

The HONORARY MINISTER: Unfortunately I have not that information with me. Since the line has been closed, a request has been received to transport some low grade ore secured by prospectors, but in view of the low rate obtaining and the cost of putting the line in proper repair, the request could not be acceded to. The Commissioner is not prepared to allow trains to run over this line without the expenditure of thousands of pounds to bring it up to standard, which would be an absolute waste of money. No member desires to have railway lines removed, but members generally will agree when I say it would be a calamity—

Hon. H. Seddon: Why do you not include other railways that are not paying?

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no necessity to do so at present. We are dealing with those about the non-utility of which we are convinced.

Hon. H. Seddon: What about the Sandstone railway?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I know nothing about it.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It does not pay for axle grease.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In regard to this Lakeside line, I with other members of the House do not desire to have railways removed if they are of any value at all to the community, but I think members will agree when I say that it would be nothing short of a calamity to involve the State in the expenditure of many thousands of pounds solely for the purpose of earning the little revenue that would be available if trains were run over these lines. It would also be equally disastrous to allow the rails to rot away for the sake of mere sentiment.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You have not included the Bunbury line. Are you retaining that for sentimental reasons?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is imperative that economy should be practised and for that reason the Bill has been introduced. The rails that will be obtained from the Kanowna line will be used again, whilst those on the White Hope line may also be used again for sidings, or may be sold. I commend the Bill to the House and hope that it will be passed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

House adjourned at 5.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 27th September, 1928.

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

QUESTION—LEPERS, BROOME HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: In view of the necessity for hospital accommodation for leper and suspected leper cases in the Broome district, will he consider the building of an isolation ward at the Broome hospital immediately?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: It is not advisable to make provision for permanently retaining leper cases at Broome. Such cases are transferred to the lazaret at Cossack as early as possible after diagnosis.

QUESTION—TIMBER ROYALTIES, GROUP SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. BARNARD asked the Premier: 1, Will he inform the House what amount of money has been collected in royalties from timber cut on group settlement locations between Busseton and Augusta? 2, To what purpose, or purposes, has such money been devoted?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The permits granted covered both Crown lands and lands under the Group Settlement Department. From these permits the amount of £68,647 16s. 4d. was collected in royalties. 2, Of that sum £44,076 8s. 2d. was credited to Forests Department revenue, and £24,571 8s. 2d. to group settlement expenditure.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Panton, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) and the member for Collier (Mr. Wilson) on the ground of ill-health.

BILL—FEEDING STUFFS.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (2)—REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

- 1, City of Perth Superannuation Fund.
 - 2, Dog Act Amendment.
- Adopted.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

Message from the Governor received and read transmitting the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1928-29, and recommending appropriation.

*Committee of Supply.***THE PREMIER AND TREASURER**

(Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.36]: I move—

That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole to consider the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ending the 30th June, 1929.

Waterside workers' dispute.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.37]: Before we carry this motion, I should like to speak about one or two very important matters that ought to receive the attention of this House. One is the trouble that has been precipitated at the waterside. I do not propose to discuss Federal Acts that have been passed recently. We are not called upon to approve or disapprove of any Acts passed by the Federal Parliament, but we are all expected to uphold the law of the land, be the law State or Federal. I hope to-day that we shall get from the Premier a little information about the present position. It is our duty to see that the law of the land is respected, and I should like to point out that the people who have most need of protection under the laws of the State are the very people that arbitration was intended to benefit. The waterside workers, as well as other unionists throughout Western Australia, should remember that almost everything they have received has come to them as a result of arbitration. I hope arbitration will always be the law of the land. I say that because I believe it is necessary for

the protection of the worker. I dare say there are other people who could do without arbitration, and there are some who would like to be in that position. I am not one of them. So I think it is our duty to encourage all sections of the people to obey the law. I suppose it is within the knowledge of every member of the House that recently what is known as the Beeby award was issued. It is the only award existing to-day to cover work at the waterside, and if any work is done at our ports it must be under the provisions of that award. While I know from the circular that has been issued by Mr. Fox—it is called "The Case for the Waterside Workers"—that the lumpers take exception to some provisions of the award, I suppose trouble will always be experienced in connection with arbitration matters when wages are reduced in any degree, and when conditions are made a little less favourable to the men than they were formerly. We must always realise that such variations will cause more trouble than anything else in connection with arbitration. If a measure is placed upon the statute-book of Australia, then I consider it is the duty of everyone to obey it. Most assuredly, if any of the provisions of an award are wrong, they should be rectified in a constitutional way. No one has the right to take the law into his own hands. We know the far-reaching effect of these disturbances. In Sydney, the men are working and I understand that in Adelaide they are working, too. The same applies to the position in Melbourne, although I confess it is a little difficult, from the published reports in the Press, to follow the details of the conditions that exist. We have a similar position in our own State, for we know that the men are working at Bunbury and Albany. They have said very definitely that they intend to work. I believe they were asked not to load boats that had left Fremantle for the southern port, but they replied that they intended to get on with the job. I am hopeful that the lumpers at Fremantle will resume work immediately. I think this is the proper time to mention the matter because I understand the Federal law, which will mean the calling in of free labour, is to be put into operation at Fremantle to-day. If the lumpers are wise, they will work under Judge Beeby's award. From the bottom of my heart I hope that they will. Of course we know what will follow if free labour is to be

called in. By the way, I do not think any section of the people have the right to hold up the business of this State, and just now our business is very important, much more important than at most times of the year. We have a great many men out of work, and they have been unemployed for some considerable time. Unless the ships are handled at the wharf side, so that our wheat and wool may be disposed of, the position will get worse. Our wool sales will have to be deferred, and already one has been postponed. That has meant that the sale of 20,000 bales of wool has been held up, which, in turn, means that between £300,000 and £400,000 will not be available for circulation within the State. The business of Western Australia will be tied up. The effect of that will be to add to the already very serious unemployment that exists in our midst to-day. That in itself is bad. Thus it is that all delays, particularly in the loading of ships, although it applies also to the unloading of vessels, mean more difficult times for everyone within the State. It is our duty to impress upon the people that the law of the land ought to be obeyed. It may be that we have to obey laws that we do not like very much, but if disrespect for the law is encouraged, where shall we be? We shall have anarchy, chaos and disaster. I do not know how it is that in Fremantle the men are not working. I understand that the head office of the union in Melbourne instructed that work was to be carried on at all ports. In these days, when every concern seems to be federated, our people are often led into trouble by unions whose head offices are in Melbourne, but in this instance I understand that instructions were issued that work was to continue. I again express the hope that wiser counsels have prevailed to-day. I understand that meetings have been held, and that the men will be urged to go back to work. In the meantime it is right that we should have something to say in regard to this urgent matter. It is a pity that other organisations have to take it upon themselves to do work that Governments ought to do. In this instance the bone of contention concerns a Federal award, and the Acts that are not being carried out represent Federal legislation. Although they are the Acts of the Federal Parliament, they are none the less the Acts of the people of Western Australia. We are the representatives of the citizens of this State, and

it is our duty, in common with the rest of the people, to do our best to see that laws are obeyed, and that these stoppages of industry are avoided altogether. We have had many stoppages on the waterfront from time to time, but none has been quite so serious as the present one threatens to be. The Premier was approached on the subject by the Prime Minister some time ago. It will be remembered that I asked for the file of correspondence between the Federal and State Governments in regard to the waterside workers' trouble. The file has come to hand, but all it contains is the telegram of the Prime Minister. I should like to read it—

Premier of Western Australia, Perth. The action taken by the Waterside Workers' Federation, because of their objection to some of the terms of an award given by Judge Beeby of the Federal Arbitration Court, is already resulting in holding up much of the shipping of the Commonwealth. As a consequence of this action by the federation, maritime transport is apparently again to be brought to a standstill and the trade of the Commonwealth dislocated, an action which will cause serious loss and suffering to thousands of our citizens. My Government feels that this unlawful and reckless abuse of power by the Waterside Workers' Federation constitutes a direct defiance of the community which cannot be submitted to by any self-respecting people. I have, on behalf of my Government, communicated with the representatives of the steamship owners calling upon them to make the necessary arrangements for carrying on the industry in the terms of the award made by the Arbitration Court, and assuring them that the Commonwealth Government will do its utmost to maintain law and order by prosecuting those who unlawfully interfere with the peaceful carrying on of the transport industry of the Commonwealth. If the interference with the legitimate trade and transport of Australia continues, I propose to advise the Governor-General to issue a proclamation under the Crimes Act declaring the existence of a serious industrial disturbance prejudicing trade and commerce with other countries and among the States. I will take this action in order to arm the Government of the Commonwealth with fullest power possible under the law and in order to protect the interests of the people. Recognising the serious results that this disastrous strike must have upon the industries of your State and the well-being of its citizens, I appeal for the full co-operation of your Government, and especially ask that due protection be given to all those citizens who are prepared to carry on the work of the maritime transport industry under the terms of the award made by the Arbitration Court—a court that has been established by the free will of the people of Australia, expressed through their Parliament. I am addressing the Premiers of the other States of the Commonwealth in similar terms. S. M. Bruce, Prime Minister.

Mr. Angelo: What is the date of that telegram?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The 12th September. I am very sorry the Premier did not see fit to send a reply to the Prime Minister. I hope he will tell us to-day that law and order will be maintained. That, of course, is our duty, as the authority controlling the police force. The necessity for it has not arisen at our port yet, and I hope it will not arise, but I suppose it will arise if free labour be called to the wharf. The best way to avoid it is for the waterside workers to go back to work and accept the award. No one can have any sympathy with the waterside workers unless they do stand by the law of the land and accept the award. I do not say that the award is perfect, but if there is anything wrong with it, there are constitutional means of getting it redressed. It is a pity that from time to time and frequently, too, we have these disturbances, and yet we allow the Arbitration Act to remain the law of the land. Every member of this House, I venture to say, agrees that the Arbitration Act should remain on the statute-book, because we believe in it and particularly because we believe it is necessary for the protection of the workers. It is necessary for the protection of the workers, and may it always be the law of the land; but that ought to be recognised by the workers themselves and the law ought to be obeyed. I realise there is no power on earth that can make a man work if he does not wish to. You cannot chain him to his work; it would not be wise to do it if you could. You cannot keep him at this job or at that job, but the least we can say to the workers is that if they elect to work in this calling or in that calling, and arbitration has fixed the conditions of employment, wages and hours, they must obey the law. I have brought this matter under the notice of the House to-day because I hope that by doing so we shall be doing something to bring about a better state of affairs. I repeat, it is extraordinary that the men at Bunnbury and Albany are working while amongst those at Fremantle the trouble continues. The Fremantle men ought to be working, too. I am not in a position to know what has happened to-day, but it is my duty to say I hope the men will be back at work before free labour is invited. I know full well that the Government have no power to bring that about,

any more than I have, but I hope they will be found expressing their disapproval of the present position of affairs, and particularly do I hope the Premier will express his disapproval of the men's disobedience of the law of the land. I hope, too, the Premier will say there was never a time when he was not prepared, through the police of the State, to maintain law and order. Of course it is possible for the Commonwealth Government to appoint its own police, but to do so would be an unfortunate state of affairs. Quite apart from that, I hope in this law-abiding country, law and order will be easily maintained and no trouble will be experienced in that respect. I have no objection to the passing of the motion as moved by the Premier, but I do wish to ask the Premier to tell us why the telegram was not answered, and especially to express his views on the refusal by people engaged on a very essential service in connection with the transport particularly of our produce to obey the law of the land.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.53]: Before the Premier replies and before the motion to go into Committee to consider the Estimates of expenditure is put, I should like to say a few words. I listened carefully to the Leader of the Opposition when he dealt with this important matter. He referred to the essential services of the country and the asking for free labour. Whatever views other people may hold, I say that this disturbance will never be satisfactorily settled by the calling of free labour—no matter how that labour be protected for the moment—to carry out the work until the unionists have been convinced that they have been defeated.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not suggest that it should be done, of course.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have had some experience of strikes, and I know something of the bitterness that is engendered by the employment of free labour. I suggest that any individuals who have banded together in an association to get free labour should select their free labourers from the people that do not ordinarily follow manual labour and who are not compelled to belong to an industrial union. Let the managers and heads of departments go to the wharf and do whatever lumping is necessary while the trouble lasts. I say that

with a full knowledge of what it implies. They may think it their duty to get free labour to work on the wharf, and in view of the large number of men genuinely out of employment—men not at all associated with the waterside workers—it may be an opportune time to get free labourers on the wharf. I would warn people inclined to offer their services not to accept the conditions if they have to follow labouring work afterwards, because it leaves a bitterness that will not be wiped out in the lifetime of the individuals concerned, and sometimes the bitterness follows even to another generation. We know what happened in 1917. We know the number of men that went to the rescue on the Fremantle wharf in that year. We remember the loyalty that was expressed and the sentiment that was aroused regarding the war and the need for shipping food for our soldiers. But how were those men who went to the rescue treated subsequently by those whom they had served? The waterside workers went back to the wharf, while the free labourers who had shown their loyalty and done good service were neglected by those for whom they had done that service.

The Premier: It has always been so.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It has always been so, and I speak with knowledge arising from an association with unionism for nearly half a century. It appears that that state of affairs will continue. I warn people not to accept the conditions because, no matter how stringent the Federal Acts recently passed may appear to be and no matter how the law may be tightened up to prevent people doing things that straightforward union men think should not be done, there is no law to protect the free labourers afterwards, and I advise such men not to accept the conditions. I do not know what my friends on your right, Mr. Speaker, think, but that is my opinion. I do not care what my friends on your left may think. I am considering the unfortunate men who, through straitened circumstances, may feel impelled to jump at this opportunity to get work. Such a position should not be forced upon them. As I said before, the people who should do the work indicated by the Essential Services Association are people who do not follow labouring work for a livelihood. Let such people do what is considered essential, and not induce men, who are perhaps hungry, to ac-

cept a job and then be left at the mercy of the unionists.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—in reply) [4.59]: I do not know that the Government can be of any assistance in the situation as it exists at present. I do not know whether the Government or this Parliament really comes into it. It is a pity that the men have gone on strike, and that work has been held up on the waterfront. I think the men would be well advised, in their own interests as well as in the interests of the country, to resume work.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is right.

The PREMIER: I do not see that the Government can do anything in the matter. The telegram sent by the Prime Minister really did not call for any reply. It was merely an intimation to the Government that a strike had taken place on the waterfront at various ports in Australia, and indicating the action the Federal Government proposed to take to meet the situation. Of itself it did not call for any reply; none was needed. I do not see that the Government are called upon to take any action, or that we are in a position to take any action at present. I agree entirely with the view expressed by the member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor), namely, that our experience of industrial trouble in Australia goes to show that the employment of free labour has been disastrous in many ways.

Hon. G. Taylor: In every way.

The PREMIER: The after effects of it have been such as to maintain bitterness for many years. As the hon. member remarked, the bitterness has been maintained for the lifetime of those who have taken part in it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot surrender in all circumstances.

The PREMIER: It has had this effect, too—those who engage in free labour ought to be aware of it—that employers themselves in Australia have turned down free labour after it has served the purpose.

Hon. G. Taylor: I have seen them starving in the streets.

The PREMIER: Free labour has to be avoided if it is possible to do so. I hope the men will, in the very near future, see the wisdom of viewing the situation in the light that a lot of the men in other ports

of Australia, namely in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, have viewed it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They should obey the law.

The PREMIER: I agree that all laws should be obeyed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Especially the arbitration laws.

Hon. G. Taylor: You cannot make them obey the law.

The PREMIER: What is to be done? I understand that the men will meet again to-morrow morning.

Hon. G. Taylor: And wise counsels will, I hope, prevail.

The PREMIER: I hope at any rate that the result of the meeting will be a settlement of the trouble. It is necessary that the trouble should be settled, but I do not see that we can be of any service, or that there is anything the Government can do in the matter at this stage.

Mr. Mann: The Premier and his Ministers may have some influence with these men.

The PREMIER: We have not been idle in the matter.

Mr. Mann: I know.

The PREMIER: We have not been idle during the last few days. So far as it has been possible to assist towards a settlement we have been doing so. I can only express the hope that the trouble will be settled within the next day or two. In the meantime I do not know of any effective steps we can take to bring about a settlement.

Question put and passed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1928-29.

In Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER

(Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.7]: Last year's financial results proved not to be as satisfactory as was expected. The revenue was slightly below expectations, the collections having been £69,647 short of the estimate. The expenditure also was lower than was estimated, but not sufficiently to counteract the falling off of revenue. I budgeted for a small surplus of £34,199, whereas the year ended with a deficit of £26,466. The

difference, however, between the actual result and the estimate was, on the whole not very great. Last year's receipts amounted to £9,807,948, compared with the estimate of £9,877,596, leaving a shortage on the estimate as stated of £69,648. This was due principally to two causes. There were, as usual, many discrepancies between the estimated figures and the actual figures, but with two exceptions they were almost all of a minor nature. The income tax was £66,403 below what was expected, and the railways were £54,701 below expectations. The railways offset their shortage by a reduction of £29,416 in their expenditure. It was not, however, possible to keep this expenditure down sufficiently to compensate fully for the falling off of revenue. The return from income tax continued to be disappointing. As I have mentioned, these receipts were £66,403 below the estimate, whilst the corresponding shortage on the estimate for the previous year was £54,473. There was a falling off in the actual collections for last year of £22,000 as compared with the previous year. It is difficult to understand the reason for this, in view of the increased dividend duty and other forms of direct taxation. It is admitted on all hands that the State is progressing, and one would naturally expect that this would be reflected in the income tax return.

Reduced Income Tax Receipts.

Although large reductions in rates were granted a few years ago, these should have been offset to a considerable extent by the growth of the public income. One reason given for the falling off in revenue and income tax is that many businesses are forming themselves into companies.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The high taxation of the Commonwealth and State makes a difference.

The PREMIER: The high taxation by the Commonwealth.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not know about that. We are getting our share, too.

The PREMIER: It is undoubtedly a fact that not only the firms but individual traders and business people are forming themselves into companies in order to avoid the higher taxation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you go on with the Profiteering Bill, they will all have to do that to keep out of prison.

The PREMIER: No. What I have stated is the reason given by the Commis-

sioner for Taxation, and it appears to be largely due to that fact. I have had the figures of new companies registered for the past few years, and they show a very great increase in the last year or two over the average for previous years.

Mr. Mann: Do you think that reason is sufficient to make up such a big loss as £60,000?

The PREMIER: What I have said, I am advised, is mainly the cause of it, namely, the formation of companies, and the increasing number of companies seems to bear out that contention. It is interesting to note that the returns last year from income tax and dividend duty, combined, failed to cover the cost of education. In other respects the collections compared favourably with the expectations. There were, as usual, many variations between the estimate and the actual expenditure for last year, but the total came within the estimate. The estimated expenditure was £9,843,397, while the actual expenditure was £9,834,415, or a saving on the estimate of £8,982. The details of the savings will be found in the returns. On the whole, the estimate was very close to the actual result. The increase under the head of "Treasury" is due to the payment of interest on overdrafts in London. The education expenditure was increased by a reclassification of the staff, and the schools, as well as by an increased number of schools opened. Public utilities were below the estimate to the extent of £29,416. This was due largely to the falling off in the railways returns.

Expenditure kept down.

Strenuous efforts have been made to keep down the expenditure. All requests are carefully scrutinised, but we have reached the stage when further economies are very difficult to effect. I am afraid we must be prepared to face increased expenditure in the near future. An analysis of last year's expenditure discloses the extent to which we are committed without any possibility of doing anything to reduce it. Under special Acts, over which we have absolutely no control, there was an expenditure of £3,490,062. Under public utilities, which vary in proportion to the extent of services rendered, and where our control is limited accordingly, the expenditure was £3,733,527. Governmental expenditure amounted to £2,610,826. This last is a field over which we operate. If we eliminate

the domestic or free services, we find that under the heading of Education the expenditure was £668,686, under Medical and Public Health £200,893, Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief £106,352, Lunacy £101,918, Police £220,511, Gaols £25,712, and Aborigines £11,626; making a total of £1,335,698 for those free services. The balance, ordinary Governmental expenditure, represents £1,275,128; and that is the section over which the Treasury exercises a rigid control.

Education.

A head of expenditure which occasions me, as it has occasioned other Treasurers, considerable concern, is that of education. In the last two years alone it has increased by £73,477—from £595,209 to £668,686. It is almost impossible for a layman to say what should be done with regard to expenditure on education.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Since 1919 it has increased from £366,000 to £697,000.

The PREMIER: Yes. It has practically doubled since 1919.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But the children are there, and I believe this expenditure is the best investment we can make.

The PREMIER: Yes, provided that we are getting value for the money, and that it is being expended in the best directions. The item is one which we cannot curtail; we can only see that as far as possible the best results are obtained from it. It is, however, a huge expenditure for our limited population.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, undoubtedly.

The PREMIER: It is a very large sum indeed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The increased expenditure is due to the increase of population.

The PREMIER: Yes, to increase of population, erection of new schools, and larger attendances at existing schools. I do not know that it would not be better to vote a lump sum on the Estimates for education, instead of doing as we do now, setting out specific items. Under existing conditions I have to grant excesses upon particular items if necessary, without being able to effect any reduction in other items.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The increase is inevitable in a new country. People will have children, and they will start new centres here and there.

The PREMIER: But the question is whether we are getting the best results. There is also the question whether, instead of setting out the items as they are now itemised annually, we would not do better to fix a lump sum and let those who are responsible make the best use of it.

Mr. Latham: You think they might keep within the vote instead of exceeding it?

The PREMIER: I think they might keep within the total of the vote. One would then know what was the amount of money that would have to be found for the year.

Mr. Latham: But you would be asked to excess the total amount.

The PREMIER: The figures mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition show that during the past eight or nine years the total expenditure on education has doubled. That is, naturally, a serious matter for the Treasurer. The Education Department is not one upon which we can attempt to exercise retrenchment, or more economy than would be fully justified.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot reduce the number of schools, and you cannot reduce the standard; so where are you?

The PREMIER: That is so, except that there may be a difference of opinion as to the age at which children should commence going to school.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is difference of opinion as to that.

The PREMIER: It is a fact that to-day the schools in some respects are nurseries. Children begin going to school at four or five years old, and accommodation has to be provided for them, and teachers to instruct them have to be paid, and there are all the other incidental expenses, whereas in the opinion of some people, at any rate, the children would be better at home for another year or two.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is so.

The PREMIER: My own view—I may be wrong—is that a year put on to the end of the child's school life, say from 14 to 15, is worth three or four years at the beginning of the school life. Children have then sufficiently developed their intellects to acquire knowledge which will remain with them for the rest of their days.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But then you must meet the added cost.

The PREMIER: Yes, but to an extent it would be offset.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not much.

The PREMIER: Not fully, but to an extent, if the commencing age were raised by one year.

Hon. G. Taylor: Say to seven years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would not make much difference, because the teachers who have charge of the small children are not highly paid.

The PREMIER: The small children require accommodation and tuition, and in these days all teachers are well paid. In that respect the position is not as it was some years ago. Even teachers on the lowest grades are well paid. Now, that is the position with regard to education.

Public Utilities.

The expenditure on public utilities, although below the estimate, was higher than that for the previous year. For 1926-27 the amount was £3,478,994, and for last year it was £3,733,527, showing an increase of £254,533. The increase was only to be expected, for these concerns increase with the growth of population. We must meet the public demand in those respects. Railways, naturally, have shown the greatest increase, £218,356. Tramways £18,558 and Electricity Supply £19,467 are the other principal increases. Apart from the instances which I have quoted, there is not, on the whole, a great variation between last year and the previous year.

Estimated Revenue and Expenditure.

For the current year I expect to receive revenue amounting to £10,222,712, and to have an expenditure of £10,317,010, leaving a deficit on the year's transactions of £94,298.

Hon. G. Taylor: You still like a small deficit?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Your land revenue is down by £40,000.

The PREMIER: That is due to the £40,000 which was paid for the State Savings Bank site going into revenue last year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you took it out again.

The PREMIER: Yes. It swelled land revenue to that extent, and that accounts for what is apparently a drop this year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You must have increased land revenue.

The PREMIER: A feature about land revenue is that the older conditional purchase blocks are in many cases going off,

while the new ones do not pay anything for five years. So there is a tendency for land revenue to fall in that respect.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But revenue from sales of blocks made five years ago are coming in now.

The PREMIER: Yes, but the sales of 15 years ago are going out as the holders clear off their liabilities. The comparatively small deficit is the result of having to provide for additional interest and sinking fund payments amounting to £226,542, whilst at the same time receiving a lesser recoup from moneys advanced. But I can assure the House that expenditure has been curtailed in every direction possible. Special circumstances are responsible for increases in many directions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are we lending a larger proportion of the money we borrow? We cannot be if we are not getting the recoup.

The PREMIER: There has been a considerable reduction in recoup from groups. The work of all the departments is increasing throughout the State, and consequently the expenditure keeps mounting.

Hospitals.

Of new hospitals in country districts there are a considerable number, and there has also been extension of the accommodation in existing hospitals. There is the new infirmary at the Old Men's Home, representing a capital cost of £14,000, and there is the Point Heathcote Reception Home, to be opened in a week or two, which represents a capital cost of £60,000. Then there are the increases in cost of maintenance represented by these new institutions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is loan expenditure, of course.

The PREMIER: Yes, but there are interest and sinking fund in respect of that loan expenditure, besides operating costs. Indeed, for the remainder of this year I have to provide £4,000 for maintenance of the Point Heathcote Reception Home. It is estimated that the home will cost £10,000 a year to carry on.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There will be revenue from it.

The PREMIER: I do not think the revenue will be much. I believe it will be very little. So that whilst the State is moving forward in the matter of providing highly necessary institutions of this kind,

the burden on the Treasurer is made heavier because of the cost of maintenance after the institutions have been established.

Country Water Supplies.

During the past two years the expenditure on country water supplies has amounted to £277,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is from loan.

The PREMIER: Yes, but it means increased interest and sinking fund payments.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This is 1 per cent. money.

The PREMIER: Not all of it. There has been quite a large expenditure on country water supplies as compared with past years. Whilst the capital expenditure is from loan, we have to meet interest and sinking fund charges upon it.

Mr. Latham: The settlers will pay it back.

The PREMIER: We hope they will, but much of the expenditure on country water supplies is bringing in no revenue at all, as the hon. member knows.

Mr. Latham: Surely the settlers pay interest and sinking fund.

The PREMIER: The same remarks apply to interest on loan expenditure under the Federal roads scheme. That expenditure for the past two years has been £463,000, quite exceptional expenditure that has come into existence only during recent years. There is again the interest upon it to be found.

Miners' Phthisis Act.

Moreover, payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act have increased. On this year's Estimates we have to find £40,000 for compensation to persons under the Miners' Phthisis Act. The actual expenditure for last year in this connection was £38,000. It will be understood that that expenditure has nothing to do with what is known as miners' complaint, which is met under the Workers' Compensation Act. This expenditure refers to tubercular men.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Government are responsible for them.

The PREMIER: Yes. They are men who have been taken out of the mines, and who have to be compensated. There are also weekly payments to the widows and children of men who have passed away. Under that heading alone I have to find, as I say, £40,000 this year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Two thousand pounds more than last year.

The PREMIER: The amount has been increasing each year.

Hon. G. Taylor: And that will continue for some time.

The PREMIER: To a point, and then it should begin to decline. To date, ever since the Act was proclaimed, this expenditure has been an annually increasing one.

Hon. G. Taylor: There was a big accumulation of tubercular men.

The PREMIER: That is so. Many of them are not able to undertake any work at all.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They must be looked after.

Hon. G. Taylor: And it is money well spent.

The PREMIER: It is a social obligation.

Hon. G. Taylor: Despite all we have done, there are still some who have been left out.

The PREMIER: That is so. At any rate, that is the position we have to face.

Police Force.

Additions to the police force have involved us in an increased expenditure of £8,201. Last year, speaking from memory, 20 new men were taken into the police force, and provision has been made this year for the addition of another 20 men. Of course, that is necessary because of the growth of the population and the development of the State. The more we progress in those directions, the more necessary it becomes to provide new police stations and additional members of the police force, not only in the country districts but in the towns.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will be pleased to know that it is raining from here to Quairading.

The PREMIER: Yes, I will take this opportunity to announce that I have just received a telegram saying that rain is falling at Northam, York, Quairading and Bruce rock and, in fact, throughout the whole of the wheat-growing areas.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sampson: Perhaps you feel like recasting your figures and budgeting for a surplus.

The PREMIER: I am afraid not.

Centenary Celebrations.

This year I have made provision for the expenditure of £10,000 in connection with the Centenary celebrations.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is that all?

The PREMIER: That is all for this year. I expect there will be a very considerable expenditure next year, as many items under that heading will have to be met subsequent to June next. I am hopeful of being able to get through this year with an expenditure of £10,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will not do so!

The PREMIER: I expect a further £10,000 will be necessary next year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you will get £100,000 at least in revenue out of the celebrations.

The PREMIER: How?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: By means of the railways, for instance.

The PREMIER: So far, everyone is asking for free services! Naturally that will involve us in increased expenditure. Every one coming from various parts of Australia is wanting free services and no charges!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you going to give all that?

The PREMIER: To some extent, yes; but I am sitting tight against a good deal of it. If I did not do so, we would probably find the whole of the railway system running free during the celebration weeks.

Automatic increases.

There have been increases in the rates of pay to civil servants, teachers and other classes of employees.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are those the automatic increases?

The PREMIER: Yes, but some have been paid apart from the automatic increases. The latter are increases within a certain range. We have granted increases each year between the minimum and the maximum, up to the maximum of the officer's classification.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That system has become automatic.

The PREMIER: Yes, it has. However, many of the officers are on the maximum now, because these automatic increases have been proceeding for some time past. This all means increased expenditure.

Suspended Sinking Fund Payments.

In addition to providing for increased interest and sinking fund payments, I have again set aside £350,000 pending the finalisation of the Financial Agreement.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Does that represent all we ought to pay but are not paying?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I thought it was £500,000.

The PREMIER: No, £350,000. We have now set aside £850,000. During the first year the amount set aside was £150,000. Last year we set aside £350,000, and this year we are again setting aside £350,000. That makes a total of £850,000 set aside so far.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I thought you said it was £500,000 when we were discussing the Financial Agreement.

The PREMIER: I think not.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think that was the figure, but there may have been some local figures included.

The PREMIER: The total was built up in other directions, but that is the total amount we have set aside in respect of payments that would have been made into the sinking fund. That total represents sinking fund payments and interest that we cannot finally deal with until the Financial Agreement has been adopted. The result of the referendum should be known by the end of November, and I hope it will then be possible to bring down supplementary estimates to appropriate that amount of £850,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are optimistic!

The PREMIER: Perhaps so. After the Financial Agreement has been endorsed by the people of Australia, we shall be able to deal with the position, but in the meantime the money will be held in suspense.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Mr. Scullin is going to knock out the Financial Agreement. What are you going to do about it? You will need to have a go at him.

Estimated Revenue.

The PREMIER: The estimated revenue for the current year shows an increase over that of the previous financial year of £414,764. This is less by £30,735 than the increases in respect of the public utili-

ties alone. The estimated receipts under the various headings are—

—	Estimated for this year.	Collected last year.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Taxation ...	1,318,920	1,296,358	22,562	...
Territorial ...	548,500	611,121	...	62,621
Departmental, etc.	1,668,683	1,669,530	...	2,947
Commonwealth	811,446	809,061	2,385	...
Public Utilities	5,739,895	5,294,306	445,499	...
Trading Concerns	187,368	127,482	9,886	...
Total ...	10,223,712	9,807,948	414,764	...

It will be seen, that we estimate increased revenue under the heading of "Taxation" to an extent of £22,562, and a decrease of £62,621 under the heading of "Territorial," which represents, of course, land revenue. There is also an estimated decrease of £2,947 under the heading of "Departmental, etc."; an increase of £2,385 from the Commonwealth; increased revenue amounting to £445,499 from Public Utilities, and an increase of £9,886 from the State Trading Concerns. It will be noted that this year we expect to pass the £10,000,000 mark in connection with our revenue. Of the total revenue, the Public Utilities account for more than half, and that serves to show what an important place they hold in our State financial operations. The railways, of course, represent the most important contributor under that heading. Ordinary Governmental revenue, which includes everything outside of the public utilities and trading concerns, shows a decrease of £40,621. There was, however, a special payment on account of the State Savings Bank last year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Was that the sale of the site?

The PREMIER: Yes. That represented a special payment of £40,000 for the block of land where it is proposed to erect the new State Savings Bank buildings. Omitting that item, the position is practically the same as it was last year. The increase of £22,562 under the heading of "Taxation" is due to stamp duty, £17,264, and land tax, £12,094. It is expected that the dividend duty tax will return £14,940 less than last year. There are but little variations in the other items. Departmental revenue shows a decrease of £4,965, which is the net result after allowing for increases in

many departments. These have principally resulted from losses of interest on Group Settlement expenditure. There was also a considerable reduction under this heading last year as compared with the previous year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are charging up interest against the scheme?

The PREMIER: Yes, but on a very much reduced basis this year. That has made the financial position much more difficult.

Mr. Davy: The position is the same, but it looks worse.

The PREMIER: The position is sound; it looks worse, and actually is worse.

Mr. Davy: You are showing the position in its true light.

