

"district council" is a better one or not is a moot point. It might be better to call them provincial or shire councils. The building of homes is not one of the functions of road boards, although I have no objection to their building homes for their employees. Very often it is difficult to get a house in a small town, and it is possible that owing to the shortage of accommodation certain individuals may erect houses and charge exorbitant rents for them. If a road board had power to build homes for the employees, all this additional cost would be saved. Such a provision would do away with a lot of the trouble that has occurred in some towns, and be the means of providing suitable residences for good employees. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. Sir William Lathlain, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 9th November, 1926.

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

QUESTION—MILK SUPPLY.

Mr. SAMPSON asked Hon. S. W. Munsie (Honorary Minister): What steps do the Government propose to take in order to give effect to the report and recommendations of the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Milk Supply submitted in 1925?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: It is proposed during the next session of Parliament to introduce legislation dealing with the matter.

QUESTION—WAR RELIEF FUNDS.

Mr. WILSON asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the annual report of the Red Cross Society, wherein it is stated that £500 was received from the war relief funds during the year? 2, In view of the early passage of a War Relief Funds Bill, will he affirm the desirability of all trustees of war relief funds withholding further action in respect of advances until the council or committee, as provided for in the proposed Bill, is constituted?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—SEPTIC TANKS, CLAREMONT.

Mr. NORTH asked Hon. S. W. Munsie (Honorary Minister): Has the Bill authorising local bodies in the Claremont electorate to introduce septic tanks been prepared?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: The preparation of the Bill is now in the hands of the Crown Law Department, and the measure should be ready within about ten days.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:

- 1, Stamp Act Amendment.
- 2, Supply (No. 3), £1,363,500.
- 3, Broome Loan Validation.
- 4, Land Tax and Income Tax.
- 5, Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

MR. PANTON (Menzies) [4.37]: A good deal has been said about this Bill already. Probably it is looked upon as a hardy annual. Nevertheless, in my opinion it represents a much needed reform.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Like redistribution of seats.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. Possibly we shall meet with the same fate on this Bill as the present Leader of the Opposition encountered in connection with his Redistribution of Seats Bill. The measure may be regarded as a preliminary to redistribution. If hon. members opposite are in earnest—which I have no reason to doubt—as to redistribution of seats, they must regard the present Bill as the first step towards giving the Parliamentary franchise to a greater number of people. Unquestionably there is inconsistency on the part of members who preach redistribution to this Chamber and are not prepared to give the full vote for Parliament to that large number of people who, after all, are producers, whether of wheat or wool or gold. Many of those producers at present have not the full vote for the Parliament of this State. The fact that people over the age of 21 have a vote for this Chamber does not give them a vote for the Parliament of Western Australia, as we must all realise from the number of messages read by you, Mr. Speaker, here night after night to the effect that another place agrees to a measure of ours with amendments. This proves that the Legislative Assembly is not the Parliament of Western Australia, but only a part of it.

Hon. W. J. George: Are not you satisfied with this part?

Mr. PANTON: I am so well satisfied that I hope I may remain here for many years in the company of the hon. member interjecting. However, I am anxious that workers now debarred from casting a vote for the Legislative Council should have that privilege. Members opposite, when speaking on this Bill, have laid stress on the circumstance that a mere matter of paying 6s. 1d. per week rent entitles a person to a vote for the Legislative Council. Those members, however, overlook the fact that the metropolitan area of Western Australia does not contain all the people entitled to elect the Parliament of this State. Out of 202,000 persons enrolled for the Legislative Assembly, only some 60,000 are on the Legislative Council roll. Moreover, as has been pointed out, many of the names on the Legislative Council roll appear for more than one province. As regards the 6s. 1d. rental, there would not be much hardship if only the residents of the metropolitan area were concerned. The Bill provides simply that a

householder shall have a vote for another place. It does not provide that every Legislative Assembly voter shall have a vote for the Council. I am quite prepared to agree that everyone having a vote for this Chamber should, as a natural corollary, have a vote for the other Chamber also. In providing for a household franchise, the Bill is extremely moderate; in fact, it is altogether too moderate for my liking. The 6s. 1d. rental cuts no ice, because of the thousands of men who have pioneered this country and are still living in the backblocks and rearing their families there. Those men have been responsible for the winning of millions of pounds' worth of gold in Western Australia; yet because their houses are on leaseholds belonging to mining companies, even though they own the houses, or though they may be paying a rental of as much as 10s. per week for them, they are prevented from obtaining a vote for the Legislative Council, the road boards not having valued those houses at the necessary amount. I make this statement in correction of something said by the Leader of the Country Party. Thousands of men, worthy citizens, residing on the goldfields have built homes suited to the climatic conditions there and have reared their families in them; but because the home is not valued high enough by the local authorities to entitle them to the Legislative Council franchise, they are debarred from voting for the complete Parliament of Western Australia. On the timber mills the same state of affairs exists. In the electorate of the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) there are only from 60 to 80 voters for the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. J. George: What rent do they pay for their houses?

Mr. PANTON: The Bill explicitly defines "house."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is the Bill.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. Surely the man who rears a family in a place is entitled to call it a house, and ask for the Legislative Council vote in respect of it. The member for Murray-Wellington (Hon. W. J. George) knows that the rents for houses on timber mills are nominal.

Hon. W. J. George: How much are they?

Mr. PANTON: From 1s. per week for a single man's hut up to 7s. 6d. per week for houses.

Hon. W. J. George: Then the tenants of those houses are entitled to the Legislative Council vote, and can get it.

Mr. PANTON: No. The great majority of them pay from 4s. to 5s. per week.

Hon. W. J. George: Then they have got cheap houses.

Mr. PANTON: I am coming to that point. Every time the timber workers go before the Arbitration Court to ask for an increase in pay, it is immediately argued by the employers that those workers get cheap houses and free firewood. Those factors have always been taken into consideration by the Arbitration Court, and as a consequence the basic wage for the timber mills has always been fixed lower than that for the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. J. George: The timber workers get pretty fair wages.

Mr. PANTON: They never get too much wages, and the hon. member knows it.

Hon. W. J. George: Neither of us does.

Mr. PANTON: Admittedly rents on timber mills are cheap in comparison with rents in the metropolitan area. Some of the houses on the timber mills are comfortable residences, and some are indifferent. The rents charged are taken into consideration when wages are being assessed by the Arbitration Court. The Chief Electoral Officer, however, gives no consideration to those facts upon an application for a vote for the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. J. George: He cannot. It is not his business.

Mr. PANTON: It is our business to allow him to do so, and the Bill provides a definition under which he will have the right to do so. If a man, by virtue of his employment, is compelled to live in a district remote from the metropolitan area, surely we are not going to debar him from having a vote for the Council. The men in the timber areas are just as much concerned in legislation as is anybody else. Recently we had a Bill of vital interest to them, but the fact that they have no vote for another place prevented them from voicing their opinions on that measure in that House. It is many years since the franchise was altered, and I am ready to believe that in 1926 we are sufficiently democratic to give a householder a vote for the Council. We hear a lot about a man having a stake in the country, but it is not easy to find a satisfactory definition of the phrase. I remember debating a Bill when I had the honour to be a member of the Council. One of the northern members was stressing the necessity for having a stake in the country. I

asked him for a definition of "stake in the country," and he said it meant that a man should be married or go on the land. My definition is, rather, that all who have to respect the laws of the country should have a voice in sending representatives to make those laws. However, that is not the definition the Premier has expressed in the Bill, which provides merely that a householder shall have a vote for the Council. Surely every man who, rearing a family, becomes a householder has sufficient stake in the country to suit even the Leader of the Opposition, who believes that every man should marry and have a large family.

Hon. W. J. George: People do not have large families now.

Mr. PANTON: You do not encourage the householder to have a large family. Give him a vote for the Council, and the result may be different.

Hon. G. Taylor: Guarantee that, and I will vote for the Bill.

Mr. PANTON: The Leader of the Country Party seems to think the Bill a huge joke. Is it a huge joke to send men out into the country to produce wealth? Men who have produced great wealth in the country and so given Western Australia the opportunity to grow wheat, are debarred from the privileges afforded to the men we are putting on the land to-day.

Hon. W. J. George: The greatest wealth that can be produced in Western Australia is a large family.

Mr. PANTON: I say to the primary producers that if they are genuine in their advocacy of primary production they should give those producing gold and timber the right to send representatives to the State Parliament. That is all the Bill asks for. I cannot believe that any member of the House is so undemocratic as to be able to bring himself to vote against the Bill. Candidly, I am disappointed in the measure, believing that it should go very much further. However, I will support it, and I hope that the Leader of the Opposition also, reconsidering the matter, will vote for the second reading.

HON. W. J. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [4.52]: Although impressed with the speech we have just listened to, I think the existing qualification is quite low enough to carry out what is required. A rental of £17 per annum means 6s. 6d. per week.

Who in Western Australia pays a lower rental?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Thousands on the goldfields and in the timber areas.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: A comparatively few people. I think £17 quite low enough as a qualification. Inquiry at the Electoral Department would show that there are numbers of people without votes who could have votes if they wanted them. At the latest Legislative Council elections in the South-West I was astonished to find there were so few people on the rolls. I took it up with the Chief Electoral Officer and suggested that if he used the rate books of the local authorities, he would be able to get quite a lot of additional names on the rolls. To my surprise he told me he had sent out over 2,000 claim cards and letters to people whom he considered entitled to vote for the Legislative Council, and that only a very small percentage of them took the trouble to reply and get themselves enrolled. In the Murray-Wellington district nearly every man should be entitled to a vote for the Council.

Hon. J. Cunningham: He is not, and you know it.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: In the Harvey Road Board rate book there are more names of people entitled to be on the Legislative Council roll than there are people actually on the roll for the whole district. I searched the rate books of the Murray Road Board and the Drakesbrook Road Board and found the same condition of affairs. It was because of that that I went to the Chief Electoral Officer. It seems there is a great deal of apathy in respect to the Legislative Council roll, although not in respect of the Assembly roll.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why should this be: a four-roomed cottage in Perth represents the £17 qualification and, consequently, a vote for the Council; whereas a four-roomed cottage in a country electorate represents less than £17, and so does not entitle the occupier to a vote. Why should £17 be a qualification in one place and not in another?

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: Most of the cottages in my electorate are occupied by small farmers who have land that, in itself, would give the qualification. In the timber areas, of course, some people pay only 4s. or 5s.

per week rent and so do not come within the qualification. However, that does not affect the matter very much because, relatively, their numbers are but few.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That shows the unfairness of the hon. member. There are thousands of such people on the goldfields and in the timber areas.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: We had brought before us many instances that, I think, would not come within the scope of the Bill. The definition here given declares that dwelling house means any structure of a permanent character, being a fixture to the soil. We could not call a tin hut or a bag hut a permanent structure, yet on the goldfields many men live in such huts.

Hon. W. D. Johnson. The majority of the goldfields houses have canvas walls.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: There may be something in the hon. member's contention that if a £17 rental entitles to a vote in one part of the State it should do so in all parts of the State; but as to lowering the qualification, I think it is already sufficiently low.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why make it £17 or £15? Why not make it "householder," which gives a definite basis?

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: We must have some property qualification, unless you propose to remove all qualification.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We are not asking for that.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: Not yet. There should be adopted some means to enable the Chief Electoral Officer to see to it that every man entitled to vote is automatically put on the roll. In my opinion the present qualification is sufficiently low.

Question put and declared passed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: An absolute majority is necessary to pass the measure.

Mr. SPEAKER: To satisfy me that the second reading is carried by an absolute majority, the House will divide.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	26
Noes	..	..	..	..	18
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	8
					—

AYES.

Mr. Angwin
Mr. Chesson
Mr. Clydesdale
Mr. Collier
Mr. Corbo
Mr. Coverley
Mr. Cunningham
Mr. Heron
Miss Holman
Mr. Hughes
Mr. W. D. Johnson
Mr. Kennedy
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Lamond

Mr. Lutey
Mr. Marshall
Mr. McCallum
Mr. Millington
Mr. Munsl
Mr. Panten
Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Troy
Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo
Mr. Brown
Mr. Denton
Mr. George
Mr. Griffiths
Mr. E. B. Johnston
Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Mailey
Sir James Mitchell
Mr. North

Mr. Sampson
Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Thomson
Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Richardson

(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I declare that the question has been passed by an absolute majority.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 15:

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: The proviso states that when a dwelling-house is only part of a building and any other part is in occupation as a dwelling of some other person, the first-named part shall not be considered a dwelling-house unless it is structurally severed from the other part of the building. What is the need for the proviso? If it were possible to sever the one part, it might be worth more than £17 per year.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.9]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Bill to pass its third reading at this sitting.

The Leader of the Opposition will admit that the merits of the Bill have been debated on the second reading and that no good pur-

pose can be served by postponing the third reading. If members agree to a suspension of the Standing Orders, we shall be able to pass the Bill through its remaining stage to-day and that will facilitate its discussion in another place. The third reading is usually regarded as being formal and passed without discussion, and I hope the House will agree to a suspension of the Standing Orders to permit of the third reading being passed to-day, rather than insist upon the delay that otherwise must be involved.

Mr. Thomson: It will mean only one day's delay.

The PREMIER: Yes, but it is not always possible to have a constitutional majority present.

Mr. Richardson: That is a very important admission.

The PREMIER: Of course I shall be able to get a constitutional majority at some future time, but it may not be to-morrow. To be quite frank, some Ministers propose to attend a show to-morrow, and it will mean that the third reading cannot be taken until some time next week. Members who are opposed to the Bill must admit that no good purpose will be served by delaying its passage for another week.

Hon. G. Taylor: You have 26 supporters present to-day and it is not wise to crack the whip too often.

The PREMIER: A constitutional majority will be available later on, but I wish to obviate delay in transmitting the measure to another place. I hope members will see the reasonableness of allowing the third reading to be passed to-day.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.12]: We cannot prevent the passage of the motion for suspending the Standing Orders, because the Premier has 26 supporters present and there is no need for us to help him, but I fear that the course he suggests, if it becomes a practice, might prove very dangerous. The opportunity to discuss a Bill on the motion for the third reading is often availed of and often has been availed of by the Premier and those members sitting behind him. I realise that everything that need be said on the Bill has been said; at the same time I do not know why the Premier cannot have his 26 members present to-morrow.

The Premier: Because two Ministers are going to a show.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This House could be show enough for them to-

morrow. Their business is in this House and not in electioneering about the country.

Mr. Wilson: You go to shows, too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Very seldom, though I should like to.

The Premier: We are pressed to attend shows in constituencies that we do not represent and are never likely to represent.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Please God you never will represent them!

The Minister for Lands: I think the Premier is under a misapprehension there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not at all. At any rate we shall see in March next.

The Premier: Do not let us get into the quarrel any earlier than is necessary.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have been fairly peaceful, but there are some things about which we shall quarrel before the next elections, one of them an electoral matter of which the Minister for Justice has some knowledge. I shall not say anything more about that at present. To suspend the Standing Orders would be to create a dangerous precedent. Still I can understand the Premier, who has 26 faithful supporters present, being anxious to finish the Bill to-day.

