that has been closed, or is about to be closed. The member for North Perth introduced a deputation to the Minister who entirely approved of the request for an infants' school. I understand he has forwarded a report to the Treasurer upon the matter strongly urging that money should be found for this object. I should like an assurance from the Treasurer that this will be done. I also wish to refer to the question of equal pay for equal work amongst men and women teachers. I have in my constituency an excess of 900 women over men.

The Premier: No wonder the bright young boy got in.

Mr. DAVY: Of those 900 women I believe 90 are teachers, but I do not know whether they are all State school teachers or not. At one of my meetings I was asked by a lady, who said she did not propose to vote for me, if I was in favour of equal pay for equal work amongst school teachers. I wanted notice of that question. I could not offer any logical or sensible reason why a woman school teacher, if she was doing the same work as a man, should not receive the same pay. Of course, there may be reasons, such as those of financial stringency, which may weigh in the matter. The question was raised before the appeal board. I have read the arguments adduced by the advocate for the school teachers and the advocate for the department. It seems to me that the school teachers' advocate won the argument. It was admitted by the department's advocate that in many cases exactly similar work was done by men and women teachers, that he could not differentiate between the responsibility which rested upon them, and that neither could he suggest that there was any difference in the value of the work done, or the strenuous nature of the work. There was a suggestion that women were more often absent through sickness or physical disability than men, but of course that could easily be compensated for. I

believe the census of absences showed slightly higher amongst women teachers than amongst men teachers. If that is the only objection, it could easily be adjusted in an entirely different way. I would like to hear the Minister's views on the subject.

**HON. G. TAYLOR** (Mount Margaret) [10.22]: The Vote we are asked to pass is for £662,189, which compares with an actual expenditure of £647,061 for last year. These are stupendous amounts for Western Australia's comparatively small population to spend on education. It is all very well to find funds for this school and that school and another school, but to ascertain whether we are receiving value for the money we spend is difficult. No one will maintain that education is not highly essential to any country, but still there is such a thing as getting value for one's money. During the last 10 years the Vote has risen by about £300,000. No other department has increased its expenditure so largely as this one.

The Premier: And it is one of the departments that are always asking for much more money than can be found for them.

**Hon. G. TAYLOR**: That is true. Of course each of the numerous group settlements which have been and are being established needs a school. If the goldfields were as prosperous now as they were 15 years ago, I suppose the Education Vote would be double what it is now; and doubtless it would represent money well spent.

The Premier: Last year there was an increase of £45,000 on account of reclassified salaries in the Education Department, and similarly an increase of £30,000 in the Public Service. There is £75,000 in one hit.

**Hon. G. TAYLOR**: Within the last 10 years the Government wages sheets have increased by pretty nearly a million of money.

The Minister for Railways: There has been an increase of £200,000 in the Railway Department within the last three years.

**Hon. G. TAYLOR**: And there was a good bit prior to that.

The Minister for Railways: More.

**Hon. G. TAYLOR**: Again, the cost of all materials required for carrying on public works has gone up too. I hope the Minister controlling the Education Department will endeavour to see that the State gets value for its money. The increase of £15,128 is no doubt merely infinitesimal, having regard to the increase in our population.

**MR. GRIFFITHS** (Avon) [10.25]: The Education Department has usually been the department to receive most criticism on the Estimates in past years, though adverse comment has slackened latterly. The State has nearly 800 schools, including 12 consolidated schools. When I entered the House in 1914, complaints from country districts were rife that they were not getting a good class of teacher. At that time teachers were sent to country schools after a supposititious three months' training at Claremont, often much less. Nowadays, however, a teacher before being despatched to the country is required to undergo 12 months' training at Claremont.

