

Hon. A. Burvill: You have not finished the clause.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It goes on to except sales by auction of grain, straw, chaff, hay or other produce sold on Government railway premises, etc. All the powers that are at present vested in municipalities will gradually disappear. I should regret to see municipalities and local authorities suffer this loss of powers which are peculiarly theirs. It is foolish of these different societies, which have urged members to support this Bill, to move as they have done without more fully considering the matter. The position is so serious as regards the future welfare and development of the country, and the cities I hope to see here, that I am prepared to move at a later stage that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

On motion by Sir William Lathlain, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

House adjourned at 9.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 3rd November, 1926.

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ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Traffic Act Amendment Bill.

URGENCY MOTION—NORTH-WEST AND ABORIGINES.

Damaging Statements.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale):—

Dear Mr. Speaker, I desire to give you notice that at the beginning of the sitting of the House this afternoon it is my intention to move the adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 47a, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the publication of an article in the Melbourne Press headed "Wild Savages and Cannibals," in which article statements are made damaging to the north-west portion of this State and to the State generally.

Before the motion can be made it will be necessary for seven members to rise in their places.

Seven members having risen—

MR. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [4.35]: I have not done this without thought, for I have no wish to disturb the routine in any way. At the same time I offer no apology for bringing the matter before the House, because it is most important to the State and particularly to the north of the State. For some time past the present Government, and indeed the previous Government, have done valuable exploring and surveying work in the North with the idea of settling people on certain blocks for agricultural purposes. This has been a very expensive work, and the Government have done a very good thing for the State in going on with it. Ministers hope to interest financial groups in England, and perhaps in other countries, with the idea of getting them to take up those particular blocks and cultivate tropical products, which should be very advantageous to the State. It is well known that an influential group is negotiating with the Government with a view to launching extensive operations in the North in respect of shipping interests and also of other industries that will be of very great value to the State. To facilitate the completion of the schemes it will be necessary to import numbers of settlers, or at least to send numbers of

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

settlers and workmen up North, and some of those workmen, possibly, will have to come from outside Australia. Members can imagine people in other countries who are desirous of investing in these projects reading the Press statements that I will read presently, statements that are vouched for by a well known pastoralist of this State. I should like to describe this man in my own language, but I am afraid it would not be parliamentary. The statements vouched for by this prominent pastoralist have been reproduced by the local Press from Eastern States newspapers. The article is headed in large black letters "Peopling the North," "Danger from Natives," "Views of Mr. ———" Dated Melbourne, Thursday, the article reads—

Stories of a little-known corner of Australia were told to-day by Mr. —, a prominent pastoralist of Western Australia, who is in Melbourne on a holiday trip. Most of his interests are located in the North-West and, perhaps, his most interesting story was that much of the country between Wyndham and Derby, which is served by innumerable fine harbours, and which is capable of producing excellent beef, was inhabited by savage tribes, where the white men went in constant danger of their lives. It was even asserted that cannibalism was still practised in this country, the unsettled condition of which Mr. — regarded as a menace to Australia and to the Empire. This country, he pointed out, was within a short distance of the teeming nations of the East. As chairman of the Royal Commission which inquired into the possibility of settling this area, he said: "I am in possession of certain facts which emphasise the danger Australia is courting by leaving such valuable country in the hands of savages. Along the coast there are many harbours capable of accommodating any interstate ship, while such ships can navigate the Hunter River for at least four miles. Some of these harbours offer facilities equal almost to the anchorages in Sydney, but no ships are seen in them, nor will the harbours ever be used until the country is settled. The only way to accomplish that is to proceed along organised lines. Individual settlers who attempted to enter the country would meet with disaster, and the only manner in which success could be won would be to give ample armed protection to organised colony settlers. For that reason settlement of the area offers many difficulties.

Now comes the cream of this article. After describing the risks people take up there, the author finishes up by saying—

Essentially it is a national question, and I think the Federal Government eventually will have to take over the area and direct its development.

This ridiculous and exaggerated libel on the North of the State refers to country

between Derby and Wyndham. It would not attract attention if it were contained in a Deadwood Dick pennyworth, but coming from a man prominent in more ways than one, a man holding a very honourable position in this State, it has an importance that cannot but be misunderstood by those who are not conversant with the local conditions and with the characteristics of such a man who, for fear his arrival in another State should not be heralded, for fear the local people should not know of his presence, seeks a Deadwood-Dick reporter and gives out this extraordinary statement to let everybody know what a wonderful explorer, what a marvellous man, has arrived in their midst. This is just the sort of man who damns a country like the North-West. Hundreds of men sleep out in the bush 50 or 60 miles away from the beaten track in that country between Derby and Wyndham described by this individual. I myself have slept out up there for months on end, and the member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) has no doubt done the same. Whether it was because we were both too thin for these "cannibals" I do not know, but we have dodged them up to the present.

Mr. Angelo: It is just as well I do not represent that electorate.

Mr. TEESDALE: Undoubtedly this sort of statement will retard and even defeat the object of the Government in going to the considerable expense of sending up North splendidly equipped parties of surveyors in an endeavour to do something for the North. It is very disheartening to members representing the North who, in season and out, are always doing their utmost, both by correspondence and by word of mouth, to interest people in the northern areas. For the last 10 years I have maintained a regular correspondence with groups that might eventually be persuaded to interest themselves in the North when those blocks are ready to be taken up. I believe we have men who will finance groups of settlers, provided the Government give reasonable help. As an illustration, some members may remember the sensational ending of a group that had arranged with certain people to form a cotton settlement in the North-West. The whole of that business was knocked on the head by a single cable from Western Australia. In 24 hours the agents at this end received an intimation that all negotiations were off owing to a cable sent to the "Morning Post" say-

ing that boll weevil had been discovered in Western Australia. There was nothing more to be said. All my explanations were of no avail. It was useless for me to attempt to controvert the opinion of this wonderful expert who came here and went away unwept and unhonoured, for no one can catch up with that sort of piffle, and so it goes all over the country, to all the provincial Press of England and to the textile districts where people are interested in coming to Western Australia. There are scores of Australians who have not been out of the cities, and who would certainly be influenced by the reading of these extraordinary statements about cannibals. Cannibalism certainly puts the fear of God into people. To my knowledge there has not been a single instance of cannibalism in this State for the last 20 years. There are certain cases in connection with native children. It is the right of the natives to carry out their rites, and we are hardly justified in interfering with them. They have a way of dealing with newly born babies. This may be the means by which they exercise some birth control. They put a little tourniquet around the baby's neck, give it a couple of twists, and they then have no need to worry about that little mouth to feed. Possibly old men, who have become a nuisance in that they cannot travel with the tribe, are treated in the same way. My statements are endorsed by the records that have been kept by the officials who have made it their duty to chronicle these things. The article says, "White men go about in constant danger of their lives." All along the route from Derby to Wyndham one can see empty jam tins, old dungarees and all sorts of refuse indicating that pioneers have been travelling to and fro since the days of the Kimberley rush. They have not suffered through cannibals.

Mr. Marshall: Where are they now? Have the cannibals caught them?

Mr. TEESDALE: This shows the state of the mind of the individual in question when he makes such remarks about this particular district. It is not inhabited by savages. Mails go up there every month, and in some cases every fortnight. I have come into contact with 2,500 natives in four months, and have never had any trouble with them. We are told we go in constant danger of our lives. That will be quite sufficient for the new chum. He will make tracks for New Zealand rather than come to this State. The serious part of it all is with regard to

the Imperial Government or the Overseas Settlement Scheme. Attention has been called to the fact that young Australians make no effort to go North and engage in pioneering work. It is rightly said that it would be advisable for Australians, who are acclimatised and fairly well conversant with local conditions, to be the first to go up there and make a start, before any unfortunate carpet-weaver or spinner comes out to tackle the proposition. If there is any exaggeration of what has been published I am afraid it will be made in these quarters. The statements I read to the House were made by a resident of Western Australia who claims to have had 16 years' experience of the North-West. Most of this has been gained from the deck of a steamer, and from what he has been told on board. He will cause a lot of trouble, because people will ask who he is. There are always people who will explain who he is. Because I shall not be there to give my explanation they will make out that he is a "big pot" in this country. If I could always be at the elbow of these people I would tell them what this gentleman is, what his experience of this so-called desert waste has been, what truth there is in his statements about cannibals showering spears upon white men who go about in fear of their lives. It is all utter nonsense. If any resident of the North, who had longer experience than I have, said these things, I would discuss the matter quietly with him. I would defer to an opinion expressed by people like the Duracks. I would respectfully listen to them, and discuss the incidents and the circumstances surrounding them. The individual in question, however, has never in his life been more than 45 miles inland from the North-West coast, and that was when he went from Whim Creek to Roebourne. I say this without fear of contradiction. Imagine a man like that, posing as an authority upon the North! He went through that part of the North with the Governor. We all know what a nicely adjusted sort of trip it is that is made with the Governor. There was no tinned dog on the table, but a nice hamper and something with which to wash down the food. I am prepared to give £50 to the hospital if this individual can disprove my statements. He has never been to Hall's Creek, Turkey Creek or the Crossing in his life, and though he is the holder of one of the biggest cattle stations up there, he has never seen

it. Fancy this man posing as having had 16 years' experience of the North, and being able to describe his countless herds that are roaming over the countryside which he has never seen!

The Premier: Do you not think we ought to recall him?

Mr. Withers: He gathers his big ideas from the dividends he has received.

Mr. TEESDALE: For fear there should be any doubt about the important position he occupies in Western Australia he has described himself as Chairman of the Royal Commission which inquired into the possibility of settling the North. He is a nice gentleman to inquire into a question of that kind! He says, "I received certain information." We can imagine the secret and exclusive information that he acquired. The inquiry was doubtless held in the back parlour of one of the local public houses. He made no dash through the scrub. He simply sat in a comfortable room, and tinkled a bell every time he wanted anything.

The Premier: He was acquiring secret, diplomatic, international information.

Mr. TEESDALE: The only regret I have is that my chief appointed him to the position of chairman. That was very painful to me. I cannot imagine what he was doing to appoint this man, except that I suppose he took him at his own face value. It was an unfortunate mistake, for this individual had no experience except that which he had gathered from other people when travelling up and down the coast. The trips that he made were duly recorded in the Press. It is assumed that he went out with a strong party because of the fear of cannibals, and travelled through the country to see things for himself. All he did was to leave the boat at each port, go to the nearest road board office, hold a little meeting there, and return to the steamer. This went on till he arrived at Darwin, and then he came back again. Of course he had many hairbreadth escapes, all of which were recorded in the Press! I have taken the trouble to substantiate my remarks on this matter. I trust the House, after hearing this indictment of the State, will remember that it deals with natives who are sometimes half-starved and sometimes badly clad. I find from records of the past 16 years that there have been five murders by natives in this particular district between Wyndham and Derby. In 10 years, with our vaunted civilisation, education, culture, and all the other things that go to make up civilisation,

we in the South can muster 18 murders. The less said about these unfortunate natives the better. I have obtained the figures from the police records.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: There have been five murders by natives.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am speaking of the irresponsible native who does not understand law and order, and is sometimes driven frantic by wrongs that are committed. There are wrongs committed up there that I would not be afraid to expose. These irresponsible natives have committed five murders in 16 years, but in the South 18 murders have been committed in 10 years! I hope the Government will take notice of the seriousness of these statements and of the publicity given to them. I hope they will take steps to contradict them through the Agent General. They are ridiculous, libellous and senseless statements. They will do much harm to Western Australia and to the settlement schemes that are in course of preparation. They may affect those who are helping us to people this great area of country in which we are all so deeply interested. I trust the Government will do this so that these statements may not go unchallenged. I will attend to the matter in the Eastern States. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [4.55]: I think the hon. member merely desires an expression of opinion from the House. It is not, I understand, his intention to press the question to a division, but merely to ventilate the matter and then withdraw the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the usual course.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is his desire.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House can negative the motion.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.58]: I am not closely acquainted with matters connected with the North-West, but I think the people are under an obligation to the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) for bringing this question before the House. Apparently there has been a great deal of misrepresentation. I do not know who is alleged to have made these statements, but that is beside the mark. The statements have appeared in a newspaper published in Perth, and it is very likely that the matter has been cabled to the Old Country. I presume the report has appeared in one of the Melbourne dailies; the report would

then be telegraphed through the Press Association to each of the capital cities, and ultimately to the big centres of the world. It is evident that Western Australia must suffer in repute if such statements are allowed to go unchallenged. We have had a similar experience only recently. I refer to the remarks made by the Premier, who drew the attention of the House to the injury that had been done to the State through the exaggerated statements that had been made in the Old Country, and published in the leading newspapers of the world. It is very important at a time like this, when every effort is being made to people the great empty spaces of Western Australia, that only statements that are truthful should be published. The member for Roebourne, than whom probably no one in Western Australia can speak with greater confidence and knowledge of the North-West, has informed the House that the statements in the Press cutting to which he has referred are not merely grossly exaggerated but entirely false, and that there is no justification whatever for their having been made. I join with the hon. member in hoping that the Government will take the matter up and adopt such action as will undo any injury which may have been caused to the State. Steps should be taken to remove the impression which has been conveyed that our North-West is inhabited by warlike, ferocious and dangerous tribes, the fact being that they are comparatively peaceful. I support the motion in the hope that the Government will give effect to the mover's suggestion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.1]: I doubt whether I can claim much more knowledge of the North-West than is possessed by the gentleman referred to by the mover.

Mr. Teesdale: You have been further into it.

The PREMIER: I say that I cannot claim to possess much more experience of the North-West. Perhaps we may now safely leave the matter in the hands of the member for Roebourne, he having stated that he will attend to any aspect of publicity given to the statements in Australia. I doubt that the statements will, as suggested by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), be cabled to all the countries of the old world.

Mr. Sampson: The report is fairly ferocious.

Hon. W. J. George: Probably it has already been radioed to Mars.

Mr. Teesdale: My suspension from a sitting of the House was cabled to New Zealand.

The PREMIER: I was about to remark that it depends a good deal on the individual whether his sayings or doings are considered of sufficient importance to be cabled to other countries. However, if any misstatements should appear in the British Press, it will be the duty of the Government to see that they are corrected.

Mr. Sampson: A highly-coloured report is bound to be published in the London Sunday papers.

Hon. W. J. George: A previous Government dealt with the stories of a Mr. Gribble, who put forward some highly-coloured statements.

The PREMIER: In the past I have noticed in the British Press exaggerated statements regarding Australian aborigines, especially those of this State. The matter is of great interest to people in other countries. The effect of such statements as the hon. member for Roebourne has drawn attention to is to cause exaggerated and sensational ideas in the minds of people who have no knowledge whatever of our local circumstances.

Mr. Sampson: People in the Old Country will look upon you as the Premier of a native State.

Hon. W. J. George: Irrespective of colour.

The PREMIER: A good deal of the misunderstanding on that subject was cleared up last year.

Mr. Sampson: But the error persists.