The Premier: I would not have moved the suspension of the Standing Orders if I had thought it would seriously inconvenience the Opposition, but I felt that all that could be said had been said, and the third reading is usually regarded as formal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not necessarily. Some members are away to-day.

Mr. Heron: Only three.

Mr. Wilson: They should be here.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Probably, but they are not here. They may have something to say on the third reading if the opportunity is offered to them. The Premier need not consider this side of the House. He must have 26 members to vote on this motion, and he has that number. He can put the thing through without consulting us. It is a very dangerous suggestion, and one that we would not tolerate in connection with any other Bill, and one that I do not approve of in connection with this Bill. There is no special reason for this action, except that it will convenience members sitting opposite.

The Premier: It will facilitate discussion in another place.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are very busy there.

The Premier: They will soon clean the business up. They are working well and going splendidly.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier is an optimist.

The Premier: I do not say in what way they will clean it up. They will dispose of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the work is disposed of in a manner that the Premier will consider is the wrong manner it will not satisfy him.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Surely the Leader of the Opposition knows that this will be a deciding factor in the matter of redistribution.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Redistribution is more important than this Bill. Why should we deny justice to the electors by retaining the present electoral boundaries of districts represented by members? I do not know why members opposite do not insist on justice being done.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We cannot get justice.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We want an assurance that a redistribution of seats Bill will be brought down. Of course, the Premier will be able to carry out his suggestion, because he has the numbers, but I do not approve of it.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [5.18]: I desire to support the Premier's motion, because I do want to give another place the earliest possible opportunity of declaring themselves on this important matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is no reason.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is one of the most important questions exercising the minds of the people. The whole of our present Parliamentary representation needs reviewing and reforming. The essential precedent to the reform of this Chamber is to get the other Chamber into closer contact with the people, so that they may give reasonable consideration to a redistribution of seats in this Chamber. If we had control of redistribution, it would be our duty to attend to it immediately, but when another place practically has the deciding voice in the matter, we want to give them an opportunity of becoming qualified to express an opinion upon it. This is an essential preliminary to that, and should be considered by another place at the earliest possible moment. We will then know whether they are prepared to get themselves more into touch with the

people, and qualify themselves to have a voice in the representation of this Chamber. Because of that I want the matter expedited. I want to know the attitude of another place, so that I may play some little part in the matter of the redistribution.

Point of Order.

Mr. Angelo: We cannot prevent this motion from going through, because the numbers are against us. I would remind the Premier that Standing Order 416 says that in the case of urgent necessity any Standing Order or Orders of the House may be suspended on a motion duly made and seconded without notice, provided such motion has the concurrence of an absolute majority of the whole of the members of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member raise that point?

Mr. Angelo: No. No doubt the motion will be carried by an absolute majority. The Premier has not made out a case of urgent necessity.

The Premier: That is for the Speaker to decide.

Mr. Angelo: Exactly.

The Premier: Are you raising a point of order?

Mr. Angelo: No.

The Premier: Then why bother about it?

Mr. Angelo: I want to induce members of the House not to vote for the motion, because the Premier has not put up a case of urgency.

The Premier: It is within the Standing Orders. If you raise that point, you raise it as a point of order.

Mr. Angelo: I am not raising it as such.

The Premier: There is no other way of raising it.

Mr. Angelo: We have had case after case of notice being properly given beforehand of a desire to suspend the Standing Orders. This is entirely opposed to precedent. It has been thrown at us.

Mr. Speaker: Strictly, the hon. member is speaking to a point of order. Does he desire the Chair to rule upon the subject? If not, the hon. member is out of order.

Mr. Angelo: According to the Orders of the Day, this item appears as No. 16.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member still arguing as to the urgency?

Mr. Angelo: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: As a point of order?

Mr. Angelo: I will raise it as a point of order so that I may proceed, but I cannot see that the case is one of urgency. We have always been given notice of an important motion like this. Why does the Premier put this down on the Notice Paper as Order of the Day No. 16? It has been low on the list for several weeks, but suddenly it is brought up above everything else, although members understood, from the publicity which has been given to the Order of the Day, that numerous other items would precede it. The only explanation given is that some members opposite will not be here tomorrow. That is not a case of urgency.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member said he was speaking to a point of order. Must he not commit his point of order to writing?

The Premier: He should speak to his point of order. His present remarks have nothing to do with it.

Mr. Angelo: I want to show that this is not a matter of urgency. The Premier has no case at all for a suspension of the Standing Orders, or for bringing this matter on to-day.

The Premier: Do you not see that it is not for me to state a case? If I am not in order, that is for the Speaker to decide.

Mr. Angelo: My point of order is that this motion cannot be carried because it does not come within the scope of Standing Order 416.

Mr. Speaker: In cases of urgent necessity any Standing Order or Order of the House may be suspended on motion duly made and seconded without notice, provided that such motion has the concurrence of an absolute majority of all members of the Legislative Assembly. The hon. member raises the point as to whether this is a matter of urgent necessity. The mover of the motion clearly showed that it was an urgent case. Now is the opportunity to send the measure to another place. If it were allowed to take its ordinary course, it might be delayed, and it might not be considered until towards the end of the session. This makes it a matter of urgency. Moreover, it is difficult, as the hon. member knows, to keep an absolute majority in constant attendance. It is very urgent and very necessary that a wise Government should take advantage of an absolute majority in the public interests. I, therefore, rule that the motion is in order.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Before you rule, Sir, I should like to state my doubts as to whether this can be considered a matter of urgency, if the only urgency about it is that there are 26 members on the Government side present to-day. Members are supposed to be in their places; it is their duty to be here, particularly if the importance of matters to be dealt with demands their attention. It cannot be argued that we should consider every one of the 26 members concerned.

The Premier: It is urgent that this Bill should go to another place, and the presence of 26 members here will enable that to be done.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Speaker says that the presence of 26 members to-day makes it convenient for the Premier to pass the third reading, and that it may not be convenient for those members to be here to-morrow.

The Premier: It makes it possible to do this to-day.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I say with all due deference this cannot be considered a matter of urgency. Because to-morrow some members on the Government side do not wish to be present, we cannot say that we should take business to-day which ought to be taken to-morrow. If it were urgent that another place should give consideration to this Bill because the session was closing, I should not raise any objection, but we are not near to closing the session yet. The Premier says that another place can get through their business quickly, but they will be sitting for several weeks yet.

The Premier: We are approaching the end of the session.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: From the point of view of time it is not urgent that this Bill should go forward to-day. Merely because it may be difficult to induce the same number of members opposite to be present to-morrow, it does not make this a matter of urgency. On this point the Premier has made out no case. There is no need to take the third reading to-day.

Mr. Speaker: I have already ruled on that question.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Does that close the discussion?

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled that the motion is in order.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not hear that.

Mr. Speaker: I did rule in that way. It is part of the functions of the Speaker to defer to the wishes and precedents of the House, and the Government are entitled to take lawful and honourable means to further the business of the House. It is the duty of the Speaker to assist them as far as he can in that respect. The question of urgency will really be decided by the vote of the House and it is surely urgent in view of the approaching close of the session, so that the Government, I will not say should take advantage of, but should use the circumstance of the presence of an absolute majority to carry on their business.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am sorry for Government members.

The Premier: The Bill affects hon. members in another place particularly, and they are entitled to have the Bill before them for consideration.

The Speaker: Undoubtedly. Hon. members know that it is not quite correct to say that the end of the session is not really close at hand.

Mr. Thomson: I am sorry that I cannot agree with your ruling, Mr. Speaker, for the reason that I am afraid we are establishing a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. Speaker: But the procedure has already been laid down in this Chamber and the precedent established.

Dissent from Ruling.

Mr. Thomson: Then I will move to disagree with your ruling as a matter of principle, because we are really setting up a dangerous precedent. I move—

That the House disagrees from Mr. Speaker's ruling.

The Minister for Mines: But the precedent has already been laid down.

The Minister for Lands: Yes. It was laid down before this.

Mr. Thomson: In my opinion, this is not one that we should pass.

Mr. Richardson: And the circumstances may not have been the same on the previous occasion.

Mr. Thomson: The dangerous part of the position is that it is quite right in your opinion, Mr. Speaker, that the presence of an absolute majority of members on the Government side of the House should be made use of for this purpose.

The Minister for Lands: On a point of order, can the hon. member discuss your

ruling without moving that it be disagreed with?

Mr. Thomson: I did do so.

The Minister for Lands: You did not.

The Minister for Mines: Well, put your reasons in writing.

Mr. Thomson: I said definitely when I commenced to speak that I moved to disagree with your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: Will the hon. member state his reasons in writing, so that I may know whether he is in order.

Hon. G. Taylor: I always understood that written reasons were handed to a chairman of committees when such a motion was moved because they had to be put before the Speaker. I did not know it was necessary to put reasons in writing when disagreeing with the Speaker's ruling.

Mr. Speaker: I require to know definitely upon what ground the hon. member desires to move that my ruling be disagreed with.

The Minister for Lands: It has always been done this way.

Mr. Richardson: Not since I have been here.

Mr. Thomson: I have moved to disagree with your ruling on the ground that the Standing Orders provide for the Standing Orders being suspended without notice, but that such a motion can be accepted only in a case of urgent necessity; also on the ground that the only argument in support of the suspension of the Standing Orders has been that it will suit the convenience of the supporters of the Government to-day.

Mr. Speaker: I cannot accept that portion of the reasons because it is not correct. There were other reasons urged.

Mr. Thomson: At any rate these are my reasons and I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot accept them. On these grounds, I object to your ruling. You clearly stated that you considered the Government were justified in taking advantage of their absolute majority to carry on the business.

Hon. G. Taylor: And also that the Speaker should uphold the Government in conducting the business of the House.

Mr. Thomson: Exactly. The reason for my motion is that, in my opinion, your ruling establishes a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. Speaker: The precedent has already been established.

The Premier: It does not establish any such thing.

Mr. Thomson: We are entitled to voice our objections to the action proposed in

connection with the Bill. It establishes a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. Lutey: You keep on saying that.

Mr. Thomson: And I will repeat it as long as I choose.

The Minister for Lands: How can you repeat an incorrect statement all the time?

Mr. Thomson: It is a correct statement.

The Minister for Lands: It is most incorrect.

Mr. Thomson: It is not in the best interests of this House that such a ruling should be passed over, without exception being taken to it. For the reasons I have indicated I voice my protest. It is all very fine to suggest that for the convenience of hon. members, the Standing Orders will be suspended. Unfortunately the House is governed by precedent and, unless we disagree with the Speaker's ruling, it may be said on future occasions that we agreed to this course.

The Minister for Mines: On a point of order. You, Mr. Speaker, stated you would not accept the motion moved by the member for Katanning. That being so, what is he discussing? What is before the House?

Mr. Thomson: I am disagreeing with the ruling.

The Minister for Mines: But there must be a motion before the House, and there is none.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. Thomson: The main object I have in voicing my protest is that, in my opinion, we lay down at this sitting a dangerous precedent, and on some future occasion when similar circumstances may arise, it will be quoted to us that on this particular day the House agreed to certain things being done under certain conditions, and, therefore, the House would be in order in doing something that the Government sought to do. Time and again rulings of the House of Commons and of other Houses of Parliament have been put before hon. members to show that a certain procedure had been adopted, and in the circumstances, that certain proposals were in order. I consider the arguments in favour of the motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders did not establish the claim that this is a matter of urgency. This is a dangerous principle for a Government to set up. No doubt the reasons advanced by the Premier were probably justifiable from his standpoint, because he expects that to-morrow one or two of his

Ministers will be absent on public duties. But that does not represent a matter of urgency within the meaning of the Standing Orders. The Legislative Council will have considerable time in which to discuss the question dealt with in the Bill. As a matter of fact, I spoke on the second reading of the Bill on the 7th September, and the measure has been held up since that date for the convenience of the Government. No objection was raised to that course.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member must not discuss the Bill.

Mr. Thomson: I am giving my reasons why I do not regard this as a matter of urgency. I am drawing attention to the fact that I spoke on the second reading of the Bill on the 7th September.

The Minister for Lands: And you have been absent from the House most of the time since then.

Mr. Thomson: Yes, on public duties, just the same as other members of the House. The Government did not hold up the business merely because I was absent, although I should have liked to discuss Bills and portions of the Estimates that have been dealt with. I have been attending shows in the country districts, just as Ministers have been doing. Although I spoke on the Bill on the 7th September, it has remained on the Notice Paper at the second reading stage since then, and for the convenience of Government supporters it has been kept well down on the Notice Paper. It cannot be regarded as a matter of urgency seeing that it has not been before the House since the 7th September.

Mr. Withers: You do not know because you were not present; you have been attending shows.

Mr. Thomson: Don't talk nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Thomson: The Premier's statement does not disclose any urgency about the question nor does it justify the suspension of the Standing Orders for the purpose indicated. I respectfully move that your ruling be disagreed with on the grounds that I have indicated. I know what the Standing Order relating to this matter sets forth, and I realise that the Government have on their side of the House the statutory majority of 26 members. Still the matter is not one of urgency.

Mr. Sampson: I second the motion.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Katanning has taken exception to my ruling. Precisely

a similar instance, on all fours with the question before us, occurred in 1911. Strange to say it arose on the subject of a Redistribution of Seats Bill. The then Premier, Mr. Frank Wilson, moved—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as will enable the Redistribution of Seats Bill to pass through its remaining stages on this day.

That is precisely the same motion as that moved by the Premier.

The Premier: And the then Premier was in exactly the same position.

Mr. Thomson: Did those stages, Mr. Speaker, include the third reading?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, the remaining stages.

Mr. Sampson: Was that motion opposed?

Mr. Speaker: Of course it was opposed.

Mr. Sampson: Then it is proper for us to oppose this motion.

Mr. Speaker: It was opposed on precisely the same ground as the motion is being opposed this afternoon, and the same Standing Orders were quoted in support of the Objections taken to the motion. On that occasion the then Speaker quoted *Redlich*, as follows:—

The motion however well supported is bound to be of an urgent character; the practice of the last 20 years—

That is, in the British Parliament.

—is fixed upon the requisite of urgency and interpreted the right to move in a restrictive sense. It is true that the urgency of the matter which forms the occasion for the motion is not taken too literally; it is enough that the mover considers his subject to be urgent and is able to give it a plausible appearance of urgency, provided always that the nature of the subject is not of such a kind as plainly to make such a description an abuse of language.

Following that precedent, and following the precedents set by this Chamber itself, I have ruled the motion in order. I have objected of course, to the statements made by the hon. member and I wish to make the correction so that it shall not go forth into print thus on the question of urgency I am guided only by the convenience of the Government. On one of the arguments of the Premier in introducing the measure was the urgency in getting it transmitted to another place before it became too late in the session to calmly consider it. The desire was to avoid delay that would follow in the natural course of events.