**Hon. G. Taylor**: Is not that training at the expense of the State?

**Mr. GRIFFITHS**: Yes. The first series of teachers have been monitors and begin with a full secondary education or a "C" certificate. The second series of teachers need a leaving certificate of full secondary education. The third series represent the easiest method for an outsider to enter the department, but a stiff qualifying examination is now demanded. In addition, a teacher can be accepted only after a searching personal interview with a board consisting of the principal of the Training College, Mr. Clubb, or Mr. Hope Robertson for the department, and the president of the Teachers' Union. The department have made the road to promotion for fully qualified, highly trained and highly certificated teachers through the one channel, namely, the country school. Large metropolitan schools are yearly combed of their finest teachers for the headmaster-ships of country schools. To obtain the headship of a Class 6 school of 20 to 50 scholars an assistant teacher must have the "B" certificate. This means a course of secondary education, two years at the Training College, and three years' service as assistant in a large school. A move that the Education Department are now making is to obtain the University's permission that the domestic science subject shall qualify for the junior certificate, equally with such subjects as history, geography, Latin and so forth. Fortunately, these are not the days when education was looked upon as mere book learning, for it is now regarded as something that helps to fit an individual for his work through life. The technical schools, however, have been starved in the past regarding conveniences for carrying out their work properly. A deputation waited upon the Minis-

ter in connection with that phase and I hope improvements will be carried out shortly. Requests have been made that agricultural training shall be provided for our girls. I do not suggest that a wing should be added to Muresk College, but I do think the question should receive consideration at the hands of the Minister.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [10.32]: I doubt whether any money is better invested than that spent upon education. We should get value but I would like to see the Minister provide more money for education on the technical side. I know there is a limit to what any Government can do so I do not propose to press that point. There is, however, one suggestion I would make in connection with the high schools, and it is that libraries containing decent books should be provided. If it is possible to allocate funds for that purpose, it will be a good thing for the boys. Unless they read during the years after they leave school, their education becomes largely wasted.

The Premier: The provision of libraries might engender a taste for reading.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. Under ordinary circumstances they cannot secure good biographies, and so forth. Among the modern books there are many well written and informative volumes dealing with other countries and various subjects of interest. It would be of advantage to the boys if such books were available to them. They should be encouraged to continue their studies and that can best be done by means of reading. I am glad to know that additional schools have been opened, and I hope the country will continue to progress so that more schools will have to be provided. In a scattered country such as ours education must always be expensive.

Item—Principal of Teachers' College: 1 at £852 (eight months); 1 at £900 (from 27/7/27):

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Are there two principals of the Teachers' College?

The Premier: A professor of education has now been appointed as principal and he was appointed during the year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose the former principal is on leave, hence the provision for his salary as well.

The Premier: That is the position.

Item—Vice-Principal, £537:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I always hesitate to criticise an appointment that has been made, but that of the vice-principal was criticised at the time by many people. I have nothing to say against the gentleman who received the appointment, but I do not think the right thing was done. There were senior officers quite as competent to fill the position. However, the Minister in charge of the Vote is not the Minister for Education, and I do not suppose he knows much about it.

Hon. H. Millington: It was fully explained.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When?

Hon. H. Millington: It was explained in the Press.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the explanation should be made here. If the Minister for Education were a member of this House we would expect an explanation, but I do not suppose the Honorary Minister can give us the details. The making of an appointment is one of the most sacred responsibilities of a Minister of the Crown. Of course the gentleman who received the appointment is competent but I believe there are others who should have received more consideration.

Item—Incidentals, postage, £1,760:

Mr. SAMPSON: I wish to offer a few words of commendation regarding the excellent work of the correspondence classes. I was at Hamelin Pool some months ago and, when talking to the parents of a girl there, they told me that she was making splendid progress as the result of that branch of the department's activities. As they were living a long way from the nearest school, it was the only means by which her education could be attended to. I heard the same commendation in other outlying centres. They issue a particularly well edited publication. The matter contained in it is of great interest, and reflects the thoughtfulness of those associated with the editorial work. In respect of the Technical School, I feel there is great need for the establishment of a linotype class. There is a great shortage of linotype operators in Perth.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.*