The PREMIER: The Government will watch the newspapers. I have no doubt the statements in question will reach parts of the Old Country. It is quite remarkable how newspapers flash sensational statements all round the world. Unfortunately such reports cannot be overtaken, no matter how one tries. Last year, when at Home, I should have liked to get a grip of some of the men responsible for cabling "information" to the Old Country. One does not know where the statements originate, but I scarcely read any Australian message that was not highly-coloured and sensational. The solid things which take place here, matters that would present the State and the Commonwealth in a favourable light, do not appear at all in the Press at Home. Only things that are out of the com-

mon course are flashed to the Old Country. There is not a mail that comes from Home that does not bring me newspaper clippings misrepresenting the state of affairs in Australia, though perhaps not so much conditions here as in the other States. We have to remember that people at Home do not distinguish between Perth and Sydney, or Western Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. Teesdale: Or between Derby and Wyndham.

The PREMIER: They do not know where Derby and Wyndham are.

Mr. Sampson: They regard them as suburbs of Bunbury.

The PREMIER: The result is that false impressions are created. I do not know whether the present statements are the work of a boy reporter, or pure imagination; but even my limited knowledge of the North suggests to me that at least some of them are over-coloured. If anything of that nature reaches the Press of the Old Country, the Government will see it is corrected.

Mr. TEESDALE: I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1, Coal Mines Regulation Act Amendment.

2, Weights and Measures Act Amendment.

With amendments.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—WIRE AND WIRE NETTING.

Report of Committee adopted.

MOTION—WROTH BANKRUPTCY CASE.

To inquire by Select Committee—Order Discharged.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Richardson:

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the allegations made by the "Subi-

aco Weekly" newspaper regarding the Wroth bankruptcy case.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [5.9]: As litigation is still pending, I move—

That the consideration of the Order of the Day be further adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the item be postponed? As there are dissenting voices, the debate is open to proceed.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.10]: I listened attentively to the remarks of the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) when introducing the motion, and also to the reply—

Hon. G. Taylor: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. As litigation is now proceeding, can the debate proceed?

Mr. RICHARDSON (in explanation): The case is now before the courts, and that is the reason why an adjournment of the debate was asked for previously. The same reason still operates.

Mr. SPEAKER: I rule that we cannot discuss a matter which is sub judice. Strictly speaking, it is not in order to have the motion on the business paper. The notice of motion was given before the case was re-opened in the courts, and the matter has since continued on the Notice Paper. Strictly speaking, however, it is not in order.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are you ruling it out, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The Order of the Day is discharged.

BILL—LEGITIMATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

MR. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [5.14] in moving the second reading said: This measure has passed another place, and I have been asked to take charge of it here. The principle of legitimation was acknowledged by the passing of the parent Act in 1909. Similar legislation has been adopted in some of the older countries of the world. Our Act of 1909 provides that a child born before the marriage of the parents, whether before or after the passing of the measure, shall be deemed, upon registration, to have been legitimated by the marriage. The child is then entitled to all rights and privileges

as if born in wedlock. The parent Act provides that the father need only make a statutory declaration and then it is mandatory upon the Registrar of Births and Deaths to have the child's name entered upon the register as that of a legitimate child. Certain anomalies have been discovered in the parent Act as the result of which, I am led to understand, some unfortunates have been dealt with harshly. It is sought to amend the Act so that additional benefits will accrue to those to whom it may apply. The parent Act provides that the father may, merely by making a statutory declaration, have a child recognised as having been lawfully born in wedlock. There is no provision to overcome the difficulty that will arise if a father, either through death or negligence, fails to take advantage of that provision. That is a defect it is sought to remedy by an amendment in the Bill.

Hon. G. Taylor: That will place them in a position of equality with the mother.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. The Bill provides that where such a default has been incurred by a father, either from death or negligence, the mother can take the necessary steps to rectify the omission by a reasonably simple process, necessary safeguards being provided that should meet with the approval of the House. By appearing before a Judge in Chambers, a mother will be able to set forth the facts, and if she can prove to the satisfaction of the Judge that the child has been acknowledged by the father during the latter's lifetime, the child will be treated as having been born in lawful wedlock.

Mr. Marshall: How will the father acknowledge his child during lifetime?

Mr. LAMBERT: I should say that if it can be shown that the father provided for the child during his lifetime, that will be sufficient.

The Minister for Lands: The provision may work an injury to others.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is a provision in the Bill dealing with estates. Section 5 of the principal Act reads as follows:—

Nothing in this Act shall affect any estate, right or interest in any real or personal property to which any person has become or may become entitled, either mediately or immediately in possession, or expectancy by virtue of any disposition made before the passing of this Act, or by virtue of any devolution by law on the death of any person dying before the passing of this Act.

Clause 3 of the Bill seeks to amend that section by the addition of the following words:—

Except so far as to permit, in accordance with Section 3, any child legitimated in accordance with the provisions of this Act receiving or sharing or participating in any real or personal property remaining undistributed at the date of registration of such child as legitimate.

Clause 4 of the Bill provides an amendment of Section 6 to deal with the position arising through the neglect of a father to register the child and so legitimatise him. It is proposed to insert the following words in the section, as set out in the Bill:—

or when after the death of the husband without his having previously made or produced to the registrar such a statutory declaration, it shall be proved to the satisfaction of a Judge in Chambers upon the application of the mother that the husband was the father of the child, or during his lifetime acknowledged himself as the father of the child, then upon production of a certified copy of the order of the judge so finding.

With the inclusion of that provision it will mean that, the requirements of the section as amended having been complied with, the registrar will place the name of the child upon the register as having been legitimatised.

Mr. Marshall interjected.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not conceive other purposes to be served by a woman going to the court and making application to have a child legitimatised if that child did not belong to her late husband.

Mr. Lindsay: But it may be done. What protection would the late husband have?

Mr. Latham: It would have to be evident that he had acknowledged the child during his lifetime.

Mr. Lindsay: Not necessarily.

Mr. LAMBERT: But the woman would have to satisfy the Judge in Chambers.

Hon. G. Taylor: The mere fact of her statement would not be sufficient to satisfy the court.

Mr. LAMBERT: No, the judge would have to be satisfied that the father had, in fact, acknowledge the child, while he was alive.

Mr. Marshall: On what ground would the mother base her claim?

Hon. G. Taylor: She would have to provide reasonable proof.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, together with witnesses and declarations. I can hardly indicate the exact process that would have to be followed in order to satisfy a judge

as to the legitimacy or otherwise of the mother's claim. I imagine that a judge would be very careful indeed to make sure that adequate proof was forthcoming, before he granted any such application.

Mr. Lindsay: There may be someone else who is alive and who will swear anything, the other fellow then being dead.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know that if a person is dead, there are always other individuals prepared to swear anything about the deceased.

Mr. Lindsay: That is the point.

Mr. LAMBERT: I think we can be satisfied to trust the court to see that proper proof is forthcoming, before any order is made in accordance with the amended legislation. This law has been in operation in other countries in the world and was first adopted in Scotland. Since then other countries have passed similar legislation and in this State it has worked exceedingly well since 1909. The amendment sought in the Bill will improve the position of the unfortunate children born out of wedlock and enable them, when legitimised, to enjoy the benefits, privileges and status of a child born in wedlock. The Bill has already been passed by the Legislative Council and I commend it to hon. members here. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Mr. Mann in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 11.—Delete the words "or is maintained or provided for by the State Children Department," in lines three and four.

Mr. MANN: The intention of the amendment is that this measure should not override the State Children Act. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 11.—Delete the words "or to such department," in line seven.

Mr. MANN: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The Minister for Justice: The hon. member should explain the effect of the amendment.

Mr. MANN: Perhaps the Bill went too far in asking that the State should be compelled to give up a ward on application, and I think another place was right in suggesting the deletion of that power. One amendment having been agreed to, the others are consequential.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 12.—Delete the words "or by the State Children Department," in lines four and five.

No. 4. Clause 13, Subclause (2).—Delete the word "four," in line one, and insert the word "three" in lieu thereof.

No. 5. Clause 13.—Add the following new subclause, to stand as Subclause (5):—" (5) Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to confer on any court power to order the release of any State child from the control of the State Children Department, or from any institution within the meaning of the State Children Act, 1907-1921."

On motions by Mr. Mann, the foregoing consequential amendments were agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

POLICE BENEFIT FUND AND SUPER-ANNUATION SCHEME SELECT COMMITTEE.

To Adopt Report.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [5.35]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that legislation be introduced this session to convert the Police Benefit Fund into a superannuation fund in accordance with the recommendations of the select committee.

The select committee have submitted a rather lengthy report in which they have dealt with the several phases of the inquiry. Copies of the report and evidence have been presented to the House for the perusal of members, and I do not propose to traverse the whole of the report. When I moved for the appointment of a select committee, I said it would be a good thing if provision had been made for superannuation for every member of the community when he reached a certain age. One of the most pathetic spectacles of life is that of a man who, after

having worked hard and reached the age of 60, an age at which he should be entitled to spend in leisure whatever of life is left to him, has to continue working or, being unable to find work, is compelled to accept an old age pension.

Mr. Teesdale: Particularly in our case.

Mr. HUGHES: All thinking people must agree that it is a legitimate charge on industry to make provision for the workers who become old in the service. Just as a machine is worn out in the manufacturing process, so is the life of an operative worn out, and it is a legitimate part of the cost of production to provide for aged workers. I think it will not be long before it will be recognised throughout Australia that a proper insurance scheme should be inaugurated, by means of contributions by employers and employees, to provide for aged workers. I admit that by granting superannuation to one section of the community we are more or less imposing a charge upon other sections of the community, but as we are not likely immediately to reach the desirable state of affairs when everyone will participate, let us bring as many workers as possible under a superannuation scheme. Then when the time comes to bring in the others, there will not be many more to make provision for. It is proper that employees should provide a superannuation scheme for themselves by contributing part of the money and, if necessary, obtaining contributions from the employers. The police, like other civil servants, are limited to a salary. One of the disabilities of the civil servant is that his activities are limited to a certain job at a fixed salary. If he is caught earning a few shillings in his spare time, he is given the order of the sack. One of the conditions of employment in the service is that a man shall not devote his spare time to earning in any other capacity.

Hon. G. Taylor: That has not always been enforced.

Mr. HUGHES: My 15 years' experience of the Civil Service is that whenever a man performed work outside office hours to supplement his income, it was soon made known to his superior officers by some kind friend. I never had that experience personally, but I know a few men who did supplement their incomes by earning in their own time, and it was not long before they were on the carpet. I do not say that some have not escaped.

Hon. G. Taylor: We have seen non-despatch letters in the Press about it, too.

Mr. HUGHES: Not only that, but direct reports have been made to their superiors, and it would surprise one to learn who the informants were.

Mr. Lamond: Are there many of them?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know that there are many. Generally there is some kind friend who informs a superior officer that a man is contravening the regulation.

Hon. G. Taylor: There are many of those kind friends about.

The Minister for Justice: Occasionally permission is granted a civil servant to do outside work.

Mr. HUGHES: Not often.

Mr. Corboy: It is extremely rare for such permission to be given.

Mr. HUGHES: I have no quarrel with the regulation. If a man is employed by the Government, is performing his duties, and working the prescribed number of hours, he should receive sufficient salary to enable him to live in reasonable comfort, and should not be forced to utilise time that should be devoted to his home and to leisure in supplementing his income. Generally, the civil servant does not receive a salary sufficiently handsome to enable him to make adequate provision for old age, and therefore it is a good thing that provision should be made for superannuation when he reaches the age of retirement. Regarding the police there is the advantage that they have an accumulated fund of £40,000, so if it is deemed desirable to establish a superannuation fund, there will be no necessity for the contribution of a large amount to start with. The sum of £40,000, as compared with the amounts provided by other similar funds, is ample as a nucleus. All that is required is a certain annual payment. The select committee took the trouble to make some calculations. Although they were not able to have actuarial calculations made to show what sum would be required annually to give the police a superannuation fund similar to that in Victoria, we had evidence from the Government Actuary that he was quite satisfied the Victorian scheme is on a sound actuarial basis. The Victorian scheme provides for the payment to the fund of 16 per cent. on the salaries. On the basis of that scheme it is estimated that £24,000 per annum will be required for a superannuation scheme here.

Hon. G. Taylor: In addition to the £40,000?

Mr. HUGHES: That is the total amount required per annum to provide a superannuation scheme similar to that operating in Victoria. The income of the Police Benefit Fund, consisting of contributions from the officers subsidised by the Government, and interest on investments, amounts to £10,000 annually; consequently, an additional £14,000 would be required. The investigations of the select committee showed that owing to the premature retirement of officers from the force, and of those officers drawing their gratuities, at least £1,000 per annum is necessary to compensate for the vacancies. That arises in this way: after 12 years of service an officer can retire and in some instances draw 12 months' pay. An officer after 12 years' service is probably reaching his maximum efficiency, and it is considered not only by the Commissioner of Police but by the officers themselves that the possibility of a man thus receiving 12 months' pay is an inducement for him to retire voluntarily. That is borne out by statistics.

Hon. G. Taylor: Could such a man rejoin the force?

Mr. HUGHES: No. Although the strength of the police force is slightly over 500, there have been 100 voluntary retirements in the last 10 years. That is a very heavy retirement rate, amounting as it does to 20 per cent. of the service.

The Premier: The inducement is that such a man is in the prime of life and can draw 12 months' pay and might start at something else.

Mr. HUGHES: There are two points to be considered. A man after 12 years' service is reaching his maximum efficiency. If he is able to draw 12 months' pay it is an inducement for him to retire from the force. Everyone is agreed on that. By his retiring he places on the service the necessity for training a man to fill the vacancy. That is estimated in cash and it is £1,000 a year. If a superannuation scheme were inaugurated, £1,000 would be saved there. The committee considered it would be advisable or justifiable to increase the rate of contributions from the officers to 4 per cent. At the present time they pay 3 per cent. The committee also thought that in order to meet some of the additional money required there would be justification for asking the officers to contribute the 4 per cent. instead of the

3 per cent. That would account for another £1,500 per annum and it would reduce the estimated amount required to £11,500. There are two factors that have to be taken into consideration in estimating what amount would be required. The £11,500 is an actuarial estimation, but under the Victorian scheme officers retire at 55 years of age, whereas in Western Australia they retire at 60. Therefore, instead of an officer here retiring at 55 and drawing his pension as is done under the Victorian scheme, he would go on to 60 years of age. In effect, he would be contributing for five years longer to the funds and consequently would draw for five years less. That of course would amount to a considerable sum. Actuarial calculations are always conservative. For instance, if the ordinary entrepreneur were working his calculations on actuarial figures there would be very little commercial business, but actuaries are asked to calculate such things as mortality rates, and of necessity they must be conservative. Evidence of their conservatism is shown in the enormous reserves that the insurance companies throughout the world have accumulated. The actuaries told us that the Police Benefit Fund is insolvent to the extent that if every officer retired from the force to-morrow the fund could not meet its commitments. In making his calculations an actuary must needs calculate on that basis that the whole of the commitments should, if necessary, be met on the one day. That is not outside the bounds of possibility.