Mr. Sampson: I wish to draw attention to one phase to which up to the present stage there has been no reference. It is the pro-

tection that Standing Order 416 gives to the minority in the House. It is a fact that if it were competent to carry a motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders, so much of the Standing Orders as to enable certain legislation to go through at one sitting, it would be competent also to alter the whole situation and in that way the minority—which in this instance is the Opposition—would be denied that protection given to them by the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders provide that the business of the House shall be proceeded with by stages, and in that way the Opposition are able to advance arguments that they may desire to submit. That is the only point I desire to make, namely, that if the Standing Orders were not in existence, the minority would be entirely at the mercy of the majority.

The Premier: They are, and it must be so. If the majority cared to adopt that course, they could do it.

Mr. Sampson: I realise that that is the case within limits, but the Standing Orders set out a certain procedure.

The Premier: There is no limit. Any Government in power may suspend the Standing Orders provided they have the necessary majority, and they could do so from the beginning to the end of the session.

Mr. Sampson: Mr. Speaker drew the attention of the House to the phraseology of Standing Order 416 regarding cases of urgent necessity. There are some who disagree with you, Mr. Speaker. They are expressing their disagreement in courteous terms, and in doing so wish to uphold the principle which is the foundation of the whole of the procedure of Parliament, namely, that there shall be certain protection afforded to the minority in regard to matters of constitutional importance when being passed through their respective stages.

Hon. G. Taylor: There can be no two opinions with reference to the Standing Order referred to. Urgent necessity must be the cardinal feature, and the question that came up for the Speaker's ruling in 1911 was different from the subject we are dealing with this afternoon. The Redistribution of Seats Bill in 1911 passed through its second reading and Committee stage with great difficulty and it reached the third reading stage only after many hours of debate. At that time feeling ran so high that the Opposition left the Chamber in disgust at the manner in which the Govern-

ment of the day had put the Bill through Committee. To-day we have this urgent measure, and it has been compared with the Redistribution of Seats Bill of 1911; it is in respect of that, that you, Sir, based your decision. We have jumped from item No. 1 on the Notice Paper to item No. 16 so as to discuss this Bill. It has been on the Notice Paper for over two months without being discussed. Is that proof of urgency? The proof of urgency lies in the fact that there are 26 members on the Government side of the House this afternoon.

The Premier: Quite so.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is beyond doubt because we have not discussed the matter for over two months. It is the majority that is present that has made it urgent. I venture to submit the opinion that the framers of Standing Order 416 never anticipated such an instance of urgency. We have no hope; the majority is there. All I wish to say now is that if the opposition to this Bill proves as disastrous to the present Government as the 1911 Bill to the then Government, the present Government will know all about it.

Mr. Marshall: You will know all about it, too, from the prospectors and all those chaps up there who are without a vote.

Mr. Hughes: If I thought that the reason given by you, Mr. Speaker, for your ruling formed the basis of the ruling, I should be obliged to vote against it, but I think that, notwithstanding that the conclusion you arrived at was wrong, I regard the ruling as sound. It is not the first time that we have had a sound ruling from wrong reasons.

Mr. Richardson: That is a left-handed compliment.

Mr. Hughes: Surely, if it is found that the representation of the House does not give expression to the will of the people, it is urgent that the matter should be rectified forthwith. The spirit of the Constitution is that the franchise shall be so arranged that the two Houses of Parliament shall give expression to the will of the people. If it is found that the franchise is so arranged that it prevents that expression being given, it becomes something in direct opposition to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution. If we find that our method of electing members to the Houses of Parliament is contrary to the Constitution, it becomes an urgent matter to put it right forthwith. When a Bill is brought down to amend the Constitution in respect of one

House or the other, members on the Opposition side are not obliged to call for a division. The Speaker has to satisfy himself that there are 26 members present who are prepared to vote, in which event the division bells need not be rung. I did not hear any voice call for a division and the second reading could have been taken as having been endorsed unanimously.

Mr. Thomson: Do you really think it was?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But we had : division.

Mr. Hughes: There was no call for a division.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There must be a division.

Mr. Hughes: The point I wish to make is that if it is found that the laws are not giving effect to the spirit of the Constitution, it becomes an urgent matter to rectify the laws forthwith.

Mr. Richardson: But there is no Legislative Council election until next May twelve months.

Mr. Hughes: We are not concerned with the Upper House.

Several Members: But this Bill deals with the Upper House.

Mr. Hughes: I am aware of that, but the point I wish to make is that the matter is urgent and it should be put into effect immediately. I agree that there should be a redistribution of seats. It makes democracy a farce when you give an adult a vote and make that vote equal to 50 others. That is burlesquing democracy. If a motion were brought down—

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss re-distribution of seats.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: A motion was brought down on that subject.

Mr. Hughes: No. It would not be right, Mr. Speaker, for any member who is satisfied that this is a matter of urgency to vote that your ruling be disagreed with simply because one of the reasons given does not meet with his approval. If it were merely a question of sniting the convenience of 26 members, I would vote with the Leader of the Country Party. As I am satisfied that the Bill is urgent and that the proposed suspension is in conformity with the Standing Orders, I shall vote against his motion.

Mr. Angelo: A little while back, Mr. Speaker, you quoted from a debate which took place in 1911. You pointed out that a precedent had been established there. I

would, however, like to bring before you this point, that the two cases are not at all similar. I have here the Notices and Orders of the Day for the sitting of the 13th January, 1911. In passing I may point out that the session had then reached January, whereas we are only in November. In the former case, therefore, there may have been some reason to claim that urgency existed.

The Premier: Not necessarily. That session could have gone on from January to June.

Mr. Angelo: Why cannot this one?

The Premier: The fact of the time being January did not make that matter any more urgent.

Mr. Angelo: The Orders of the Day for the 13th January, 1911, began as follows:—

1, Annual Estimates. 2, Redistribution of Seats Bill, second reading.

On that occasion the Bill came in the usual order of procedure. In this instance, however, we have jumped from No. 1 to No. 16. That is why I submit the two cases are not similar at all.

The Premier: That has no bearing whatever on the question.

Mr. Angelo: Certainly it has.

The Premier: The Bill is on the Orders of the Day, whether second or sixteenth.

Mr. Angelo: The Premier seems to forget that there is an inevitable gradualness about legislation. There is the first reading, the second reading, the Committee stage, and the third reading. These various stages are for the purpose of affording members the opportunity of considering the subject of a Bill from every point of view and thereby enacting legislation beneficial to the State. Had the Premier told us through the usual channel of the Notice Paper that this Bill was going to be discussed straight away at to-day's sitting, we would probably have been able to consider our various points either for or against the measure; but we have had no opportunity at all.

The Premier: The Leader of the Country Party said you had had too much opportunity.

Mr. Angelo: The Bill is suddenly brought forward.

The Premier: Suddenly after two months!

Mr. Angelo: Some members of the Chamber are absent, having been absolutely misled by the Notice Paper. They thought that the Estimates were to be considered, and that 15 other matters would receive attention before this Bill. But then the Premier

comes along and says, "The Constitution Act Amendment Bill is a matter of urgency." In the course of his speech he added that some of his Ministers were to be away. I have to vote against you, Mr. Speaker, on this occasion.

Mr. Speaker: I do not wish to enter into a debate with any other member of the House, but I desire that certain matters should be put accurately before the public. In the first place, this case is precisely on all fours with the case I cited from "Hansard" of 1911.

The Premier: That case occurred in January, and that is the only difference.

Mr. Speaker: It was towards the close of the session; and, similarly, it has been urged that this too might be considered a matter of urgency, and accordingly the consent of the House has been sought to the suspension of the Standing Orders, with a view to the consideration of this Bill being completed to-day. It would be an abuse of language to say that there is or ought to be a full attendance of members at all times. The urgency consists in the fact that the Bill might be indefinitely delayed while waiting for the requisite number of members able to vote one way or the other. That, to my mind, is a matter which constitutes something like urgency, at all events. I have quoted the precedent, and I have quoted authorities as to not interpreting "urgent necessity" too literally. Therefore I feel justified in giving the ruling I have given. The question now is that my ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. Thomson: May I reply, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: There is a question before the House. The hon. member has spoken to it.

The Premier: The hon. member may not reply.

Mr. Thomson: I would like your ruling. Sir, under Standing Order 79.

Mr. Speaker: This is a new point of order.

The Premier: There is no right of reply.

Mr. Thomson: Is not there a Standing Order giving the right of reply when a motion to disagree with the Speaker's ruling has been moved?

Mr. Speaker: Not on a motion of this kind.

Mr. Thomson: Very well, Sir. I was merely asking for your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is an old enough Parliamentarian to know that Stand-

ing Order 79 does not bear upon this matter at all, that it prescribes the usual, routine, daily business when the House is in session. The Standing Orders equally make provision for extraordinary or urgent occasions. The question is that the House disagree with my ruling.

Question put and negatived.

[*Debate resumed.*]

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [6.9]: I regret that the Government are endeavouring to pass a motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders in this manner. I know they can carry the motion, but I have just been reading some of the remarks made by you, Mr. Speaker, in 1911, which, though of great interest, I do not propose to quote. To my mind a highly dangerous precedent is being created—dangerous in this respect, that we have suddenly jumped over the whole of the business on the Notice Paper up to Order of the Day No. 16, have passed the second reading of the Bill, pushed it through Committee, and are now about to suspend the Standing Orders so that the third reading may be carried. Such a principle is one to which I must take exception. The Government, no doubt, have the necessary majority to carry the suspension of the Standing Orders. However, we are entitled to voice our objections. I respectfully submit that the routine of business is distinctly laid down by Standing Order 79. The House is to proceed each day in the following routine:—First, presentation of petitions; second, giving of notices of motion; third, questions upon notice; fourth, motions and Orders of the Day, or vice versa, as set down on the Notice Paper. I respectfully contend that the object of that order is to regulate the conduct of business here. My reason for objecting to the suspension of the Standing Orders is made in exactly the same spirit as animated the present occupants of the Ministerial bench when they put up their strenuous fight of 1911. On that occasion the suspension of the Standing Orders was sought not for the purpose of carrying a Bill through second reading, Committee, and third reading, but only for the purpose of adopting the report of Committee.

The Minister for Railways: That motion referred to "all remaining stages."

Mr. THOMSON: I have read the debate myself, but I am not going to take up time by reading it to the House.

The Premier: It was a very interesting debate.

Mr. THOMSON: It was. Unfortunately the present Premier did not take part in it. I anxiously looked to see what he had had to say.

The Premier: I think I was ordered out the day before that debate took place.

Mr. THOMSON: On that occasion some highly pertinent remarks were made by you, Mr. Speaker, and by other members then sitting in Opposition. I feel it my duty to protest now on exactly the same grounds as moved the Opposition of that day to protest strongly against a suspension of the Standing Orders for the purpose of putting through the Redistribution of Seats Bill. That Bill, however, had been under consideration for months. In the present instance there is no such urgency, and I oppose the Premier's motion.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [6.12]: I see little purpose in continuing the debate, as the numbers are against us. Still, it is unwise for the Government to make use of their majority, since that majority is here only on special occasions to let us know its full weight. I fail to see the urgency for transmitting this Bill to another place. In my opinion the course proposed cannot be justified by a comparison with the procedure adopted for the Redistribution of Seats Bill of 1911. By no stretch of imagination can the present proposal be justified on those lines. I hope the motion will not be put to a vote. The Premier should consider the protest which has been made, and act in the way that is wise for the sake of good government of the State and of good feeling in this Chamber. So far as the session has gone, we have done good work, and done it with more expedition and less waste of time than I have ever known during my membership of the House. It is now early in November, and our Notice Paper is in a better condition than it has been during December in other sessions. The Premier knows that as well as I do. I sincerely trust the motion will not be pressed to a division.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [6.13]: I support the Premier's motion, and for the reasons which have been outlined by the hon. gentleman. The Government have a policy, and they have a majority. The Standing Orders exist only for a certain pur-

pose. If the Government have a majority and secure the suspension of Standing Orders, a Bill can be disposed of in one day's sitting. We have passed this Bill through the second reading and Committee stages.

Mr. Thomson: All in one day.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If the idea of the Opposition is not to pass the Bill, they should have opposed the second reading. I see no advantage whatever that is to be gained from delay. Many precedents have been referred to. As the Premier says, it is a matter of public importance that Ministers should visit the various agricultural shows and see the country. As the representative of an agricultural district, I am most anxious that members of the Ministry, and the Premier himself if possible, should see what my district can produce in the way of wool, timber, fruit and so forth.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Before tea I was endeavouring to support the Premier in his motion for the suspension of Standing Orders, on the justification of the urgency and importance of the Premier or one of his Ministers attending country shows. The Leader of the Opposition has said that the place for a member of Parliament is in the Chamber, not attending agricultural shows. But I point out that the Leader of the Opposition is certainly inconsistent in that respect, since he himself attends agricultural shows, as indeed does every other member. I do not know whether or not the Premier was throwing bouquets when he said Ministers go to some electorates where they have no chance of winning seats. I assume he was referring to Nelson. However, my constituents expect to see the Premier or a member of the Ministry at their agricultural show. Moreover, it is essential that Ministers should make themselves conversant with all parts of the State and with all the various industries. I will support the Premier in his motion that the Standing Orders be suspended.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [7.33]: I oppose the motion. I cannot understand why the Government, at such short notice, should have lifted this measure from No. 16 on the Notice Paper to No. 1. If it were proposed that the Standing Orders should be suspended in order to per-

mit of the passage of a Bill for a redistribution of seats, I could understand it. But we are 18 months distant from the next Legislative Council elections, and so there is no urgency for dealing with this measure; in fact, it could very well be left until after the elections and so give the people an opportunity for pronouncing upon it. The Government have ventilated it each session during the life of this Parliament; indeed, it has been brought forward on occasions for many years past. We have just passed one Legislative Council election, and it will be 18 months before we have another. In the meantime the electors will have to elect a new Assembly. If the democratic spirit be really alive, they should have an opportunity to pronounce on this measure. In that event, possibly, an improved Bill would be passed by the next Assembly. It is not right that a dying Assembly should alter the franchise for another place for which there can be no elections during the next 18 months; but there is urgent necessity for an equitable redistribution of the seats in this Chamber, before we go to the country. Turning to figures that have been quoted several times this session, we find that the member for Menzies represents 324 electors, that there are in Mt. Leonora 763 electors, and in Hannans 893 electors, whereas the average number of electors in the agricultural electorates is between 4,000 and 5,000, whilst in the metropolitan area the member for Canning represents 14,603 electors, and the member for Leederville well over 11,000 electors. So, if the Government had moved the suspension of the Standing Orders with a view to appointing an independent tribunal to carry out a redistribution of seats on a fair basis, the motion would have had my support. As it is, I oppose the motion before us, and hope the Government will not proceed with it. If they do proceed with it I hope they will adopt the suggestion of the member for Guildford who, by interjection, said that with this Bill out of the way the field would be clear for a redistribution of seats.

