

if milk is pasteurised to 145 degrees, it is contended that the tubercule germ, whose resistance to heat is very great, is not destroyed. It has been proved here in Perth that even with the best appliances, it requires the man behind the scheme to effect a satisfactory pasteurisation. In England the Health Department has been very active in its endeavours to get the producers to carry out a system of tuberculin test and to go in very thoroughly for hygienic methods of production. It is known that $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of milk consists of solids, not fat. If we subject those solids to heat, we seriously affect the digestive qualities of the milk, and if we over-heat the milk we destroy its vitamins also, and so reduce its value very greatly. I was surprised to hear Dr. Saw express approval of the expedient of boiling milk. In a country where we have no very high standard of hygienic conditions it is perhaps wise, but where there are infants and children to be fed, the boiling of milk is not very desirable. It is very much wiser to encourage the dairyman to improve his hygienic conditions and produce the milk free from tubercle or pathogenic germs. Then if a mother has occasion to warm the milk for her children, she does not destroy the vitamins so essential to infants. I should like to see the motion withdrawn or amended to cover the whole of the production and sale of milk. Then we could get the milk supply improved to meet the scientific conditions laid down for its production elsewhere, notably in Sweden, Denmark, and America. By this means we should avoid increasing the cost to the consumer, while at the same time we should be encouraging the consumption until it might be increased to what it ought to be. Only the other day, on making a rough calculation I found that the consumption of milk in the metropolitan area does not exceed a quarter of a pint per head per day. In New York and other cities of America, the consumption is over one pint per head per day. If we are to proceed on lines that will benefit the consumer, and at the same time develop the dairying industry so valuable to Australia, we must pay more attention to improving the hygienic production. I cannot subscribe to Dr. Saw's charge against the Government of hush-hush, or that the herd at Claremont is not receiving proper attention, or that the inmates of the Children's Hospital are not getting high grade milk. Still, I do admire Dr. Saw for having

brought forward this question, which must be tackled in the near future, and I should like to support him in his endeavour. But I want the motion to apply generally, not to a single herd.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 10th November, 1927.

	PAGE
Question : Tramways, Extensions	1792
Papers : Federal Road Grant, Narembeen allocations	1792
Bill : Broomhill Lot 602, 3r.	1793
Annual Estimates : Justice	1793
Police	1803
Land and Surveys	1820

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

QUESTION—TRAMWAYS, EXTENSIONS.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, When does he expect to have the tram lines in Stirling and Newcastle streets completed? 2, Is he aware that in their present condition they are dangerous to the public?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, The tram track in Stirling and Newcastle streets is complete, and the road surfacing is a matter for the City Council, who have arranged to do the work for the department.

PAPERS—FEDERAL ROAD GRANT, NAREMBEEN ALLOCATIONS.

On motion by Mr. Latham, ordered: That all papers, since inception of the scheme, relating to the allocation of moneys to the Narembeen District Road Board, under the

Federal Aid Roads Act, be laid on the Table of the House.

BILL--BROOMEHILL LOT 602.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1927-28.

In Committee of Supply.

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

Department of Justice (Hon. J. C. Willecock, Minister).

Vote—Justice, £91,643:

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [4.35]: There is not much I desire to say in connection with these Estimates. Everyone knows that courts are provided for dealing with legal matters that require attention. There are one or two points in connection with the revenue and expenditure that I will touch upon and I will give further particulars, if necessary, when we are dealing with the items. The estimated revenue in connection with the department is £24,000 in excess of the actual amount received last year. Probate duty is, of course, an unknown quantity but one or two large estates are being dealt with, and it is anticipated that the estimate will be reached. Considerably increased revenue has been derived from the law courts and it is anticipated that this year the increase will be maintained. That is accounted for largely by the traffic cases. Unfortunately, notwithstanding the large number of penalties that have been inflicted, many breaches of the traffic regulations are still committed by drivers of various types of vehicles. People who are not in the proper condition to control their vehicles have been fined or otherwise penalised, but it does not seem to have that deterrent effect that is necessary in the interests of public safety. If people will not act up to a proper realisation of their responsibilities to the general public, it seems that the heavy hand of the law will have to be applied by means of still more substantial penalties that have been inflicted so far. I think that opinion will be shared by every member of the House. Naturally it would be a matter