Mr. Mann: It would be like all the clients going to a bank and demanding their money on the one day.

Mr. HUGHES: If that were done the bank could not pay. That actually happened in England in 1914 and the bank found it necessary to take legal action. An examination of the fund, however, will show that the possibility of its not being able to meet its commitments is very remote. As I have already stated, the £11,500 that is required, according to the actuarial calculation, can be reduced on account of two factors, the first being that in Victoria officers retire at the age of 55, whereas in Western Australia they retire at 60, and secondly the actuarial calculation is of necessity conservative. I am not finding fault with the actuary for making calculations on those bases. They cannot make them on other bases. They take all possibilities and probabilities into consideration.

The Minister for Justice: They take the actual average.

Mr. HUGHES: A very conservative estimate of those two factors would be at least £2,500 a year, and therefore we can safely say that a contribution of about £9,000 a year from the Government, in addition to the fund that is already there and the additional contributions from the officers, would be ample to provide a pension scheme on the basis of that in Victoria, subject to the age of retirement. I consider that is an expenditure that can be well justified, an expenditure we can well take the responsibility of recommending. I submit the motion.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.50]: I support the motion moved by the member for East Perth. The report is comprehensive and it is not necessary to repeat what it sets out. I would, however, like to express my appreciation of the work done by the member for East Perth and the other members of the committee. There was no official to assist the committee and the member for East Perth threw his whole energy and ability into the work and his knowledge proved very helpful throughout the inquiry and in the preparation of the report. In drawing up the report the committee desired to put something practical before the Government and the House, something within the reach of the State, bearing in mind its present financial position. It would have been a pleasant and easy thing perhaps for us to recommend a scheme on the basis of that existing in New South Wales, which is the very best in Australia, certainly the most liberal, but the committee thought it would be wise to have regard to the State's financial position and prepare a scheme that would be fair to the Police Force and fair to the taxpayers. Evidence was brought before the committee to show that practically every civilised part of the British Empire has its pension scheme in connection with the police force. There are special circumstances associated with the work done by the police, which, in the opinion of the committee, make it necessary that there should exist a pension scheme. The Victorian scheme which has been recommended for adoption by the select committee is very fair, and under it I think the police would be very much better off than they are to-day. The Government must be gratified to find that such a scheme can be carried out at so

reasonable a cost as the payment of £9,000 a year from the Treasury. When we take into consideration that certain fees will also go into the pension fund, fees in connection with the services performed by the police, the call on the Treasury may be even less than the £9,000 mentioned. We all remember the regrettable occasion in Victoria when a discontented police force went on strike. Melbourne was ransacked and the central part of the city pillaged. Without fear of contradiction I can say that the cost of a contented police force is a very good insurance for the Government and the State.

The Premier: The pension scheme in Melbourne apparently did not prevent that trouble. Do you suggest that it will prevent a similar trouble here?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I was not going to mention that fact, but in view of the Premier's interjection may I tell the hon. gentleman that at the time of that strike less than half the police force enjoyed pension rights.

The Premier: It was the pension half that were responsible for the trouble.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Evidence was submitted to the select committee—I had not intended to mention this—that of the large number of men who had pension rights in Victoria at the time of that regrettable strike, only two went on strike. Those without pensions went out.

The Premier: Where did you get that?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was tendered as evidence.

The Premier: By whom?

Mr. Hughes: By the Commissioner, I think.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The select committee dealt not only with the pension scheme, but they embodied in the report the complete schedule of the proposed pensions and gratuities, taken from the Victorian Act.

Mr. Latham: Was that the only State from which you received replies?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The committee received full information from all over Australia.

Mr. Latham: Others were less favourable?

Mr. F. B. JOHNSTON: Some were less favourable. The Victorian scheme seemed to us to be the fairest. Every State in Australia, excepting Tasmania and Western Australia, has a police pension scheme in operation. In recommending a pension scheme the select committee pointed out that

there is already £42,000 in hand with which to make a start. When the Victorian scheme was established not so long ago, the Government were obliged to advance £50,000. In Western Australia that will not be necessary. It is recommended that no officer be asked to give up his existing rights, but if any officer wishes to remain under the conditions obtaining to-day he should be permitted to do so.

The Premier: Therefore we should have to keep the benefit fund going as well?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It would mean that those men who preferred to pay the 3 per cent. and eventually draw less, would be entitled to do so, but I think that the Premier would find that except those who perhaps wished to go on the land, or start in business, 19 out of every 20 would prefer the pension scheme.

The Premier: Every officer approaching his 12-year period would want to continue under the old conditions.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: We recommended, and we think properly, that no existing right should be taken away, and that each individual should be given six months to decide whether he would retain his existing right to a gratuity, or whether he would come under the pension scheme. It is provided that if a man comes under the pension scheme, and dies, his dependants will receive not less than the pension to which the officer was entitled, for a period of five years. That is only a fair and proper provision to make. Then the committee went into other aspects. There is the question of workers' compensation, which is fully dealt with in the report. It was amazing to realise that if to-day a policeman were killed on duty, his dependants would be paid very much less than they would have received, in addition to the gratuity, under the Workers' Compensation Act. I am sure the Government will see that they have a proper duty as employers to bring their staff, the police force, under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act in cases of death or accident when on duty.

The Minister for Lands: It would mean an increase in the land tax.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Every other employer in the State has to do that. The Government have been getting off very lightly in paying £300 per year, a very small contribution for the specific purpose of a premium, so that the fund should meet medical claims under the workers' compen-

sation. That has not been a sufficient premium for the risk nor have the amounts received by the police for accidents been anything like what would have been paid under workers' compensation. The committee have properly recommended that the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act be extended to cover officers of the police force, including recruits, without prejudice to any benefits to which officers may be otherwise entitled from the Police Benefit Fund or any superannuation scheme hereafter established. If any ordinary citizen employed a gardener or a carpenter causally, and if that man should be killed, his dependants would receive £600. Yet the police force, whose members are always called upon in times of danger, would not receive, in the case of death, £600 in addition to the amount they are entitled to as a gratuity, and to which they have contributed one-half. At any rate, the committee's report on that point is very clear, and I hope it will be carried into effect. There are to-day two classes of beneficiaries under the Police Benefit Fund, namely, those who joined prior to 1917, and those who joined since that date. The last-named class, while making the same contributions as the other class are entitled to 'approximately only half the benefits.

The Minister for Justice: They knew when they joined what they were going to get.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, the evidence shows that the average recruit does not know until after his appointment.

The Minister for Justice: Whose fault is that?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am not blaming anybody. It is a state of affairs that, for the benefit of the force, should be remedied. It is very bad to have two classes of men in the force paying the same contributions but receiving dissimilar benefits. In the other States, ill results have arisen from having one-half the men in one scheme and the other half in another. If this proposed pension scheme cannot be brought into operation at once, it would be wise straightway to put the whole of the contributors to the fund on the same basis in respect of benefits.

The Minister for Justice: They would all have to contribute more.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, there would be no alteration in the rate; the Government could raise their subsidy.

The Minister for Lands: You must think we get money out of the sea in a bucket.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Then we could have uniform amounts payable in the event of death or accident. The committee recommended that if the pension scheme be not adopted forthwith, the scale of benefits for officers who have joined since 1917 be brought into line immediately with that applicable to officers who joined prior to that date.

The Minister for Justice: Do you mean to say that recruits do not know of the difference when they join?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They should know, but they do not, and so there is great discontent.

The Minister for Justice: There cannot be discontent, for the recruits join under definite conditions.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They do not know of the conditions until after they have joined. The evidence shows that there is great discontent in consequence, and we hope the pension scheme will be introduced, or failing that, that the whole of the men be put upon the one basis.

The Minister for Justice: They will have to pay more.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is not recommended.

The Minister for Justice: Of course not; the recommendation is that the Government pay.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The existing rights of those who joined prior to 1917 cannot be altered. Rather than have the men in the force divided into two camps, making the same contributions but receiving dissimilar benefits, it is recommended that, with a view to ensuring content and efficiency in the force, the benefits be made uniform for all.

The Minister for Justice: If it be proved to be financially impossible, what will happen?

Mr. Hughes: It is not proved to be financially impossible.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is recommended that the Government's contribution to the fund be increased. I take it the Government, in effect, back the soundness of the existing fund. If, through an epidemic, there were unprecedented calls on that fund, the Government would come to the rescue and see that the men got the benefits to which they were entitled. The select committee showed considerable regard for the financial aspect. The police force in Victoria pay only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of their salaries in contributions to receive the benefits of

the fund. We recommend that if the Western Australian force are to come under the benefits of the Victoria scale, in view of the financial position of this State, they should pay 4 per cent. as against the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. paid by the Victorian police. In addition, it has been pointed out by the member for East Perth that the Victorian constables retire at 55 years, whereas the Western Australian constables do not retire until they reach 60 years. So whilst a man here would pay $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more of his salary than he would pay if he were in Victoria, he also has to contribute for five years longer than have the Victorian police, and to draw five years' less pension. So in putting forward these recommendations, the committee have paid regard to the financial position of the State. In conclusion I draw attention to the rider attached to the report as follows.—

After considering certain cases that have been dealt with under the provisions of the fund, we are satisfied that some injustice has been done to Inspectors Mitchell and Duncan—

The Minister for Lands: In that you are going outside the jurisdiction granted by the House.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, we were asked to report as to the condition of the fund, and its administration. This was within the instructions given to the select committee. Since we had the member for East Perth as chairman, there was no possibility of the committee going beyond the scope of its instructions. We are glad to be able to report that the fund has always been invested in the best possible manner, having regard to the interest available.

The Minister for Justice: Did you have the file?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: We had Mr. Simpson's evidence, and a number of files. In our report we were guided largely by the evidence of the Under Treasurer, who is a member of the Police Benefit Fund Board. The rider alluded to continues—

—and the dependants of officers killed in the execution of duty, and therefore recommend that where the result of the injustice warrants it, the cases be reconsidered by the Government.

I desire to draw the attention of the Minister and the Treasurer to that rider, which in my opinion is highly justified and very important. Also it is a matter of urgency, for I understand one of those inspectors is to retire this month, and the other shortly

afterwards. So I hope the Government will give due weight to that rider without delay. I strongly urge the Government to carry the whole of the committee's recommendations into effect. They have been gone into very carefully by members representative of all sections of the House, and I am sure if these recommendations are adopted particularly if the men be given the option of coming under the superannuation scheme, it will result in improved efficiency in a body of police that, to-day, stand out as probably the best in Australia, namely the Western Australian police force.

MR. CHESSON (Cue) [6.14]: I am thoroughly in accord with the report and recommendations presented by the select committee. We went into the question very thoroughly, examining all its aspects. Of the £42,000 in the Police Benefit Fund we found that £40,000 was invested in Treasury bonds, returning 5 per cent., or £1,600.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. CHESSON: Before tea I was referring to the amount of the Police Benefit Fund, which is £42,000. The police officers contribute £4,200 a year and the Government, at the rate of pound for pound, a similar amount. The capital is invested at five per cent., which brings in another £1,600 a year, so that the total annual payments amount to £10,000 a year. We found that the police who joined after 1917 were not on the same footing as those who joined before. We asked that a statement should be prepared showing the state of the fund then compared with what it is now. The balance in the first year, 1899, was £5,993 15s. 1d., and in 1926 it was £42,416 4s. 3d. It was further stated that the fund was not solvent. It may be said that the fund is for the benefit only of those who joined subsequent to 1917. A good deal of dissatisfaction was caused by the position that was set up. Recruits are not told what the position is at the time they join, and it is only when they have been members of the force for some time that they find things out. Then it is that dissatisfaction occurs. It appears that there have been retirements from the force equal to 22 per cent. annually. As time goes on there will be more men working under the 1917 scale than there will be under the old scale which provides for one year's gratuity after 12 years'

service, and, as the numbers increase, so will the dissatisfaction increase.

The Minister for Justice: What about the position in the Civil Service as the number of officers who are entitled to pensions grows less?

Mr. CHESSON: These officers have contributed to the fund for a long time. There have been a great many retirements from the service, some of them voluntary and some of them compulsory. According to the evidence an officer can draw a year's salary after 12 years' service. Some of these men have retired in order to engage in business. They realised that they could not draw a pension, and that the longer they remained in the service the less fitted they would be for other occupations. That is why many of them retired after 12 years' service. It costs at least £1,000 to bring an officer up to the same state of efficiency as those who retire under these conditions. No inducement was given to men to remain in the force, because at the end of their term they would receive only a gratuity.

The Minister for Justice: The gratuity increases with every year of service.

Mr. CHESSON: Yes. A man pays three per cent. of his salary into the fund, and pays more to the fund as his salary increases. The following question was put to a witness by the chairman:—

For the sake of testing the stability of the fund, assume that within the next five years the force lost the 14 men over 60 years of age, and sufficient men over 55 years of age, though not all of them, to balance the income, there would still be £42,000 to the credit of the fund, and to exhaust the fund would require the retirement of all the men in the group from 50 to 55 years of age, because the further one goes back, the lower the rate of gratuity becomes. Therefore, in order to make the fund actuarially insolvent, all officers over 50 years of age, or their equivalent, would have to be taken out in the next five years?—That is so.

This proves that something remarkable must happen to prevent the fund from going insolvent. The member for Mt. Leonora (Mr. Heron) asked the following question:—

This is solely a question of finance. The fund at present has a balance of £42,000, and during the next five years 14 officers are due to retire and they will draw approximately £14,000. The income of the fund during the next five years will amount to £50,000, and if the estimated expenditure during that period were to equal the revenue it would be necessary for the 14 officers over 60 years of age and 56 officers between the ages of 55 and 60 years to retire, involving the necessary expenditure by the fund. Do you think there is any pos-

sibility or probability of those 70 officers or a number of officers whose gratuity would be equivalent to that drawn by those 70 officers, going out of the force during the next five years?—I should not think so. The men will serve as long as they can reasonably, and some of them would be entitled to serve for a period of 10 years.

The answers to these questions were given by officers of experience, and one of them is handling the fund. They are in a position to express an opinion. We have recommended that the police should be brought under the Workers' Compensation Act as is done with other Government employees.

The Minister for Justice: The police get better than that.

Mr. CHESSON: Not according to the evidence. The maximum an officer can draw is £446, but under the Workers' Compensation Act his dependants would draw £600 at death, and for permanent injury £750. In the case of injury a policeman merely receives full pay for a certain period.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: What does he contribute?

Mr. CHESSON: He contributes three per cent. of his salary. In Victoria the rate is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. We have recommended that it should be increased to four per cent., which would provide an adequate fund. In Victoria the retiring age is 55, but we have placed it at 60. Our men will pay for five years longer than they do in Victoria, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more. We have recommended that the benefit fund should be converted into a pension scheme similar to the pension, gratuity and allowance system of Victoria. We have recommended that six months should be allowed to an officer to indicate whether he desires to convert his rights to the Police Benefit Fund into a pension scheme. As 14 officers over the age of 60 are likely to be retired within the next five years, we thought it right they should be given six months in which to decide what to do. We have added a rider to our recommendations dealing with specific cases. We found that under the regulations one officer was compelled to retire. The regulation provided that on attaining the rank of sub-inspector a member must retire from the fund. The select committee considered that this was an injustice, and added to their report a rider stating—

The Minister for Justice: What was the injustice?