Mr. Pantou: He said nothing of the sort. He said the fate of the Bill would decide his attitude towards a redistribution of seats.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Then let me suggest that with this measure out of the way the Government should take action to get the Assembly seats put upon a proper basis through a redistribution by an inde-

pendent tribunal, so that when we go to the country the electors will have a fair chance to pronounce their verdict on the actions of this Parliament. I know the Government have never feared the opinion of the people, and I say it would be an excellent thing to have a redistribution of seats. In fact, it seems to me to be lowering democratic government to go to the country on the existing boundaries, so properly condemned when introduced in 1911 and which, ever since then, have been getting worse and worse through the unfortunate decline of the gold-fields.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	27
Noes	..	..	..	18

Majority for .. 9

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Cbesson	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munste
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. J. H. Smith
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lamond	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Davy	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Denton	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. George	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Maley	Mr. Richardson

(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is resolved in the affirmative by an absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

Third Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [7.40]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	26
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority for .. 7

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Munro
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Panten
Mr. Heron	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Brown	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Davy	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Denton	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. George	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. C. F. Wansbrough
Mr. Maley	Mr. Richardson
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is resolved in the affirmative by an absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

1. Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
2. City of Perth Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1926-27.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 4th November; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Department of Chief Secretary (Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister; Hon. S. W. Munsie, Honorary Minister, in charge of the Votes).

Vote—Chief Secretary, £16,058 (partly considered):

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [7.48]: Does the Minister intend to speak?

The Premier: Talk if you want to talk; there has been a debate on this for hours.

Mr. THOMSON: It is usual for a Minister to introduce the Estimates.

The Premier: If you want to talk, go on with it. You are not going to force a Minister to speak. We are not going to be instructed by you.

Mr. THOMSON: The procedure has been that the Minister in charge of the votes has introduced the Estimates, but in this instance we have not been told what the various departments are doing. Members would be in a much better position to discuss the Estimates under the jurisdiction of the Chief Secretary if the Minister made a statement. A considerable number of departments are administered by the Chief Secretary. One is the Fisheries Department from which the estimated revenue this year is £11,000, whereas last year we received £20,585 for an expenditure for a little over £5,000. One could wish that we obtained as good a return for our expenditure in other directions. I wish to present to the Committee a phase that has not previously been discussed. I consider that the present Government as well as the previous Government have been somewhat remiss in having made no attempt to establish the fishing industry, beyond giving some assistance to returned soldiers at Shark Bay. When I was in the Old Country four years ago I was approached by a number of fishermen who were desirous of migrating to Australia. During the war the fishermen of Great Britain performed valuable service. They were the men who were called upon by the Imperial Government to enter the dangerous calling of mine sweeping and submarine destroying. It is remarkable that in the whole of our migration schemes, so far as I can gather, neither here nor in any other part of the Commonwealth has any endeavour been made to encourage the immigration of such men. A great majority of the men engaged in the fishing industry in Western Australia particularly are what are commonly known as "dagos." If we become embroiled in trouble with some other nation we know that we have amongst us men possessing a knowledge of our coast, a majority of whom might not be sympathetic towards us. I do not wish to speak derogatively of the men who follow this calling, but some scheme could and should be propounded to encourage the migration of men and women born and bred in the industry in Great Britain. If such people were encouraged to come here and engage in fishing they would prove to be very useful settlers. They would be useful from their

practical knowledge of fishing and fish curing, and if we became involved in trouble with any other country, we know from the service of men of the same type during the great war that they would be of immense assistance to us. I urge the Government to consider a scheme to bring out men of this class. I went to the trouble of preparing considerable data and the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, Mr. Aldrich, expressed himself sympathetic. He was only too willing to give all the information available, but neither from the State nor from the Commonwealth was much encouragement forthcoming. The proposal is well worth considering. New Zealand has been obtaining parties of crofters from the Old Country. The ex-Agent General, Sir James Connolly, submitted a similar proposal, but nothing came of it. The present system is not satisfactory, but if we are able to derive from it a revenue exceeding £20,000, a proper scheme would lead to much enhanced returns besides ensuring a much needed commodity of food for the people in the country as well as in the city. The price of fish is high. The previous Labour Government established State fish shops, which were not very successful. In New South Wales State trawlers were operated with very little success. It is a remarkable fact that when those trawlers were sold to private enterprise, they immediately became a highly profitable asset and the community were supplied with fish at a much cheaper rate than that which obtained previously. The fishing industry in Western Australia has not been sufficiently exploited. I commend to the Government the suggestion to introduce fishermen from the Old Country. If this were done and they were given sufficient encouragement, there would be no doubt of our ability to obtain the right type of men. I discussed the matter with gentlemen in Scotland and when the scheme was outlined in the Press, a little sooner than I had hoped for, they were deluged with applications from people desirous of coming here and engaging in the industry. We could have no better class of migrant than the Scottish fisherman. The reason that our fishing enterprises in Shark Bay and elsewhere failed was that they were undertaken by men who had not a thorough knowledge of the industry. In the Old Country there are fishing communities who have followed the industry from generation to generation. The scheme is a sound one and

in the interests of the State and of the Commonwealth it should be embarked upon. Migrants of this type would be able to displace the foreigners who are at present engaged in the industry. I now wish to refer particularly to the State Labour Bureau. I see that the sum of £2,855 is set down for salaries for the secretary and clerks, and for contingencies, travelling expenses, telephone, fares, etc. I wish to voice my protest against this expenditure in any department that is utilised for the purpose of compelling men to join a union whether they like it or not. The Government policy is one of preference to unionists, and compulsion. The statement has appeared in the public Press that an organiser of the A.W.U. is always at the elbow of those who want work. It is said that on one occasion this organiser demanded that a man should produce his union ticket. There was a certain amount of trouble between the two men, and I do not know whether the man who wanted work was able to get it. It is not a function of the Government to insist upon this kind of thing. It is not fair on their part. We hear a great deal about government by the people for the people. That is all very well in theory, but it has not been put into practice by the Government in respect to this department. It has been admitted by Ministers that no man can get a job on any Government work unless he possesses a union ticket.

The Premier: That statement is not correct. It has been denied a hundred times.

Mr. THOMSON: It is correct with regard to this bureau. We know from the statements that have been made in the Press that men must produce their union tickets.

The Premier: We have had a lot of garbage about that.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier is an authority on political garbage.

The Premier: You know your statement is not correct.

Mr. THOMSON: If I were the Premier I would leave all that alone. I am dealing with facts. No one can get employment on a Government utility unless he possesses a union ticket.

The Premier: That is incorrect.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier knows that is the policy of the Government.

The Premier: Preference to unionists.

Mr. THOMSON: The State Labour Bureau is supposed to be open to all. It is

open to all to make application for employment there, but a man cannot get work without a union ticket.

The Premier: You know that is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. THOMSON: I know it is correct. I take strong exception to any Government office being utilised for such a purpose. What would the Premier say if the Country Party were in power, and we were to lay it down as a condition that no man could get employment or have his goods carried on the railways unless he belonged to the Primary Producers Association? I am sure the Premier would be the first man to rise in righteous indignation against such a proposal.

The Premier: Of course I would.

Mr. THOMSON: I am entitled to voice a strong protest against this action on the part of the Government. By legislation the Government have tried to eliminate all registry offices, where no questions are asked and a certain fee is charged. The State Labour Bureau was established allegedly in the interests of men who want work, and yet they are denied the right to get work because of the policy of the Government as to preference to unionists. No Government should force their views upon the people in this way. I am sorry I have not had the opportunity of hearing the Honorary Minister speak generally on these Estimates.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [3.7]: I congratulate the Honorary Minister upon his recovery, and hope that he is now quite well again. I also have to thank him for the assistance he has rendered to several struggling hospitals in my electorate, and for what he has done for the Kellerberrin, Westonia, and Merredin hospitals. When the war was raging it was found as a result of the examination of recruits that many minor defects existed amongst adults. This leads one to the question of the advisability of more medical examinations being made of children when at school. The collated figures of such examinations in other parts of the world are very startling. I recently had a letter from Canada which stated that medical examinations had been conducted in the schools of 19 rural districts. In all about 39,000 children were examined. Of these 32,000 were found to be defective in some way or other, which meant that only 7,000 of them were sound.

Mr. Teesdale: Were these State school children?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: They were children attending country schools. I know the Honorary Minister takes a deep interest in welfare nurses and school nurses, and in the health and physical standard of the children. Out of 32,000 defective children it was found that 1,743 were suffering from malnutrition; 351 were mentally deficient; 2,331 were suffering from defective vision; 318 suffered from defective hearing; 738 were suffering from nasal growths; 3,777 were suffering from goitre; 10,093 were suffering from defective teeth; 24,995 were suffering from adenoids; 7,560 had enlarged tonsils; and 2,424 were suffering from enlarged glands. In Canada the system of school nursing, following up the medical examinations, was inaugurated, and a marked improvement soon became apparent by the bright intelligence displayed by the children. In the case of enlarged glands, it is believed that with many children this is the beginning of consumption, but if the complaint is taken early the danger is obviated. I commend these figures to the attention of the Honorary Minister. He may be fully aware of them and of the defects that exist amongst our school children. We should think about these things, and help in any way that we can.

MR. MANN (Perth) [8.12]: It is my duty to bring before members certain matters connected with the administration of the State Labour Bureau. During the winter, when work was scarce, some hundreds of men were looking for work.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Are you trying to make yourself popular with the unemployed?

Mr. MANN: I will not be prevented from putting forward the facts, which are already known to the Honorary Minister. The only work of any importance that was offering was Government work. The Government policy was preference to unionists. The result was that the non-unionists were unable to get employment. Men with union tickets were picked up, and, if they obtained work for a month or two, they were picked up again before the non-unionists had time in which to earn enough to enable them to buy a unionist ticket. There were scores of men anxious to join a union, but they had not sufficient means with which to purchase their tickets. The Premier has stated that every man is entitled to employment irrespective

of whether he is a unionist or not. That is all right so far as casual work with private employers goes. If a private employer sends to the bureau for a man there is not the same strictness enforced with regard to unionists as there is in the case of a Government pick-up. In the case of a Government pick-up there is always present a representative of the Australian Workers' Union to see that none but those who have union tickets are picked up. That is the policy of the Government, and I suppose we have to accept it. It was pretty hard upon scores of married men who attended the bureau week after week, but were unable to get enough money with which to purchase the necessities for their families. Furthermore, men were compelled to come in from the country and attend at the Labour Bureau, in order to get work which took them back to the country. This brought scores of men to the city who would otherwise have stayed away. Men would have been prepared to tramp to another job in the country and take the risk of getting on there, but if they did so they were told they would have to go to the Labour Bureau in Perth for the pick-up. It has been said that some gangers and overseers do not always pick up men at the bureau. In one instance a man was told that before he could be picked up, it was necessary for him to go to the bureau. I think the Government might well consider a readjustment of their policy regarding the administration of the Labour Bureau, so that men in the country may be picked up for country work. One man told me of his experience. He was tramping through the Northam district and heard that men were being picked up for work at Chid-lows Well. He went there and saw the ganger who told him that he would have to go to Perth, as the men were being picked up there. He went to Perth, and thus became added to the already large number of unemployed in the city.

The Premier: Do you think it is always safe to accept ex-parte statements as being correct?

Mr. MANN: No, it is not.

The Premier: When we investigate such cases, more than half of them are found to be not true.

Mr. MANN: One should not accept ex-parte statements, but when a man approaches you with facts and dates and reasons for his actions, you are bound to accept his statements. I know there are any number of men who attend the Labour Bureau and are quite satisfied to register there and to collect

the dole from the Charities Department. On the other hand there are scores of men attending the Labour Bureau who want work and are unable to get it. I have to say in favour of the officer controlling the bureau, that he administers it in a sympathetic manner. On every occasion I have asked him to provide fares for men to go to work in the country he has done so. On one occasion he agreed to my request, although the man concerned had had a ticket a month before. The officer gave him the additional ticket in order to enable him to get out of town. I ask the Government to give consideration to the position of those who are not fortunate enough to have a union ticket and thus are not able to get a job. Men are forced to go to town to be picked up, although they could have been picked up for the jobs in the country.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is not so.

Mr. MANN: It is so, and I can give the Honorary Minister particulars regarding the jobs for which men had to come to Perth from the country and then go back to work in the country.

The Premier: They say that.

Mr. Mann: It may suit the Premier to take that view of the position now, but I am convinced he knows in his heart that policy was a mistake.

The Premier: I do not. Whenever fresh work was commenced in the country, a percentage of the unemployed in the country district were given employment.

Mr. Thomson: Not always.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, always.

The Premier: Those were the instructions at any rate.

Mr. Thomson: I know of some incidents myself.

Mr. MANN: Of course it could not be so, because men were picked up in the city for country work. Eighty per cent. of the men who were sent out for the Narrogin-Dwarda railway construction work and for the duplication of the line between Perth and Northam were picked up from the city.

The Premier: But men in the locality were employed as well.

Mr. MANN: That has not been my experience.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Did you go out to the jobs to see whether only men who had been picked up at the bureau were working on these jobs?

Mr. MANN: Of course I did not.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Of course not. Had you done so you would have found out

that men had been picked up in the country for the job.

Mr. Thomson: Not in all instances.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Perhaps not in one or two instances, but generally speaking, that is so.

Mr. MANN: I had so much to do with the unemployed during the winter months that I had to see the Premier on more than one occasion. On the facts I was able to put before him, the Premier was sympathetic and did his best to find work, particularly when the position was most acute.

The Premier: From the Government's own standpoint it would be ridiculous to force men to come to Perth to get work in the country. If we sent out 200 and another 200 came in, it would make the position impossible. The situation by that method would be made no better, and it would be foolish from the Government's standpoint.

Mr. MANN: That is what happened.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It did not happen. What is the good of saying that?

The Premier: There may have been one or two instances, but it did not happen generally.

Mr. MANN: Naturally a man would not take on clearing or work on farms, when he could get a 44-hour week and better conditions on Government work.

The Premier: That was not the point you were making.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You can go on that point if you like.

The Premier: But that is not the point you were making at the time.

Mr. MANN: In order to get Government work, it was necessary to come to Perth.

The Premier: No.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Not at all.

Mr. MANN: I shall be pleased to hear the Minister give particulars to show that what I say is not correct.

The Premier: What about the Esperance job?

Mr. MANN: Of course, the Government could not take men from Perth for that job, seeing that there were so many men out of work in the goldfields area.

The Premier: Then there was the Denmark extension, as well as the Dwarda railway.

Hon. J. Cunningham: On all public works and railways, the policy has been as the Premier suggests.

Mr. MANN: Men went from here for work on the Denmark line!

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, because there were not enough men there.

The Premier: The hon. member must know that in some cases, these men draw their cheques and then come to Perth for a holiday. When their money gives out, they look around for work and when asked why they were in town, they say they had to come to town to get work.