The PREMIER: The position is difficult as yet. We do not know how the groups will pan out from the capital cost point of view. We know there will be considerable losses, and we shall endeavour to meet them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You pay 1 per cent. on a great proportion of the money borrowed.

The PREMIER: Yes, but it runs into more than that when it is worked out. The revenue returns from the timber trade are not expected to be as great as those of last year to the extent of £22,527. Over-production not justified by market conditions has caused a depression in the trade which, we hope, will be merely temporary. As I have already stated, revenue under the heading "Departmental" has been adversely affected by losses in connection with the group settlements.

Commonwealth Grants.

The revenue under the heading of "Commonwealth" shows a reduction of £19,708, the amount receivable under the Surplus Revenue Act. This is due to the amount received last year having been paid under the schedule of the States Grants Act, the Financial Agreement Act not having been assented to at that time. The amount provided by means of the Financial Agreement, namely, £473,432, was based on the amount paid for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1927. The amount provided in the schedule of the States Grants Act, £483,750, was based on the per capita payment of 25s. per head on the estimated population

as at the 31st December, 1927. Payment has been made under the latter measure, and we received £10,318 more than we would otherwise have secured. The necessary adjustment is being made in the amount to be received this year. The payments of interest on account of transferred properties have been affected in the opposite way. The amount received last year was at the old rate of interest, $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., instead of at 5 per cent. Arrears amounting to £11,046 have been received this year.

Public Utilities.

The increased revenue from our public utilities is estimated to amount to £445,499 and this amount is largely due to the railways, from which we expect to derive an additional £364,701. Traffic over our railway system is steadily growing, and from the indications to date, I think it is safe to assume that we shall have a great increase in wheat traffic this year. The revenue of the Metropolitan Water Supply shows a substantial increase to the extent of £35,100. This, of course, is due to the increased population of the metropolitan area and to the extensions of the sewerage system. It is expected that the Electricity Supply Department will return £24,560 more in revenue than last year. The demand for power is rapidly increasing, and I am advised by the general manager that another unit is necessary. When we were faced three or four years ago with the expenditure of about £300,000 for additions to the power station, I thought sufficient provision would have been made for a number of years. Although we have only just completed the additional unit to the power plant, the general manager has made a request for further additions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This is about the third time.

The PREMIER: Yes

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And it will go on till the cows come home.

The PREMIER: I do not see any end to it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course, as Perth grows the demand will increase,

The PREMIER: Yes, the demand for current for power and lighting purposes must increase, while there is also a continual demand for the extension of electricity

supplies to the suburban and country centres. Then with the increase in the number of manufactories, we must expect a greater demand for power, and this will mean an additional expenditure in that direction.

Mr. Mann: That is a better sign than if the units at the power house were idle.

The PREMIER: Quite so. At any rate, the returns from the public utilities are growing steadily year by year.

Estimated Expenditure.

The estimated total expenditure for this year under all heads amounts to £10,317,010 which represents an increase over the expenditure of last year of £482,595. This increase has been spread over the three divisions of the Estimates!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a very good job it is raining!

The PREMIER: It is. Under Special Acts the increase is £214,798, Governmental £6,668, and Public Utilities £261,128 or, as I have said, a total increase over last year's expenditure of £482,595. Under Special Acts we have to provide £3,704,860 under Governmental £2,617,494 and under Public Utilities £3,994,656. Those are the three divisions of the Estimates. Over the first, the Special Acts, we have absolutely no control. There we have nearly three and three-quarter millions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is all past borrowing.

The PREMIER: Yes. Nothing can be done with that.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, thank God it is raining again.

The PREMIER: The increased payments this year in interest and sinking fund on the loan floated in London at the end of last year amount to £130,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We shall have to stop this blessed borrowing.

The PREMIER: It is a serious matter. When one comes to make up the Estimates, there is brought home to one the necessity for limiting our loan expenditure to the lowest possible amount consistent with the development of the country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Interest-earning money is all right.

The PREMIER: But of course a proportion of it is not interest-earning, al-

though in the main it is. Other parts of it will be interest-earning in later years, but for the time being they are not so. The total increase in the year's interest is £214,881 and in sinking fund £11,661—together, a pretty substantial sum. Over Public Utilities there is very little control except that exercised in insisting on strict economy. But as the demand grows, so the expenses of meeting that demand must also grow. I can assure the Committee that every effort is being made to keep expenditure within revenue. These Public Utilities, serving a particular portion of the community, ought to be self-supporting. For it is not desirable that other people who do not come within the sphere of a public utility should have to make up a loss upon it. On the other hand, it is not desirable that there should be undue profits made out of public utilities.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There need not be much fear of that.

Railway Expenditure.

The PREMIER: I have already referred to the anticipated increase in the revenue of the Railways. But that increase is offset by increased expenditure, estimated to amount to £221,215.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is affecting the running of the railways.

The PREMIER: Yes, the working of the railways. The relation of expenditure to revenue in the Railway Department is very constant. If the traffic is not so great as was expected and in consequence the revenue falls, so does the expenditure decrease, although not quite in the same ratio. That is to say, the expenditure does not come down exactly in the same ratio, but approximately it does.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The reverse obtains when revenue goes up.

The PREMIER: It is about 60 to 40. If we put on £100,000 worth of revenue, we have to increase expenditure in the proportion of about 40 to 60.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you were to lose £100,000 of revenue, the expenditure would not come down proportionately.

The PREMIER: Not to the same extent, but the department are able to reduce expenditure if there should be a falling off in revenue.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Our railways are jolly well managed—the best in Australia.

The PREMIER: Yes, they are showing good results, far and away the best in Australia. Under the heading "Governmental," the increase is slight. Each of the departments' expenditure is kept as low as possible, but it is very difficult to control the domestic departments. Of the total amount of £2,617,494 provided under Governmental, this section, the domestic section, free services, absorbs £1,370,682. It is £34,984 above last year's expenditure, and this large sum does not include interest on money expended on buildings. Each of these departments shows an increase. The whole of the collections under Taxation, it is interesting to note, fall short of the cost of these free service departments, Education, Public Health, Police, Lunacy, Gaols and Aborigines. The whole of the collections from taxation does not meet the cost of these free service departments. I have already referred to Education, and I need not go over the ground again, but there is there an increase for the year of £10,008, and there is also an increase of £8,201 for additional police.

Loan Expenditure.

The loan expenditure for the year amounted to £4,680,260.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the largest yet, is it not?

The PREMIER: Yes. It is £567,206 more than in the previous year. But not the whole of that sum was actually expended, for the transfer of the State ships to loan, the writing off of works on the State ships, accounts for £419,000 of the total expenditure set out in last year. So actually the amount that was expended within the State was very little in excess of the previous year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The writing down in respect of the State ships could not be avoided.

The PREMIER: The old system was not fair to the shipping people. It made the ships' results show in a wrong light. That was the reason for it. Development of Agriculture was the principal head of expenditure. I think it is right that it should have been so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is from loan.

The PREMIER: Yes. From loan expenditure last year there was spent on the assistance to settlers £1,641,092.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is including group settlers.

The PREMIER: Yes. Then there was £806,895 for Railways, £144,551 for Tramways and Electricity Supply, £336,745 for Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage, and £287,584 for roads and bridges. Then, of course, there was a large number of lesser items. We provided £50,000 for additional capital for the Workers' Homes Board. The increase in the State's agricultural development naturally causes an increase in loan expenditure. Then, too, Public Utilities must be expanded as the demand increases. Public Utilities being a State function, the responsibility of providing additional capital for them falls on the Government. It is desirable that we should spend only such loan moneys as we have to. But the development of the State must continue. It would be a false policy to refrain from borrowing and expending money if by so doing we should restrict the development of the State. We are now at the stage where we are expanding, growing, and there is need on all hands for the expenditure of money, on assistance to settlers, the building of railways, the construction of roads, improvements to harbour accommodation, and the provision of water supplies. All those things that are essential to primary production and the development of the State, call for the expenditure of considerable sums of money. We have the advantage that a fair proportion of those works will be constructed with cheap money. It is a big saving to get money at 1 per cent. for five years and at 2 per cent. or a little less for the next five years. Spread over the whole 10 years, it means a big saving in interest, amounting to a very considerable sum of money. So I think there is justification for our borrowing and spending the money, provided always that we get value for the money.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We must get 20s. worth for 20s.

The PREMIER: Yes, provided that so far as possible it is expended on reproductive works, on works that will be interest-earning and at the same time will develop the country. Personally, I should like to see the whole of the money, or as great a proportion of it as possible, expended in the country districts. Then it would open

up our territory and help in the production of wealth, which of itself would bring prosperity to the State and to all sections of the community. That, I think, should be one of our guiding principles: the expenditure of money to enable people in the country to produce more and so benefit all concerned. But that is not possible, because in this State the Government have undertaken to do many of the things that in other countries are done by private enterprise, and in some of the other States are carried out by trusts and boards apart from the Government. But here the obligation of providing all the money required for every kind of public utility falls upon the Government and so our borrowings appear to be large. Although it has frequently been pointed out in this House that comparisons cannot be made between our borrowings per head of population and those of the Eastern States, it is well nevertheless that we should repeat it. At various times I have noticed statements made by people in the Eastern States in which they have compared our annual expenditure of loan money per head of population with that of other States and on their conclusions we appear to be the greatest borrowers in the whole world. Those people, however, did not take into account the large undertakings and public utilities which in the Eastern States are not charged up to Government borrowing. I believe the capital expenditure on the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works for water supply and sewerage runs into nearly 30 million pounds. That amount does not appear in the public debt of Victoria, but all our expenditure on water supplies and sewerage for Perth and Fremantle has been incurred by the Government and does appear in our public debt.

Hon. G. Taylor: It might be wise to try to alter that.

The PREMIER: The harbour works of Victoria have been carried out by a harbour trust with separate borrowing powers and this expenditure does not appear in the public debt of that State, whereas the cost of all our harbour works, not only the expenditure on Fremantle, but that on Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton and other harbours appears in our public debt. Consequently, no comparison that would be fair to this State can be made of the per capita expenditure of loan moneys here and in other States.

Loan Flotation.

The loan raisings during the year comprised £3,000,000 raised in London in April, £2,468,096 received from the Commonwealth Government for migration, etc., and £353,393 representing small local raisings less redemptions, making a total for the year of £5,821,589. When we raised the £3,000,000 we intended to ask for only £1,500,000, but our London advisers informed us that the market at the moment was so favourable that we ought to ask for £3,000,000.

Mr. Latham: It turned out to be good advice.

The PREMIER: Yes, because the amount was over-subscribed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A part of the £5,800,000 representing the total flotation was required to pay off the previous year's overdraft.

The PREMIER: Yes; and of course the £3,000,000 loan came in near the end of the financial year and we are carrying on with that money now.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think you have much of it left.

The Premier. A large portion of it had to go to meet the overdraft in London. It pays the State to finance on an overdraft because we get the money from the London and Westminster Bank at a rate of interest a point less than we would have to pay if we borrowed the money. So it pays us to work on a large overdraft. Sometimes our overdraft mounts up to nearly £2,000,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: More than that.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether it has ever exceeded £2,000,000, but we have been up to that figure. The accommodation that the bank gives in this respect has been most helpful to the State. Shortly before and after the raising of our loan, other States and the Commonwealth went on the market and a large proportion of their loans was left with the underwriters. Hence it is satisfactory that ours was over-subscribed. It shows that Western Australia should continue to borrow in London in its own name, which it will be able to do in future as in the past.

Hon Sir James Mitchell: I do not think it will under the Financial Agreement.

The PREMIER: I knew that was in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition.

Deficiency.

During the year the balance of the unfunded deficit was wiped off by the amount of £200,000 which was placed in suspense for that purpose two years ago. That is the £200,000 we received from the Commonwealth as a disabilities grant. The deficit unfunded at that date, amounting to £157,540, has been transferred to the suspense account and extinguished, leaving a credit balance of £42,460. After setting off last year's deficit of £26,466 against the surplus of £28,245 in the previous year, there remains a small credit of £1,779 on that account.

Railways, Tramways and Electricity Supply.

The railways had a most satisfactory year. I need not stress the important part the railways play in the finances of the State. They dealt with a record harvest and it is only natural that in the circumstances the year should also have been a record one for the railways in both revenue and expenditure. The total revenue for the railways reached £3,845,299 and the expenditure amounted to £2,903,084. Consequently, there was a substantial balance after meeting working expenses towards the payment of interest and sinking fund. There was more than sufficient to cover the interest charges, but not the sinking fund. The capital account was also increased and now totals £22,000,000. Thus about one-third of the public debt of the State is invested in our railways.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are worth far more than that.

The PREMIER: Yes, double that, I should think.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes.

The PREMIER: The interest bill of the railways amounts to £920,569 and the mileage now open is 3,977 miles. Considerable additions were made to the rolling stock during the year and the work of re-grading and ballasting was continued. Full details are given in statements Nos. 15, 23 and 24 of the operations on working account for the year. The tramways business continues to increase. Both earnings and operating costs were much above those of the previous year. Earnings were greater by £24,406 and the expen-

diture increased by £18,558. The earnings per car mile were higher and the car mileage increased by 193,000 miles. At present there are approximately 36¼ miles of tracks open for traffic. The total capital expenditure on the tramways has reached £1,060,247. Statement No. 16 furnishes information of the operations during the past six years. The electricity supply continues to expand. The capital of this department is now £992,395. New plant was completed during the year and further extensions are being asked for. There was an increase of 6½ millions in the units sold last year, and the department showed a satisfactory profit of approximately £10,000.

Metropolitan Water Supply.

The metropolitan water supply is another rapidly expanding undertaking, the capital of which, including sewerage and drainage, is £4,413,000. I am glad to say that much of our summer trouble has been overcome. There has been a great improvement in the supply and its consumption last year constituted a record. The Churchman's Brook reservoir has been completed and many large mains have been laid. Further extensions are being continued.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is it good water?

The PREMIER: Yes, except for a little colouring in it, due to the rust in the pipes. That cannot be avoided.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The rust has only started lately.

The PREMIER: All the new pipes being laid are lined so that the next generation will not have to put up with the discomfort of discoloured water.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How many pounds of rust to the square inch do you get?

The PREMIER: I do not know. I wish we could charge for the rust, but I do not think it registers in the meter.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes, it does.

Mr. Lindsay: It is said to be good for the human system.

The PREMIER: All the authorities agree that the discoloration is not detrimental to the water, though it may be to the work of the good lady responsible for the washing. From the health point of view we are informed that the rust is not harmful.

Mining.

The production of gold and other minerals, unfortunately, continues to decline. The year's production was as follows:—

	£
Gold	1,734,571
Coal	407,967
Other minerals	59,899
Total ..	£2,202,437

This was less than the production of the previous year by £169,427. I am pleased to say that the outlook for mining is better than it has been for some years. With the prospects at Wiluna and the experiments that have been made in treatment on the Golden Mile, there is to-day a degree of confidence in mining circles that has not existed for many years. It is felt by the people of the goldfields that the downward trend has been arrested for the time being at any rate. The continual decline over many years has had a very important effect on the State's affairs, while the much reduced number of men employed in the industry has affected all sections of the community, although people living in Perth or in centres far removed from the goldfields may not be aware of that fact. It has probably also been a factor in creating the difficulty of finding employment for many of our people. The number of men engaged in the industry has declined considerably, but at present there is a feeling of stability that is very hopeful.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Record Season.

The PREMIER: With regard to our agricultural development, it is of course a mere platitude to say that our future is largely bound up in this direction, particularly in the production of wheat and wool. As hon. members are aware, the season was a record one, and owing to the unfavourable season in Eastern Australia, our State was last year the biggest producer of wheat in the Commonwealth. The harvest totalled 35,134,156 bushels, or 5,112,540 bushels above the previous record. That is a very fine performance indeed.

Members: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It is well to remember at the same time that our sheep increased during the year by 1,000,000, the total in

the State now being 8,447,750. The wool production was 59,525,989 lbs., or over 9,000,000 lbs. above the highest previous yield. That, too, was a very fine performance.

Dairy Produce.

It is particularly pleasing to note that dairying is improving. This is a direction in which we have been somewhat backward during the whole of our existence. Dairy produce has increased tenfold since 1914. The figures are worth quoting. In 1914 there were 451,000 lbs. of butter produced, and last year, 14 years later, the weight produced was 4,500,000. In the same period the production of cheese increased from 1,675 lbs. in 1914 to 164,000 in 1927. Bacon increased from 112,400 lbs. in 1914 to 1,990,000 lbs. in 1927. These figures at a glance will indicate the great advance that has been made in our dairying industry in the past 14 years. That is one of the directions in which it was essential the State should make progress, having regard for the large amount of money that goes out of the State every year for dairy produce. With the development of the groups, if fairly settled, we should be within measurable distance of meeting our own requirements in this direction, as we are doing in other directions.