Mr. CHESSON: That the officer was compelled to retire from the fund. The evi-

dence shows conclusively that he had no alternative.

The Minister for Justice: He has been allowed to rejoin the fund since.

Mr. CHESSON: Yes; but in view of the payments required, we thought the case should be reviewed.

Mr. Hughes: The file shows that there was an injustice.

The Minister for Justice: He has been allowed to rejoin the fund.

Mr. Hughes: On pretty harsh conditions.

Mr. CHESSON: Most of the reasons given were found to be evasive. The select committee went into the matter exhaustively, and with a single desire to do justice to the State and the police alike. We found that the nucleus of a fairly large fund had been built up by the police, and we thought the fund could reasonably be converted into a pension scheme, the police contributing 4 per cent. of their salaries, and the age being raised by five years in accordance with the Victorian scheme. Mr. Bennett thinks the Victorian scheme sound from an actuarial point of view. Thus there are the means of creating a pension scheme for officers remaining in the Western Australian force until compulsorily retired. The select committee came to the conclusion that the contribution required from the State would be £9,000. If the Police were under the Workers' Compensation Act, the cost to the State would be much greater than that contribution. I fail to see any reason why these State employees should be treated differently from other State employees, who receive the benefits of the Workers' Compensation Act.

On motion by Hon. G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1.—Clause 13, Subclause 4, add a proviso as follows:—"Provided that the trees and natural growth on those portions of such reserve, which are described in Part III. of the said Schedule shall not be removed or destroyed, and that those portions of the said reserve shall not be used

for any purpose which is likely to lead to the removal or destruction of any such trees or growth":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

In order to understand amendment No. 1, it is necessary to read also No. 2. The amendments deal with the botanical gardens situated in South Perth, the designation of which has been changed to a reserve. Protection is provided for the area and the trees on it. The Schedule requires that there shall be protection of the trees for a width of one chain facing certain streets. Council's amendment No. 1 provides that the reserve shall not be used for any recreation which would lead to removal or destruction of trees.

Mr. Stubbs: Why?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have my opinion, but I cannot say definitely. Some people like a public garden in front of their residences but object to its being used as a playground.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is a common trouble.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment, however, will not affect the use of the area as a playground.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have made some inquiries into this matter. I was first informed that the desire of the people would not be fulfilled if the amendment were agreed to. However, as suggested by the Minister, the second amendment minimises the evil of the first.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2—Schedule, insert the following, to stand as Part III.:—"That portion of said Reserves 5574 and 8722, one chain wide, abutting on Richardson-street, which extends from Melville-terrace to the south-west boundary of the portion of Reserve 8722 set apart as a parking reserve, and that portion of Reserve 5574, one chain wide, abutting on Amherst-street, which extends from Melville-terrace to the south-west boundary of the portion of Reserve 5574 set apart as a parking reserve":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In view of what I have stated I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [7.55] in moving the second reading said: Since the coming into operation of the Commonwealth Navigation Act, 1912-20, certain sections of our Navigation Act of 1904 have required to be deleted, mainly those sections dealing with surveys of steamships engaged in commerce with the British Dominions outside Australia. The term "survey" covers general inspection of hulls, life-saving gear, boilers and engines connected with vessels engaged in navigation. The Imperial Merchant Shipping Act covers foreign-going vessels, and the Commonwealth Navigation Act provides for vessels going from one Australian State to any other Australian State, or going overseas from Australia. In a High Court case referring to the Newcastle and Hunter River Shipping Coy. it was laid down that the Commonwealth Navigation Act did not apply to vessels whose trade is exclusively confined within a State. The inspection of harbour and river craft was to some extent provided for by the Inspection of Machinery Act of 1904, but the provisions in question were repealed by the Inspection of Machinery Act of 1921. The latter Act does not extend to engines and boilers of steam or oil launches. The consequence is that the provision for inspection of harbour and river craft is at present incomplete. This defect will be remedied by the present Bill. Part IV. of the Navigation Act of 1904 deals with steam navigation only when providing for the survey of vessels, and therefore no provision exists for the survey of motor vessels such as the "Kybra," or of schooners such as those now trading on the North-West coast, or of motor-driven lighters. Instances have been known of vessels in an unseaworthy condition leaving North-West ports, to the great danger of the lives of the crew and at the risk of valuable cargoes such as wool and merchandise shipped from port to port. The application of Part V. of the parent Act to steam navigation is certainly obscure. Indeed, that part does not provide for the survey of local and intra-state vessels. It

is important that this power should be provided. Section 30 of the parent Act refers only to vessels engaged in trade from any port within the jurisdiction to any port in any other part of His Majesty's Dominions. The Bill provides that the sections relating to survey of vessels shall apply to all ships, whether British or foreign, but with certain exceptions. The first exception is in respect of steamers that hold certificates under Part III. of the Merchant Shipping Act. As an illustration I may mention the new motor vessel "Koolinda," which is exempt under her Board of Trade certificate until the expiration of that certificate. Vessels that are entitled to and receive such certificates, if they come to Australia, are permitted to ply for hire or to be navigated within Australian waters without an additional certificate, until the expiration of the Board of Trade certificate.

Hon. G. Taylor: For what period?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: For 12 months. In addition, provision is made exempting vessels that come under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Navigation Act, which provides for the survey of all vessels making interstate and overseas voyages. The Bill repeals Section 31 of the Act and provides for the survey of vessels once a year instead of half-yearly as at present. This amendment will bring our law into line with the Commonwealth and other State Navigation Acts with regard to surveys. The Bill also amends Section 33 of the principal Act by the addition of the words "or navigate" at the end of Subsection 4. This is necessary because plying is not necessarily navigating.

Mr. Mann: Will that provision apply to all Government vessels?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, regarding surveys.

Mr. Mann: Then there will be a new ferry boat running to South Perth next year!

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: That is all right. I would advise the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) to wait until the conclusion of my remarks, and then to look into the provisions of the Act. If he does that, no doubt he will be more satisfied with the knowledge he will gain, and will be able to criticise more ably the measure than he can possibly do now.

Mr. Mann: Your explanation is a bit involved.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Provision is made to amend Subsection 5 of Section 33

of the principal Act which states that officers of the Customs Department shall cause lists of vessels to which certificates have been issued to be posted in a conspicuous place in the Customs Houses. The new subsection in lieu of the one to be deleted, states that the Chief Harbour Master shall publish in the prescribed manner lists of all vessels in respect of which certificates have been issued. This is necessary because at the present time customs officers are under the control of the Commonwealth authorities, whereas when the parent Act was first introduced and passed, those officers were under the control and in the employ of the State. The clause that amends Section 36 of the principal Act declares that certificates shall be issued annually instead of every six months. Power is also given to prescribe fees by regulations. This will obviate the necessity of including in the Act a scale of fees for the many and varied classes of craft. In addition, the Bill provides that Section 39 of the principal Act shall be broadened and be made applicable to all ships and not to steamships only. The section in the Act states that steamships shall not proceed on a voyage without a certificate, but the amendment proposed goes further by extending the provision to a vessel navigating in closed waters or plying without certificates. Section 43, which relates to the provision of fire extinguishing appliances, is to be amended and, as before stated, we are making provision in the Bill for the survey of sailing and other vessels as well as steamships, and the words now proposed to be inserted will bring all ships within the scope of the section. The Bill amends in general Part IV. of the parent Act by the substitution of "ship" for the word "steamship." That will provide the power necessary for the survey of various coasting schooners trading along the coast and auxiliary schooners or motor driven vessels, such as the motor ship "Kybra." In the parent Act the word "ship" was not included and therefore that section applied only to steamships. Hence the necessity for this important amendment.

Mr. Marshall: That will cover launches on the river.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It will cover all motor driven and steam driven boats plying for hire or navigating in closed waters. Such vessels will be called upon to operate under the provisions of the amended legislation.

Mr. Marshall: To date they have been exempt.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Because the law has not been applicable to them. It is now deemed necessary that this important legislation shall be enacted because, as hon. members will appreciate, as we proceed we find that legislation that was quite adequate in times gone by, is not applicable nowadays. It is essential to bring our legislation up to date. As we are becoming a more thickly populated community, it becomes necessary regarding our navigation laws, equally with our vehicular traffic regulations, to introduce amendments. The many important inventions and improvements that have been made during recent years necessitate vital alterations in our legislation. Section 56 which deals with the manning of vessels is to be amended by the insertion of the words "acts as master, mate or engineer," in lieu of "plies," and this will clear up the indefinite meaning of the section. It is contended that the word "plies" in this instance is not full or definite enough. When in Committee I propose to point out just exactly what is meant by the word "plies" as against the inclusion of the words "acts as master, mate or engineer." The Bill also contains special provisions relating to harbour and river ships. That is the point mentioned by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). Power is sought to examine candidates for certificates as marine motor engine drivers as well as third class engineers. This is necessary because there are a number of motor vessels carrying large numbers of passengers and plying for hire in our harbours, such vessels being equipped with powerful engines that are under the control of men without any certificates whatever. The Bill also provides that harbour and river vessels used in trade and commerce shall be provided with a marine motor engine driver. In addition, the Bill will bring marine motor engine drivers under the same provisions of the parent Act as third class engineers. It contains a proviso that the fees for certificates of marine motor engine drivers shall be the same as those payable for third class engineers' certificates. Provision has been included to meet the case of those who have been in charge of vessels for many years. It is thought that the Chief Harbour Master should have the power to grant a marine motor engine driver's certificate without examination to persons of good repute, who

produce satisfactory evidence that they have been in charge of, and have driven, a marine motor engine for at least one year within a period of five years. I can remember many years ago when that practice was adopted in connection with the granting of certificates after examinations. Provision was made regarding men who had been driving steam engines used on the mines, whereby certificates of competency might be issued to any person who could prove to the satisfaction of an examiner that he had been in charge of, and had driven, such steam engines for one year prior to the date of the examination. It is considered in connection with the Bill now before the House that where any reputable person can prove to the satisfaction of the Chief Harbour Master that he has been in charge of, or in control of, a marine motor engine, which he has driven, for at least 12 months prior to the passing of the Act, he shall be entitled to receive a certificate.

Mr. Marshall: That principle was adopted in connection with internal combustion engines when we passed legislation in 1921.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, and the same thing will apply under the Bill. Provision is also made to prevent any hardship or difficulty in obtaining certificated men for vessels in the North-West. It has been decided to exempt vessels used north of the 27th parallel of South latitude from the provisions contained in the Bill relating to certificated marine motor engine drivers on harbour and river ships. This is essentially a Committee Bill and the various clauses can best be explained when we reach the Committee stage. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [8.13] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to enable the Education Department to keep a closer check upon children who do not attend school regularly and who may be evading the compulsory clauses of the Act; secondly, to bring the compulsory clauses into line

with modern conditions; and in the third place, to establish a board of appeal for teachers who are fined, disrated, or dismissed. The principal Act states that the parent of a child who neglects to attend school has to be summoned, in the name of the Minister, before a court of summary jurisdiction. Some magistrates have held that every complaint must be issued with the Minister's name upon it, and that the ordinary form is insufficient. Members may think it strange that a Minister should have to satisfy the court in writing that he has ordered the prosecution of a parent for not sending his child regularly to school. That is possible under the Act, and the Minister is called upon to satisfy the magistrate in writing that the summons should be issued. It is ridiculous that the Minister should be brought into the business at all. It is a matter with which even the Director of Education should not be worried. It should be left to the officers of the department who are appointed to enforce the provisions of the Act. If the Bill be passed, prosecutions can legally take place on the complaint of a compulsory officer, an inspector, or any person authorised in that behalf by the Minister. Thus the Minister will be able to delegate his authority instead of each case having to be submitted to him for signature. Western Australia is a large State through which hundreds of schools are scattered, and in quite a number of instances parents neglect to see that their children attend school regularly. It is sometimes difficult to trace children who have left a school. There are people who move from one part of the city to another or from one district to another, and it becomes necessary for the children to attend another school. It is proposed that every elementary school, whether public or private, shall send in a monthly return of children between the ages of 6 and 14 who have left the school during the month. The object is to have a record of the children, so that we may ensure that they attend school for the required period during the year.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you require any indication of where they are going so that you can trace them?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: When a child leaves one school it may be a fortnight before it begins to attend another school. The presentation of the monthly lists will enable the officers to see that the child has lost a

fortnight's schooling. It is desirable also to have the names of children of compulsory age who have been admitted to any school during the month, and we shall require those returns from secondary as well as from primary schools. Only children below the compulsory age of 14 are to be included. There are many such children attending secondary schools, and we desire power to compel those in control of the schools to furnish returns such as are furnished by the primary schools that are not Government schools. We want a complete system applying to all schools, whether State or privately controlled. The compulsory clauses dealing with the attendance of children for whom means of conveyance are provided were drafted when horse-drawn vans were the usual vehicles. Hence the present Act states that the parents of children from 6 to 9 years of age will not be required to send the children to school by such means if the distance to the school is more than six miles or, in the case of children from 9 to 14 years of age, if the distance to the school is more than eight miles. The introduction of motor vans has made it possible to deal with much wider areas. It is therefore proposed to compel parents to send their children to a Government or efficient school if satisfactory means of conveyance is provided by the Minister. Children under 9 years cannot be compelled to walk more than one mile and children over 9 years more than two miles to the conveyance. It is well known that the Education Department enter into contracts with the owners of motor vans to convey children long distances to school. This is done on the requisition of the parents. If the distance from school is over six miles or eight miles, as the case may be, according to the age of the children, there is no power to compel them to take advantage of the conveyance provided. The Bill provides that where a driving allowance is given to a parent, this shall be considered to be the provision by the Minister of a satisfactory means of conveyance. A parent who accepts a driving allowance is thus brought under the compulsory clause and is bound to send his children to school every day, unless there is a reasonable excuse, such as sickness, for non-attendance. The Bill contains an innovation in that it will give teachers an appeal board on which they will have representation. This refers to cases in which teachers, for alleged misconduct or breach of the regulations, are fined any amount

in excess of 15s.; transferred at their own expense, which is a severe penalty; reduced to a lower grade, which represents an annual financial loss to the teachers extending, perhaps, over many years; reduced from any position to a position carrying a lower salary, or dismissed. The Minister is now called upon to decide what the punishment for disciplinary offences shall be, and his decision may seriously affect the future welfare of the teacher, who has no right of appeal. It is seldom necessary for the Minister to exercise this power, but he believes in the principle of an appeal board for men who have permanent positions under an Act of Parliament, such as the school teachers have. The public service have an appeal board, and so have the police, the warders of the Fremantle Prison, and the railway officers and employees. In each case the men have representation on the board, a consideration that has resulted in a more contented service than we should otherwise have. The constitution of the appeal board is to be a police or resident magistrate as chairman, a representative of the Director of Education to be appointed by him, and a representative of the teachers or his deputy for the time being on the public service appeal board. The Bill is the result of conferences held between the Minister for Education and the Teachers' Union. The teachers are the people who come into direct touch with the children and have a close knowledge of the requirements of the schools. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1926-27.