Hon. J. Cunningham: They pulled the wool over the hon. member's eyes!

Mr. MANN: It is apparently easy for the Premier to satisfy his mind to-night.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

The Premier: The men come here to spend a few weeks' holiday and then make this explanation, when they are asked as to their presence in town.

Mr. MANN: If the Premier is in power next winter, I believe the Labour Bureau will be conducted along different lines, because his experience this winter has taught him that it is necessary to have a change.

The Premier: No.

Mr. MANN: Having ventilated these grievances in connection with the Labour Bureau, I will not take up any further time of the House but will deal with other matters when we come to the items.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [8.22]: If the Honorary Minister intends to reply, I hope he will give us some information as to what is to be done regarding the allowances for State children. Some six or seven years ago a Royal Commission sat to consider the question and issued a recommendation setting out that 12s. a week was a reasonable payment for State children to live on in those days. I would be pleased if the Minister would tell us when some increase in the rates is to be made. The amount of 9s. a week on which a woman is expected to support a State child, is quite inadequate. Further than that, if a woman, who has several children and is in receipt of an allowance, happens to do a little work, her payments are cut down correspondingly to what she has earned. The whole position is wrong, and the Government should provide for an increased payment. If 12s. was considered adequate six or seven years ago, it should be realised that the cost of living has gone up considerably since then, and that therefore an increase is overdue. As to the State Labour Bureau, I have to voice a

grievance although it does not come within the same category as that voiced by other hon. members. During the past year the State Labour Bureau, instead of providing work for men, has been the means of keeping people out of work. It has been used by pannikin bosses in the metropolitan area for their own purposes. They have sent men to the bureau on the understanding that they could not secure jobs on the spot, but would have to be picked up at the bureau. As soon as the backs of those men were turned, the friends of the pannikin bosses have been put on the jobs.

Mr. Mann. You are proving my case!

Mr. SLEEMAN: In one instance at Fremantle a crowd of men were told by the pannikin boss that they could get work on the job but would have to go to the bureau to be picked up. As soon as the men left, six other men were put on. The next morning the crowd went down to the job and were inclined to kick up a fuss. They returned to town to hold a protest meeting. The result was that the foreman followed them to town and, perhaps in order to pacify them, picked up two or three men from the crowd who were in the street. The crowd held a meeting hurriedly and asked those who had been selected not to go to work because the policy of the Government, so they had been told, was to have men picked up from the bureau. The two or three men concerned were loyal to their colleagues and told the foreman that they would not start work unless they were picked up from the bureau. A few days afterwards the foreman went to the bureau to pick up some men and one of those who had been selected in the street was offered by the officer in charge of the bureau. The foreman, however, stated that the man was no good to him. In these circumstances it is clear that that particular individual was victimised, because he stood up for the rights advocated by the Government and by the balance of his colleagues who said that they should be picked up from the bureau. Another thing that happens at the bureau is that a man can register to-day and be picked up to-morrow, notwithstanding that forty or fifty men may have been registered for weeks at the bureau, looking for work each day. In my opinion the bureau has outlived its usefulness and no harm would be done if we abolished it. Let us have one thing or the other. If we are to have the bureau, let us have it and let the policy be

carried out properly. Recently I asked the Minister for Works a question and I was told by him it was the policy of the Government to have men picked up through the bureau. I was told that my suggestions on that occasion were ridiculous, particularly as I was in daily touch with the unemployed and should know the position. On the other hand I say that the Minister's statement was ridiculous to the men who know the facts. I hope something will be done in connection with the bureau immediately. We do not want half and half measures. If the bureau were wiped out, the men could be picked up on the job, and they would know where they stood. Regarding the Old Men's Home, I asked a question recently concerning that institution and the Minister told me there was no reason to doubt that the home was being run equally well, if not better than it was before the Government took office; in fact, that some improvements had been made. I believe that reply was correct, but still there is room for improvement. It seems to me that while we are finding money for expenditure in various ways not so laudable as in the support of the Old Men's Home, we are stinting the old chaps and not giving them all that could be desired. I spoke recently about the old men driving the coal drays. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Lamond) and I visited the Old Men's Home yesterday and during the course of conversation the Master of the home told us that the old men made two trips a day on two days a week and he added: "For instance, the men are not out to-day." Unfortunately for the Master, Mr. Lamond and I were detained at the home and about an hour afterwards we saw the men driving the coal dray in through the gates of the institution. It is ridiculous and a disgrace for old men to be asked to cart coal from the railway station. The old men get 3s. per week for that, and the man who feeds the horses gets 5s. There is enough work for the old men to do about the institution, and outside labour should be obtained for the work of coal driving. I hope some alteration will be made in this respect promptly. Loading coal into drays through the cold winter and the hot summer is not suitable work for these old men. I know by sight the old man who was driving the coal dray, and I believe he is next door to an invalid. He should not be asked to do this work. The other day I referred to the

"twopenny orderlies." I made a mistake on that occasion and wish to correct it now. They are "threepenny orderlies," not "twopenny orderlies." They are known as "twopenny orderlies" and when I spoke of them I referred to them as such, but did not mean that they received twopence a day. I am told that they get threepence. I say that work is not suitable for the old men and they should not be asked to do that work.

Mr. Clydesdale: They are able to work.

Mr. SLEEMAN: They should not be asked to do it.

Mr. Clydesdale: There are several there who are capable of working.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Then they should be put out.

Mr. Clydesdale: You try to put them out.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No man there is doing another out of a job.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We are doing men out of a job, and it is disgrace to keep on employing the old men on that work. I challenge the hon. member to deny that we saw two old men loading a dray.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Why don't you be fair; you are referring to the "twopenny" orderlies."

Mr. Clydesdale: Try to stop the old men from working, and see how you get on.

Lieut.-Colonel Denton: You will find a lot of men from the Old Men's Home working in the country.

Mr. SLEEMAN: They have no right to be kept at the home if they are able-bodied men.

Mr. Mann: If the hospital is overcrowded, old men are sent down there during the convalescent stage.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The men who are sent down there for rest after having been in hospital should not be given wood to chop.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Nothing of the kind; stick to the truth.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Perth suggested that men were sent down there from the hospital, and he contended that they were able to do a little work.

Mr. Mann: Yes, after they had been built up a little.

Mr. SLEEMAN: They will not be built up by chopping down banksia by the side of the river. They should not be asked to do the work that they are doing, or to do the work of the "threepenny orderlies," or even asked to load drays. The whole business should stand being inquired into. Another matter to which I wish to draw atten-

tion is the fact that only four baths are provided for the whole of the "strong" ward. There are between 300 and 400 men there, and only four baths are provided. It is practically impossible for half that number to get a bath. We can easily understand that it takes some of these old men a long time to have a bath, and therefore others are kept waiting much longer than should be the case. Then, again, there is no segregation for those men who are suffering from skin diseases. They are obliged to use the same baths that are used by the healthy men. Special baths should be set apart for those suffering from skin diseases and other complaints. There is also insufficient lavatory accommodation. We saw numbers of men waiting for that accommodation. That kind of thing should be altered also. We were told while we were there yesterday that there were complaints about the potatoes that were sent down. Those in control of the home protested against their being obliged to take delivery of a quantity of potatoes that the Tender Board forced them to accept. The quality was neither fair nor average, but the home was compelled to take them. It is coming to a fine pass when those who constitute the Tender Board can dictate to practical men, and compel them to take food of this description that is of a very inferior quality.

The Premier: I venture to say that not a member of the Tender Board saw those potatoes.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I was told that the matter was referred to the Tender Board, and the Tender Board compelled the home to take them.

The Premier: Certain standards of quality are set out, and it is the duty of an officer to see that the standard complies with the tender. That should be the duty of the master at the home.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Pilbara was with me at the time, and he can support me when I say we were told the potatoes were forced upon the home. The master of the home had to take them whether he liked them or not.

The Premier: You saw the master of the home?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, he showed us the potatoes. The largest was the size of a marble, what I used to call a "big eyedrop." I am not exaggerating when I say that.

The Premier: It was the duty of the master to complain to the authorities.

Mr. Mann: Anyhow, it is wrong for members to interview the head of an institution like that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We did not go there to interview him; we went there to have a look around, but he saw us and took charge of us.

Mr. Mann: I suppose he was afraid of the spoons disappearing.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I don't know about the spoons, but as far as the forks are concerned I would not have them in a black's camp in the bush. We are spending between £1,500 and £1,600 on an institution like the Observatory; we could easily cut that out until we are able to provide in a satisfactory way for these old men. I hope something will be done for them.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.36]: I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Health to the position that exists at Wiluna, a mining centre that has made considerable progress during the last 12 months. There are quite a number of men working there now and the hospital accommodation is very poor. I drew attention to this on the previous occasion and I had to agree with the Government that the time had not arrived for the provision of anything that would involve elaborate expenditure. To-day, however, there are 120 men working in that centre, and while there is always a danger of a big accident, we know that it is a common occurrence for accidents of a minor nature to happen almost every day. All the accommodation that exists at the present time is afforded in a shed which at one time was known as the male ward. A little over two years ago a cyclone passed over that centre and wrecked the structure. The greater part of it was carried away, but a partition, six or eight feet high, was erected in what was left, and in that way male patients were separated from female patients in the room that was left standing. This partition, which is made of hessian, has not even had a coat of whitewash or kalsomine and does not reach the ceiling. Hon. members are sufficiently sober to understand how a woman would feel if she were on one side of the hessian partition and a strange male was on the other side.

Lieut.-Colonel Denton: What would you do?

Mr. MARSHALL: I would want to consider the facts before I did anything. On several occasions the matron, out of pure

decency, has been compelled to leave her room, which has been reconstructed, and give it up to a female patient whilst she herself has slept in the open. I am bringing this matter forward in the hope that the Minister will take heed of what I am saying, so that more humane conditions may be made to prevail there. The population has increased and there are many married men there. The Minister, therefore, must appreciate that this kind of thing cannot last much longer. With the growth of the mining, as well as the pastoral industry there, many men are being employed and they are taking their wives with them. The time has arrived to provide hospital accommodation and also for the appointment of a medical officer. I hope the Minister will go into the matter thoroughly and do the best he can to assist the people in that isolated centre. Wiluna is 320 miles from the capital and is easily the furthest back town from a capital city in any part of the Commonwealth. When women are prepared to join their husbands in such isolated places so far from civilisation, the Government should treat them with some consideration in the way of providing medical facilities. When speaking on the Address-in-reply on the subject of allowances to State children, the Premier interjected that he proposed to increase that allowance. I regret to say that the Estimates do not show any increase. In all probability the Minister for Health may be able to justify the Premier's interjection of a few months back and tell us what is to be done in regard to the allowances to women who have lost their husbands, and children who have lost their fathers and are depending on the charity of the State for their maintenance. Hon. members will admit that 9s. a week is far too low. I trust the Minister will consider these few matters that I have brought under his notice.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.57]: I do not wish to throw bouquets, but I must say that since the present Minister has been in charge of the Health Department he has done good work. Whenever I have approached him, and that has not been very often, he has attended promptly to the requirements that I have submitted. It is very difficult now in the back country, as the member for Murchison has pointed out, with mining at such a comparatively low ebb, to secure hospital ac-

accommodation to the extent that was possible in days gone by. The Minister, however, has been very generous and I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—Hannans [8.45]: I wish to reply to one or two criticisms which have been offered. The position in which I find myself is rather peculiar, seeing that some of the complaints refer to the Health Vote and not to the Medical Vote. Therefore, I am lumped, so to speak, with the Chief Secretary, under whom the Medical Vote comes. On this occasion I shall not deal with the Health Vote at all. I shall have something to say on it when it comes up in its turn. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) spoke of the necessity for additional hospital accommodation at Wiluna. The hon. member referred to the same subject on last year's Estimates. I went into the matter then, but found that the population of Wiluna was very low in numbers. I should like to see every outlying centre have hospital accommodation and medical attention if possible, but last year Wiluna was not in such a position as to warrant an increase of hospital accommodation. I do not find that since then any definite request has been made to the Medical Department for further assistance at Wiluna. In view of the statements made by the hon. member I shall, however, go into the question of additional accommodation there.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have also to see about a railway to Wiluna.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am not dealing with railways. We provide many hospitals where there are no railways. As to stationing a medical man at Wiluna, I am not the only person who has a say in that matter. First of all it is necessary to find a medical practitioner willing to go to Wiluna. The Government have set up certain conditions as to the subsidising of medical men. If a medical man can be got for Wiluna under those conditions—I am pleased to say they have been agreed to by the British Medical Association—I shall do my part in the matter. Now as to the criticisms of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). Probably there are at the Old Men's Home some inmates doing work which should be done by outsiders, but I wish hon. members to realise that no man at the Old Men's Home is asked or forced to do anything at all. Any job done by an inmate there is done of his own

volition for the sake of a few shillings pocket money. Moreover, it is to be borne in mind that all the inmates are not old men. I know one inmate who drove a cart for eight or nine months, and may still be driving it, and who is fairly nimble, but whose physical condition is not such that he could find employment outside.

Mr. Heron: I know of one inmate about 55 years of age who is strong enough for work.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The inmate I refer to cannot get work, and the Government have no place to put him in except the Old Men's Home. I admit that the home is not all it ought to be; I would like to see it in a better condition. But I will say there is not in the Commonwealth another institution for old men which compares with our home for them; and I have seen all the institutions of the kind.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are the inmates happy?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: They are as happy a lot of 600 odd men as can be found anywhere. The greatest difficulty, the worst feature, is the accommodation for invalids.

Mr. Sleeman: What about the accommodation for inmates who are not invalids?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I admit that the home is somewhat overcrowded, but I am endeavouring to get extensions made. The cost of them is estimated at £9,000. A new ward which has been in the air for seven or eight years is to be built. We have been in office 2½ years, and the only reason why we have not yet built it is that we have not been able to find the money.

Mr. Mann: I suppose that was the stumbling block in the case of previous Governments.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Probably that is so.

Mr. Mann: They were sympathetic enough, but could not find the money.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, and that is a good reason. However, there are other institutions just as deserving of additional expenditure as the Old Men's Home is. The accommodation at the home is now much better; there is not the overcrowding that formerly existed. However, I would first like to spend money on building another Old Women's Home.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Old Women's Home is even more unsuitable under existing conditions than is the Old Men's Home

under existing conditions. The Government will use their best endeavours to provide additional accommodation and thus relieve the position of bed patients at the Old Men's Home, those being by far the worst off. As to the increase in the vote for maintenance of State children by their mothers, no one will argue that 9s. per week is sufficient. All I can say is that I was very glad to read, while I was in bed, the interjection made by the Premier as to the possibility of an increase in the rate. I hope that promise will be kept.

The Premier: Was that an absolute, definite promise?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No. It was a statement made in reply to an interjection.

The Premier: What was the statement?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That the Premier was considering an increase in the rate for this year.