for congratulation, if it were not necessary to take action for the punishment of people who contravene regulations framed in the interests of public safety. No one desires to see those prosecutions undertaken, but unfortunately they are necessary in order to make people live up to their responsibilities in regard to public safety. The revenue derived from the Land Titles Office is a constantly increasing one. Activities in connection with land are considerable and that is very satisfactory inasmuch as it reflects upon the general prosperity of the State. People are desirous of acquiring properties, and those properties are generally secured at increased prices. This tendency is pleasing as it shows that the transactions are regarded as good securities, and that is an excellent index of the progress the State is making. The department has made urgent representations regarding the building in which the land titles business is done. We are fully seized with the necessity for considerable improvements and additional accommodation required for the office.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot do much to the old building.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. The Premier indicated at an earlier stage of the session that there was a possibility of the Government taking action regarding the provision of a suitable building to house all the Government departments. Until something definite is determined, it will not be wise to incur expenditure on buildings that will not conform to the general scheme. There will be some improvement, and I hope it will not be long before the work is undertaken. There has been an increase in the revenue derived from liquor licenses. While some hotels have been delicensed, other hotels have become necessary at centres where there are increased activities or where the population of the district has been largely augmented. Under the heading of expenditure this is estimated at £91,643 for the year. It is much the same as the actual expenditure for last year, which was only £3,000 in excess of the estimate. That was largely due to several cases that were unforeseen. There were two or three important actions that necessitated witnesses being detained in Perth for considerable periods. No one knows what will happen during the year, but the cases I refer to explain the increase in the expenditure for the last financial year. The department

does the work of the State, undertakes the legal business of the Government, and provides courts where private people can settle their differences. It is a department that does not require much discussion, and I will content myself with moving the adoption of the Estimates.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.42]: This is an important department which comprises several small sub-departments. The work of the Land Titles Office is an indication of the progress the country is making. It is an index not only of the added value of the land, but the desire of the people to acquire property. The protection of titles is of the utmost importance, and as the volume of business grows, so must the necessity for accommodation extend. I hope that before money is expended on providing a more suitable building for the Land Titles Office, the Government will seriously consider the question of a permanent housing scheme for the public departments. I do not know that we can afford to spend the money that will be necessary for the erection of such a large building, but in these days of high costs it would probably pay to erect suitable Government offices in which the whole of the work could be centralised, and where we could economise not only in the expenditure of the State but in the time of people having work to do with Government departments. I know it is difficult for the Government to provide the necessary protection for documents without spending a great deal of money. It cannot be done cheaply, for we cannot afford to take any risk. At the same time I hope full consideration will be given to the question of housing Government departments in one big building before spending any considerable sum on erecting buildings in the future.

The Minister for Justice: New premises are urgently required for this department.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and the Government cannot incur any undue risk. The building in which the Land Titles Office is now housed was erected a long time ago when the country had not progressed to its present stage. In those days the titles were comparatively few. Every time a block of land is disposed of, it means additional accommodation required for the documents that are involved. No matter whether the block be large or small,

the room taken up by the registrations and the documents must be precisely the same. I suppose when the buildings were erected there were only a few thousand titles in existence. To-day there are tens of thousands and all need care and protection. I have nothing to say about the Crown Law officers, but I should like to refer to the Electoral Department. The Chief Electoral Officer occupies a very responsible post. He has work that must be done thoroughly and he must keep in touch with people. People in this State move about considerably. In a new country they transfer from one residence to another and one district to another all too frequently, particularly the workers. So it is important that electoral affairs should be well managed. Elections should be well run, the Act should be administered to the letter and every detail of the work should receive the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer. For some years, as the Estimates show, senior officers have been receiving increases of salary. The Under Secretary last year or the year before was getting £850 and he is to receive £960 this year. I have no objection to offer to that, but the Chief Electoral Officer, getting an increase of £32, is inadequately paid. His is and always has been a sub-department of the Crown Law Department and so he is treated as a sub-head. I do not think that works too well. Of course it is impossible to have a dozen separate and independent departments, but the Electoral Department might well receive consideration at the hands of Ministers, especially if we are not going to adopt joint State and Federal rolls. I should like to feel that the Chief Electoral Officer or the official controlling the department did so without interference from Ministers, particularly at election time. The Minister must see that the Act is administered, but beyond that the Chief Electoral Officer is capable of doing all that is required. It is impossible to have a great many electoral registrars. The Commonwealth Government, with their ample funds, can appoint men to take charge of their affairs, but we are not in that happy position. We have to endeavour to carry on the work of the department with very limited funds. The whole cost this year will be £2,354. True, that is an increase on the cost of the previous year.