In Committee of Supply.

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

Department of Mines (Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister).

Vote—Mines £78,059:

MR. LAMOND (Pilbara) [8.26]: I wish to refer particularly to the mining industry in the Pilbara electorate. I am particularly interested in the sum of £165,000 that has been earmarked by the Government to assist the mining industry. The Minister, in in-

troducing his Estimates, indicated that the Government had not yet decided upon a scheme for the utilisation of this money, but he told us that a committee consisting of the State Mining Engineer, the Superintendent of State Batteries, and the Manager of the Perth Tramways had been appointed to consider the matter. I hope that when the Government deal with the committee's report they will give consideration to the industry in the North, particularly in the Pilbara electorate. There is perhaps no other mining field in Australia or in the world that has such a variety of minerals as are found all over the Pilbara goldfield. On that field are found gold, asbestos, tin, tantalite, lead, and, in fact, almost every metal that is of any commercial value. In most instances the deposits occur in such quantities as would be payable provided they were located in any other part of the State. Unfortunately the high cost of living and of transport in the North has retarded the progress and development of those deposits. The Braeside lead field, which promises to develop into one of the biggest silver-lead deposits in Australia, has received a fair amount of Government assistance, but its progress is hampered owing to the cost of transport, which is about £8 per ton from the mine to the head of the railway. That is a very serious item. As late as yesterday evening I received advice by the aerial mail from one of the prospectors of that field who is now managing for the syndicate that has taken an option over the leases. He informed me that a shaft had been sunk on one of the main leases to a depth of 125 feet, and the values over the whole shaft at that depth were 82.2 per cent. of lead and 27 ozs. of silver. That is highly satisfactory. It is true that a number of concessions in the tin area have recently been granted to syndicates, and I am pleased that the Minister has been careful to protect the rights of those men who were already engaged in dry-blowing. There are many old men who have followed that occupation for many years, and it is only right that the areas held by them should be protected. Tantalite is again being worked in the North. For many years mining for tantalite was held up on account of the fact that there was no market for the mineral. The other day, however, I noticed in the Press that the value of 10 tons, obtained from the Wodgina field was close on £1,300. We in the

North are particularly thankful to the Minister for the reductions he made recently in the charges for the treatment of stone at the Marble Bar battery. When speaking on the Address-in-reply I brought under the Minister's notice the fact that I had made representation to him with a view to having the charges at the battery brought into line with those imposed at State batteries in other parts of the State. The Minister has since seen his way to reduce the charges, and they are now on a level with those imposed elsewhere. We have received small assistance from the Mines Department, and by reason of that several shows in the North have had satisfactory returns. At one place I know of a little assistance was given for the sinking of a shaft and an engine was lent to cope with an inflow of water. This assistance has resulted in two crushings being taken out, each of which averaged over six ounces to the ton. Thus it is proved that the assistance given was justified. In another case that I have in mind some assistance was rendered to sink a shaft, and where the parties bottomed they obtained three-ounce stone. They are now taking out a crushing. In another case assistance was rendered to an asbestos show that had been hung up for some time because the syndicate had not sufficient funds with which to carry on operations. The Government financed these people for a time, and for two years about 12 men have been constantly employed there. I was in communication with one of the principals of this show last week, and he informed me that everything was going along very satisfactorily. There is no need to say much more except to express the hope that when the time arrives to give consideration to the manner in which the Disabilities Grant will be utilised, consideration will be shown to the Pilbara field, particularly because of its isolation and the cost of mining operations there due to the high transport charges. These difficulties should be taken into consideration together with the fact that we in that part of the State have the goods which merely await exploitation.

Item, Clerk in Charge of Records and Correspondence, £360:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I notice that this officer also receives £168 as chairman of the Miners' Phthisis Board. Is that a new position?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The officer is Mr. D'Arcy, who is in charge of re-

cords. His salary has lately been increased under the classification, but temporarily he is receiving £168 as chairman of the Phthisis Board.

Hon. G. Taylor: This is the first year?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, but he received a portion of the amount last year. As soon as the examinations are completed there will not be a great deal of work for the board to do, at least I hope there will not. The other members of the board are Inspector Phoenix and Mr. D'Arcy, workmen's inspector at Kalgoorlie.

Item, State Mining Engineer and Chief Inspector of Mines, £852:

Mr. LAMBERT: We have been told by the Minister that there is to be a reorganisation of the department. I hope the same course will not be followed as has been followed for a number of years in keeping the State Mining Engineer at a high salary to do more or less merely office work. The State Mining Engineer should be in a position similar to that of Director of Agriculture—a field man. He should be out from day to day, week to week, and month to month, and he should be making himself personally acquainted with mining throughout the State. We have had a wonderfully good man in the present State Mining Engineer.

Hon. G. Taylor: And a most obliging man.

Mr. LAMBERT: Possibly too much so for his own advantage.

Mr. Stubbs: Why is he being retired?

Mr. LAMBERT: He has reached the age limit.

The Minister for Mines: He is not objecting to it.

Mr. LAMBERT: The ability of the present State Mining Engineer must not be discounted. He stands high in the professional world, and as an officer he is absolutely reliable.

Hon. G. Taylor: And he is well acquainted with the technicalities of our mining.

Mr. LAMBERT: He has a sound all-round knowledge, and a fine and useful knowledge of the geology of Western Australia. But through some rotten system in the Mines Department, he has been snowed in to write reports of more or less importance, and to do other work that ought to have been performed by an office man. Instead of being indoors he should have been out in the country in the manner that the

Director of Agriculture conducts his operations. We want a man who is prepared to take the field and keep the Minister for Mines whoever he may be, thoroughly au fait with mining operations generally and to see that the money granted for assistance to mining is properly expended. I hope the Minister will see the necessity for what I am urging, and that Mr. Montgomery's successor will be permitted to follow a different course. I should like to take this opportunity of paying a well deserved tribute to the very high attainments possessed by Mr. Montgomery, and a tribute also to the great service he has rendered the mining industry of the State. All mining officers associated with the department should be detached from the Perth office. There are no mining operations in Perth, and therefore the officers would be better employed on the goldfields. That is their place.

Mr. STUBBS: I am in accord with the eulogy paid to the State Mining Engineer. I have found him a most experienced officer, and one of unfailing courtesy. I was not aware that he had reached the retiring age; that is why I asked what was the object in retiring a good man. I hope that whoever may be appointed in Mr. Montgomery's place will not remain in a departmental office, but will get out into the field. To a large extent, he will have in his hands the future destiny of Western Australia; for I refuse to believe that the Golden Mile is the only area in the State carrying enormous mineral wealth.

Mr. CHESON: I wish to pay a tribute to the sterling qualities of the State Mining Engineer, who is about to be retired. He is a very capable and efficient officer. He has always been very obliging and painstaking, and ever willing to assist with information. I have never come across any other man having such a grasp of all aspects of mining in this State. Mr. Montgomery has a thorough and intimate knowledge of the underground workings of all the better known mines. I agree with the member for Coolgardie that so important an officer should not be kept in an office in the city, but should be out in the field investigating, and even lecturing when in outlying districts.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am sorry the State Mining Engineer has arrived at the retiring age, if only in view of his remarkable accumulation of knowledge of our goldfields. Apart altogether from the high scientific

training he had before coming to this State from New Zealand some 23 years ago, he has acquired a most thorough knowledge of Western Australian mining. Moreover, he has been a loyal officer to successive Ministers. As a courteous adviser to members, he stands alone.

Mr. Panton: That is typical of the Mines Department.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is, and personally I have met that treatment in all the departments. I am sorry the State is about to lose the accumulated knowledge of local mining that Mr. Montgomery possesses. The Minister told us that in reorganising his staff he was retiring four officers with an aggregate salary of just under £3,000, and would appoint a new State Mining Engineer at a salary of £1,500. I take it the Minister does not intend that the new officer shall fill all four vacant positions?

The Minister for Mines: No.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Will it be necessary to fill the remaining three vacant positions?

The Minister for Mines: I cannot say until I have consulted the new State Mining Engineer.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: You will need a fully qualified man as Chief Inspector of Machinery.

The Minister for Mines: Mr. Howe is acting in that capacity now.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Mr. Howe is another very capable officer, with whom it is a pleasure to do business. I am only anxious that these vacant positions shall be filled by men equal in capacity and courtesy to those who are being retired.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Although my dealings with the State Mining Engineer have extended over only 2½ years, I should like to stress what the member for Mt. Margaret has said regarding that officer. I had to put before Mr. Montgomery the ideas of the people of Westonia respecting the flooded mines. I received from him the most courteous treatment, and I am sure, had it been within his power to help us unwater those mines, and so recover £250,000 worth of gold, he would cheerfully have done so. I still hope the scheme will be carried out some day. Whenever I had to see Mr. Montgomery he was very helpful indeed, and I am please to be able to testify to his high qualities.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am glad members have spoken in such glowing

terms of the State Mining Engineer. Throughout the whole course of my administration our relations have been most cordial. I have found him very helpful and highly capable. He has now arrived at an age when, in order that the department may be reconstructed, he should be retired. I think he knows that the scheme has been under consideration for a considerable time. All that has been said regarding his courtesy and capacity, I can cordially bear out. Moreover, he is a very loyal officer; unfailingly he gives of his best to his Minister.

Hon. G. Taylor: His decisions to a member are never influenced by consideration of which party is in power.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Most certainly not. I do not think it altogether correct to say that Mr. Montgomery has been confined to his office; certainly he has not been so confined from any instructions from his Minister. Of necessity many applications for assistance are made in the city, and Mr. Montgomery has to report upon most of them. He is not a young man, and cannot be expected to travel as much as he did. He has, however, made several important investigations. He made an important announcement in regard to the manganese deposits, which is of considerable value to the company concerned. He made a comprehensive investigation of the Golden Horseshoe mine. His report is one of the best I have read. He was also sent to the Sons of Gwalia Mine and reported thoroughly upon it. I agree that the State Mining Engineer should not be kept in his office. He should be actively engaged in travelling round the country doing those things which tend to the development of the industry. I have already suggested that when departmental officers travel about they should give lectures to prospectors and other mining men that will be of advantage to them, and should encourage, advise, and help them on matters connected with their occupations. The routine work of the department should be done by the Under Secretary and his staff. Mr. Montgomery is not retiring immediately. He has a profound knowledge of the mining industry, and possesses a fund of information which cannot be garnered by any other officer of the department. He has been associated with the important developments of the industry for a quarter of a century. I propose to retain his services for some time in order that he may make

a permanent record of the important factors connected with the industry, so that the information that he possesses may not be lost. When he retires from his present position he will devote the whole of his time to the writing of the record covering our important mines, the working of the leases, the value of crushings, and the general peculiarities of lodes. This information will be of the utmost value to the department. The Treasurer has agreed that Mr. Montgomery should do this work. I am sure he will give a good return for the salary that will be paid to him, and that the remarks which have been made by members will give him very great pleasure. The amalgamation of the departments has been under consideration for some time. Nothing is to be gained by retaining officers for whom there is no work. That is bad for them, as well as the administration. I do not propose to retain officers whose services cannot be properly utilised. When the new State Mining Engineer is appointed, he will go into the question. The advertisement calls for applications for a State Mining Engineer and head of the Machinery Department. This can be rearranged when the appointment is made, after consultation with the officer in question. We have to provide a high salary in order to get a good man. I hope we shall be able to get a good man. At present, Mr. Howe, the Superintendent of State Batteries, is Acting Chief Inspector of Machinery. It may be possible to effect an amalgamation there. Much of the work done by the Machinery Department can effectively be done by the Factories Department. At present there is considerable duplication in the two offices. Two or three officers of the Factories Department have the same qualifications as others in the Machinery Department. In cases where the same kind of work is being done by both departments, it can well be done by the Factories Department. I do not refer to the inspection of boilers, but to the inspection of sewing machines, one-horse motors, and other small things of that sort.

Mr. Lambert: There are enough inspectors to inspect one another.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: An amalgamation has been brought about largely with the object of utilising these officers in a different way. I have resisted any attempt to make further appointments to the Machinery Department. It may be necessary to increase the geological staff, and

carry out more work on the goldfields. At present the Geological and Mines Departments are separate. The former is under the administration of Mr. Gibb Maitland, and the latter under that of the State Mining Engineer. The two departments ought to be allied. This will be brought about.

Item, Government Mineralogist and Analyst, £950:

Mr. LAMBERT: In Dr. Simpson we have a valuable officer, but it appears to me that the system connected with the department is wrong. If a man in the country finds a piece of stone he sends it in to the department. No one finds out where the stone came from, but it is analysed free of charge. There are many cranks who are constantly sending in pieces of stone that are of no economic value.

Mr. Stubbs: Do they not have to pay?

Mr. LAMBERT: No. Highly paid officers waste time and valuable re-agents in carrying out work that has no economic significance. When a mineral specimen is submitted for analysis a responsible officer should inspect the locality from which it came, and interview the person who found it. He could then advise the head of the department as to whether it was worth while going to the trouble of analysing it.

Mr. Stubbs: That might cost more than the analysis.

Mr. LAMBERT: The department is generally snowed up with trivial work. The officers would be better employed in showing people how to utilise the valuable minerals that are found in this State. All the geological specimens sent in from our vast mineral territories should not be analysed. Before an analysis involving considerable labour is carried out, there should be a preliminary report from either the Inspector of Mines or someone near the spot saying that a satisfactory analysis would represent results which were worth while. The department might believe that a specimen sent in represented an enormous quantity, whereas in fact a search of the whole district would not disclose another piece. The unnecessary work of the department should be done away with. Fifty per cent. of the specimens submitted represent no body or area whatever, and so the departmental officers are snowed under and prevented from carrying out valuable work.

Mr. CHESSON: My opinion on this sub-

ject differs altogether from that of the previous speaker. Obstacles should not be put in the way of the prospector. In the case of a specimen sent down from the North-West for analysis, there would be enormous delay involved in making an inspection beforehand. Some minerals obtained only in small quantities are highly valuable. The department's aim should be to advise prospectors of the value of minerals found by them.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I understand that Dr. Simpson and Professor David inspected the Irwin River and Eridu coal workings, examined the white shale there, and found in it fossil remains identical in structure and age with those found in the Greta Mine, of Maitland, New South Wales. It has been asserted that because these northern coal seams were found on the Midland Company's land, their examination was held back. I do not know whether there is anything in that allegation. Professor David stated that though these seams are high in ash content, the same thing applied in the early stages of the Greta Mine. Further, he explained that although the ash content might be high in one part of the seam, another part, only a little distance away, would yield bright, rich coal. He saw no reason to doubt that the Irwin coal seam would develop in the same way. The discovery of a good coal seam would be the making of the port of Geraldton.