The Premier: Ah!

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The point raised by the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) refers to the Health Vote, and not the Medical Vote. I do not think the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) was altogether just in his criticism of Thursday last on the Medical Department. He accused the Government of relieving the Consolidated Revenue through the measure introduced for the continuance of the entertainments tax. When that measure was introduced, we gave our pledge that the money from the tax would be used exclusively for hospitals, and would not be used to relieve the amount contributed towards hospitals from Consolidated Revenue. That promise has been absolutely and definitely kept. There is no shadow of doubt about that. The amount received from the entertainments tax has not relieved the Consolidated Revenue by one penny. I admit that if we had not had the revenue from the entertainments tax, we might have had to provide more money for the hospitals from Consolidated Revenue this year. I wish to draw attention to the difference between that position and what the member for Swan claimed when he introduced the previous Government's Bill for the assistance of hospitals. The hon. member said on Thursday last that we were doing what we criticised him for trying to do. We are not doing anything of the kind. We are not trying to do what the hon. member tried to do when he introduced his Bill.

Mr. Sampson: Your Medical Vote this year shows £10,000 odd less.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I admit the figures show that. However, the Premier's Budget speech dealt with the matter. I have not yet read the "Hansard" report of that speech, but I was pleased to see that the "West Australian" featured the Premier's correction in block type. Still we have the member for Swan repeating the statement that we took £10,000 off the Medical Vote. We have done nothing of the kind.

Mr. Sampson: Your figures show it.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: As I stated the other evening, there is an actual increase of about £298. In introducing the Bill imposing the entertainments tax I said I did not know what revenue would be received from it. I also stated that if I got up to £30,000 or even £40,000 a year from the entertainments tax, I should be doing good work if I stabilised the expenditure on hospitals at the amount it then stood at by not taking the receipts from the entertainments tax into Consolidated Revenue. I have been able to maintain that position up to date, using the revenue from the entertainments tax to meet increased hospital expenditure. When introducing his Bill for the assistance of hospitals, the member for Swan said that he anticipated receiving from the measure, if passed, a revenue of £113,000. Further, he stated, that by this means he anticipated relieving the Consolidated Revenue to the extent of £100,000 a year.

Mr. Sampson: That was perfectly clear; there was no ambiguity about that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yet the hon. member claims that his object was to get £113,000 for the benefit of the hospitals. It was nothing of the kind. His Bill was intended to make the people of Western Australia pay in additional taxation a sum of £113,000 from which the hospitals were to get £13,000 extra. The proof of it is that the Premier of the day cut the expenditure down by £100,000.

Mr. Sampson: Not £100,000.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No; £50,000 for six months, which amounts to the same thing.

Mr. Mann: Do you find any fault with that?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Of course I do.

Mr. Davy: That is what you are doing.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That proposed relief to Consolidated Revenue was abso-

lutely the sole reason for the loss of the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Bill would have been passed if the member for Swan had stated that it was for the purpose of raising £113,000 extra revenue and that the whole of this £113,000 would be devoted to the hospitals. But he said the money would go to relieve Consolidated Revenue to the extent of £100,000, and that the hospitals would get £13,000.

Mr. Sampson: There was no attempt to deceive the House, anyhow.

The Premier: Is there any insinuation?

Mr. Sampson: I am denying the statement that—

The Premier: What you say was in plain English in the Bill.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Why I am referring to this is because the hon. member the other night said we had done what we accused him of trying to do when he introduced his Bill. I say that statement is entirely incorrect; it is not true. I have a copy of the Estimates from the time the hon. member introduced his Bill. That year the Estimates showed for this Vote £98,298, and the department actually expended £151,079. When the Bill was defeated they had to put back the amount of revenue they anticipated when taking the £50,000 from the Hospitals Vote. They had to, when the Bill was defeated.

Mr. Mann: It was very unfortunate.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I do not know. It would have been no good for the hospitals had they got the Bill through. For the next year, 1923-24, of which we administered part, their Estimate was £145,642, and there was spent £151,623. In the following year, the first full year of our administration, we spent £167,162. I want to tell the hon. member that instead of our doing what he would have done had he got his Bill through, we increased the amount spent on hospitals last year by £29,463 over his amount, and there is still a surplus of £5,000 in the entertainments tax.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You used it for hospitals and saved revenue.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It did not come out of revenue that we were expending; the Treasurer did not ask me to reduce the amount he was then providing, as you asked the hon. member to do when he introduced his Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A very different thing; a small amount.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is the difference we object to. The expenditure on the Medical Department last year was £179,041, and we collected in revenue £44,013. The expenditure was made up as follows: On hospitals £124,701; on the Wooroloo Sanatorium, £25,193; on homes for the aged, £24,166; on head office administration, part of which is really chargeable against the Health Department, £4,975. I want to congratulate the officers of the Medical Department on the magnificent work they did last year. There are no more loyal officers in the service, and in my opinion no officers that work harder. Out of the entertainments tax we actually spent on hospitals last year £13,308, the total revenue received from the entertainments tax being £19,521. The balance is shown in the Estimates as undistributed. I might mention that while the present system continues it will be possible to have a credit at the end of every year, for the reason that the Taxation Department collects the money and pays it in, but we do not spend it until we know the money is there. The result is that the last month's collection will always show as a surplus unless we draw against it, which will not be done if I can prevent it.

Mr. Sampson: To what extent have assisted hospitals benefited from this fund?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is shown on the Estimates.

Mr. Sampson: I see £544 for assisted hospitals.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: A percentage of the amount for Government hospitals goes to that as well.

Mr. Sampson: It would be interesting to have those figures.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: If the hon. member expects me to produce to the House a balance sheet showing how each pound is spent, he is expecting something he will not get. If he applies to the Audit Department, probably he will be permitted to see all the vouchers, showing how each shilling has been spent.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Or he can move for a return.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, he can do that. Let me recount some of the activities of the department during the last 12 months. We have opened a hospital at Wellard, on the Peel Estate, where the residents agreed to

find sufficient money to equip the hospital, provided the Government built it and ran it when built. The residents provided their share of the money, according to agreement. In that they were actuated largely by the energies and efforts of the reverend gentleman who looks after their spiritual welfare; he is one of the finest organisers I have ever met. At Collie we are building a hospital to cost over £13,000 and to be ready for opening in January or February next. Even at Katanning, before the new hospital was built, the conditions were not nearly so bad as they are at Collie at present. To-day Collie has the worst hospital accommodation in Western Australia.

Mr. Thomson: I have heard it is nothing but a bug-walk.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is a building totally unsuited to hospital requirements, and very seriously dilapidated. To begin with it was a four-roomed house, and has since been added to in sections, principally from the goldfields. It stands on the side of a hill and, in consequence, to go out of any one room or ward into another it is necessary to negotiate four or five steps. It was quite essential that the new hospital should be built. The people of Collie have to pay interest and sinking fund on one-half the outlay, just as the people of Katanning had to do. Also we have put in extensions to the Busselton maternity home and to the Denmark hospital; provided new nurses' quarters and laundry at Albany, equipped a children's ward at Northam and put in further extensions. Although the hospital at Northam is a Government one, it has to comply with the conditions laid down to secure hospital accommodation in any other town. I was prepared to repair the present hospital at Northam, but the people there wanted new additions, and so they had to comply with the conditions applicable to other towns. At Geraldton, during the last year, there has been a complete transformation from the old building to a much newer building more suitable for the purpose. We have provided a new hospital at Nannup and another at Dumblevung. Also a new hospital has been erected by the Inland Mission at Lake Grace on pound for pound assistance by the Government. We have provided a maternity home at York. There again the Red Cross Society assisted us to a great extent. I wish to pay a tribute to the Hospital Comforts Fund com-

mittee at York and also at Katanning. At those two towns that committee has done magnificent work. For the size of the institution, I have never been in a hospital that can compare with the Katanning hospital. When in the wards, of course, the patients realise that they are in hospital, but the institution has been so designed and is conducted on such lines that immediately a patient gets outside the ward he finds himself in what is, to all intents and purposes, a private home. Whenever people have approached me on hospital matters I have put it back on them by telling them that the policy of the Government is to assist those who will do something to assist themselves.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A good deal was done before you came in, you know.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, but I have a perfect right to say what we have done since.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You had better do so, for it is so little known.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: As Minister controlling health, hospitals and kindred institutions, I have done more in two years and four months than was done by any previous Minister in five years.

Mr. Davy: You speak very highly of yourself.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is true. The records will prove it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You must have made people sick of it.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, we have tried to prevent them from being sick.

Mr. Davy: Self-praise is no recommendation.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is just as well the people should know what we have done.

Mr. Davy: They won't believe you.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: But they do. Go where you will, you can see what we have done.

Mr. Marshall: Even at Northam.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, even at Northam. Extensions have been made to the nurses' quarters at the Fremantle hospital and further large extensions to the Perth hospital. Prior to the last general elections the member for Swan announced that the Government had agreed to a reduction of hours for the nursing staff at the Perth Hospital. That statement was correct, but I have to admit that those nurses have not received a reduction of hours yet. Though the member

for Swan agreed to grant the reduction, it could not be made until accommodation was provided for 40 extra nurses. That accommodation has now been provided. I hope that the furnishing will be completed in the next fortnight and that the nurses will then receive a reduction of hours.

Hon. G. Taylor: What is the reduction?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: To 52 hours per week. The condition agreed to between the conference of the nurses' association, the three big hospitals and the Medical Department was that the nurses were to work 52 hours a week on day work and 54 hours a week on night work. The Perth Hospital committee agreed to make the hours 52 for both day and night work, so that when the new quarters are furnished the hours will be reduced to 52 all round. At Fremantle I believe the reduction has already been granted, because the requisite accommodation for nurses was available.

Mr. Thomson: Have the nurses received any increase of salary?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, all grades have received an increase, though it has not been great.

Hon. G. Taylor: The fourth grade nurses will receive a good increase.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: They will receive the best increase, but the reason is that until recently it was necessary for probationers to serve only a three years' course. The period however, has been extended to four years, and naturally the fourth-year nurses should receive the greatest increase.

Mr. Thomson: The trouble is we are losing a lot of our nurses.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, they get married.

Hon. G. Taylor: We are training more nurses.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: A fair number go into private nursing.

Mr. Thomson: We cannot blame them, but could we make nursing more attractive?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am surprised that we have been able to retain the services of some nurses who have received better offers from outside than we were able to make them. I admit that the hospital accommodation at Narrogin is inadequate. I have visited that town two or three times in order to get the people to agree to the conditions laid down, but they have not done so.

The Minister for Lands: They did so once, and failed to pay.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Narrogin has a Government hospital. The people of Narrogin are prepared to agree to the scheme, but those in some of the surrounding districts will not agree. Although it is a Government hospital there is no hope of better accommodation being provided next year unless the people generally agree to the scheme.

Mr. Teesdale: Oh, leave next year out of it!

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: At Wagin there is an agitation for largely increased accommodation, and plans have been drawn for improvements to the value of £5,000. That also is a Government hospital, but the people there are willing to accept the conditions of providing interest and sinking fund on half the money. At Margaret River a good deal of money has been expended, but notwithstanding the additional accommodation provided, the hospital is still overcrowded.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are a lot of timber workers at Margaret River.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Considerable additions will have to be made to the hospital and particularly to the maternity section, which is a good thing. Negotiations are proceeding for a new hospital at Goomalling, a new hospital at Three Springs, and for extensions to the Wyalcathem hospital. We are building a maternity block at Kojonup and are considering extensions to the Kununoppin hospital.

Mr. Thomson: Is anything to be done at Gnowangerup?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. Out of the money provided by the entertainments tax we have subsidised on a pound-for-pound basis four hospitals to purchase X-ray plant. We are now negotiating with three other hospitals with a view to subsidising them for a similar purpose. Under the old military regime in this State a system of establishing district medical officers was inaugurated. That system has continued ever since. The reason advanced so far back as it can be traced in the records was that the Government should provide part of the money to induce a medical officer to go to a district where there was insufficient practice to keep a doctor. Wherever a district medical officer has been appointed the Government have subsidised him, regardless of the amount of his earnings. Thus we have been paying away thousands of pounds in subsidies to medical officers who really had no claim whatever for Government assistance other

than the amount of £10 a year for treating indigent aborigines. We circularised the whole of the members of the British Medical Association, and I am pleased to say they have all agreed to a new arrangement. We have laid down a scale, the amounts varying in the different districts, but there is no need to enter into the details. A medical officer in the North-West, at Wiluna, or other out-back place would be put on a higher scale than would a medical man in an agricultural centre close to a town, but we have fixed a minimum of £800 a year, irrespective of where the doctor is located. The doctors have signed an undertaking to keep a correct set of books showing their income, the books to be open to inspection by audit officers whenever required. In the eastern wheat belt a doctor whose income exceeds £1,000 a year would receive no subsidy. The reason for paying the subsidy was to keep a medical man in the district when his practice was insufficient to provide a living. An income of £1,000 a year should be sufficient inducement for a doctor to remain. By this reorganisation we have saved a good few thousands of pounds to the State, which money can be utilised to advantage in other directions. Where a doctor in a sparsely-populated place is earning £400, the remaining £400 is to be contributed on the basis of three-fifths by the Government and two-fifths by the local residents. To make up the two-fifths, the residents may adopt any means they like—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Such as spinning jennies?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No; they may adopt a system of contributions to the doctor. In one district that has been organised on this basis during the last 18 months we were paying the doctor a subsidy of £150 a year but he is now receiving £1,600, inclusive of his earnings. Consequently our subsidy has ceased.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He does not work in the hospital free?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Some hospital work would be free, but not maternity cases. Those are the conditions on which we are organising at present. I believe the new system will prove highly satisfactory. Extensions have been almost completed at the King Edward Memorial Hospital, where the new ward will be opened on the 17th December. I mention this because we are training there slightly over 80 per cent. of the midwifery nurses. I want to see a hun-

dred per cent. trained there if possible. I believe it will prove a first-class training school. It could not be successful as a training school unless provision were made for pre-natal and ante-natal work, and the new ward is being erected to give that training. Attached to the ward is a baby clinic, and thus the institution will now be able to cover the whole range of work including instruction to mothers. For years there has been an agitation for the establishment of a dental hospital in the metropolitan area. While I am not prepared to-night to give details, I am pleased to be able to announce that the Government have decided to establish a dental hospital. In the course of two or three years I hope that the University authorities will bring this State up to the level of the Eastern States by providing for the training and qualifying of dental students. I believe they will do it. It was useless for them to attempt anything on those lines until we had a dental hospital. We have a building for the purpose, and I hope it will be a going concern in the course of a month or five weeks.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [9.30]: It is a pity the Honorary Minister did not introduce his Estimates in the usual way. We might have had an opportunity of saying nice things about him if he had told us in the early stages of the discussion what he has just told us. Hospitals are not treated exactly as he would have us believe they are. The hospital at Northam serves a large area. It possesses two doctors and is a well-equipped and well-staffed institution. Serious cases are brought in from districts many miles away, along the Wongan Hills and Dowerin lines. It is a central hospital very much like that in Perth, and should receive the same treatment. What would the people of the city say if the Honorary Minister told them that before the Perth hospital could be added to they must find half the money?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There is no analogy between the two.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Perth hospital is treated better than are country hospitals.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It is not treated as well as many country hospitals, or as well as the Northam hospital.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is treated much better. The Perth hospital had several thousands of pounds invested. The

Kununoppin hospital serves an area well outside its own district. Are the people at Kununoppin expected to find the money for the necessary additions in order to accommodate people from outside the district? Each of these institutions should be treated on its merits, and assisted according to the services it renders.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If I agreed to that, not one hospital in the State would find anything. Many cases come to Perth from Northam.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are not going to allow the Honorary Minister to do as he likes. He is not going to lay down hard and fast rules in regard to these institutions. If he wants the vote of this House, he must carry out the wishes of members.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If people in older settled places want hospital accommodation they must provide the money towards it, or they will get no assistance from me.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why does not the Honorary Minister make the people pay half the cost of the police service in their district? I know the system started before he assumed office. We collect enough in taxes to enable us to carry on these free services, such as education, police, hospitals and charities.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: To carry on free hospitals would cost three millions of money.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why should hospitals be singled out as something that must be paid for twice over?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There has been a big alteration in the system.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: An alteration for the worse.