Lands Department activities.

For the Lands Department the year has been a particularly busy one. Land has been in greater demand than in any previous period. The area applied for under conditional purchase was 3,165,579 acres. Pastoral leases were applied for to the extent of 15,599,452 acres. Considerable progress has been made in the surveying of blocks. A classification of the country between Lake Hillman and the Geraldton-Cue railway, and from Pindar to Ejanding, is proceeding. The land to be served by the Mollerin Eastward railway, the Bill for which was recently passed through this House, and from Lake King northwards to East Kalgarin has been subdivided, and a large area has been thrown open. Altogether extensive classifications and surveys are in hand. Furthermore, 2,285 miles of wire netting were supplied to settlers, all of which indicates the development of the State, especially in the agricultural areas.

Agricultural Bank.

The operations of the Agricultural Bank were expanded considerably during the year. The loans authorised amounted to £585,625, and the advances to £539,054, bringing the total of advances made by the bank since its inception to £6,649,385. These figures will serve to indicate the great part the bank has played in the settlement and development of our agricultural areas. The balances outstanding at the bank at the end of the year were in principal £3,731,219, and in interest £334,104, making a total outstanding with principal and interest of £4,065,323. The authorised capital of the bank is 4½ millions, and it will be necessary during the year to increase it. It is the intention of the Government to bring down a Bill for a further authorisation of £1,000,000 of capital.

Mr. Brown: Will the bank make advances on light land?

The PREMIER: I cannot say, but I am sure it will be a lower amount than on first class land. Is the hon. member thinking of taking up land again? I think perhaps it might be well if our farmers who are already established endeavoured to farm light lands with their own capital. It would be better for them.

Mr. Brown: But there are poor people taking up light land.

The PREMIER: I do not know that it is desirable for poor people to take up light land only.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They want the best land.

The PREMIER: Yes. They cannot afford to take the risk that a man who is established on the land can take.

Mr. Brown: Some of the best crops in the Corrigin district have come off light land.

The PREMIER: No doubt. In some seasons we do get excellent crops off light land, but it would not be wise to rush in and say the farming of all light land is a profitable venture for people without capital, who have no first-class land and only light-class land.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You must give them the best land you have got.

The PREMIER: We will need to be careful about that.

Mr. Brown: Light lands do not cost so much for clearing.

Mr. Mann: And they do not produce so much.

The PREMIER: Yes, but there are handicaps associated with light lands.

Mr. Griffiths: They are of such a varied character.

The PREMIER: These handicaps may perhaps more than balance the light cost of clearing. I do not think the hon. member would advise new settlers without capital to rush into light land.

Mr. Brown: Many have no alternative, because it is the only land they can get.

The PREMIER: It might be better to go without land than to rush into something which can only mean failure. I do not think it is a wise alternative to do something that is not justified.

Mr. Brown: It is at all events half a loaf.

The PREMIER: If the half-loaf proved to be indigestible, and caused ill-health and perhaps death, it would be better to leave the half-loaf alone. That may be the case with light land for those who have no capital.

Mr. Brown: No. Some of our light lands have grown better crops than have been grown on heavy land.

The PREMIER: Some of our light lands sometimes will grow better crops than heavy land will sometimes grow. There is no doubt about that. It would be wise to go carefully in that direction.

Soldier Settlement Scheme.

The advances made last year under the soldier settlement scheme amounted to £107,225, bringing the total of advances under the scheme to date to £5,816,244. Repayments during the year totalled £124,035, and since the inception of the scheme they have amounted to £1,170,677. The writing off of bad debts has not yet been finished, so that further losses may be expected.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have a good fund to meet any losses.

The PREMIER: Yes. It will be remembered that the Federal Government appointed a Commission to inquire into the losses on soldier settlement with a view to giving relief to the State Governments. The Commissioner was in this State some little time ago and took evidence, but I have not yet heard the result of his investigations.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have a good fund in hand.

The PREMIER: In any case, soldier settlement in this State has been fairly sound in comparison with that in the other States. Practically all the States, particularly Victoria, have made tremendous losses, and are seeking relief from the Federal Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And they will get it, too.

The PREMIER: I think so. I am not optimistic about Western Australia getting very much as the result of the inquiry that has been made by the Federal Government, but I think Victoria will be able to make out a good case, and possibly some of the other States as well.

Mr. Griffiths: Our soldier settlement comes out on top of the lot.

The PREMIER: I think it does.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Easily.

The PREMIER: Of the soldiers who have been settled, most of those who are in the wheat belt have done well, and many of them exceptionally well.

Mr. Lindsay: There has not been much writing down in the wheat belt; I think £16,000 in all.

The PREMIER: No, wherever there have been unsuccessful soldier settlements they have been in the South-West.

Mr. Sampson: There are some splendid fruit-growing soldier settlements in the Piesse's Brook area.

The PREMIER: I believe there are some very good blocks there. Those who are engaged in soldier settlement, whether here or in the Eastern States, and are connected with the dried fruit industry, have been unfortunate. That is where heavy losses have been made. This is particularly noticeable in South Australia and in Victoria on the soldier settlement along the Murray River, owing to the low prices that have obtained for such produce.

Mr. Sampson: And the dumping of Californian dried fruits.

The PREMIER: The competition has been very severe.

Industries Assistance Board.

The Industries Assistance Board has been continuing as usual, but we are not, as I stated a few evenings ago, taking any new clients. The amount advanced during the year was £713,197, and the amount repaid was £994,013, so that the repayments exceeded the advances by a considerable sum. The total of the advances by the Industries Assistance Board under the Act is

£12,086,604, undoubtedly a huge figure. However, the State has been repaid in other directions. Apart from that aspect, the total repayments to the Board amount to £10,676,402.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That money has all created wealth.

The PREMIER: Yes. There still remain on the books of the Industries Assistance Board balances amounting to £1,697,616.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That includes soldier settlers.

Mr. Lindsay: It also includes other industries besides farming.

The PREMIER: Yes, but not to any great extent.

Mr. Griffiths: Pearling, for instance.

The PREMIER: There has been a little assistance to pearling, and a little to mining, and some to secondary industries.

Mr. Mann: Probably enough to account for the deficiency.

The PREMIER: I think not. The advances in those directions have not been great. Mainly, the advances have been to farming.

Mr. Lindsay: And to butter and bacon factories, freezing works and so on.

The PREMIER: Probably. It might run into a couple of hundred thousand pounds. Certainly, the amount is not great. Moreover, there have not been advances in those directions for the past two years; or, at all events, very small advances. Assistance has been given to secondary industries; which it was sought to establish in the city. Eventually the deficiency under the Act will be fairly heavy, but in the circumstances in which the Industries Assistance Board was established it was almost inevitable that losses should occur. Indirectly at any rate, the increased wealth produced will fully compensate the State for any losses made. The Act was essential, and excellent work has been done under it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But for the Industries Assistance Board the State would have lost far more on Agricultural Bank securities.

The PREMIER: The Industries Assistance Board last year handled 3,000,000 bushels of wheat and this year assisted settlers to crop 406,000 acres. In so far as the board's activities decrease, the better will it be for the State and for all concerned. On the whole we can congratulate ourselves on having experienced a fairly successful and prosperous year. All the

indications are fairly set for another good season, when we should easily increase our wheat yield by a quantity equal to last year's increase, and our wool production should also advance. Given these things, and the careful expenditure of public

moneys to open up new areas for settlement and production, the future of the State should be assured. I move the first Division of the Estimates, namely—

Legislative Council, £1,700.

Progress reported.

[Return No. 1.]

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, 1927-28, COMPARED WITH THE ESTIMATE.

REVENUE.

		£	£
The Treasurer's estimate for the year was	...	9,877,596	
The actual amount received was	...	9,807,949	
Or a total net over-estimate of	...		69,647

EXPENDITURE.

The Treasurer's estimate for the year was	...	9,848,897	
The actual amount expended was	...	9,884,415	
Or a net over-estimate of	...		8,982

DETAILS.

HEADS.	REVENUE.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Over- Estimate.	Under- Estimate.	Over- Estimate.	Under- Estimate.
	£	£	£	£
Taxation—				
Land Tax	...	2,906	...	...
Income Tax	66,403	...	...	...
Dividend Duty	...	14,940	...	...
Totalisator Tax	...	1,770	...	...
Stamp Duty	...	7,756	...	...
Probate Duty	...	1,452	...	...
Licenses	...	457	...	...
Commonwealth	1,304	...	...	...
Territorial, etc.—				
Sandalwood	...	48,484	...	...
Land	...	5,283	...	...
Mining	...	2,112	...	...
Timber	41,458	...	...	...
Law Courts	...	122	...	...
Royal Mint	640	...	...	...
Special Acts—				
Interest	...	...	...	1,267
Sinking Fund	...	...	2,029	...
Forests Act	...	...	...	12,418
Pensions	...	...	...	5,211
Residue	...	...	16,108	...
Departmental—				
Parliamentary	...	...	...	163
Premier	1,834	...	...	8,040
Treasurer	15,127	...	...	32,574
Minister for Forests	...	1,920	...	207
Minister for Lands, Immigration, and Industries	...	8,805	5,959	...
Minister for Justice and Police	...	1,917	2,022	...
Minister for Mines	...	1,307	...	16,017
Minister for Agriculture	...	2,151	1,526	...
Minister for Public Works and Labour	3,099	...	21,798	...
Chief Secretary	...	1,843	3,132	...
Minister for Education	...	315	...	6,497
Minister for Public Health	...	3,488	1,817	...
State Trading Concerns	19,756	...	...	...
Public Utilities—				
Aborigines Cattle Station	...	2,081	989	...
Albany Cold Stores	...	...	250	...
Bunbury Harbour Board	4,750	...	...	...
Fremantle Harbour Trust	...	57	...	...
Goldfields Water Supply	5,091	...	...	8,860
Government Refrigerating Works	...	29	...	...
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs	255	...	228	...
Metropolitan Abattoirs	...	6,197	792	...
Metropolitan Water Supply, etc.	...	20,900	479	...
Other Hydraulic Undertakings	...	1,903	4,931	...
Perth City Markets	...	120	1	...
Railways	54,701	...	29,416	...
Tramways	...	7,438	2,435	...
Electricity Supply	2,580	...	1,033	...
State Batteries	...	1,321	1,067	...
Cave House	...	772	...	786
Totals	216,978	147,331	96,007	87,025
Net Under Estimates		£69,647		£8,982

[Return No. 2.]

REVENUE.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS FROM 1919-20 TO 1927-28 AND ESTIMATE FOR 1928-29.

Heads.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.	1925-26.	1926-27.	1927-28.	Estimate, 1928-29.
TAXATION—	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Land Tax ...	46,416	57,791	42,649	79,983	71,449	113,867	145,830	147,415	162,906	176,000
Income Tax ...	271,386	334,320	320,874	390,003	502,265	478,642	566,344	345,527	828,897	325,000
Dividend Duty ...	144,748	244,969	177,005	189,087	216,895	237,467	265,895	273,613	324,940	310,000
Totalisator Tax ...	45,911	57,448	57,792	64,411	53,910	52,905	54,529	54,553	58,770	60,000
Stamp Duty ...	173,543	177,404	164,923	173,463	194,176	204,109	231,407	252,693	270,756	288,020
Probate Duty ...	121,951	42,406	76,817	45,997	66,969	68,114	84,635	66,306	81,452	84,400
Licenses ...	40,243	41,020	41,194	54,654	67,904	68,927	69,410	71,176	73,937	76,500
Total ...	844,197	955,358	881,159	987,553	1,173,568	1,224,080	1,418,050	1,211,843	1,296,358	1,318,920
TERRITORIAL AND DEPARTMENTAL—										
Land ...	330,740	342,362	338,729	311,380	330,234	334,109	336,791	350,531	395,282	355,000
Mining ...	24,050	24,103	22,929	19,880	17,376	16,328	16,306	16,689	18,312	19,000
Royal Mint ...	37,818	23,005	24,446	22,898	16,397	24,294	18,231	15,271	15,800	16,000
Timber ...	54,010	70,796	73,529	72,095	115,047	151,787	188,641	183,602	197,027	174,500
Departmental Fees, etc.	601,724	808,261	910,857	1,046,008	1,086,279	1,236,240	1,415,714	1,636,768	1,602,548	1,597,533
Law Courts ...	23,497	25,210	26,353	28,609	30,070	33,978	37,568	45,441	51,122	53,000
Commonwealth ...	598,273	598,834	583,767	583,166	585,728	588,184	588,510	1,153,132	809,061	811,446
Total ...	1,669,612	1,888,176	1,980,610	2,084,032	2,181,126	2,436,870	2,601,761	3,401,524	3,089,712	3,026,529
PUBLIC UTILITIES—										
Harbour Boards ...	157,687	185,470	178,188	168,223	224,850	262,124	245,263	279,034	265,307	280,000
Railways ...	2,275,426	2,688,611	2,805,335	2,886,370	3,189,894	3,334,008	3,317,140	3,574,269	3,835,299	4,200,000
Tramways ...	187,709	225,000	248,924	263,668	275,402	282,413	287,774	295,032	319,438	332,000
Batteries ...	49,087	69,467	57,663	56,891	39,235	17,816	27,336	21,921	19,196	16,725
Avondale, Harvey, Bucklands, and Yandooka Estates ...	13,865	12,020	7,543	4,943	2,966	...	...	...	...	...
Water Supply and Sewerage, etc. ...	361,533	402,354	406,151	416,033	424,835	441,962	469,519	498,272	523,712	566,000
State Dairy Farm ...	2,844	3,250	2,514	a	a	a	a	a	a	...
Refrigerating Works, etc. ...	32,138	35,735	40,016	43,918	32,120	24,669	56,569	59,654	61,732	53,170
Cave House, etc. ...	11,079	13,884	14,432	13,576	18,680	14,011	16,190	16,279	17,272	20,000
Electric Works ...	62,972	95,350	119,120	128,938	162,796	186,887	205,073	221,221	247,440	272,000
Butter Factories ...	18,717	27,548	17,766	17,187	17,310	18,329	16,224	4,577	...	...
Total ...	3,174,087	3,768,680	3,893,291	4,000,147	4,388,088	4,677,204	4,640,108	4,970,269	5,294,396	5,739,595
TRADING CONCERNS ...	175,805	187,342	152,047	135,755	122,813	143,342	148,247	167,707	127,482	137,368
GRAND TOTAL ...	5,363,501	6,789,586	6,907,107	7,207,492	7,866,595	8,381,446	8,808,166	9,750,833	9,307,948	10,222,712

a. Included in Departmental.

[Return No. 3.]

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FROM 1920-21 TO 1927-28, AND ESTIMATE FOR 1928-29.