Hon. G. Taylor: And of the State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will send on the criticisms of the member for Coolgardie to the departmental officers with a request for a reply. I personally would not care to interfere in any way with the facilities provided for the mining community of Western Australia to obtain free assays. Even if there is a little waste in regard to those assays, that is probably better than restriction. Every facility should be offered for obtaining information as to all the minerals in the country. I am not in a position to speak as to the technical efficiency of the department. I cannot put myself up as having any technical knowledge at all in this regard. Therefore, I am not able to say definitely whether the efficiency required is here or is not here. A little while ago, however, the department was reorganised by the Public Service Commissioner in conjunction with the Under-Secretary, who has had a long association with the department's activities. For the

time being, and until I know better, I shall have to be satisfied that the department is carried on with efficiency.

Mr. Lambert: The work of the department is thoroughly efficient. I was not speaking from that point of view.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I often think there is a lot of humbug talked by scientists. They can smoke their pipes all day long and overwhelm me with technical words and terms and phrases, and I cannot pretend to know what they are talking about. At the same time I am satisfied that there are very good and efficient scientists, and until I find my scientists out I am prepared to believe that the department is all it should be. I am not prepared to admit that any scientific humbug is associated with the department under my control.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not wish to be misunderstood. The work of the department is, in fact, highly efficient. My only desire is to make it more so. However, the mineralogist will tell the Minister that there are in this State numerous mineral deposits of little or no economic value, and that samples of them are frequently sent to the department for analysis. I know men in my district who are absolute cranks on sending the Mines Department samples for analysis, although those samples represent nothing of any economic value whatever. If the Minister were to confer with the Government Mineralogist I am sure he would find that that officer could discard many of the samples that are sent to him and thus his time could be employed upon other minerals and advising upon the use of them.

Item, Assistance to Petrologist, £300:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: What is the meaning of this item? There is provision for an assistant, but there is no reference to the petrologist.

The Premier: That position is vacant:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Mr. Farquharson is the petrologist, but he is on loan to the Somaliland Administration. The position has been kept open for him, but I understand he has accepted a permanent appointment with the Imperial Government for service in Somaliland.

Mr. SAMPSON: Has any progress been made regarding the efforts to find oil in the State?

The Minister for Mines: No.

Item, Chief Inspector of Machinery and Chairman of Board of Examiners, £708:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Minister informed us that the Chief Inspector of Machinery will be retired shortly. I have had a long acquaintance with that officer and I have always found Mr. Mathews most anxious to render assistance and to carry out his work without interference or stopping progress.

Mr. Sampson: With him there is no sign of officiousness.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: None at all. Sixteen or eighteen years ago Mr. Mathews was attacked bitterly year after year, because he would not allow the engine drivers on the goldfields to do as they liked. He came out of that trouble with satisfaction to the department and credit to himself, and I am pleased to know that he is leaving his position without having been at cross purposes with the Minister.

Mr. Davy: But I understand he has been sacked.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think so; he has been retired.

Mr. Davy: Do I understand that Mr. Mathews' retirement is voluntary?

The Minister for Mines: No, it is not.

Mr. Davy: Then he has been sacked.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. Davy: It is then a fact that he has been dismissed.

The Minister for Mines: His position has been abolished.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not wish to have words with the Minister on this subject, but I understood from him that Mr. Mathews was agreeable to being retired.

The Minister for Mines: No, he was not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then the Minister has abolished the position in order to get rid of Mr. Mathews.

The Premier: It is a matter of reorganisation.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is the same old tale that Governments have put up ever since the Public Service Act was passed. They are always putting up schemes for reorganisation which really mean getting rid of some officer.

The Premier: This is a matter of reorganisation and one man is now doing the two jobs. The Superintendent of Batteries is doing his work and this work as well.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am pleased to find that it is merely a matter of reorganisation because I know Mr. Mathews well and I

have never heard any complaints about him. I know that reorganisation schemes can be carried too far, especially if a Minister wants to get rid of the head of a department.

The Premier: Another reorganisation involved the abolition of a position. The positions of State Geologist and the State Mining Engineer have been amalgamated.

Mr. Davy: Has anyone been dismissed?

The Premier: Mr. Gibb Maitland has been retired. He is over age.

Mr. Davy: Mr. Mathews is not over age.

The Premier: No.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There are many years of service yet before Mr. Mathews.

The Minister for Mines: He will receive a good pension and has many years of work ahead.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am glad to know that it is merely a matter of reorganisation and does not mean that Mr. Mathews has been sacked.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Mt. Margaret did not use appropriate words when he said that the position had been abolished to get rid of Mr. Mathews.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: On a point of explanation. I did not say that. I said that I had found that schemes of reorganisation had been carried out by all Governments to get rid of officers at times. I did not cast any aspersion on the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In this instance the position has been abolished. Anybody who has been associated with the Mines Department and knows anything about it, as the member for Mt. Margaret ought to know, must realise that with the decreased operations there is not the same work to be undertaken by some branches of the department.

Hon. G. Taylor: I know that; I am not making any complaint.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I refuse to administer a department where money is being spent unnecessarily upon various services. It cannot be urged against me that I have ever attacked Mr. Mathews during the years I have been in Parliament. I have had no controversy or dispute with him. On the other hand I am not blind to the fact that the department badly needed reorganisation. There are other members who are not blind to that fact too. I refrained from taking any step until I knew what was the proper thing to do. I am satisfied that the geological staff and

that of the State Mining Engineer can be amalgamated. As a matter of fact the Public Service Commissioner recommended that course two years ago. I did not move hastily, but proceeded carefully before effecting the amalgamation. If any hon. member doubts my words he can get the papers.

Mr. Sampson: Could the work be done by factories inspectors?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As a matter of fact the work of inspection could be done by the three factories inspectors, who have the same qualifications as the inspectors of machinery. Those men do similar work and there is duplication. I do not propose to have one man more for the Inspection of Machinery Department because I know the work can be done. I have resisted new appointments and the work has been done all the same. The amalgamation will not be made at the expense of efficiency. Mr. Howe is a competent officer. He combines firmness with ability, and will see that the work is done.

Hon. G. Taylor: He is a good man.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have no doubt that under him we shall have efficient service.

Mr. DAVY: If the Minister concludes that one man can perform the duties formerly done by two men, the amalgamation should be made. To pay two salaries of £700 instead of one would be to waste public money, but why is Mr. Howe the favoured of the two?

The Premier: He has the qualifications for this work and Mathews knows nothing about State batteries.

The Minister for Mines: Mathews is not a metallurgist; Howe is.

Mr. DAVY: That seems to be a good answer.

Item, Mining School, Salaries of Lecturers (includes district allowances £270), £3,352:

Mr. STURBS: This seems to be a large sum of money. Is it for lecturers on the goldfields only or throughout the State?

The Premier: For lecturers at the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: How many lecturers are there and what is the average salary paid?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The item is for the lecturers at the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie. The lecturers are: Mr. Bute-ment, lecturer on mining, salary £681; Mr. Moore, lecturer on chemistry, salary £525;

Mr. Tate, lecturer on engineering, salary £527; Dr. Larcombe, lecturer on geology, salary £518.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is he the petrologist?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, though he acts in that capacity at times. Mr. McDougall is lecturer on electricity, and Mr. Illidge is lecturer on mathematics. Those are the most important of the lecturers.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Has the Minister paid the same attention to reorganising the lecturers as to the other departments he has reorganised? To have six lecturers at the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie seems a lot. What is the average attendance of students?

Mr. Angelo: Or do they lecture to each other?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I suppose the Minister is satisfied they are doing good work.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know how many students attend the school, but if the mining school is to serve the purpose intended, the lecturers are essential. Without them the school could not exist. If we are going to give students opportunities to engage in active mining operations and carry on the industry, we must have lecturers on mining, chemistry, engineering, geology, electricity and mathematics. Some of the lecturers are carrying out experiments in order to elucidate the problems that confront the industry. Mr. Moore gave a good deal of assistance to the recovery process at Phillips River, but it did not work out satisfactorily. Mr. Winter, another of the officers, was sent to Broken Hill in connection with oil flotation experiments, which have been carried out in conjunction with Mr. Moore. Probably the school has not the number of students that it had in the past.

Mr. Davy: Would it have 100 students?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I should think not. On the other hand, I imagine there are some institutions where the lecturers can compress their duties in a very few hours per day. If we are going to assist the industry by having a mining school on the most important field in the State, we must have lecturers.

Mr. Sampson: Do the students pay fees?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. We promised that the fees should be abolished, but they have not been abolished.

Mr. Davy: At what age do students enter the school?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: From 16 or 17 upwards.

Mr. Davy: It is a technical school in the mining sphere?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I find that the estimated revenue for the mining school is £150 and that the actual revenue last year was £139. If there is any number of students they would be paying a very small fee.

The Minister for Mines: They want the fees abolished on the ground that fees are not charged at the University.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I direct attention to the revenue so that Minister might be able to give further information. Either the fees are low or the students are few in number. I do not suggest that fees should be charged. I would favour the abolition of fees, but we should not be justified in spending £3,352 for lecturers if they are not needed.

Mr. LAMBERT: It would be well for the Minister to review the positions and see whether some of them cannot be amalgamated. The most glaring item is that of the director of the mining school.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a previous item and we cannot go back to it.

Mr. LAMBERT: The director draws half his salary from the Education Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot permit the hon. member to discuss that.

Mr. LAMBERT: In view of the apparently small number of students, the Minister might be able to effect a readjustment without sacrificing efficiency.

Hon. G. Taylor: The director draws £852.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is so.

Mr. ANGELO: The cost of the staff of the Mining School totals £5,487. Comparing that with the cost of the staff of the Agricultural College, £1,677, the difference seems very great indeed, especially when one takes into consideration the relative importance of the two institutions to the State. Moreover, the revenue of the Mining School is estimated at £150, as against a revenue of £4,000 estimated for the Agricultural College. I hope the Minister has satisfied himself that the huge cost of the staff of the Mining School is justified. We know that mining has, unfortunately, gone down.

Mr. DAVY: This Mining School is the kind of little department that is easily overlooked. As developments or the reverse take place, there may be a little backwater; and the Mining School might be carried on with very few students. If the fee of £2 2s. per term refers to four terms in the year, the number of students, on the basis of the revenue, works out at 15; whilst if the fee refers to three terms, the number of students works out at 22. The Minister might ascertain how many students the school has.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I regard the criticisms of hon. members as fairly directed, and I will make inquiries. The Mining School is at Kalgoorlie, and I see it but rarely. I should not, however, care to do anything drastic, having regard to the present condition of the mining industry. I do not think advantage should be taken of the depression which happens to exist.

Item, Inspector of Explosives, £528:

Mr. CHESSON: The salaries of the inspector, the clerk in charge, and sub-inspector, and the magazine-keeper and watchmen total £1,452. What are the duties of the inspector and sub-inspector in regard to explosives? Do they test them? The quantity of explosives now used is not nearly so large as that used years ago. Where are the officers employed?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This is the branch of my department into which I am making inquiries. Up to date I am satisfied the officers have been doing their work. Mr. Curtin, the Chief Inspector of Explosives, does all the testing except that which, in his absence, is done by his officers. In fact, I have been at the magazine and seen him testing explosives there. The member for Cue is mistaken in thinking that there has been a large falling-off in the work. All the explosives for the group settlements, representing a very considerable quantity, have been submitted to the chief inspector for testing. The increase of salary shown in the item is due to reclassification. I am satisfied that the officers referred to are essential, and that the work ought to be done.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does the Inspector of Explosives inspect all explosives coming to Western Australia?

The Minister for Mines: He tests them, and he condemns large quantities. However, I do not say he tests all the explosives which come here.

Mr. Davy: Do all explosives pass through the Government magazine?

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does the officer also test fuses?

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is most essential that fuses should be tested.

Mr. Chesson: The miners themselves test the fuses.

Item, Temporary labour, magazine-keeper and watchmen, £576:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does this item refer to the magazine at South Fremantle?

The Minister for Mines: There is a magazine-keeper at South Fremantle, and there are two watchmen. The item refers to those three officers.

Mr. LAMBERT: This is another branch of the Mines Department that could well be looked into. A few years ago the quantity of explosives used in this State was three times as great as the quantity used to-day. Has there been a corresponding decrease in the number of officers? Is it necessary to have an inspector, a clerk in charge, and a sub-inspector?

The Premier: The clerk in charge and the sub-inspector are one person.

Mr. Davy: Does the sub-inspector hold any other position?

The Minister for Mines: Yes. He does the office work as well.

Mr. LAMBERT: I understood that until three or four years ago, when the present Federal member for Perth was retired, the actual testing of explosives was carried out in the Government Laboratory. It would appear that there is a separate laboratory at South Fremantle for the testing of explosives. I do not think it is necessary to have all these various laboratories, and they should be grouped under one head.

Mr. SAMPSON: Do I understand that all the explosives coming to the State have to pass through Government magazines?

The Premier: Yes, even the well known brands have to be tested. That is one thing that the Government must test.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have already made inquiries about this department and have spoken to the Under Secretary concerning the work this officer is carrying out. The officer has to travel all round the country inquiring into matters regarding explosives. Large quantities are now being used in connection with the group

settlements, and this officer is responsible for the explosives. The only officer who takes charge when the inspector is absent in the country, is the clerk in charge and sub-inspector. That is the classification given by the Public Service Commissioner. Naturally, someone must carry out the work of the inspector when he is absent in the country. Then there are three men at the magazine. I have looked into this matter and I cannot see where any saving can be effected.

Item, Chairman of Board, £168:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: This item relates to operations under the Miners' Phthisis Act. Last night I pointed out certain statements regarding the Kalgoorlie "Miner," and the Minister said that I had misquoted. I made inquiries to-day at the Perth office of the Kalgoorlie "Miner," particularly in view of the Minister's statements. I was assured that beyond quoting the article that appeared in the "Daily News" of Perth, and their comment—I did not know anything about that part of it until to-day—and not making it clear and separate from the rest of the report, I had quoted the report satisfactorily. They assured me that the Minister, either by letter or personally, remonstrated with the "Miner" people and said that they had not been fair. The "Miner" decided not to enter into a controversy, but to publish the two Acts—the Scaddan Act of 1923 and the Troy Act of 1925—side by side in the paper and also to reprint the statements made by members in this House and in the Legislative Council relative to those Acts. I was told that this ran into about 28 columns in the Kalgoorlie "Miner" and that was done so that the people could see exactly what had been said. That was done because there had been a lot of ill feeling and the people on the goldfields were the ones most concerned. Because of that the "Miner" people decided to reprint the reports from "Hansard," the official record of the debates of Parliament, and it was that that caused the furore in Kalgoorlie.

The Premier: The hon. member has not got it fairly. The furore was started by statements made, and the publication he speaks of appeared later.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The "Kalgoorlie Miner" people have assured me they made no comment.