The Premier: The public may be induced to think there has been an improvement.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Honorary Minister has had the same money voted to him and has had imposed, in addition, a special hospital tax, a thing he loathed and denounced when sitting on this side of the House.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Not at all.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A select committee, on which two members of his own party sat, was appointed to deal with the matter.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: But you did not carry out its recommendation in your Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We did. It is not polite of the Honorary Minister to contradict me in that way. The gross

expenditure on hospitals is £125,000, and the amount collected from the entertainments tax is £25,000. Of course the Treasurer has not collected and spent that £25,000 without saving his general revenue.

The Premier: That money has given increased accommodation and facilities for hospitals, which would not otherwise have been provided.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course they would have been provided.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Of course they would not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier would have been obliged to give them facilities. He cannot prevent babies from being born. This £25,000 must be a saving to the Treasurer.

The Premier: It is not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He has no right to tax the people unless the money is properly spent. It undoubtedly saves the general revenue. It was wrong when we proposed it, but it is right now. This shows the inconsistency of the Honorary Minister. I admit he has displayed considerable interest in hospitals, as the previous Minister did. Every Minister wants more money for hospitals than the Treasurer can afford to give. I want to correct the Premier on the question of preference to unionists. At one time men told me they were informed by officials that they must come to Perth from Northam in order to get employment. In some cases I managed to get things fixed up for them in the district.

The Premier: It was a case of where the officials were not telling the truth. Would they be so mad as to say that men must come to Perth in order to get work? That is the last place in which the Government would want to see unemployment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Premier see that that is put right tomorrow?

The Premier: I will.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is satisfactory to know that men in the country are to be given jobs there. I hope this work will be given unconditionally, and that the men will not have first to produce a union ticket. The Premier is wrong about the Labour Bureau. Men have had to produce tickets there. We object to preference to anyone in any circumstances. It is not right that a man who possesses a union ticket should have preference over another.

There are many reasons why members opposite should not insist upon this principle. Men are entitled to work and to share in Government work. In some degree all men contribute to the revenue of the State. They contribute through the trade for which they are responsible. They have a right to their share of Government work. I cannot understand why the Minister for Labour should have issued instructions that no work was to be given to other than unionists. That is morally wrong. I am sure some members opposite object to that as much as I do.

Mr. Sleeman: You believe they should all take out a ticket.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A ticket in Tattersalls would be better than some of the tickets they are compelled to take out. It is very fortunate that the Minister is so satisfied with what has happened in connection with the department under his control. I believe he has done his best and if he has not done as well as his predecessor, still he has done well. Of course, increased expenditure has had to be incurred regarding hospitals because the more people we bring to the State, the greater the facilities that have to be provided for them.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [9.46]: I realise that with an increase in the population, the vote must be increased as well. In some of the smaller centres people are making considerable sacrifices in their endeavour to secure sufficient funds to erect hospitals. They have to find additional funds for the purpose of upkeep. Notwithstanding that, we have a number of hospitals in our country districts. I do not consider it possible to establish hospitals in every country town, but at certain centres, at a fair distance apart, we should establish decent country hospitals, so that people should not be forced to go to Perth. At present it is necessary for serious cases to be despatched to the metropolis, although the patients are patched up first at the country institutions. At Goomalling efforts have been made to raise money for the establishment of a hospital. They have asked for a subsidy and it has been usual for the Government to grant one.

The Premier: Yes, if the people guarantee half the cost.

Mr. LINDSAY: That was what I wanted to ascertain. They have gone to a great deal of trouble and have raised about

£2,000. The balance is in sight and if the Government provide a subsidy along the lines indicated, it will soon be possible to start building operations. I wish to acknowledge the fact that the Minister has given me every assistance in connection with hospitals in my district.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie—in reply) [9.48]: In replying to the debate, I wish to deal with some of the statements made by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), particularly in connection with gaols and the proposal to establish a prison farm. I am pleased to say that the management and the conditions obtaining in relation to our gaols compare favourably with those obtaining in the Eastern States. Only recently an authority on prisons paid a visit to this State and on her return to South Australia wrote commending the Comptroller of Prisons in this State for the manner in which our system is operating. As to the proposal to establish a prison farm, we know that the matter received some scant consideration by the member for Swan while he held the office of Colonial Secretary in the Mitchell Government.

Mr. Sampson: Why "scant" consideration?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I say "scant" because the hon. member seems to have occupied his time in the position, which is now known as that of the Chief Secretary, by reading a few reports upon what happened in New Zealand and talking about the subject with a few of his friends. There is little or no record on the departmental files to show that he desired to do anything regarding the establishment of a prison farm in Western Australia.

Mr. Sampson: There are many records on the files.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I think the hon. member's time was taken up in discussing the probability of doing something in connection with the establishment of such farms.

The Premier: A lot of talk, and no achievement!

Mr. Sampson: It is a pity that the Minister does not continue the work I commenced.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The present Chief Secretary is giving serious consideration to this question.

Mr. Richardson: Then he has not done more than his predecessor in office.

Mr. Sampson: What has the Honorary Minister done?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The member for Swan, when Colonial Secretary, pointed out that it would be possible to select virgin country for the purpose of establishing a prison farm. The virgin country that we have to-day is exactly the same as that which was available when the hon. member was in office.

Mr. Sampson: Exactly, and we were on the eve of establishing the farm after working on the proposition for 20 months only.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Like all his activities in the departments under his control at the time, the hon. member did nothing but read articles that appeared in a New Zealand paper, dealing with the experiments carried out there.

Mr. Sampson: That sounds jaundiced, and it is not true. I visited New Zealand myself.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I agree that the hon. member went that far. He looked at a prison farm in course of establishment at the time of his visit, but on his return he did nothing to further the project.

The Premier: He has never put one brick on top of another to construct anything.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yet he has the cool cheek to come here and ask what the present Chief Secretary has done in connection with the establishment of a prison farm!

The Premier: The member for Swan did not even put the fence around the Wooroloo Sanatorium, and he has been talking about it ever since.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The question is still under consideration, and when funds are available something will be done. No doubt that governed the position when the hon. member was in office, too.

Mr. Sampson: Now you are making a full confession.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No doubt something may be done to satisfy the crying and whining needs of the member for Swan. Dealing with the Lunacy Department, for some years past negotiations had been carried on between the department and the Federal Government in connection with the establishment of the mental hospital known as Lemnos. That project was under consideration by the previous Government, but it was left to the present Administration to

bring about the consummation and establishment of the mental institution. It is now in operation and doing good work for those in whose interests it was established. As to the urgent need for a reception home for mental patients, that question also received some consideration by the previous Government but again it has fallen to the lot of the present Administration to start the construction, and that work is still in hand at the present time. No doubt that work when completed will supply a very urgent need.

Mr. Sampson: Is it proposed to complete a convalescent home?

The Premier: For what?

Mr. Sampson: In connection with the mental reception home.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: That is a matter for further consideration, and no doubt the Chief Secretary will give the necessary consideration to it.

The Minister for Lands: In other States the mental reception home is the convalescent home as well.

Mr. Sampson: Your Royal Commission recommended the establishment of one.

The Minister for Lands: No, they did not.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) referred to a proposal to bring out fishermen from Scotland to be established in the fishing industry here. Unfortunately, he has not been very successful.

The Premier: They were too Scotch!

The Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: We know that representatives of Scottish families visited Western Australia and other States with a view to people from Scotland becoming established in the fishing industry of Australia. For some reason those people have not arrived in Western Australia. We have a coastline extending for 5,000 miles, providing ample opportunity for people to become established in the fishing industry here. The member for Katanning referred to the fact that some years ago the State Government established fish shops as a State trading concern, but that the business passed out of existence. He also referred to the fact that the New South Wales Government had had a similar experience, but had disposed of the State trawlers to private enterprise that had since made a huge success of the industry.

Mr. Sampson: The Queensland Government are crashing on the same proposition.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: In Western Australia the whole coastline is open to any-

one to become established in the fishing industry, and there is an open field for private enterprise.

Mr. Thomson: Nothing was done to get migrants from Scotland.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No. I remember the hon. member's remarks on his return from a visit to Great Britain. He did urge his Government to take up the matter but seemingly that Government was not sufficiently influenced by his remarks and the facts that he placed before them.

The Premier: These things should be left to private enterprise.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The State Labour Bureau has rendered valuable service in connection with the finding of employment during the regime of the present Government. In the period ended the 30th June last the registrations and transactions at the bureau exceeded those of any previous year. There were 12,654 registrations and 8,602 engagements. In addition, workers were issued railway passes to the number of 3,577 and 56 fares were issued to lads on the goldfields who were desirous of coming down to farming areas to take up employment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You continued most of the good work you found going on.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: We found the Labour Bureau in existence but we improved its usefulness.

Mr. Richardson: You have had more unemployment, and it is still in existence.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: With regard to the criticism of the policy adopted concerning the production of union tickets, I remind members that preference to unionists is the policy of the present Government and it is intended to carry out that policy.

Mr. Thomson: But it is not the policy of the country.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is the policy of the country so long as the present Government remain in power. That policy was placed before the people prior to the election campaign and the people endorsed it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It was never mentioned.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It was mentioned.

Mr. Mann: It was preference to one union.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is a matter of preference to unionists. I remember having read about the member for Perth striving after championship honours as leader of the unemployed in Perth. I

understand, however, that he was ousted without gaining his objective.

Mr. Mann: I gained the objective by securing work for the men. I enlisted the sympathy of the Premier and he found work for 130.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Premier, acting on behalf of the Government, of which he is the head, found employment for these men, not the member for Perth.

Mr. Thomson: The member for Perth was not in a position to put the men on to a Government job.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I cannot understand his meddling in things in which he had no concern whatever.

Mr. Mann: I like that!

Mr. Richardson: I guarantee that the unemployed went to him.

Mr. Mann: They came to me instead of going to the Trades Hall.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The class that went to the hon. member were the unemployed. They went to him to solicit sympathy so as to get a few more meals rather than take the work that had been found for many of them. In connection with the complaint that married men were refused employment because they were not holders of union tickets, those men had the opportunity to become members of the industrial union governing their class of employment. The member for Perth surely knows that the settlement of disputes and the framing of conditions and wages—all this is done under the provisions of an Act of Parliament known as the Arbitration Act, and that unless a man becomes a member of an industrial union he can be no party to that agreement. Therefore the Government stand for preference to unionists and are desirous of dealing with organised bodies rather than a rabble such as the member for Perth found at the Labour Bureau.

Mr. Thomson: Where are your 26 supporters? The House is very thin on your side.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Complaints were made that the Government issued instructions that workers should be engaged through the State Labour Bureau as against on the job. Instructions were issued specially in connection with country jobs, that local men should receive first preference.

Mr. Thomson: That did not obtain in every instance.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: There may be instances where that did not obtain. I remember that one report came through from the South-West. The complaint was immediately looked into. If the member for Katanning had such a grievance it was his duty to bring it directly under notice.

Mr. Thomson: I did, but unfortunately the men had been sent from Perth.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Those in the district, if there were unemployed, would have been found employment. That was the position in connection with the case referred to at Pemberton. It is not necessary to say anything further on these Estimates with perhaps the exception of one of the remarks made by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). I am prepared to admit that in some cases those in control of certain work have not carried out the instructions of the Government with regard to picking up men through the State Labour Bureau. Instances are known where men have been picked up on the job. Only recently such a case came under notice from Fremantle and I assure the hon. member that the Minister is making a thorough investigation.

Mr. Sleeman: And immediately after I brought the matter under his notice, the same thing was done again.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is only by bringing these matters under the notice of the Minister that they can be attended to at once. It is better to do that than to wait for weeks and refer to such cases on the floor of the House.

Mr. Mann: It should not be necessary to bring these matters before the House. Mentioning it to the Minister should be sufficient.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Exactly. Why should the member for Perth wait for months to bring up instances of that kind and take up the valuable time of the House that could be utilised to better advantage.

The Premier: That is the way to come him.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: That is all I wish to say in reply.

Mr. SAMPSON: Have I the right to reply to the Minister?

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: I wish to draw attention to the attitude of the Minister—

The Premier: The hon. member has no right to speak on this occasion; he has already spoken once. He is entirely out of order.

Mr. SAMPSON: Am I not justified in drawing attention—

The Premier: The hon. member is distinctly out of order in speaking at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not entitled to speak.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Aborigines, £8,538—agreed to.

Vote—Fisheries, £5,437:

Item, Chief Inspector £600:

Mr. THOMSON: I would like to know whether the Chief Inspector of Fisheries has put forward any scheme for the establishment of group settlement for settlers who would combine work on the land with fishing operations.

The Minister for Lands: This item has nothing to do with migration in any shape or form and the hon. member is out of order.

Mr. THOMSON: I am merely asking whether the Chief Inspector has put up any such scheme. We could get Scottish fishermen out here and allocate some land to them so that they could carry on farming in a small way. This land would necessarily have to be near the scene of the fishing operations. I interviewed a certain department and the officers were good enough to select sites that would be suitable for a settlement of this description. We are losing a golden opportunity if we do not consider any recommendation that might be made by the Chief Inspector of Fisheries. I am willing to give the Minister a lot of valuable information that I have in my possession.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in pursuing a general discussion.

Mr. THOMSON: If this officer has not put up proposals of that nature, he is negligent of his duty.

Hon. J. Cunningham: He has had no instructions to put them up.

Mr. THOMSON: We are dealing with a responsible officer to whom the State is paying £600 a year. Has he put up any such thing?