Head.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.	1925-26.	1926-27.	1927-28.	Estimate 1928-29.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Special Acts	2,416,555	2,644,300	2,702,793	3,081,350	3,362,720	3,592,273	3,602,450	3,490,083	3,704,860
Parliamentary and Executive Council	11,350	11,423	12,258	11,855	12,568	13,557	13,901	13,954	14,090
Premier	2,343	2,227	2,168	2,358	2,399	2,549	2,608	2,516	2,530
His Excellency the Governor	12,502	12,032	14,190	12,817	11,973	12,256	12,572	13,344	13,280
London Agency	3,498	2,563	2,701	2,569	1,374	1,345	1,873	1,573	1,528
Public Service Commissioner	2,590	1,703	2,193	1,063	3,947	5,534	5,838	5,478	7,491
Government Motor Cars ...	78,868	71,881	68,270	63,389	62,875	64,946	67,053	67,929	71,333
Printing ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	1,579	1,738	1,934	2,182
Tourist and Publicity Bureau	8,900	9,250	9,250	9,250	9,200	9,707	11,115	11,321	11,958
Literary and Scientific ...	11,567	14,909	14,677	13,882	13,169	13,518	13,516	19,830	20,595
Treasury	11,597	12,818	11,701	11,830	12,772	12,431	13,876	13,534	14,440
Audit	8,460	4,984	2,509	3,976	5,425	5,216	7,441	5,591	1,907
Compassionate Allowances	30,470	31,798	38,150	32,356	34,589	38,404	44,413	48,361	52,539
State Savings Bank	15,580	21,480	15,878	16,015	16,511	16,337	16,996	17,076	17,029
Government Stores	33,372	14,486	13,200	13,835	14,341	13,937	30,224	30,212	30,000
Taxation	4,048	6,047	11,366	12,353	12,014	12,659	13,722	17,212	17,854
Workers' Homes	77,373	117,156	104,229	149,410	117,766	86,394	230,328	511,881	435,446
Miscellaneous and Refunds	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,550	3,164	3,559
State Accident Insurance Office	...	...	...	1,065	1,437	1,088	1,168	1,176	1,215
Council of Industrial Development	90,182	108,192	101,056	100,897	82,963	72,689	885,005	72,191	72,539
Commonwealth Grants ...	11,763	13,207	13,199	9,787	...	...	...	69,141	72,539
Lands and Surveys	53,134	61,016	68,804	89,865	82,398	83,511	83,061	79,514	80,851
Settlement for Soldiers ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agricultural Bank and L.A. Board	...	...	...	8,401	9,865	9,243	10,825	12,978	14,075
Group Settlement ... ..	...	...	...	8,430	5,786	4,904	5,728	5,914	6,065
Immigration	73,551	67,010	67,817	63,002	61,481	68,492	86,190	102,066	104,976
Mines, Explosives, Geological, etc.	16,129	16,439	15,246	15,835	17,816	23,191	23,192	24,081	24,445
Forests	65,863	58,973	56,398	58,657	63,225	73,865	77,963	85,881	94,582
Agroforestry	87,186	78,077	76,810	82,334	80,715	81,932	94,233	90,321	87,413
College of Agriculture ...	174,829	178,005	175,332	180,079	187,240	209,459	215,908	220,511	228,712
Crown Law and Branches	123,938	93,587	76,042	87,220	89,538	82,688	88,971	89,668	113,001
Police ... ..	...	...	...	5,336	6,251	7,415	10,228	12,310	14,432
Public Works	c37,718	c34,814	c32,277	c27,110	c23,584	c29,308	c30,478	c31,165	c30,857
Labour	10,423	10,244	6,108	6,623	8,899	4,615	5,562	11,626	12,376
Office of Chief Secretary ...	...	...	...	5,414	5,485	5,211	5,443	5,385	5,839
Aborigines	28,984	26,088	24,022	23,195	28,366	23,351	25,400	25,712	26,491
Fisheries	22,479	22,073	20,466	20,213	21,690	22,290	23,082	22,429	23,194
Gaols	97,422	89,840	87,847	88,813	97,085	99,487	102,653	101,918	106,805
Harbour and Light and Jetties	88,221	93,563	95,626	95,623	100,499	109,220	108,425	108,352	109,828
Lunacy	197,640	180,093	181,277	181,018	196,357	205,573	199,895	200,894	206,176
Charities and State Children	490,160	556,029	568,183	560,458	585,465	595,209	647,061	668,685	678,604
Medical and Health	270	2,942	20,989	21,813	19,005	23,229	...	...	...
Education	Department of the North-West	2,012,320	2,049,278	2,026,554	2,127,346	2,126,794	2,170,143	2,785,715	2,772,055
Department of the North-West	2,012,320	2,049,278	2,026,554	2,127,346	2,126,794	2,170,143	2,785,715	2,772,055	2,786,962
Total, Departmental...	2,012,320	2,049,278	2,026,554	2,127,346	2,126,794	2,170,143	2,785,715	2,772,055	2,786,962
PUBLIC UTILITIES.									
Aborigines Cattle Station...	11,314	12,030	10,560	7,643	6,074	6,232	7,254	6,079	7,158
Butter Factories	29,503	15,073	16,483	18,607	13,088	14,673	4,537	...	...
Water Supply	284,485	281,846	275,447	283,598	284,102	291,053	299,819	307,184	318,520
Refrigerating Works, etc.	29,576	31,647	24,987	24,568	25,070	31,180	32,592	30,130	33,048
Railways	2,427,075	2,337,391	2,210,851	2,307,380	2,361,760	2,519,712	2,684,728	2,903,034	3,125,000
Tramways	168,284	202,995	207,542	225,678	226,362	4,332	234,508	253,065	260,000
Electricity Supply	83,088	85,784	81,557	116,154	136,731	147,634	172,000	191,467	200,000
State Batteries	66,221	84,891	72,140	36,889	28,359	29,215	29,317	27,712	27,105
Cave House	13,115	d14,176	d18,841	d14,412	d14,610	14,379	14,139	14,815	14,825
Avondale, Harvey, and Yandooka Estates	6,022	3,882	1,678	1,702	...	...	...	...	...
Total, Public Utilities	3,145,173	3,059,815	2,925,025	3,038,819	3,090,196	3,233,710	3,478,094	3,733,526	3,904,056
Less Debates, etc.	7,574,058	7,753,702	7,744,372	8,242,515	8,578,710	9,051,126	9,877,159	9,995,644	10,466,478
Total	97,767	114,460	131,516	147,763	138,866	143,817	154,571	161,229	169,468
Total	7,476,291	7,639,242	7,612,856	8,094,752	8,439,844	8,907,309	9,722,588	9,834,415	10,317,010

a Includes transfer from Miscellaneous.

b Includes £45,071 for loss on operations Royal Commission Control of Trade.

c Includes Registry, Friendly Societies, Correspondence Despatch, and Observatory, and Labour Bureau.

d Includes Tourist and Publicity.

[Return No. 4.]

STATEMENT SHOWING ANNUAL SURPLUSES AND DEFICIENCIES OF CONSOLIDATED
REVENUE FUND, ALSO ANNUAL AGGREGATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 1900-01
TO 1927-28.

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Annual.		Aggregate.	
			Surplus.	Deficiency.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
Balance, 30th June, 1900 ...	£ ...	£ ...	£ ...	£ ...	£ 12,372	£ ...
1900-01 ...	3,078,033	3,165,244	...	87,211	...	74,839
1901-02 ...	3,658,049	3,490,026	168,023	...	123,184	...
1902-03 ...	3,630,238	3,621,763	108,475	...	231,659	...
1903-04 ...	3,660,016	3,698,311	...	148,295	83,364	...
1904-05 ...	3,815,340	3,745,225	...	129,885	...	46,621
1905-06 ...	3,568,939	3,632,318	...	73,379	...	119,900
1906-07 ...	3,401,354	3,490,183	...	88,829	...	208,729
1907-08 ...	3,376,641	3,379,006	...	2,365	...	211,094
1908-09 ...	3,267,014	3,368,551	...	101,537	...	312,631
1909-1910 ...	3,657,670	3,447,731	209,939	...	...	102,692
1910-1911 ...	3,860,439	3,734,448	115,991	...	13,299	...
1911-1912 ...	3,966,673	4,101,082	...	134,409	...	121,110
1912-1913 ...	4,596,669	4,787,064	...	190,405	...	311,515
1913-1914 ...	6,205,343	6,340,764	...	135,411	...	446,926
1914-1915 ...	6,140,725	6,706,541	...	565,816	...	1,012,742
1915-1916 ...	6,356,978	6,705,201	...	348,223	...	1,360,965
1916-1917 ...	4,677,007	5,276,764	...	699,757	...	2,060,722
1917-1918 ...	4,622,536	5,328,279	...	705,743	...	2,766,465
1918-1919 ...	4,944,851	5,596,966	...	652,015	...	3,418,480
1919-1920 ...	5,863,501	6,531,725	...	668,225	...	4,086,705
1920-1921 ...	6,769,666	7,476,291	...	686,725	...	4,773,430
1921-1922 ...	6,907,107	7,638,242	...	732,135	...	5,505,565
1922-1923 ...	7,207,492	7,612,856	...	405,364	...	5,910,929
1923-1924 ...	7,865,595	8,094,753	...	229,158	...	6,140,087
1924-1925 ...	8,381,446	8,439,844	...	58,398	...	6,198,485
1925-1926 ...	8,808,166	8,907,309	...	99,143	...	6,297,628
1926-1927 ...	9,760,833	9,722,588	28,245	...	...	6,266,383
1927-1928 ...	9,807,949	9,834,416	...	26,466	...	6,206,849

[Return No. 5.]

SYNOPSIS AND BALANCE SHEET AT 30TH JUNE, 1928, AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

	1924.		1925.		1926.		1927.		1928.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
DR.										
Westminster Bank, Ltd. ...	210,000	0 0	a		445,000	0 0	b		c	
Consolidated Revenue Fund									1,778	17 4
Sinking Fund ...	9,831,824	0 0	10,017,509	12 5	10,652,929	7 3	9,129,910	0 0	9,250,811	2 8
General Loan Fund ...	2,046,097	11 6	571,425	6 7	113,965	12 11	...		...
Australian Wheat Board									7,698,784	14 5
State Savings Bank ...	5,967,586	12 8	5,978,002	3 9	6,460,884	14 1	6,986,310	0 0	7,698,784	14 5
Insurance Companies Act, Deposits	260,000	0 0	275,000	0 0	290,000	0 0	290,000	0 0	295,000	0 0
Trust and Deposit Accounts generally	2,937,385	11 7	2,918,238	18 11	3,450,491	19 1	3,855,680	0 0	4,332,084	2 1
	20,752,843	15 9	19,760,176	1 8	21,413,271	13 4	20,261,880	0 0	21,578,458	16 1
CR.										
Investments ...	16,226,637	6 5	16,860,165	1 8	18,350,203	10 1	17,313,298	0 0	17,881,787	19 1
Stores on hand ...	810,263	12 11	801,794	8 3	725,078	6 9	826,418	0 0	934,846	16 7
Treasurers' Advances, and other Advances	214,642	17 0	261,660	11 8	582,347	0 1	432,686	0 0	343,174	6 10
General Loan Fund ...							292,936	0 0	947,260	17 7
Cash in hand—										
Treasury ...	4,128	1 11			22,541	4 11	...		15,849	12 7
Wheat Certificates										
General Account with Bank	614,894	5 0	811,664	9 4	730,651	13 10	170,358	0 0	287,555	5 9
State Savings Bank Account	476,508	2 4	516,703	15 10	320,151	8 8	207,949	0 0	361,889	4 6
Fixed Deposits with Bank					300,000	0 0			250,000	0 0
Government of South Australia							600,000	0 0	250,000	0 0
Government of Victoria									105,258	17 4
Eastern States ...	197,439	18 11	29,100	16 5	151,357	16 2	90,957	0 0	4,871	1 9
London ...	6,780	17 10	12,164	3 1	2,952	8 11	2,187	0 0		
Remittances and Drafts in transit	2,064	2 9	2,866	17 3	37,745	5 9	61,350	0 0	51,058	7 5
Consolidated Revenue Fund	2,053,382	15 1	58,397	9 2	157,540	8 4	129,296	0 0		
Deficiency Account ...	141,363	7 5	403,509	17 10	15,892	12 9				
Sundry Debtors, etc.	4,538	8 2	2,248	11 2	7,809	17 0	128,452	0 0	145,761	7 8
	20,752,843	15 9	19,760,176	1 8	21,413,271	13 4	20,261,880	0 0	21,578,458	16 1

a £2,340,000 incorporated with General Loan Fund. b £1,465,000 incorporated with the General Loan Fund.

c. £10,000 incorporated with General Loan Fund.

[Return No. 6.]

STATEMENT SHOWING RECEIPTS FROM COMMONWEALTH FROM 1909-10 TO 1927-28.

Year.	Payment per Head, 25s.	Special Payment to W.A.	Interest on Transferred Properties at 3½ per cent.	Disabilities Grant.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£
1909-10 ...	703,723a	...	Nil	...	703,723
1910-11 ...	569,578a	...	Nil	...	569,578
1911-12 ...	365,614	232,265	40,648	...	638,527
1912-13 ...	332,691	222,554	30,465	...	635,610
1913-14 ...	400,855	212,751	27,358	...	640,964
1914-15 ...	403,772	203,127	24,388	...	631,287
1915-16 ...	398,076	193,544	24,485	...	616,105
1916-17 ...	386,008	183,974	24,485	...	594,467
1917-18 ...	386,779	174,350	38,110	...	599,239
1918-19 ...	391,809	164,696	29,163	...	585,668
1919-20 ...	414,068	154,937	29,268	...	598,273
1920-21 ...	419,448	145,287	29,099	...	593,834
1921-22 ...	418,966	135,738	29,063	...	583,767
1922-23 ...	423,193	126,038	28,955	...	583,186
1923-24 ...	442,269	116,301	27,153	...	585,723
1924-25 ...	455,155	106,589	26,391	...	588,135
1925-26 ...	466,229	96,890	26,391	...	589,510
1926-27 ...	473,432	87,207	26,588	565,905	1,153,132
1927-28 ...	b 483,286	...	25,775	300,000	809,061
Totals ...	8,388,851	2,556,248	487,785	865,905	12,298,789

a Surplus Revenue returned.

b Special payment under States Grants Act.

[Return No. 7.]

LOAN AUTHORISATIONS AND FLOTATIONS.

							£	£
Authorisations to 30th June, 1927	...	...	...	...	...	...	79,072,629	
Do. 1927-28	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,014,961	
Total Authorisations								84,087,620
Flotations—								
General Loans	...	...	...	...	...	...	45,578,253	
Local Debentures	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,741,400	
Local Inscribed Stock	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,270,457	
Treasury Bills	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,118,304	
Treasury Bonds and Inscribed Stock under Deficiency Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,329,487	
Commonwealth Advances	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,564,940	
								80,602,841
Balance available for Flotation								3,484,779
Actual Loan Indebtedness—								
Gross Debt on 30th June, 1927	...	...	...	...	...	...	70,606,175	
Flotation during year—								
Inscribed Stock, London, 5 per cent.	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,000,000	
Treasury Bonds	...	...	...	...	...	...	135,937	
Local Treasury Bills	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,625	
Local Inscribed Stock (5 and 5½ per cent.)	...	...	...	...	...	...	401,105	
Debentures (5½ per cent.)—Commonwealth Loans	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,099,791	
Commonwealth Advance (Migration and Wire Netting)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,368,305	
								76,622,938
Less Redemptions—								
Debentures, Loans, 1881-4 (Crown Agents), 4 per cent.	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,600	
Treasury Bonds	...	...	...	...	...	...	70,200	
Treasury Bills	...	...	...	...	...	...	70,639	
Debentures (Commonwealth, from Sinking Fund)	...	...	...	...	...	...	47,735	
								195,174
								76,427,764
Less—								
Sinking Fund (as on 31st March)	...	...	...	...	...	...		8,890,080
Net Indebtedness, 30th June, 1928								67,528,884
Net Public Debt per head of Population on 30th June, 1928								
Do.	do.	do.	1927	...	...	...	168	16 0
Do.	do.	do.	1926	...	...	...	168	4 4
Do.	do.	do.	1925	...	...	...	148	2 2
Do.	do.	do.	1924	...	...	...	148	7 6
Do.	do.	do.	1923	...	...	...	142	9 6
Do.	do.	do.	1922	...	...	...	137	1 0
Do.	do.	do.	1921	...	...	...	*124	15 11
Do.	do.	do.	1920	...	...	...	119	7 3
Do.	do.	do.	1919	...	...	...	116	7 0
Do.	do.	do.	1918	...	...	...	118	0 8
Do.	do.	do.	1917	...	...	...	116	5 5
Do.	do.	do.	1916	...	...	...	109	19 9
Do.	do.	do.	1915	...	...	...	101	12 10
Do.	do.	do.	1914	...	...	...	94	4 11
Do.	do.	do.	1913	...	...	...	85	17 2

* NOTE.—Compared with the previous year, £2 16s. 11d. of the increase is due to an adjustment in the figures of the population at the Census.

a Includes surplus of £55,821, under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Act, 1924.

[Return No. 8.]

LOAN FLOTATIONS, DEBT AND EXPENDITURE ON 30TH JUNE, 1928.

Works and Services.	Flotations.	Actual Indebtedness on Works.	Actual Cash spent.
	£	£	£
Railways, Tramways, and Electricity Supply	25,139,491	24,453,074	23,743,851
Harbours and Rivers	5,534,208	5,254,392	5,125,795
Goldfields Water Scheme	2,903,078	721,751	2,689,824
Water Supply Generally	4,293,022	4,280,516	4,017,597
Sewerage	1,748,287	1,745,657	1,691,630
Erection of State Batteries and Treatment Plants	335,030	334,691	319,517
Development of Goldfields	2,179,492	2,152,540	2,033,479
Development of Agriculture	3,888,087	3,835,550	3,813,886
Agricultural Group Settlement	5,799,043	5,799,048	6,340,289
Assistance to Settlers	2,879,508	2,879,508	2,689,092
Agricultural Bank	3,168,865	3,168,865	3,030,000
Land Settlement for Soldiers	7,839,917	7,011,337	7,751,706
College of Agriculture	57,324	57,324	51,878
Purchase of Wire Netting for Settlers	117,775	117,775	158,504
Workers' Homes—Working Capital	589,324	589,324	575,500
Telegraphs	276,724	214,354	269,308
Roads and Bridges	1,451,006	1,420,958	1,262,335
Public Buildings	1,386,818	1,375,352	1,418,844
Immigration	64,216	64,210	56,392
State Hotels	91,730	91,730	94,585
State Steamships	999,012	999,012	1,171,091
State Saw Mills	323,794	323,794	325,698
State Implement Works	153,656	153,656	168,270
South Perth Ferries	24,447	24,447	12,987
State Milk Supply	4,590	4,590	4,496
State Brickyards	61,655	61,655	50,496
State Quarries	28,366	28,366	26,092
State Fish Supply	3,286	3,286	3,162
Crawley, Dalkeith, and Harvey Estates, Aborigines Stations, Avon Valley Native Station, Savoy House, Purchase of Land at Nedlands, Purchase of House for Residence of Agent General, and Site at Point Heathcote for Mental Reception Home	131,441	131,441	117,437
Stores and Stock Suspense Accounts	216,248	216,248	225,500
Miscellaneous	187,521	187,435	204,941
Wyndham Freezing Works (Working Capital)	388,602	388,602	286,014
Fisheries	12,208	12,208	11,806
Carnarvon Meat Works	46,624	46,624	45,000
	72,324,400	68,149,323	69,767,032
Redemptions ... ..	...	4,175,077	...
Cost of Raising ... ..	...	...	2,768,239
Estimated further proceeds London Loan ... ..	...	...	711,254
Less Balance General Loan Fund ... ..	...	...	922,125
	72,324,400	72,324,400	72,324,400

a Includes £717,877, expended on Wyndham Freezing Works. b An additional amount of £426,538 was expended upon Agricultural Immigration from Development of Agriculture.