The Minister for Justice: But that is for salaries alone.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Quite so, but salaries comprise practically the whole of the expenditure. The other part is printing, etc. I wish the Minister would consider whether this officer could not be made a little more independent and a little more responsible. If he were made entirely responsible, he would feel that the duties rested heavily upon him. The rolls, too, ought to be kept up to date. I hope the Minister will see that the staff is adequate to do that.

The Minister for Justice: It is.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is important that the Electoral Act should be administered to the letter. There should be no departure from that. Some confusion has been caused by the introduction of the form for nomadic electors. I have shown the Minister that the protection sought to be given to people genuinely entitled to it has been extended to other people not entitled to it. There are some people who travel and are not long in any one place, people we do not wish to disfranchise.

The Minister for Justice: The man about whom you spoke to me went from Northam to Kellerberrin, then down to Narrogin and somewhere else and then to West Perth and somewhere else from there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That was only one instance, but it was sufficient to show the Minister what could happen. In nearly all cases the witness is the real culprit. The man who signs a claim card does not read the conditions. I venture to say that not one man in 50 signing claim cards reads the conditions or knows the penalties. The man who makes it his business to get enrolments, however, does know the conditions and penalties and if he commits an offence he should be punished. It would be of little use inflicting wholesale punishments now, though it ought to be done, but we should make an example of the worst offenders so that others may be warned not to indulge in similar practices. There are not many people who see the Electoral Act.

The Minister for Justice: Few people see any Acts.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The claim cards, however, show the conditions under which a person may claim enrolment and also the penalties likely to be incurred if mis-statements are made. If a man de-

liberately evades the law he should be adequately punished.

The Minister for Justice: Not evades, but flouts the law.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister may put it that way if he likes. I hope punishment will be meted out to such a man. It is not possible to have our rolls kept in perfect order, but it is possible to prevent much of the fraud that is perpetrated. All said and done, it is fraud. I have seen a man asking passers-by in the street to sign claim cards, men who had just come to the place and apparently were only passing through, and eventually they were persuaded to record postal votes. That is wrong. It has always been the duty of the Electoral Department, after an election and without any suggestion from the Minister, to look into the work of the electoral officers throughout the State and, if possible, ascertain where fraud has been committed, and take proceedings to get the offenders punished under the law. That is what ought to be done.

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we had responsible officers to do the work, it would be done. When an election is over, we find all sorts of excuses for people who have been enrolled without being qualified or people who have voted when they should not have done so. In the case that the Minister has under review, the man knew he was not qualified and yet he voted. He knew that he had been illegally enrolled, but that did not deter him from voting. I think it is largely due to ignorance of the law or to a feeling that this sort of thing has been done for so many years and it is still safe to go on doing it. Let us have a clean roll and let us conduct the elections as cleanly as possible. To achieve that end, let people who commit offences know that nothing will save them from punishment. Then all will be well. The Minister will find that the nomad form has led to abuse in more cases than the one I have quoted. I hope we shall have a redistribution of seats, which may improve the position, but we should have a few more electoral registrars in the country. Considering the enormous distances, we have very few electoral registrars.