The Premier: They published the speeches, but only after the row started.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I quoted from the report published on the 24th January. The "Kalgoorlie Miner" printed it before that, because feeling was running so high.

The Premier: The hon. member must realise that he is out of order in discussing this subject on this item.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: This item deals with miners' phthisis.

The Premier: The salary of the men!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: And on that I am at liberty to discuss miners' phthisis.

The Premier: You are not.

Mr. Angelo: Take item 102, compensation.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Well, I will wait for that. I only want to explain the position.

The Minister for Mines: Keep on explaining.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Minister told the House last night that the "Kalgoorlie Miner" had acted in a scurrilous manner in publishing certain statements. The quotations I made were not from the "Kalgoorlie Miner," but from the "Worker." I made inquiries to-day and was assured by the proprietor of the "Kalgoorlie Miner" that that paper made no comment other than the comment the Minister spoke of. Then the paper published the two Bills and every word said in Parliament. That is what caused the people's anxiety and made it necessary for members and Ministers to go to Kalgoorlie to straighten out matters.

The Premier: The hon. member is incorrect again. The publication of those speeches was made later.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I was in hospital during that period, but I made inquiries to-day.

The Premier: Your information now is not correct.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am informed on the best authority that it is correct. On the information I received I challenge the Minister for Mines to produce proof of the "Miner's" vilification of the action of the Government, other than the first article republished from the "Daily News." I challenge the Minister now to bring forward those vilifying statements on the strength of which he described the paper as being of the gutter Press, and a scurrilous rag. That is a fair open challenge. I quoted the official organ of the Government last night, and they denied even that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member is trailing his coat. I know

that he shines better when challenging and roaring than when doing anything else.

Hon. G. Taylor: Well, you accept my challenge.

Mr. Marshall: You wait until he challenges you. You have been doing a lot of challenging to-night.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Now then, gramophone!

Mr. Marshall: I will come and gramophone you.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have had a lot of experience of the hon. member's challenging and roaring and playing to the gallery. At that he cannot be surpassed.

Hon. G. Taylor: You were vilifying the Press in a scurrilous manner last night, and now I challenge you to justify it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not concerned about the hon. member's challenge; I despise it.

Mr. Davy: Well, treat it as an invitation, and do what he asks you.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have seen the hon. member in many roles. I have seen him challenge a Government on a principle, and the next day support the Government on the very principle he had previously denounced.

Hon. G. Taylor: Get "Hansard" and the records and prove it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have seen the hon. member denounce the Wilson Government over the State trading concerns, and I have heard him at Laverton approve of those same trading concerns.

Mr. Teesdale: On which item are we now?

Hon. G. Taylor: I notice the Minister has a lot of latitude.

Member: You were allowed to make quite a long speech.

Mr. Davy: He was not making a speech about somebody else's character.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, it was all about his own adventures.

Hon. G. Taylor: You could not pull the wool over the workers' eyes in the Boulder Hall.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not pretend to be ready to blow hot and cold.

Hon. G. Taylor: You came away with a great flourish of trumpets after three weeks in my electorate—half a dozen of you.

Mr. Teesdale: On which item are we now?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member is trailing the tail of his coat to-night, but his heroics will not avail him

much. He has the assurance of the "Kai-goorlie Miner" that what I said last night was not true. I said the "Miner" had instigated the agitation on the goldfields by the publication of an alleged report in the "Daily News." Outside of that article, the hon. member says, it was all fair and above board. Therefore he implies that the article itself was not fair and above board.

Hon. G. Taylor: I didn't say anything of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This article was a pure concoction, whereas the report in the "Daily News" was a perfectly fair report of Parliamentary proceedings. But the "Miner" added to the "Daily News" report a concoction of its own, which it put forward as coming from the "Daily News." I wrote to the editor of the "Daily News," and he denied that it was part of his article. Now the hon. member takes offence because I say that is a depraved type of journalism. A paper that wilfully concocts matter for its own purposes and publishes it as having been taken from another paper is not acting fairly and squarely, and the hon. member will have difficulty in justifying it.

Hon. G. Taylor: The "Miner" people say that beyond that article they never made a comment.

The Premier: Except that a man has been in gaol for 20 years, he is a perfectly honest person.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member says he does not justify that article. He cannot. If the article cannot be justified, why was it printed?

Hon. G. Taylor: That has nothing to do with it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Why did your friends print it?

Hon. G. Taylor: Where are the other articles?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member's friends did not want to convey a wrong impression to the goldfields people, why did they concoct that article?

Hon. G. Taylor: The article did not cause the trouble. It was the reports of the speeches in both Houses. That article would not infuriate a thousand men.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the article was not intended to convey a wrong impression, why was it concocted? That is a question the hon. member cannot answer and no man of any character, standing, or sense of decency can justify it. It is a sample of depraved journalism. It is a

type of journalism that happily is rare in this State.

Hon. G. Taylor: Why refer to that? I deny any knowledge of it. Outside of that I challenge you to bring comments from the "Kalgoorlie Miner." You are beating the air.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member did not justify the article, and if he did not defend the paper, why did he raise this question? That was the whole purpose of his speech.

Hon. G. Taylor: Nothing of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And now he is running away from it.

Hon. G. Taylor: No, I never do that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Let us go further. The hon. member now does not attempt to justify the article. He admits that it was a concoction.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not admit anything of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yet he wants us to believe that the article was concocted for no bad purpose.

Hon. G. Taylor: I admitted nothing about it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Now I shall go on.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes; find some of the other reports you spoke about.

Mr. Davy: What is that article?

Hon. G. Taylor: I never saw it. The Minister had better read it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not going to bother about the hon. member's heroics.

Hon. G. Taylor: Justify your malicious statements of last night. That will give you quite enough to do without trying to vilify me to-night. Be honest!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The first time I met the member for Mt. Margaret was in Cue 24 years ago, when he denounced me over the expulsion of Mr. Fergie Reid.

Hon. G. Taylor: I denounced you?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have yet to learn that Mr. Fergie Reid was not an honest man and that his expulsion was justified. I have had a long experience of the hon. member.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are up to your neck in rascality over this matter. Deal with this matter and do not go any further! Be honest!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall go back to the stirrup-iron incident.

Mr. Teesdale: I rise on a point of order.

Hon. G. Taylor: The poverty of your argument is appalling.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member keep order!

Mr. Teesdale: This is not a debate.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. Teesdale: That the Minister is indulging in a long discussion instead of dealing with the item before the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: I am the best judge as to whether the Minister is in order or not.

Mr. Teesdale: All right.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Mt. Margaret does not attempt to justify the article that created the mischief in the first place. The Bill passed its third reading in this House on the 19th December, and the article appeared in the "Kalgoorlie Miner" on the 23rd December, four days later. We are asked to believe that the article was perfectly innocent. Now the hon. member attempts to justify the "Kalgoorlie Miner" by stating that it published all the facts—

Hon. G. Taylor: It published 28 columns.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And that it published the speeches of members on both sides of the House. We shall see what it did publish.

Hon. G. Taylor: Those speeches indicated that the Minister in another place contradicted the Minister in this House over the same Bill. That is where the trouble arose. The workers on the goldfields discovered that they were being sold a pup.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I admit that after my protest the "Miner" people did publish the speeches made by members in Parliament. They printed also Mr. Scaddan's Bill and the Bill introduced by me, but there was a purpose behind that because they knew perfectly well that not one man out of a thousand on the goldfields would understand the phraseology of the measures. It was all part of a cunning plan.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do not reflect on the ability of the goldfields men to understand a Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As a matter of fact, they printed Mr. Cornell's speech, Mr. Dodd's speech, Mr. Seddon's speech, and Mr. Harris's speech. They stated in another article that in order to explain the Bill they proposed to print the speeches delivered by members in the Council. What they published did not ex-

plain the Bill and was never intended to explain the Bill; it merely gave what those members had said about the Bill. All that was cunning propaganda and no one knew it better than the "Kalgoorlie Miner" people. During the whole of the time they carried on this controversy they published leading articles, copies of which I have before me, as well as letters from Messrs. Seddon, Harris and Cornell, supporting the statements made by those members in another place, even after the statements had been contradicted by me and after I had set out the true intention of the Bill as explained by the Solicitor General. Yet, in defiance of the Solicitor General's statements printed in the "Kalgoorlie Miner," they still reiterated the mis-statements regarding the Bill and continued to do so up to the time of the Upper House elections.

Hon. G. Taylor: They absolutely deny that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have it on the file before me.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then for goodness sake read some of it! Give us a sample of that vilification!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall read what I consider is necessary.

Hon. G. Taylor: Give us the facts! I put all the cards on the table.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member put no cards whatever on the table. He said he had been told by the "Kalgoorlie Miner" people that certain things were not true.

Hon. G. Taylor: And I challenge you to produce your stuff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member admits that the first article in the "Kalgoorlie Miner" was a concoction.

Hon. G. Taylor: I admit nothing of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He admits that portion of the article came from the "Daily News" and that the rest of it was "Kalgoorlie Miner" comment, but he refrains from saying that the whole of it was published as if it had been extracted from the "Daily News."

Hon. G. Taylor: Give us some of that vilification! Get away from the article! The "Kalgoorlie Miner" people are not responsible for it except that they printed it first and did not comment afterwards. They published the speeches.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Here is the manner in which they published the speeches:—"Miners' Phthisis Bill: Applica-

tion of the gag; Further discussion blocked." Those are the headlines. Then they give:—"Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill."

Hon. G. Taylor: That is right.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When the papers publish reports of Parliamentary proceedings they do not state who is in the Chair; they publish the speeches.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is a reprint from "Hansard."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: "Hansard" does not give headlines such as "Application of the gag; Further discussion blocked." The concocted article had laid special stress on the fact that Dr. Saw gagged Mr. Seddon after that member had moved an amendment to the Bill, and that Messrs. Ewing, Dodd, Cornell and Seddon disapproved of Dr. Saw's action.

Hon. G. Taylor: I suppose that appeared in "Hansard."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It was pointed out that Mr. Kirwan was in the Chair, the desire being to show that he could not act.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is fair to let the people know that.

Hon. G. Taylor: That report was taken out of "Hansard."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It looked fair enough, but "Hansard" does not use headlines such as "Application of the gag," "Further discussion blocked." That was the method employed in this case. During the campaign the "Kalgoorlie Miner" printed articles in which no attempt was made to clear up matters so far as the amending Miners' Phthisis Act was concerned. The gentlemen who were fighting their elections kept on reiterating in the "Kalgoorlie Miner" the statement that the Government had deprived the miners of something which the Scaddan Bill had given them.

Hon. G. Taylor: These are the utterances of the people concerned.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am satisfied that they were written and sent in by the persons interested.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was denied.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They even induced Dr. Saw to write saying that he did not intend to gag them deliberately. Dr. Saw had to do this because I had pointed out that if they were gagged they were gagged by one of their own side. It is

peculiar that Dr. Saw should have gagged them.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is it not a non-party House?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The matter is not worth bothering about. I am sorry I was dragged into the controversy. What I said last night stands. If the member for Mt. Margaret will bring forward Mr. Kirwan, who owns the "Kalgoorlie Miner," I will prove from the file the truth of the statement I have made.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I should have been more pleased if the Minister had afforded proof from the file of the statement that the "Kalgoorlie Miner" had vilified and undermined the Government right up to the time of the May elections. Right up to the appearance of the first article, that is supposed to have been taken from the "Daily News," I am assured that nothing more was published in that paper than clippings from speeches that were taken from "Hansard." So far as I am concerned the Minister has not denied that. I do not feel disposed to bring forward any further proof, seeing that the Minister has left unanswered the challenge I made him.

Item, Incidentals, £8,230:

Mr. ANGELO: I would point out that the travelling expenses included in this item amount to about £6,000, whereas in a similar item connected with the Lands Department these expenses amount to only £1,200. I do not say the expenditure is not warranted, but I think the Minister might inquire into the matter and see if there has been any extravagance.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Agriculture (Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister).

Vote—Agriculture, £84,570:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [10.45]: In introducing the Agricultural Estimates I have much pleasure in referring to the exceedingly prosperous state of the agricultural industry. There is no doubt that our agricultural industries are more profitable than they have been at any time in the history of the State. In many respects our production this year will surpass that of any previous year. On the occasion of the

opening of the Muresk Agricultural College the Premier gave some important figures dealing with the progress of the State. He showed that in 1904 the State was not producing enough wheat to meet its own requirements, but that this year it was hoped that the harvest would be in the vicinity of 30 million bushels. The area under wheat this year is no less than 2,776,000 acres, an increase of nearly half a million acres over last year. The greater portion of this area under crop is fallowed land. The following figures show the area under wheat in the other States for the year 1924-25. In New South Wales the area under wheat was 3,500,000 acres; Victoria, 2,705,000 acres; Queensland, 189,000 acres; South Australia, 2,499,000 acres; Tasmania, 12,000 acres; and Western Australia, 1,867,000 acres. The area under crop this year in Western Australia is 2,776,000 acres, or 300,000 acres more than was under crop in South Australia last year. This denotes the rapid progress that is being made in the agricultural development of this State. In New South Wales during 1924-25 the production of wheat amounted to 59 million bushels. The production of wheat in Victoria was 47,000,000 bushels, in Queensland 2,700,000, in South Australia 30,000,000, and in Western Australia 23,000,000. That was a very high yield in South Australia. The yield may be higher there this year, but the production generally does not appear to keep close to the total for 1924-25. The value of wheat produced in 1924-25 in the Commonwealth was £53,000,000, and Western Australia produced 17.25 per cent. of that wealth. The agricultural belt has extended rapidly during the last few years; farmers are now getting out on what may be termed, under present conditions, the doubtful rainfall area. A clamour arises from those settlers for Agricultural Bank assistance; and the bank trustees, in their discretion, apparently do not think it advisable to give full advances on areas which have not yet been proved. But the Government, in order to assist in the development of those areas and in order to determine whether the limits of profitable wheat production can be extended, have resolved to establish a number of experimental farms. During the past three years State farms have been established in the new wheat areas. One has been established at Salmon Gums in the Norseman-Esperance area. The

farms in this area are situated in an adequate rainfall area. The experimental farm has been established there in order to provide for the settlers the same opportunities and facilities as are furnished to settlers in the wheat belt by the Merredin and Chapman experimental farms.

Mr. Stubbs: Will the Salmon Gums experimental farm be properly equipped?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Certainly. The work of clearing is now in hand. An experimental farm is also being established at Ghooli, eight miles east of Southern Cross. I am of opinion that with our present knowledge, and with the present rainfall, wheat growing in the Southern Cross area will be carried on under the best possible conditions. It is no use scratching in crops at Southern Cross; such a course invites disaster. The best cultural methods will have to be adopted, and to that end it has been decided to establish an experimental farm at Ghooli, so that the area may be tested as a wheat-producing province and so that the settlers there may have an opportunity of observing those lessons and experiments which are at present being carried on for the benefit of other farmers at Merredin and Chapman. Another experimental farm has been established at Dampawah Springs, 40 miles east of Perenjori, on the edge of the Murchison country. I believe the rainfall there is sufficiently good for growing cereals eight years out of ten. There will be years when the rainfall will prove insufficient, but the district has several advantages not possessed by areas in the wheat belt, with the exception of Ghooli, which has a pipe line alongside it. In the Dampawah area water can be got at shallow depth, which is a highly important feature in all new settlement. We have decided to try an area there of 7,000 acres, and if it is proved in the course of years that wheat farming is not a satisfactory occupation for settlers taking up land in the district, we shall make sheep the basis of our farming proposition. If the area cannot be developed as a wheat-growing area, it will be developed as a grazing-farm area. It will be the buffer area between the pastoral country and the southern wheat districts.