The CHAIRMAN: The matter has already been dealt with in the general discussion, and the hon. member is not in order in dealing with it afresh on an item. The Minister can answer the hon. member's

question without our having another general discussion.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The officer would not accept instructions from the member for Katanning to put up a scheme.

Mr. Thomson: Of course not.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The officer would await the Minister's instructions before doing so. I know of no such instructions having been given.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Registry and Friendly Societies, £10,259; Gaols, £25,133; Harbour and Light and Jetties, £22,882—agreed to.

Vote—Lunacy and Inebriates, £102,510:

Item, Inspector General of the Insane and Inebriates, £800:

Mr. SAMPSON: On Thursday I made some remarks on the reception home at Point Heathcote. The Governor's Speech stated that a commencement had been made with the erection of the home.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no mention of any reception home under this item.

Mr. SAMPSON: The home comes under the Inspector General of the Insane and Inebriates.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order. He cannot discuss the policy of the vote on the item of the Inspector General's salary.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Inspector General has charge of the reception home.

The Premier: The home is not built yet.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know that.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the member for Swan to resume his seat if he is going to discuss the reception home under this vote. The reception home is a question we discuss on the Loan Estimates. If the hon. member will not accept my ruling, he has the alternative of moving that my ruling be dissented from.

Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.

Mr. Sampson: Very well, Sir. With great regret I move—

That the Committee dissent from the Chairman's ruling, on the ground that the care of the reception home is one of the functions of the Inspector General of the Insane and Inebriates.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Chairman stated the dissent.

Mr. Sampson: I desired to discuss the matter of the reception home, and as all matters of lunacy are under the care of the Inspector General I claim that in bringing this matter up under the item of the Inspector General's salary I am acting properly and in accordance with the Standing Orders. On the face of things this is the proper, and indeed the only, place where the reception home can be discussed. The observation ward at the Perth Hospital is under the charge of the Inspector General of the Insane, and at a later stage the reception home at Point Heathcote will be under his charge. It certainly is under his supervision, because he has visited the site in company with me.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will be aware that there are two sets of items—those in the matter now submitted to the Committee, and items under the Loan Estimates, which will be submitted in due course. To discuss an item now before the Committee is regular, whether it deals with the Inspector General of the Insane or any other subject; but to discuss items that are strictly within the Loan Estimates, these not being before the Committee, will be out of order.

Mr. Sampson: This matter has already been discussed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: It may have been discussed, but if attention had been drawn it would have been ruled out of order. I must therefore uphold the Chairman's ruling.

Committee resumed.

Item, Staff Soldiers' Mental Hospital, West Subiaco (State's proportion), £1,950:

Mr. MANN: Has the Minister any information to give regarding the administration of the soldiers' mental hospital? We have been advised through the Press that some difficulty has been experienced in restraining some of the inmates owing to the lack of male warders. While it is preferable to have nurses in charge of mental cases, because the records show they are more successful, still there seems to be something wanting because inmates have frequently wandered away. In some instances there have been assaults upon people at the institution.

The Premier: You know that that happens at times regarding patients in other hospitals where there are male attendants.

Mr. MANN: I know, but, according to the Press reports, what I complain of is becoming more frequent.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: When reports of such instances are brought under the notice of departmental officers, the usual inquiries are held. All reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the patients.

Hon. G. Taylor: The complaint of the hon. member was that the general public were not safeguarded.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: They are safeguarded all right. The department has this matter well in hand.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does the Minister suggest, with the experience of four or five months, that the public will be safeguarded under existing conditions with the addition, perhaps, of a few warders? I know the Lemnos mental hospital has been established on a fine site, but I am afraid if something is not done the difficulties that have occurred will be recurring ones.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Yes, the public will be safeguarded.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Observatory, £1,636; State Children and Outdoor Relief, £110,280; State Labour Bureau, £2,855—agreed to.

Vote—Medical, £165,959:

Item, Government Hospitals: Provisions, bedding and clothing, fuel, medicine and surgical instruments, equipment, uniforms for staff, washing, minor repairs, travelling, postage and telephone rent, and commission, etc., miscellaneous and transport, £33,000:

Mr. SAMPSON: I wish to deal with this item and also the other items from 20 to 24.

The Minister for Lands: You cannot do that.

The Premier: You must deal with one item at a time.

[Mr. Lutey took the Chair.]

Mr. SAMPSON: Dealing with the item I have referred to, provision is made for an expenditure of £33,000. Last year the vote was £31,000 and the expenditure was £30,994. The next item deals with public hospitals—the Perth, Children's and Fremantle hospitals—and it shows that £50,850 was voted last year and the expenditure was £49,850.

The Premier: You cannot discuss that item; you must deal with one at a time.

Item, Assisted Hospitals, Grants in aid of maintenance, buildings, additions and repairs, fees, etc., £10,500:

Mr. SAMPSON: Last year the vote was £8,575 and the expenditure was £7,357. This year the estimate provides for £10,500, or an increase of £3,143. For the whole of last year the Estimates show that £165,000 was voted for the Medical Department, whereas the expenditure for the year was £176,000. When speaking on the vote generally I mentioned that the entertainments tax had been used to assist regarding hospitals.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must deal with the item alone.

The Premier: This is developing into a general discussion.

Mr. THOMSON: Does the vote provide for the construction of buildings or for repairs as well?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It is not for building construction at all. There may be some slight repairs to be dealt with under the vote, but not the construction of buildings.

Mr. THOMSON: I believe there is a fixed policy of assistance to committee hospitals, and I should like it put on record.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No definite policy is laid down as to what subsidy shall be given to committee hospitals. Each hospital is treated on its needs in relation to revenue. Subsidies vary from £50 to £800 per annum. There is one hospital committee—it is a new hospital—that asked me for £50 for their first year as they were afraid they could not make ends meet. I granted the request, and before the 30th June of this year I received from that hospital committee a letter telling me they could manage this year without any subsidy at all. I understand it is the first time in the history of the Medical Department that any hospital committee has sent in such a letter.

Mr. MANN: The Children's Hospital committee have been expecting, under promise from the Treasurer, a grant for the extension of a ward.

The Premier: That is on the Loan Estimates.

Item, Sundry Services, £16,300:

Mr. SLEEMAN: At the Old Men's Home 13s. 9d. per head is allowed for contingencies. The home is in a sense being robbed by those in charge being made to pay for

transport from the railway station to the hospital and for burials from that allowance.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The inmates are kept very comfortably.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Some are comfortable; some are not. However, that is not the point. It is not right that the cost of transport and of burials should come out of this allowance, rather should it come from a separate vote for destitute persons.

The Premier: There is no fixed allowance; the figure given in the annual report is what the cost of those services amounts to.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am told that 13s. 9d. is the sum allowed per head.

Hon. G. Taylor: No, it works out at 13s. 9d., according to the last annual report.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is not right that the cost of transport and burials should be taken out of money intended for the upkeep of the home. Again, I believe something extra could be done in the way of providing medicine. It is impossible for many of the inmates to see the medical officer when he visits the institution for three-quarters of an hour on two days per week. The sum of £200 is a very small amount for medicine for the whole of the year.

Mr. Clydesdale: A number of the inmates ought to be in hospital.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Certainly they ought to be able to get what medicine they require.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Any medicine they want they get free at the Perth Hospital. A car comes up every morning.

Mr. SLEEMAN: What is the use of the car coming up if the men cannot see the doctor? They need to see the doctor to find out what medicine they require. Some time ago when an inquiry was held into the conduct of the home, the commissioner said that before there could be any satisfactory working of the home, a medical man must be placed in charge. I do not go that far.

The Premier: Perhaps a medical officer might well be placed in charge instead of the man in charge at present.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I believe that the master of the home, Mr. Rust, is doing the best he can in the circumstances.

The Premier: He is doing the best he can to prompt a lot of complaints instead of making them to his Minister.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is useless for the Premier to become so petty.

The Premier: I know that that accounts for it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A sum of £200 is not sufficient to provide medicine for the number of old men and women. The fact of deceased inmates being buried three deep is a standing disgrace. The master of the home is not responsible for that. It will be said that arrangements may be made for families to be buried together, but what would any member say if his father, mother, sister, brother or wife was interred with two or three strangers?

Mr. Clydesdale: Better start and cremate them.

Mr. SLEEMAN: While burial is the practice, the old men should receive the respect that we would expect.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It would cost £25 per burial.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It would not cost anything of the kind.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You could not get it done any cheaper.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It does not cost anything like £25 to bury a pauper. What would it cost to give a man 6ft. of ground instead of burying these people three deep?

The Premier: I do not care what becomes of me.

Mr. SLEEMAN: But if we found some of our own friends being buried like that, we would be the first to complain.

Mr. Chesson: Our first duty is to the living.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The inmates of the home have a sufficiently hard time through having to end their days in that institution, and if we do not do much for them while they are living, let us at least bury them in a respectable way. The men at the home consider that the mineral bore should be opened up. Is there any chance of its being opened up?

Mr. Mann: It is a good job you are not speaking from this side of the House.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not wish to be in the company of the hon. member. I prefer to be here.

Hon. G. Taylor: I am afraid the Government would prefer you to be over here.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am entitled to say what I think is right. I am free to do that; I am not like the member for Nelson, who stated that if he said anything against the Minister he would be brought to book. On the Opposition side the whips are cracked, but on this side a man is free to speak his mind; outside of party matters.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I do not know where the hon. member got all his complaints. I have received complaints from several of the old men.

Mr. Heron: If the member for Fremantle were put in charge, he would have just as many complaints.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. I do not think one word would have been said about the burials but for the disclosures made by a week-end paper.

Mr. Sleeman: A week-end paper did not make the disclosures.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It did. When the matter was brought under my notice I found that the head of the Old Men's Home had actually made overtures and passed severe comment on the attitude of the contract undertaker. The matter was brought under the notice of the Tender Board, and I do not think that the man who was responsible will have a hope of getting the tender again.

Mr. Sampson: You are not referring to the frozen meat trouble?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, to the manufacture of coffins. The contractor sent to the Old Men's Home a coffin, the end of which was made from a petrol case with the advertisement for the petrol still showing on the outside.

Mr. Richardson: That was a bad mistake.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: When he was brought to book for it he made the excuse that a man he had just employed was responsible.

Mr. Mann: The management rejected the coffin?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, they took exception to it, but it was used. The contractor said it had been painted over with black paint, but the report I received stated that the advertisement could be seen through the paint. Regarding the burial of two or three in one grave, I do not know that there is any great crime in that. I know of several families who have ground and who utilise it in that way. I do not think there is any hardship in that respect.

Mr. Thomson: I do not think the old men would worry much about it.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No. Regarding the medicine, if the member for Fremantle can bring forward the case of one inmate who should have had medicine and could not get it, I shall want to know the reason why. I know of no instance where an in-

mate was entitled to medicine and did not get it. It is not a matter of whether £2 is sufficient. That is the estimated cost of the medicine, but if £700 worth was required, they would get it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course they would.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: There is no chance of having the bore reopened.

Hon. G. Taylor: Why?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It caused too much commotion there. We have arranged with the gardens' board, who are using the surplus water from the bore, to erect a shower through the fence. The old men can use this shower free of charge. I would not grant this permission unless the board guaranteed to erect separate showers for the old men free of charge. These facilities are only 50 yards away from where they are in the open air.

Mr. Richardson: Is the shower there now?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I believe so. It would be unwise to reopen the bore.

Mr. LAMOND: Better medical attention should be provided at the Old Men's Home. It is said to be difficult for the inmates of the institution to attract the attention of the doctor. Very often the medical man spends only half an hour there, and some of the old men have not seen a doctor for weeks. One man said he found great difficulty in getting medical attention. Doctors should be asked to spend more time there for after all there are 600 inmates at the home.

Mr. Chesson: It should be in charge of a medical man.

Mr. LAMOND: There should be a resident doctor at the place. The morgue is a very small one. On one particular day five men died, and the bodies were stacked on top of each other. A notice was put on the door stating that there was only standing room left inside. The morgue should be enlarged. It is not nice for the old men to think that when they die they may be stacked in a place like that. When five men died in one day, it is understood they were perishing from the cold because of their lack of clothing.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The member for Fremantle said that £200 was hardly worth mentioning when it came to a question of supplying medicines for over 600 men. When I was chairman of the Perth Hospital

medicine was supplied to the Old Men's Home free of charge.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is still done.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The medicine was sent down in cartloads two or three times a week. Whatever was required was sent. I once interviewed the Minister with the object of inducing him to make a special allowance to the hospital for these medicines, but nothing was done. I do not know why £200 is set down in the Estimates for medicine, unless the system has been altered. The Perth Hospital supplied very much more than £200 worth of medicine every year.

The Premier: There are other homes in the State which are supplied with medicines that do not come from any hospital.

Mr. Sampson: Has any progress been made with regard to deep therapy and X-ray treatment?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In the case of a person requiring deep therapy treatment the resident medical officer of the Perth Public Hospital and the doctor outside confer. If they recommend that the patient should be treated in this way, the department has this done and pays for it. A contract was made with Dr. Syme Johnson and Dr. Donald Smith, the only two medical men in Perth possessing deep therapy apparatus. The contract provides for the treatment of all such cases. A fair number have been treated, and I was anxious to obtain particulars of the results. I am glad to say that some of the cases have resulted satisfactorily up to date. In cases treated over two years ago there was, up to a recent date when inquiry was made, no recurrence of the growth. In other cases, which were treated just for the time being, there was regrowth, and the patients have passed away.

Mr. Sampson: I believe a certain percentage of cures has been recorded in Melbourne.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Not very many, I am sorry to say.

Hon. G. Taylor: The treatment has not proved a success.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: There have been some cures, however. In cases where the patient is unable to pay but is recommended as I have stated, the department find the necessary funds for treatment.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.13 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 10th November, 1926.

Question: Citizens' memorial ...	...	...	...	Page 2045
Bill: State Insurance, 2a. ...	...	...	...	2046

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

QUESTION—CITIZENS' MEMORIAL.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE asked the Chief Secretary: Seeing that a citizens' memorial, annexures, etc., sworn before, and approved by, the Federal Royal Commission in Perth, 20th March, 1925, was signed by many thousands of representative bodies and electors, and placed before that Commission facts which have been, and will be, beneficial to Western Australia; and since the memorial has been further supported recently by the resolutions of many municipal councils, road boards, and other bodies, will the Minister place copies of the memorial and resolutions on the Table of this House for the further information of this House, and of others in Western Australia and elsewhere?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: As these have been public property for so long, it is unnecessary to follow this course.

BILL—STATE INSURANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. EWING (South-West) [4.35] I have listened with great attention and an open mind to all that has been said by hon. members during the course of the debate on this Bill. I have given that attention to those who spoke for, as well as to those who spoke against, the legislation. I have arrived at a conclusion that is satisfactory to my own mind, but whether it will be satisfactory to that of others, is another question. The tone of the debate has been a high one, reflecting the greatest credit upon hon. members who have approached the question with an open mind and with a desire to do what is right in the interests of the State and of the miners suffering