RECONCILIATION WITH PUBLIC DEBT (RETURN No. 8).

Indebtedness as above	£ 68,149,323
Local Inscribed Stock, issued under Agricultural Bank Act, for conversion of Mortgage Bonds	1,566,000
Issues under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Act	6,329,487
Issues under Insurance Companies Act, 1918	295,000
Treasury Bills under Loan Act 1923 issued for payment of arrears of interest	87,954

Gross Public Debt £76,427,764

[Return No. 9.]

LOAN EXPENDITURE FOR 1927-1928 COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEARS.

(Exclusive of Loan Suspense Expenditure.)

Undertakings.	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.	1921-22.	1920-21.	1919-20.	1918-19.	1917-18.	1916-17.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Railways, including Land Resumptions	806,895	642,225	642,854	634,103	561,988	518,557	323,296	145,724	75,786	154,720	181,394	246,994
Tramways—Perth Electric	75,247	32,444	16,380	28,571	57,815	72,057	55,835	34,419	27,473	7,239	3,073	20,445
Electric Power Station	69,304	104,752	110,540	60,661	31,717	87,761	184,845	18,783	17,890	25,386	23,506	61,033
Fremantle Harbour Works	113,954	62,652	66,539	56,437	37,891	42,726	49,009	46,089	61,855	46,345	42,449	49,004
Fremantle Dock and Slip	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Harbours and Rivers generally	137,691	128,535	152,764	124,576	101,122	77,414	42,632	72,245	50,322	23,603	42,485	72,854
Sewerage—Perth and Fremantle	129,430	108,414	109,891	114,798	39,762	47,190	21,348	19,436	...	...	16,167	11,050
Water Supply	452,367	333,431	568,570	635,497	895,903	163,667	198,231	194,172	49,115	48,636	53,080	65,426
Development of Goldfields	81,915	87,598	84,079	85,731	84,221	64,618	45,530	43,902	32,581	16,162	10,661	19,829
State Smelter, Ravensthorpe	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Development of Agriculture	67,091	61,238	127,326	100,628	74,941	91,952	58,682	73,075	112,807	159,421	156,083	169,483
Assistance to Settlers	110,959	84,900	10,784	192,710	441,546	400,000	74,674	31,898	5,458	80,000	478,170	...
Agricultural Group Settlement	1,122,829	1,428,486	1,335,009	1,124,252	822,910	508,808	...	...	...	...	...	...
Land Settlement for Soldiers	170,484	176,921	326,247	599,649	778,608	963,132	983,914	1,527,664	1,947,772	283,319	...	...
College of Agriculture	5,371	25,859	5,043	15,698	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Immigration	10,072	21,203	...	7,148	16,229	11,209	8,278	12,024	5,205	1,867	1,107	2,352
Agricultural Bank—Working Capital	221,170	105,378	229,511	257,072	264,027	266,410	13,515	151,825	118,285	78,948	25,000	93,165
Purchase of Wire Netting for Settlers	25,650	132,854	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Steamships	419,119	178,353	94,989	...	...	6,658	200,000	10,000	14,591	...	...	409
Workers' Homes Working Capital	50,000	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saw Mills	38,934	50,000	...	...	...	...	...	38,603	...	...	...	214
State Hotels	18,905	953	966	1,424	2,831	3,108	6,858	5,055	2,767	1,793	117	589
Agricultural Implements Works	...	25,000	...	7,500	...	...	...	39,929	15,772	...	...	1,292
Brickyards	1,506	9,587	1,712	7,500	...	141	...	705	1,826	1,165	20	...
Ferries	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
State Fish Supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	131
Public Buildings	126,512	117,483	77,795	91,140	88,595	18,680	44,440	24,943	10,602	21,570	17,636	23,350
Roads and Bridges	287,664	184,911	96,835	92,606	77,744	34,381	12,566	82,121	14,719	4,231	2,473	2,557
Perth-Fremantle Road Reinstatement	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	839
Purchase of Plant and Stock (Suspense Account)	50,000	...	...	30,500	30,000	10,000	...	50,000	...	...	...	...
Fremantle Road and Railway Bridge	847	...	...	...	...	...	19	...	1	79	108	2,482
Sundries	14,264	29,108	18,061	25,140	23,280	13,892	9,710	7,841	3,089	2,262	1,729	2,676
Wyndham Freezing Works—Working Capital	...	...	...	...	...	14	86,000	...	100,000	100,000	...	...
Fisheries	...	...	...	...	...	32	5,870	...	5,804	...	...	...
Urgent Minor Works throughout the North-West	...	...	3,770	1,714	5,708	2,979	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purchase of Site at Point Heathcote for Mental Home	...	...	91	7,088	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purchase of Avon Valley Native Station	368	6,450	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Reconstruction Canning Road	75,792	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	4,680,260	4,113,054	4,078,686	4,099,021	3,936,833	3,389,299	2,454,925	2,586,404	2,663,320	1,049,736	1,054,178	856,183

a Includes Loans to Local Authorities for erection of Country Hospitals, etc., £10,379.

b Includes Loans to Local Authorities for erection of Country Hospitals, etc., £21,625.

[Return No. 10.]

PUBLIC DEBT AND SINKING FUNDS.

Loan.			Sinking Fund as at 31st March, 1928.		Remarks.
Year.	Amount.	Maturity.	Rate per cent.	Accumulation.	
LOANS CARRYING SINKING FUNDS.					
<i>Inscribed Stock.</i>					
	£			£ s. d.	
1899-1915 ...	998,353	1934	1	847,713 14 4	Controlled by Crown Agents. Stock issued for conversion of Debentures.
1896 ...	1,500,000	1935	1	870,729 7 6	
1897-1900 ...	3,500,000	1935	1	1,837,231 12 5	G.S.R. Purchase.
1897 ...	1,100,000	1936	1½	982,910 12 11	
1900-1902 ...	680,000	1935	1	295,709 15 7	
1902-1905 ...	2,600,000	1935	1	1,028,740 7 4	
1907-1908 ...	2,000,000	1947	1	589,341 5 10	
1909 ...	1,445,000	1955	½	175,079 17 5	
1910 ...	1,342,000	1955	½	150,480 7 4	Issued for redemption on £1,876,000 stock; balance taken from Sinking Fund.
1911 ...	1,650,000	1955	½	261,921 15 6	
1912 ...	1,000,000	1960	½	91,880 3 5	
1912-1914 ...	6,000,000	1962	½	485,778 5 8	
1916 ...	140,000	1936	3½	62,947 10 0	Sinking Fund represents premiums paid on Assurance Policy for redemption of principal amount of 5 per cent. Stock issued for purchase of M.S. "Kangaroo."
1922 ...	2,000,000	1945	½	18,015 18 4	
1920 ...	1,500,000	1940	½	33,311 8 7	Issued for redemption of Local Stock; £172,407 was taken from the Sinking Fund.
1922 ...	3,000,000	1940	½	51,326 8 1	
1923 ...	3,000,000	1965	½	18,998 17 3	Issued for redemption of Local Stock.
1926 ...	520,327	1975	½	190,268 6 9	
1925 ...	1,541,149	1952	½	b	Commonwealth Overseas Loan.
1925 ...	452,265	1975	½	b	
<i>Local Inscribed Stock.</i>					
1912 ...	370,790	1932	½	91,662 7 5	
1913 ...	297,045	1934	½	32,045 8 1	
1915 ...	78,185	1935	1½	30,047 3 5	
1913 ...	309,130	1933	½	44,602 13 7	
1914 ...	1,566,000	1964	½	108,734 15 1	Issued under Agricultural Bank Act.
1922-1926 ...	1,490,135	1928/38	½	366,610 5 4	
1922 ...	164,950	1927/32	½	5,714 1 10	
1923 ...	306,345	1928/33	½	8,869 15 1	
1923 ...	120,349	1933	½	13,937 15 2	
1923 ...	755,000	1943	½	210,168 13 1	
1923 ...	225,400	1929/34	½	57,556 14 9	Issued for redemption of Local Stock.
1926 ...	654,100	1931	½	66,745 19 7	
1923 ...	250,000	1947	½	751 14 10	
<i>Treasury Bonds and Inscribed Stock.</i>					
1917-1926...	5,704,820	...	½	28,728 14 4 b	Under Treasury Bonds Deficiency Acts; currency is maintained up to thirty years.

[Return No. 10—continued.]

PUBLIC DEBT AND SINKING FUNDS—continued.

Loan.			Sinking Fund as at 31st March, 1928.		Remarks.
Year.	Amount.	Maturity.	Rate per cent.	Accumulation.	
LOANS CARRYING SINKING FUNDS.					
Debentures.					
1918 ...				£ s. d.	
1919 ...	697,000	1927	½	60,568 18 6	
1872-1888 ...	106,803	1940	½	2,283 2 6	
	4,200	...	1	1,780 7 4	Redeemable by Annual Drawings; Controlled by Crown Agents.
1926 ...	1,290	1936	½	455 4 9	Issued for redemption of Local Stock.
1923 ...	61,697	1942	½	176 7 0	
1926 ...	750,000	1945	½	b	} Migration Loans.
Various ...	1,538,584	1975	½	b	
	109,193	...	½	b	
Various ...	BALANCE OF DEBT.				
	24,891,854	Various	...	...
		Accrued Sinking Fund	...	9,124,125 15 11	
		Less advances by Westminster Bank	...	225,045 14 2	
Total Debt	76,427,764			8,899,080 1 9	
Previous year's totals	70,806,175	...	...	8,756,935 11 5	
Increase on year ...	5,621,589	Increase	...	142,144 10 4	
Consisting of Local Inscribed Stock (£4,496,966), Debentures (£5,545,077), Inscribed Stock London (£8,479,673), Issues under the Treasury Bonds Deficiency Acts (£324,667), for which Sinking Funds have not commenced, Treasury Bills (£1,118,304), which carry no Sinking Funds, and Commonwealth Advances, Soldiers' Settlement, £4,526,000, and Wire Netting, £101,158.					
NOTE.—These Loans are now subject to Sinking Fund under the Financial Agreement and the charges have been made accordingly and are awaiting payment to the Trustees.					

a Consisting of—

Treasury Bonds	...	...	...	...	£ 428
Commonwealth Advances (Migration)	...	...	...	...	1,267,147
Commonwealth Advances (Wire Netting)	...	...	...	...	101,158
Local Inscribed Stock	...	...	...	...	401,105
Inscribed Stock, London	...	...	...	...	3,000,000
Debentures, Commonwealth Loan—London	...	...	...	...	490,000
Do. do. New York	...	...	...	...	575,362
Do. do. Australia	...	...	...	...	99,738

5,934,938

Less—

Debentures (London) redeemed	...	...	...	£ 6,600
Treasury Bills (Net)	...	...	...	59,014
Inscribed Stock (London)	...	...	...	47,735

113,349

Net Increase ... £5,821,589

b Sinking Fund held by National Debt Sinking Fund Trustees was utilised for redeeming a Loan to the extent of £47,735.

[Return No. 11.]

SINKING FUND AND INVESTMENTS.

ANALYSIS OF FUND.

	£
Contributions from Revenue	6,876,423
Interest on Investments	4,393,331
Discounts on Purchases, less Brokerage, Expenses, and Premiums on Purchases ...	1,098,689
	<u>12,368,443</u>
Less utilised for Redemptions	3,460,363
Total of Fund, 31st March, 1928	<u>8,899,080</u>

INVESTMENTS.

Maturity.				Rate.		Nominal Value.		
						£	s.	d.
Western Australian Stocks	1935 ... ..	...	...	3 per cent.	...	1,493,943	2	6
	1936 ... ..	...	...	3 per cent.	...	494,003	8	3
	1935 ... ..	...	...	3½ per cent.	...	1,570,178	13	0
	1927-1947 ... ..	...	...	3½ per cent.	...	547,399	10	10
	1935-1955 ... ..	...	...	3½ per cent.	...	1,091,196	4	10
	1940-1960 ... ..	...	...	3½ per cent.	...	108,042	4	8
	1942-1962 ... ..	...	...	4 per cent.	...	1,034,817	2	3
	1930-1940 ... ..	...	...	5½ per cent.	...	445,106	16	7
	1930-1940 ... ..	...	...	6 per cent.	...	251,600	0	0
	1935-1945 ... ..	...	...	5 per cent.	...	241,136	15	6
Western Australian Debentures	1935-1965 ... ..	...	...	4½ per cent.	...	275,137	11	1
	1945-1975 ... ..	...	...	5 per cent.	...	222,738	12	10
	1939 ... ..	...	...	4½ per cent.	...	8,295	0	0
Total						7,783,595	2	11
Other Stocks—Crown Agent's Investments						841,190	10	3
Victoria, 4½ per cent.						80,721	1	6
New South Wales, 5 per cent.						347,367	10	7
Payments on Assurance Policy towards redemption £140,000						62,947	10	0
Cash						8,304	0	8
						9,124,125	15	11
Less Advances by Westminster Bank, Ltd.						225,045	14	2
Total Sinking Fund						8,899,080	1	9

[Return No. 12.]

SINKING FUND AND DEFICIT.

Year.	Contributions.	Interest and Discount (less Brokerage and Expenses).	Total Accretions.	Redemptions.	Increase in Sinking Fund.	Deficit on Year.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1911-12 ...	245,274	136,148	381,422	7,500	373,922	134,409
1912-13 ...	244,555	153,756	398,311	7,700	390,611	190,404
1913-14 ...	250,100	140,558	390,658	7,900	382,758	135,411
1914-15 ...	258,792	126,193	384,985	8,200	376,785	565,817
1915-16 ...	265,457	206,842	4,22,999	12,755	459,544	348,223
1916-17 ...	280,883	239,445	520,328	7,600	512,728	699,757
1917-18 ...	306,732	237,405	544,187	9,300	534,887	705,743
1918-19 ...	319,101	257,457	576,558	8,400	568,158	652,014
1919-20 ...	319,692	386,628	706,320	12,200	694,120	668,225
1920-21 ...	342,277	460,761	803,038	10,300	792,738	686,725
1921-22 ...	322,130	416,066	738,196	9,600	728,596	732,135
1922-23 ...	242,310	351,879	594,198	183,307	410,891	405,364
1923-24 ...	225,649	377,471	603,120	10,600	592,520	229,158
1924-25 ...	236,742	330,918	617,660	6,200	611,460	58,398
1925-26 ...	247,168	428,894	676,062	6,600	669,462	99,143
1926-27 ...	282,326	327,816	610,142	2,507,700	1,897,558	d 25,245
1927-28 ...	68,649	127,830	196,479	54,335	142,144	26,466
Totals ...	£4,457,896	4,756,067	9,213,963	2,870,197	6,343,766	a 6,309,147

a The Actual Deficit on 30th June, 1928, was £6,295,849, the difference being due to a credit balance of £13,298 at the commencement of the period included in the return. b Includes £21,375 by Trading Concerns. c Decrease. d Surplus.

[Return No. 13.]

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES FOR YEARS 1922-1923, 1923-1924, 1924-1925, 1925-1926, 1926-1927, 1927-1928.

	Capital Cost.	Working Expenses.	Interest Charges.	Sinking Fund.	Total Cost.	Revenue.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1922-23 ...	29,819,380	2,923,476	1,136,606	190,886	4,250,968	4,000,147	...	250,821
1923-24 ...	30,841,698	3,032,282	1,186,766	192,751	4,411,799	4,358,090	...	23,709
1924-25 ...	32,290,890	3,097,680	1,230,788	196,158	4,524,626	4,577,204	52,578	...
1925-26 ...	33,675,991	3,291,186	1,294,398	197,745	4,783,329	4,640,108	...	143,221
1926-27 ...	34,606,907	3,476,997	1,318,674	199,593	4,995,264	4,970,259	...	25,005
1927-28 ...	35,740,764	3,746,600	1,345,609	201,458	5,293,667	5,298,117	4,450	...