Mr. Stubbs: Will the Agricultural Bank advance money there?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No lands have been thrown open for settle-

ment there. All the lands in that area have been reserved.

Mr. Lindsay: That is the course that should have been followed long ago, instead of settlers being sent out on unproved country.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not right to let settlers go out into unproved areas and then make the question of Agricultural Bank assistance one of politics, the Government being forced to grant assistance where in the opinion of their advisors the risk ought not to be taken. In my opinion experimental farms should have been established in this area years ago. Thus we would have proved all that country adjacent to the established wheat areas, and the Agricultural Bank would then be able to advance money with a full knowledge of the local conditions. In that area, I say, all the land has been reserved; there is no demand for that land yet. If wheat growing cannot be carried on there as a safe occupation, I think that by the establishment of grazing farms of 5,000, 7,000, or 10,000 acres we shall be able to settle quite a number of people there whose basis of farming will be sheep and who will produce crops eight years out of ten. By that means we should be able to establish in the locality a much larger population that could be settled under existing conditions. The rainfall, I believe, is all right; but in some parts the soil is shallow. As a matter of fact, the rainfall is much safer there than in the Southern Cross district. As regards the shallowness of the soil, my experience is that such country requires a much heavier rainfall than deeper soil, because in shallow soil it is not possible to conserve moisture by fallowing. That is my own experience, and I have lived there for many years. I know that stations in the district have grown good hay crops, and that without fallowing. One or two of the stations may claim to fallow, but they do not fallow under proper cultural conditions. The Government have in mind the establishment of yet another experimental farm, but so far have not decided upon the locality. The Southern Cross farm should determine whether all that country south of Southern Cross towards Ravensthorpe is suitable for wheat growing. Before proceeding with further settlement in remote areas of limited rainfall, we should push out experimental stations. If it is proved, as I believe it will be, that wheat can be grown safely and suc-

cessfully at Southern Cross, farmers can be pushed out in that area. We may get to understand the country better and science may come to our assistance in a higher degree than it does to-day, and so there may be more settlement in that area than we have any conception of at present.

Mr. Stubbs: Is not this area in the same latitude as Newdegate, where the rainfall is only 15 inches?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Newdegate is all right. I myself am situated 50 miles from the coast, but my rainfall is only the same as that at Kellerberrin, which is about 120 miles from the coast.

Mr. Griffiths: It is 132 miles from the coast.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is evidence that the rain comes inland and widens out as it goes south. Those are the usual winter conditions. The area eastward from Southern Cross may prove more fitted for settlement than the Southern Cross area. When I was at Glenelg Hills recently I saw a fine belt of country, some of the finest I have ever seen. That is south of Burracoppin. I am hopeful that in years to come that area will carry a large and thriving population.

The Minister for Lands: It is fairly patchy country.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not see ten acres of patchy country between Narembeen and Glenelg Hills.

The Minister for Lands: It may be a narrow strip of good country.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course, we followed the road.

Mr. Latham: And these bush tracks do not go through the heaviest country.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At any rate, as the member for York (Mr. Latham) knows, we passed through good country. Glenelg Hills itself is situated in a fine area, and south of that centre is another splendid strip of country. I want to give members some idea of the results of work on the experimental farms last year. The wheat production at the Merredin State farm totalled 3,297 bushels, giving an average of 10 bushels 55 lbs. to the acre. Hon. members who represent constituencies in the Eastern Wheat Belt will realise that last year was what would be called a drought year in those parts. The rainfall at the Merredin State Farm during the growing period was only 565 points. It was what would have been called a drought year in the early

days of land settlement in Western Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: The crops would have been a failure then.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Despite that light rainfall, we secured, as I have already stated, a return of over 10 bushels to the acre. In addition to that, an average of 13 bushels 12 lbs. of oats to the acre was obtained. At the Chapman State Farm, 3,709 bushels of wheat were obtained, showing an average of 17 bushels 17 lbs. to the acre, while 1,030 bushels of oats returned an average of 21 bushels 16 lbs. to the acre. The season was a little better in the Chapman area; the soil conditions there are more suitable in drought years than the soil conditions at Merredin. At the Wongan Hills Experimental Farm a return of 7,599 bushels of wheat was secured, showing an average of 16 bushels 53 lbs. to the acre, which was a very fine return indeed. There was also a good return from the oats crop. Last year, of course, the lighter rainfall was suitable for that area.

Mr. Latham: Yes, it suited that area well.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This year the rainfall has been heavier, and I do not think that the wheat return from the Wongan Hills farm will be as good in quality or as heavy in quantity as in the former year. The value of the wheat sold from the experimental farms represented £5,200. The wheat produced from the experimental farms is proving of great advantage to the farmers to whom it is sold.

Mr. Lindsay: Quite right.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The reason for that is that only pure seed is supplied, and that will result in building up and increasing the average returns throughout the farming districts. During the year, the Agricultural Department conducted many trial plots on a number of farms. These experiments, which are carried out in co-operation with the farmers themselves, are of great educational value, as they enable the farmers to see the actual methods adopted and the fertilisers and seeds used in the trials. During the year operations of this description were conducted at Albany, Young's Siding, Denmark, Bencubbin, Welbungin, Southern Cross, Kalgoorlie, Goomarin, Scaddan, Latham, and Mukinbudin. In addition, top-dressing experiments for pastures and the planting of fodder crops have been carried out in the extreme south-western portions

of the State. These experiments are conducted annually, and the practice is being extended. We have agreed to carry out trials at Tambellup and at Tunney, and as the department grows and settlement increases, these operations will be extended so that we shall meet the needs of the agricultural community throughout the State. I am pleased to announce that the farmers are taking a deep interest in these experiments, and the interest shown proves that the department is doing good work that will be reflected throughout the agricultural districts in the future. Regarding the fruit industry, judging by the number of young apple trees that have been imported this year, the backward drift that has been apparent in the area under fruit is being arrested, and it is anticipated we will soon be able to record an upward move. The mainstay of the fruit industry is the apple, chiefly because of its keeping qualities and its suitability for export. It is therefore pleasing to know that not less than 65,000 apple trees have been imported this season for planting in this State. The returns obtained from the sale of fruit in England were adversely affected by the strike there, but reports show that Western Australian fruit was in great demand and secured top prices. Unfortunately, we experienced during the past year the worst outbreak of that dreaded scourge, the Codlin moth, on record in Western Australia. It occurred in the Collie district. There had been a prior outbreak at North Dandalup but the departmental officers devoted particular attention to that district, and their efforts proved successful in overcoming the pest there. At Collie 97 separate properties were infested. There have been numerous outbreaks during the past 20 years, but in every instance the officers of the fruit inspection branch of the Agricultural Department have been successful in eradicating the pest. Stringent and effective measures have been adopted at Collie, and it is confidently anticipated that success will follow the efforts of the officers. I regret to say that an outbreak has also been discovered at Narrogin, but effective steps have been taken to cope with it. I hope that reports concerning this phase of our work will not be bruited abroad and that the department will be as successful in combating the disease as in former years. During the past year a number of deputations waited upon me regarding the unsatisfac-

tory conditions obtaining in the dried fruit industry. Last year the growers did not have a successful time, and they asked that legislation should be introduced this session, if possible, in order to assist them. Last year the producers of this State exported a quantity of dried fruits to the Eastern States. Owing to legislation operating in South Australia and Victoria, a quantity of those exports was seized in Victoria, thus handicapping the export trade from this State.

Mr. Latham: Was that in Victoria or South Australia?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In Victoria. I do not know whether the Victorian Government were warranted in passing their Act, or whether the authorities who seized the fruit were within the law. I have an idea that their action amounted to a violation of the Federal Constitution. We have appealed to the Federal Government, and although we have repeated our request for information advising us whether the Victorian Act complied with the provisions of the Federal Constitution, the Federal Government have not seen fit to reply to our communication so far. The action seems to have been taken in the interests of the growers in the Eastern States.

Mr. Lutey: Particularly in the interests of those concerned in the dried fruit industry.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In view of these circumstances, it may be necessary for us to introduce legislation to deal with the position. The grape growers have asked that experimental vineyards be established. They want one at Toodyay and another in the Swan Valley. However, the locality has not yet been decided upon. The request is under consideration, and I hope that in due course the Treasurer will agree to find the necessary money. Last year 4,692 cows and heifers and 105 bulls were supplied to group settlers. Of that number 2,000 heifers were purchased from New South Wales by our dairy expert. As it was considered it would be in the best interests of the dairying industry and would permit of the superintendent of dairying devoting the whole of his time to the dairying industry, that gentleman was relieved of his position as manager of the Busselton State butter factory, which has now been sold to the co-operative butter factory company at Bunbury. The Albany Butter Fac-

tory and Trading Company went into liquidation, and as it was desired that the dairymen in that district should not be without a factory to which to send their butter, it was decided to lease the factory to the Western Farmers, Limited, who agreed to take it over on the same terms and conditions on which it had been let to the Albany Butter Factory and Trading Company. The terms are, rent free for two years, the company to operate the cold store and to be reimbursed for any loss sustained thereon. The butter industry is making some progress, although I regret the butter factories, which were established with Government assistance some years ago, have not given better results. Still the Bunbury butter factory is very successful, and I hope the success achieved there will now be reflected in the Busselton factory.

Mr. Lindsay: The Busselton factory should be successful, with all the group settlers in the district.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Members are aware of the scheme known as the Paterson scheme to stabilise butter prices. It was reported in the Press a few days ago that under that scheme butter was sold in London at a considerably lower price than in Australia. This alleged stabilisation scheme has come in for much discussion at all the conferences of Ministers for Agriculture I have attended during the last few years. So far as I can see, it is not of present advantage to Western Australia, because the greater portion of the butter consumed here is imported from the Eastern States, and so under that scheme we are paying a levy that goes into the pockets of the producers of the Eastern States. It was pointed out that the average export of Australian butter being one-third of the total production, a levy of 1d. per lb. on the butter produced would enable the payment of a bonus of 3d. per lb. on all butter exported, and so the producer would get 2d. per lb. more for his butter than he received before the scheme came into operation. On those figures the consumers of Western Australia would pay £125,000 more than if the Paterson scheme were not in operation, and of that amount £94,000 would be paid to the producers of the Eastern States. Although approached by people interested in butter in Western Australia to support the Paterson scheme, I have not been able to approve of that scheme. In my opinion it is not a

stabilisation scheme for the butter industry, but merely a scheme to stabilise land values. When I attended the conference of Ministers for Agriculture at Hobart, Mr. Pratten, M.H.R., now Minister for Customs, asked us to support the Paterson scheme. He said that unless the scheme were supported and the producers thus got more for their butter, they and their families would be condemned to perpetual servitude. At the same time there was sitting in Victoria a Royal Commission inquiring into the value of the lands held by soldier settlers, and all the evidence showed that large numbers of those settlers, many of whom were dairymen, had paid too much for the land purchased on their behalf by the State Government. In one instance the land was under water for six or seven months in each year. Those people were expected to make a living on land that was not as productive as it ought to have been according to the value placed upon it when it was purchased by the Government. The Paterson scheme might well be termed a scheme to stabilise land values.

Mr. Stubbs: In Western Australia we are paying 1s. 10d. for butter that is sold in England for 1s. 3d.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is because of the operation of the Paterson scheme. The butter sold in Australia for local consumption is expected to carry the loss made on the exported shipments. It appears to me the scheme must break down, for Australia is destined to become a great exporter of butter and under the Paterson scheme the greater the quantity exported the greater the loss. The trouble of the dairyman in the Eastern States is that too much has been paid for his land, and under present conditions he cannot make a living and pay interest on the unduly high value of his land.

Mr. Lindsay: He cannot make a living, without paying interest.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When in New South Wales recently I visited the North Coast, whence a tremendous quantity of butter is exported. I found there land valued at £16 and £17 per acre. The settlers had paid deposits, and the banks had allowed them overdrafts with which to pay the balance. All the financial firms there are interested in keeping up the prices of land. Those unfortunate settlers are struggling to pay interest on land that is

not up to the value placed upon it. To help them, this Paterson scheme has been devised. In my opinion it can have no material result. What is wanted in the Eastern States is a revision of land values. People are asked to pay too much for the land, and so they have to resort to a scheme like the Paterson scheme, in order that they may make a bare livelihood. I hope that in this State there will be no necessity to resort to those practices, but that we shall be able to carry on under natural conditions and that our land values will never become so high as to condemn people, as Mr. Paterson once expressed it, to perpetual servitude. I have heard people express the wish that land values would increase. As a landholder I hope values will never go too high.

Mr. Lindsay: That is right.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If values do go to a high figure the original settlers will leave the land, new settlers will take their places, and we shall have in Western Australia a repetition of the conditions prevailing in the Eastern States. Our settlers are prosperous and happy because their land values are low, but when land becomes dear and the people purchasing it have heavy interest bills to meet, they have either to produce more or be content with less, and they cannot be so happy as they are under existing conditions. I was going to say a word or two about the Mureak College of Agriculture, which was opened the other day. Members, however, know the place that this college will fill. I heard some remark made about the salaries being paid to the college staff as compared with those being paid to lecturers at the School of Mines. That is not a fair comparison because the college is only just in the process of being established. Within a year or two the salaries paid will probably be very much higher, and the staff will doubtless also be numerically greater.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is to be hoped that the college will be a success. At present there seems to be nothing to militate against its success.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I agree with the hon. member. If the experience of other institutions is adopted, as it will be, if the practice of agriculture is carried on as in similar institutions that have been in existence for many years, and if we apply the most approved methods of

science to the soil, the college must fill a very important place in the community.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.25 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 4th November, 1926.

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

QUESTION—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Which road board districts have an annual revenue below £500, derived from general rates? 2, What is the approximate area in square miles in each case? 3, Which of these will be affected by the clauses of the Bill to amend the Road Districts Act, 1919?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, The road boards, who for two consecutive financial years have collected general rates less than £500 in each of the two years are as follow:—Greenbushes, Black Range, Mt. Margaret, Coolgardie, Lawlers, Westonia, Wiluna, Nannine, Norseman, Denmark, Shark Bay, Tableland, Hall's Creek. 2, The area in square miles is set down opposite each district named—73, 9,765, 37,830, 11,753, 11,010, 1,040, 87,800, 4,300, 15,000, 718, 7,078, 16,050, 32,920. 3, Each case would be considered on its merits, as