The Minister for Justice: In every large town where there is a clerk of courts it is his duty to act in that capacity.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But I mean registrars whose duty it would be to look after the rolls. There may a clerk of courts at Kellerberrin for instance, but it is a full-time job for a man to look after the electoral officers throughout a large district. My point is there are insufficient registrars to do the work. If we appoint Government officials to do the work, it is not their special job and they have not much time to give to it. I hope the rolls for the Upper House will be found to be in order. I daresay it is not so difficult to keep them in order, because electors do not change their addresses quite so often and the Electoral Department, in compiling the Council rolls, receives a good deal of assistance from road boards and municipalities. Everyone entitled to be on the roll for the Upper House should be enrolled and it should be the duty of registrars to get such people enrolled. For the Upper House, enrolment is not compulsory.

The Minister for Justice: We expend money in advertising and publicity to get them on the roll.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Registrars could do a good deal in conjunction with the local authorities.

The Minister for Justice: So they do.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Though we have compulsory enrolment for the lower House, it has never been actively enforced. It ought to be enforced, or the provision ought to be repealed. It is not very comfortable to find there are 3,600 names on a roll that ought to contain only 3,000. If the compulsory enrolment provisions were enforced the rolls would be more or less in order. The Federal rolls are very much better than the State rolls, because the Federal authorities do enforce enrolment and impose fines, though we do not hear much about it.

The Minister for Justice: They have a very simple procedure of fining a man half-a-crown.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so, and if he pleads not guilty and goes to the court he is fined 10s. I hope the Minister will instruct the Chief Electoral Officer to enforce the compulsory provisions. It is only right to do so. I admit they have never been enforced. I should like to say a word or two about the Licensing Court. There has been a considerable increase in the salaries of its members. That of the chairman has gone up to £1,000, and

of the other magistrates to £850. There is an increase of £300 on the Estimates. No doubt these officials have important work to do.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, they have.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If they do their job properly they are not overpaid. I do not know how they arrive at the ingoings that are required. At Morowa the ingoing was £2,000. Tenders were called and £2,000 was the offer. In the case of an hotel in Murray-street, Perth, the ingoing was fixed at £4,000, whereas the fee for the Brighton Hotel was fixed at £3,000. The latter was a delicensed house, as a result of the local option poll. An ingoing of £3,000 at Claremont seems to be an extraordinary amount compared with £4,000 in Perth, and £4,000 seems to be extraordinarily low as compared with £2,000 at Morowa, or £1,000 at Kunnunoppin.

The Minister for Justice: There was already some form of license at that hotel.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The public have to pay in the long run. We do collect 5 per cent. from the hotels on the purchase price of liquor. An interesting thing has come under my notice. I find that in the case of a small club the State derives from its levies no more than £27 whereas the Federal Government collect £324.

The Minister for Justice: The excise on beer has gone up enormously. There is no reason why the Federal Government should have this money except that the Constitution provides for it. We have to bear all the expense.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If they were situated in Perth there would be something done in the matter, but as they are 2,000 miles away no one bothers very much. If there is anything to say against the charges that are levied, it must be said against the £27 which the State levies, and not against the £324 the Commonwealth levies. Because of the large amount collected by the Commonwealth, we cannot collect more ourselves. It is a big enough task already. The hotels all the time are paying the 5 per cent. It is not so important that we should have large ingoings as that the hotels should be properly equipped and managed. Occasionally the premiums paid have been mentioned in the Press. These are irregular in amount, and are hardly proportionate to the business done or to be done in some cases. There should be some method of fixing the amount. In an industrial cen-

tre in the South-West the cost of running an hotel is less than that of running one in a purely agricultural centre.

Mr. Marshall: It might be a reasonable thing to permit an appeal from the decisions of the court.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think so. The court has done excellent work. I have very little to complain of with regard to it.

Mr. Marshall: You would not be so enthusiastic about it if you went through my electorate.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If this court metes out one form of control to one hotel and another form to another hotel in the same locality, and if people are not treated in precisely the same way, it will be our duty to step in. I have heard no serious complaint against the court, but if the hon. member knows of any, I hope he will mention it. Members of the court fulfil important functions and have immense power. We expect our hotels to be properly conducted and equipped. The equipment is being improved as well as the standard of the buildings that are going up. The conduct of hotels has been very much better since the new Licensing bench came into existence.