[Return No. 14.]

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES FOR YEAR 1927-28.

	Capital Cost.	Working Expenses.	Interest Charges.	Sinking Fund	Total Cost.	Revenue.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Railways	12,130,077	2,903,084	920,569	126,000	3,949,653	3,835,298	...	114,355
Tramways	1,060,247	253,065	48,709	2,498	304,362	319,438	15,076	...
Electricity	922,395	191,467	43,627	2,387	237,481	247,440	9,959	...
Metropolitan Water Supply...	4,412,936	143,831	135,105	25,162	304,098	324,900	20,802	...
Goldfields Water Supply ...	3,230,021	136,633	37,358	10,547	184,538	164,909	...	19,629
Other Hydraulic Undertakings	416,071	20,719	19,109	4,364	50,192	38,003	...	11,289
All other	3,509,117	91,801	141,042	30,500	203,343	367,220	163,886	...
Total	35,740,764	3,746,600	1,345,009	201,458	5,293,667	5,298,117	149,723	145,273
Net Surplus ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	£4,450	...

[Return No. 15.]

RETURN RELATING TO RAILWAYS.

	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.
Number of miles open ...	3,977	3,918	3,865	3,733	3,629	3,555
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment of Lines open {	£	£	£	£	£	£
	21,488,043	20,923,104	20,368,658	19,520,070	18,810,711	18,297,240
	642,034	643,158	658,134	798,050	827,333	862,962
Working Expenses	2,903,084	2,684,728	2,519,712	2,361,780	2,307,380	2,210,851
Interest Charges	920,569	837,740	860,225	813,849	787,221	768,244
Total Annual Cost	3,823,653	3,572,468	3,379,937	3,175,609	3,094,601	2,979,095
Gross Revenue	3,835,298	3,574,269	3,317,140	3,334,008	3,189,894	2,886,370
Surplus	11,645	1,801	...	158,399	95,293	...
Deficiency debited to Consolidated Revenue, being burden on Taxpayers ...	...	...	62,797	...	...	92,725

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, estimated to be £126,000

[Return No. 16.]

RETURN RELATING TO TRAMWAYS.

	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment ...	1,060,247	983,140	949,929	932,317	912,089	850,965
Working Expenses ...	253,065	234,507	234,332	229,362	225,678	207,542
Interest Charges ...	48,799	46,236	45,155	44,835	42,843	40,419
Total Annual Cost ...	301,864	280,743	279,487	274,197	268,521	247,981
Gross Revenue ...	319,438	295,032	287,774	282,418	275,402	263,668
Surplus ...	17,574	14,289	8,287	8,221	6,881	15,707

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, £2,493, nor payments to Local Authorities, £8,100.

[Return No. 17.]

RETURN RELATING TO ELECTRICITY.

	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment ...	922,395	895,629	880,042	864,128	800,227	754,921
Working Expenses ...	191,467	172,000	147,034	136,731	116,154	91,557
Interest Charges ...	43,627	42,340	41,540	40,039	37,261	28,475
Total Annual Cost ...	235,094	214,340	189,474	176,770	153,415	118,032
Gross Revenue ...	247,440	221,221	205,073	186,867	162,796	128,937
Surplus ...	12,346	6,881	15,599	10,097	9,381	10,905
Deficiency ...	...	...	...	...	...	...

These figures do not include Sinking Fund, £2,387.

[Return No. 18.]

RETURN RELATING TO METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE

—	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	4,412,936	4,103,759	3,796,396	3,313,032	2,777,080	2,426,376
Working Expenses*... ..	143,831	139,004	134,286	124,756	123,302	114,678
Interest Charges	135,105	125,646	113,665	104,389	96,093	81,638
Sinking Fund	25,162	23,374	21,855	20,205	18,004	16,222
Total Annual Cost	304,098	288,024	269,806	249,350	237,399	212,538
Gross Revenue	324,900	290,334	250,729	236,386	221,867	204,935
Surplus	20,802	2,310	...	...	...	...
Deficiency ... ..	...	...	19,077	12,964	15,532	7,603

*Includes Interest and Sinking Fund on debentures, £33,510.

[Return No. 19.]

RETURN RELATING TO GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

—	1927-28	1926-27	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment	3,289,021	3,266,603	3,250,085	3,154,727	3,099,816	3,056,926
Working Expenses a	136,633	133,432	128,858	131,457	132,450	131,381
Interest Charges	37,358	60,055	79,893	75,579	74,211	79,223
Sinking Fund	10,547	10,385	8,698	7,356	6,459	6,059
Total Annual Cost	184,538	203,872	217,449	214,392	213,120	216,663
Gross Revenue	164,909	171,145	180,942	171,850	170,748	182,109
Deficiency	19,629	32,727	36,507	42,542	42,372	34,554

a Includes interest on Debenture Capital.

[Return No. 20.]

RETURN RELATING TO OTHER HYDRAULIC UNDERTAKINGS.

	1927-28.	1926-27.	1925-26.	1924-25.	1923-24.	1922-23.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Cost of Construction and Equipment ...	416,971	429,797	406,191	400,350	394,745	397,984
Working Expenses ...	26,719	27,483	30,385	27,949	27,844	29,388
Interest Charges ...	19,109	18,120	18,726	20,951	20,401	19,248
Sinking Fund ...	4,364	4,449	5,807	7,951	7,822	7,905
Total Annual Cost ...	50,192	50,052	54,917	56,851	56,067	56,441
Gross Revenue ...	38,903	36,792	37,848	33,726	32,220	29,580
Deficiency ...	11,589	13,260	17,069	23,125	23,847	26,852

Return No. 21.]

RETURN RELATIVE TO OTHER UTILITIES FOR 1927-1928.

Utilities.	Capital Cost, etc.	Working Expenses.	Interest Charges.	Total Annual Cost.	Gross Revenue	Surplus.	Deficiency.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fremantle Harbour Trust ...	2,444,235	...	97,537	97,537	250,057	152,520	...
Bunbury Harbour Board ...	466,628	...	20,525	20,525	15,250	...	5,275
State Batteries ...	411,999	27,712	14,420	42,132	19,100	...	23,032
Aborigines Station ...	20,867	6,079	1,269	7,348	5,141	...	2,207
Albany Cool Stores ...	20,915	1,880	937	2,817	654	...	2,163
Perth City Markets ...	20,000	1,713	...	1,713	1,562	...	151
Metropolitan Abattoirs ...	32,347	36,534	4,907	41,441	54,948	13,507	...
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs ...	9,360	3,068	420	3,488	3,245	...	243
Butter Factories ...	551	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tourist Resorts ...	23,215	14,815	1,027	15,842	17,272	1,430	...
Total ...	3,509,117	91,801	141,042	232,843	367,229	167,457	33,071
Estimated Sinking Fund...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30,500
NET SURPLUS ...	...	...	...	...	...	£103,886	...

[Return No. 22.]

ESTIMATED CASH POSITION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES FOR YEAR ENDING
30TH JUNE, 1929.

Items.	Estimated 1928-29.		Balance.	
	Receipts.	Payments.	Deficiency.	Surplus.
	£	£	£	£
Aborigines Cattle Stations (Moola Bulla and Avon Valley)	3,600	7,158	3,558	...
Albany Cold Stores ... ..	...	1,060	1,060	...
Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking ...	165,000	142,032	...	22,968
Kalgoorlie Abattoirs	3,000	2,393	...	607
Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale Yards ...	45,000	28,807	...	16,193
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage	360,000	146,188	...	213,812
Other Hydraulic Undertakings	41,000	35,300	...	5,700
Perth City Markets	1,570	788	...	782
Railways	4,200,000	3,125,000	...	1,075,000
Tramways	332,000	260,000	...	72,000
Electricity Supply	272,000	209,000	...	63,000
State Batteries	16,725	27,105	10,380	...
Cave House, etc.	20,000	14,825	...	5,175
	5,459,895	3,999,656	14,998	1,475,237
Net Surplus ... ..	...	...	£1,460,239	

RAILWAYS.—STATEMENT SHOWING TONNAGE AND EARNINGS ON GOODS CARRIED.

Class of Goods.	1927-1928.		1926-1927.		1925-1926.		1924-1925.		1923-1924.	
	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.	Tonnage.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal ...	240,011	6.68	242,473	7.26	209,929	6.69	212,940	6.69	199,761	6.82
Ores and other Minerals ...	678,812	18.39	580,232	17.88	523,862	16.09	560,951	17.64	504,245	17.23
Wool ...	25,286	.70	21,334	0.64	16,941	.54	15,242	.48	15,866	.54
Hay, Straw and Chaff ...	80,128	2.23	89,646	2.69	100,113	3.19	113,653	3.67	116,102	3.97
Wheat ...	851,229	23.68	663,745	19.88	499,066	15.90	567,419	17.85	468,381	15.66
Other Grain and Flour ...	161,605	4.50	166,688	4.99	175,277	5.58	159,645	5.03	162,581	5.55
Firewood ...	359,700	10.01	381,457	11.43	441,836	14.08	422,393	13.28	455,345	15.55
Local Timber ...	554,409	15.42	603,640	18.08	619,037	19.72	595,310	18.75	549,670	18.78
Imported Timber ...	5,546	.15	4,861	0.15	4,135	.13	4,635	.15	5,062	.17
Fruit and Garden Produce ...	55,864	1.54	64,441	1.93	55,977	1.78	59,362	1.87	59,368	2.03
Fertilisers ...	217,141	6.04	190,897	5.72	170,834	5.44	147,481	4.64	123,119	4.21
All other goods ...	365,144	10.16	328,699	9.85	322,022	10.26	319,438	10.05	277,652	9.49
Total ...	3,594,465	100.00	3,338,113	100.00	3,139,019	100.00	3,179,749	100.00	2,927,512	100.00

Class of Goods.	1927-1928.		1926-1927.		1925-1926.		1924-1925.		1923-1924.	
	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.	Earnings.	Percentage of Total.
Coal, Coke, and Charcoal ...	£ 130,700	5.29	£ 127,638	5.61	£ 112,289	5.54	£ 108,142	5.23	£ 104,891	5.49
Ores and other Minerals ...	150,064	6.08	132,862	5.85	120,765	5.96	125,447	6.07	118,084	6.18
Wool ...	93,321	3.78	80,011	3.52	58,601	2.89	50,274	2.43	53,220	2.70
Hay, Straw, and Chaff ...	42,824	2.64	68,858	3.03	73,046	3.60	85,261	4.18	83,865	4.39
Wheat ...	536,511	21.72	404,029	17.77	302,945	14.95	349,253	16.90	283,798	14.86
Other Grain and Flour ...	91,761	3.72	92,748	4.08	96,865	4.78	91,811	4.45	90,670	4.74
Firewood ...	35,039	1.44	37,575	1.65	44,075	2.17	44,146	2.13	51,146	2.68
Local Timber ...	301,237	15.84	422,873	18.60	416,889	20.65	404,200	19.66	384,711	20.14
Imported Timber ...	3,552	.14	3,112	.14	2,764	.14	3,322	.16	3,402	.18
Fruit and Garden Produce ...	72,657	2.94	76,659	3.37	71,345	3.52	71,062	3.44	71,519	3.74
Fertilisers ...	75,043	3.07	68,025	2.99	57,132	2.82	51,123	2.47	40,885	2.14
All other goods ...	825,562	33.44	759,129	33.39	670,535	33.08	682,851	33.03	624,028	32.67
Total ...	2,469,771	100.00	2,273,519	100.00	2,027,000	100.00	2,066,892	100.00	1,910,128	100.00

TRADE, PRODUCTION, POPULATION, Etc.

	1915-16.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.	1924-25.	1925-26.	1926-27.	1927-28.
Railway Revenue ...	£22,217,250	£22,004,148	£21,970,333	£22,012,811	£22,463,186	£22,913,611	£23,054,258	£23,150,037	£23,405,207	£23,616,428	£23,604,914	£23,869,300	£24,154,736
Railway Mileage ...	3,332	3,425	3,491	3,539	3,539	3,539	3,539	3,555	3,629	3,733	3,865	3,918	3,977
Wool exported ...	£1,273,183	£1,420,291	£535,819	£1,952,141	£3,937,106	£2,988,119	£3,202,145	£3,232,590	£1,237,152	£3,736,300	£3,527,865	£3,518,318	£4,962,916
*Wheat produced (bushels)	18,236,353	16,103,216	9,303,787	8,845,387	11,222,950	12,248,080	13,904,721	13,857,432	18,920,271	23,867,397	20,471,177	30,021,616	a 35,300,000
*Hay produced (tons) ...	395,172	236,989	267,163	250,014	378,025	264,244	368,729	467,371	368,122	443,525	355,280	423,839	416,549
Gold produced ...	£4,803,206	£4,861,698	£3,924,197	£3,580,650	£2,637,932	£2,425,852	£2,385,753	£2,204,257	£2,186,563	£1,891,310	£1,890,141	£1,781,662	£1,708,924
Timber exported ...	£442,014	£310,983	£274,280	£332,980	£465,734	£1,137,223	£1,040,640	£897,454	£1,367,719	£1,477,997	£1,522,958	£1,658,018	£1,265,321
Coal produced ...	£140,388	£182,852	£192,248	£219,260	£311,731	£393,424	£404,521	£372,130	£365,567	£371,152	£364,304	£405,770	£414,451
Other Minerals (exported)	£155,213	£189,124	£276,856	£247,691	£218,067	£199,394	£75,534	£143,898	£140,153	£151,896	£118,021	£76,656	£22,389
†Number of Sheep ...	4,803,850	5,520,960	6,384,191	7,183,747	6,897,961	6,632,965	6,506,177	6,664,135	6,505,867	6,398,584	6,861,705	7,458,766	8,447,480
†Number of Cattle ...	821,048	863,930	927,086	948,847	880,644	849,803	893,108	939,596	953,764	891,564	835,911	827,303	846,735
†Number of Horses ...	163,006	169,730	173,151	180,094	174,919	178,684	180,334	181,159	181,944	175,116	170,563	166,463	165,021
Area of land selected (acres)	808,590	235,640	547,583	611,135	1,469,884	1,723,455	1,924,129	1,830,270	1,836,083	1,684,963	2,023,671	2,179,616	2,147,202
Area of land leased (acres)	8,175,594	9,845,516	20,383,357	39,571,708	19,178,124	20,354,735	28,641,868	7,605,229	20,389,232	20,899,982	8,031,282	10,623,845	11,105,900
c Area of land under cultivation	8,056,374	7,822,549	7,687,820	7,582,716	7,325,519	7,583,272	7,704,242	8,305,232	8,896,204	9,099,933	9,757,189	10,474,172	a 11,486,743
*Area of land under crop (acres)	2,186,466	2,004,944	1,679,772	1,805,088	1,828,163	1,804,986	1,901,630	2,274,998	2,323,070	2,710,856	2,932,110	3,324,523	a 3,720,000
Tonnage Shipping, Inwards	2,491,387	2,548,339	1,094,000	2,122,439	2,860,040	2,843,470	3,231,392	3,166,116	3,097,366	3,666,226	3,263,893	3,763,957	a 3,900,000
Tonnage Shipping, Outward	2,492,375	2,557,986	1,102,295	2,111,894	2,650,302	2,825,686	3,231,366	3,087,946	3,101,166	3,657,529	3,266,132	3,796,564	a 4,000,000
Exports, including Gold ...	£8,040,484	£14,683,027	£5,807,835	£10,922,676	£16,068,790	£12,258,639	£13,622,893	£11,105,220	£14,123,289	£14,664,548	£14,581,657	£15,151,959	£13,240,775
Exports, excluding Gold ...	£4,795,057	£5,562,966	£3,607,336	£5,927,471	£12,019,962	£10,440,617	£10,647,324	£8,858,726	£11,798,689	£13,976,719	£13,521,377	£14,048,867	£17,569,994
Imports ...	£8,988,000	£9,385,010	£7,649,233	£8,023,990	£12,368,331	£14,839,241	£12,037,770	£13,777,679	£14,344,145	£16,074,035	£16,462,572	£18,376,023	£18,287,876
State Savings Bank Deposits d	£3,640,374	£3,528,851	£3,608,075	£4,415,732	£6,045,930	£8,142,756	£5,276,218	£6,321,616	£5,696,912	£5,796,118	£6,312,148	£7,057,817	£7,972,142
State Savings Bank Withdrawals d	£3,828,187	£3,471,959	£3,549,293	£4,128,161	£5,936,575	£6,223,806	£5,571,830	£5,380,578	£5,904,923	£5,940,535	£6,061,332	£6,742,398	£7,491,094
Excess of Arrivals over Departures	b 14,116	b 12,063	b 2,764	7,488	6,795	b 1,077	1,557	3,132	7,374	2,749	2,368	4,957	a 9,389
Population ...	313,048	306,297	308,232	310,636	330,172	333,644	340,059	345,119	380,352	368,027	375,158	385,043	a 400,049

* Season ended 28th February.
Arrivals.† Year ended 31st December.
c Area cropped, cleared, fallowed, ringbarked, etc.‡ Including Perth Tramways.
d Not including School Savings Bank.a Preliminary figures, liable to revision.
e Exclusive of premium realised on export sales.b Excess of Departures over
Arrivals.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LAND AGENTS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MANN (Perth) [7.53] : I realise that some amendment of the law relating to the business of land agents is necessary. However, following up remarks made yesterday by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy), I feel that the Bill will not reach the class of men who have recently been committing frauds in dealing with land. A measure compelling the licensing of all land sellers is necessary; but if it is desired to reach the class of men who have been committing frauds in this State during the last couple of years with regard to land sales, it would be better to amend the Criminal Code. The men in question appear to me to be more or less confidence men, men who would be well qualified to tell the story of the rich uncle who died in Fiji, or to sell a gold brick, or float a bogus mine, or use any means except honest ones to get a living. They blow into this State and begin to operate in land. If we tie the hands of land agents and interfere with their business, it will not be the means of preventing such frauds. If the men in question are debarred from continuing frauds connected with land, they will resort to the story of the rich uncle, or the gold brick, or the fabulously wealthy mine. In introducing the Bill the Minister, without mentioning names, gave the police records of some of these alleged land agents. He stated that they came from different parts of the world, were well known to the police in the Eastern States, and were reputed to be confidence men. For the last two years they have had a merry career here.

The Premier : And a very profitable career.

MR. MANN : Yes, so far as they themselves are concerned. One syndicate of these men purchased for £250 an area of land situated somewhere in the scrub between North Perth and Wanneroo. Thereupon they went into the country and exploited the farmers by selling for £1,785 a little over one-third of the land which had been bought for £250 in all.

Mr. Panton : The farmers must have been doing pretty well.

MR. MANN : In one instance these men went so far as to prevail on a farmer to sell his farm.

The Premier : To buy this suburban land?

MR. MANN : Yes. He sold his farm and invested the proceeds in this area of land.

MR. KENNEALLY : He sold his land and bought a pup.

MR. MANN : The Minister refrained from mentioning names, and I will do the same, but I will give particulars of one case in which these men obtained £2,400 from a farmer at York. There a man drove up to a young fellow who was fallowing in the field, and asked to be directed to some road. The young fellow began to direct him, and they got into conversation. The man told him that he was a land agent from Perth. He drew from the young fellow that he and his father owned some valuable blocks of land at Cottesloe. "Oh," said the agent, "I have a buyer for that land; I have a man who wants to acquire Cottesloe land." The young fellow said, "You will have to see my father about it." So the young fellow knocked off work on the farm, and they harnessed up a horse and drove to the father's house. The land agent was duly introduced, and he prevailed on the father to get into a motor car and come to Perth. There the old gentleman was persuaded to sell his Cottesloe blocks for £750, which amount, together with £250 in the form of promissory notes, was taken as a deposit of £1,000 on the purchase of 20 blocks of land somewhere in the scrub. This business took some days, though I am telling it in a few minutes. Having come to Perth, the party had to return to York in order to get the deeds of the Cottesloe land from the bank. The banker tried to prevail on the old farmer not to part with his land before making sure that the deal was all right. However, the old farmer was indignant that the banker should think it was not all right, and the story ends with his parting with the deeds of the valuable land at Cottesloe and with his cash. The House and Land Agents' Association desire as far as possible to put a stop to such frauds. They inserted half-column advertisements in the newspapers warning the people in the country districts about these individuals who were operating fraudulently in land transactions. Following on that, a couple of men drove along to a farmer in one of the coun-

try districts, and sold to him two blocks of land at £15 each. A couple of days later a swellish young man drove along in a motor car and saw the farmer. He said, "I am an inspector appointed by the House and Land Agents' Association. You will have noticed from the newspapers that there have been a lot of frauds perpetrated on farmers by people who have sold land to them. I have been asked by the association to see farmers and endeavour to prevent the continuation of these frauds. Have you had any of those men along to see you?" The farmer replied, "Yes. I bought two blocks from a couple of men a few days ago." The young fellow asked him if he had seen the men since, and the farmer replied, "Yes, they came back and wanted to buy the two blocks from me. The man who actually sold the blocks to me came with another man who wanted to buy them. He told me that my blocks were in the centre of the estate and the owner, who wanted to sell his property, could not do so unless he secured the two blocks that I had bought." The young fellow asked him if the men were coming back to see him, and the farmer told him that they had stated they would return that day. On hearing that, the young fellow said he would wait and see them. During the afternoon the two men arrived. The swellish young chap, who said he was an inspector, introduced himself to the men and said, "If you don't mind, I wish to be present while you continue discussing the deal. I am acting on behalf of the House and Land Agents' Association." The men said they did not mind, and so the young fellow waited while the negotiations took place between the farmer and the two men who wished to buy the blocks. During the discussion the young fellow took the farmer outside and said to him, "You have these fellows in the palm of your hand. Apparently you have the key of the position. They have 40 blocks to sell but they cannot sell without your two blocks. Don't you sell your blocks unless they let you into this scheme. They are going to get £150 each for their 40 blocks. Don't you sell your blocks unless they give you a chance to buy 20 blocks at £100 each. That will give you a chance of making £1,000. You will be able to sell your 20 blocks with their 40 blocks." The farmer thought that seemed all right and they returned to the room. The farmer said,

"I will sell you my two blocks if you let me into the scheme." The men asked him what he wanted, to which the farmer replied that he wanted 20 blocks at £100 each. The two men reckoned that was too much, but subsequently they agreed, but it was stipulated that it should be a cash transaction. The farmer agreed to that, and he purchased 20 blocks at £100 each, so as to get into the scheme. He handed over his £2,000 and got his 20 blocks. That was how that deal finished up. The farmer still has his 20 blocks!

Mr. Panton: The rich uncle gag is a fool to that!

Mr. MANN: These men adopt varying methods and schemes in different places. They apply themselves to conditions as they find them. In one instance they prevailed on a farmer to sell his farm, and so they went on from place to place. In all probability these men got away with anything from £40,000 to £50,000, perhaps more. We will not effectively deal with men of this description by passing the Bill. All it will do will be to drive them out of fraudulent dealings in land, and leave them free to run loose and deal fraudulently in something else. These men are of a type that if we drive them from Western Australia, they will go to another country and carry on the same mode of living.

Mr. Kenneally: Does the hon. member want them to stay here?

Mr. MANN: No.

Mr. Griffiths: They come back like the photograph enlargement people.

Mr. MANN: We will not stop this fraudulent dealing, merely because we make it difficult for them to deal in land. We will still leave it open for those people to continue fraudulent dealings.

Mr. Kenneally: Under the law as it exists now, it is open to anyone to do that, should he so desire.

Mr. MANN: Perhaps so, but I will indicate what suggestion I have to make to deal with the position.

Mr. Kenneally: You can legislate against robbery, but you cannot prevent robbery going on.

Mr. MANN: Section 412 of the Criminal Code reads—

Any person who conspires with another by deceit or any fraudulent means to affect the market price of anything publicly sold, or to defraud the public, or any person, whether a

particular person or not, or to extort any property from any person, is guilty of a crime, and is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for seven years.

If that section is not broad enough, it can be broadened, or also another section added to the Criminal Code. It is alleged that some of those men were previously operating in Africa where they worked a fraudulent motor car insurance scheme. I do not know, but probably the authorities in South Africa took drastic steps to prevent those individuals from continuing their fraudulent operations. The result was that the men crossed the sea to Australia, where they have indulged in their land operations. If we make it too warm for them here, they will go to New Zealand and start another class of fraud. I am surprised that the authorities here did not give them a fly on some of the charges that are known. There is one instance of which I have particulars that seems to me a clear case of conspiracy.

Hon. G. Taylor: And of fraud.

Mr. MANN: There is no doubt about the fraud, but it seems to me more than that; a clear case of conspiracy. I refer to the instance in which these people prevailed on the farmer to sell his farm and put his money into land. They brought him to Perth and introduced him to some other people. He was a bit dubious and did not want to go on with the deal. The result was that they introduced him to some other people who suggested that they would go into it together and buy 20 blocks. Then one man said that he would buy 15 blocks and suggested that the farmer should buy five blocks. The farmer thought that if it was good enough for such a well-dressed gentleman to take 15 blocks, it would be good enough for him to take five blocks. The farmer then went home and signed the documents. Before doing so he gave an order on one of the leading stock agents, who had also sold him the farm, to collect the money. On his return home, the farmer thought it was not good enough, so he cancelled the authority for drawing the money. These people went to town and got hold of him. They used their persuasive powers and got him to revoke the order, with the result that the money was forthcoming. I cannot go too far into the details of some of these cases because civil action is likely to be taken, and I understand that libel actions are threatened. I have given some parti-

culars, however, to indicate the type of men who have been concerned in these transactions. They are not men who come here to settle down permanently in business. They are men who blow in and, to use a sporting phrase, make a welter of it from the beginning.

Mr. Kenneally: And then blow out.

Mr. Clydesdale: What is the meaning of "making a welter of it"?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member is often accused of making a welter of it himself. That is the position. We have the benefit of the consolidated Criminal Code, whereas in South Australia they had not that advantage, and therefore introduced a special Act to cover this particular class of offence. That explains why such a comprehensive measure was introduced in South Australia. We do not need anything of the sort here because we have the Criminal Code, which is wide enough to cover every class of crime. I repeat that I am still amazed that the people who conducted such fraudulent operations in Western Australia, were not put on their trial in connection with some of their transactions. The section of the Criminal Code I quoted easily covers the cases, the particulars of which I have given. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) dealt with the Bill from a technical aspect, and pointed out the difficulties that would confront honest business firms carrying on in this State. Those people are men who have the respect of the community, and they have been here for the whole of their lifetime. They are men above suspicion. The Bill will make it difficult for them to carry on their business, but it will not stop the operations of men who have occasioned the introduction of this legislation. I understand that the South Australian land agents desired the introduction of the Bill there, because they wanted their calling to be protected. I believe they have found out that the legislation has not done all they desired. On the other hand, it has hampered their business operations, and the men against whom the legislation was aimed, merely shifted from South Australia to Western Australia. I have given these few particulars at this stage because I desire to indicate to hon. members the reason why the Bill was introduced. I wished them to gain from the particulars I was able to supply, confirmation of what the Minister has already stated. Several

of the persons who had been victimised came to see me, and I discussed the frauds with them. I sent them on to the Criminal Investigation Department. Particulars of their cases were submitted by the Criminal Investigation Department to the Crown Law Department, but the latter advised that there was doubt as to whether criminal prosecutions would succeed. I do not think that is the right view to take of such matters. I do not think it should be a question whether such prosecutions would succeed, but rather what was in the interests of the community generally. I am convinced that prosecutions would have been justified in several of these instances. In my opinion, there was a good chance of those prosecutions succeeding. The Minister will be wise if, following the suggestion of the member for West Perth, he refers the Bill to a select committee, so that the good clauses in it might be used, while those that tend to obstruction could be deleted and replaced with better provisions. Then if we thought it was still necessary to enlarge the Criminal Code, adding to it some new clauses to deal with these men, that could be done. For these men, even if driven away to-day, will come back again next year.

Mr. Lindsay: Yes, they are a perpetual menace.

The Premier: None but a farmer would fall for them.

Mr. MANN: I am reminded that the Premier himself is a farmer, and I am wondering whether he would be immune from the danger of falling for some of the schemes these agents put up. It is easy to say the farmer is caught without trouble, but the same may be said of innumerable people in other walks of life.

Mr. Davy: There will be people caught by the thimble rigger at the Royal Show, probably.

Mr. MANN: I agree with the member for West Perth that the Bill will not be effective, but will be obstructive, and therefore should be referred to a select committee.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [8.17]: The Bill is a pretty comprehensive one, and if it were referred to a select committee it might result in our getting something more suitable. Still, I cannot see why land agents should be thought to be the only rogues in

the country when it comes to selling something. I have seen selling shares, men who were just as much confidence tricksters as any land agent. It has been suggested here that generally farmers are the people who are taken down.

Mr. Panton: They are the only people who have any money.

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not know about that. Certainly the average farmer has a lot of debts, and as a rule he can raise money only because he has also some assets. I have had experience of land agents, and I can well understand how it is the farmer is often taken down by them.

Mr. Sampson: Is this a confession?

Mr. LINDSAY: No. I have never been taken down. The reason is because the farmer lives widely separated from his neighbours, and it is the usual practice that when any man comes on to a farm the farmer treats him as a guest.

Mr. Davy: The visitor usually comes at meal time.

Mr. LINDSAY: When a man does arrive, the courteous farmer treats him as a guest, and is not prepared to say anything nasty to him. Until the farmer finds his visitor to be a rogue, he is always prepared to treat him as an honest man.

Mr. Clydesdale: That is what they call the lead-up.

Mr. LINDSAY: When a man arrives on a farm at meal time, he is invited to have a feed. Then it is he has the opportunity to convince the farmer or his good lady that this land or that share is a good proposition. When one comes to a house in the city, he is not asked inside to have a feed.

Mr. Davy: No. You have to get your foot in the door.

Mr. LINDSAY: Let me give an experience illustrating why it is the farmer is often taken down. I have met some of these agents with such persuasive powers that I think they are a menace to the country when out of gaol. I was chairman of a road board in my district. One evening I went to a function in the town. The bank manager said to me, "I have a gentleman I wish to introduce to you." I saw a very smart-looking individual and, assuming it was he whom the bank manager wanted me to know, I was not surprised when he came up and introduced himself. But he was treating all and sundry to drinks and cigars, and thinking him a bit too liberal I became suspicious

of him. Later he said to me, "I want to have a talk with you." Somewhere about 12 o'clock, before leaving for home, I said to him, "If you want to see me, what's it all about?" He said, "I am coming down to the farm to see you." I tried to put him off, but sure enough he came. He did not succeed in selling me a block of land, but he produced books containing the names of every prominent man in that district, and assured me they all had bought from him blocks of land at North Beach. I did not buy a block, for the reason that I had already bought one at a lower price than he was asking, and so I was not going to have another at an enhanced price. However, this man followed me everywhere. One day I went to the railway siding. The train had just come in, and I saw this man handing out schnappers to all and sundry. I said, "I may be able to beat a land shark, but when he has a sea shark to assist him, I had better get out." The man who had brought him out to my farm to see me was the most substantial agent in the district. Apparently they were both implicated in the business.

Mr. Clydesdale: Did this fellow give the bank manager any schnapper?

Mr. LINDSAY: He may have done. I saw a number of prominent local residents to whom he had given schnapper. Later I decided to come to Perth. That man followed me to Goomalling in a motor car, where he left the car and got into a train with me and tried his best to get me to take a block of land. Subsequently there was some trouble about it in the "Sunday Times," and a case was taken to court. When the case was being heard, two hard-headed farmers of my district decided to come down and assist in getting a conviction. On their return I said, "How did you get on? Did you sign the paper saying you were dissatisfied?" They said, "No. We signed another saying we were satisfied. You see, he took us down to the Ocean Beach hotel and drove us about everywhere in a motor car. We had a bottle of champagne with him, and so in the end we reckoned the time we had had was worth it."

Mr. Davy: Which of them should have been punished? The crook agent or those farmers?

Mr. LINDSAY: After being in that man's company for some time, I realised that he was a menace to everybody. It was no trouble to him to persuade people to buy something they did not want. Then there

was another case. A man used to drive up to a farm in a motor car, get out, take off his motoring cap, put on a helmet, hook a walking-stick across his arm, walk up to the door, knock, get his foot inside, and then he could not be got out until the farmer had bought shares from him.

Mr. Clydesdale: What about lady canvassers?

Mr. LINDSAY: They do not come through my district. I agree that the Bill is necessary, and I agree with the member for Perth that if we deprive these land agents of their occupation they will certainly take up something else in the confidence trick line. All they are doing is to get into the confidence of people in order to sell them blocks of land. I agree with the member for West Perth that the Bill should be referred to a select committee. I do not believe the select committee will deal with the Bill in the way the member for Coolgardie dealt with his Bill, for there is something in this one. I should certainly like to see steps taken to check those people who go around a district making misrepresentations to induce people to buy land or shares or other things.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.27 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 2nd October, 1928.

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

BILL—KULJA EASTWARD RAILWAY.

Read a third time and *passed*.