The Minister for Justice. That is generally conceded.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If I knew of any complaints as to the treatment meted out to the various hotels, I should not hesitate to write to the Minister about them.

Mr. Marshall: There is no appeal against the decisions of the court. I had one go at them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This House could very easily reduce the vote. That would be a satisfactory rejoinder to any protest that was made. I would not be justified on what I know in supporting such a step. A great deal of good work has been done. Many hotels that ought never to have been licensed, and that serve no useful purpose, have been delicensed. Some of our country hotels are good enough for the metropolitan area.

Mr. Marshall: Why should that be?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is better to have it that way than the other.

Mr. Marshall: Have not people to pay for that?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In some country centres the hotel accommodation, one

would think, would be suitable for a population four times as big. I refer to the house accommodation. The cost of erecting hotels is now considerable.

Mr. Marshall: Private individuals cannot get into hotels now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the court errs at all, it errs in wanting too much.

Mr. Chesson: Most of the hotels are tied up now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the hon. member has complaints to make, I hope he will voice them. We occasionally hear unpleasant rumours, but cannot take any notice of them. Every court of the land is in the same position. The successful litigants are always satisfied, but the unsuccessful ones do not think much of the court. When a new license is wanted, a petition has to be signed by the majority of the rate-payers in the locality. Tenders may be called, and someone who is not interested in the petition may be chosen as the successful applicant.

Mr. Marshall: I am not interested in anything else but the requirements of the travelling public.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We should see that justice is done all round. People have even criticised the Chief Justice. It is often a greater compliment to be criticised by men for whom one has no respect than to be applauded by other people. The position of the bench is not to be compared with that of members of Parliament. We expect to be criticised. When we criticise, we have to be careful to state the facts, but when people criticise us, they do not stop to think what they are saying. They allow their tongues to run away with them. Of course, if we were not criticised, many of us would not be heard at all. I hope the Minister keeps in touch with the Licensing Bench.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, but I never interfere with them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister has no power to do so. It would be a great mistake if Ministers interfered with the management of departments.

The Minister for Justice: Of course.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is, however, right that Ministers should see that their officers are doing their work.

The Minister for Justice: I have frequently discussed matters with members of the Licensing bench.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not propose to discuss the recent elections. I hope the Minister will, if necessary, see that the number of registrars is increased, and that officers are appointed to devote the whole of their time to electoral matters. That would be worth while. Nothing more important happens in the State than a general election, and it should be conducted free from all suspicion. The number of officers engaged should be sufficient to ensure that everything is fair and aboveboard. The Federal people have a sufficient number of officers for their purpose.

The Minister for Justice: They have not so many.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They have the postal officials to assist them. The Commonwealth does not depend upon a probably over-worked official to perform these important duties in a perfunctory fashion. The work is most important, and we ought not to mind if we spend a little more money on it than is now spent. Everything in connection with electoral matters should be done thoroughly, and as the Act directs.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [5.16]: I agree with what the Leader of the Opposition has said regarding the importance of the position of Chief Electoral Officer. The salary is not in keeping with responsibilities of the office. I heard the Minister say by interjection to the Opposition Leader that he does not interfere with the head of the Electoral Branch. I see, however, that that head is under the Under Secretary for Law.

The Minister for Justice: That is so.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is not wise that he should be. In my opinion, the Chief Electoral Officer ought to be independent of the Under Secretary for Law in carrying out his important duties. Beyond doubt the Under Secretary for Law cannot know all the ramifications of the electoral system.

The Minister for Justice: I assure you he does.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think he can know them sufficiently well. In any case, he is worked pretty hard, because everybody who wants to know anything goes to Mr. Hampton. From my experience of that gentleman I can certify that he is a very capable officer indeed. I should be most sorry to create an impression that I consider Mr. Hampton ought to be removed; but I do think it better that the Chief Elec-

toral Officer should be under the Minister as head.

The Minister for Justice: He frequently comes to me, and I frequently ask him to come and see me. He often has direct communication with me.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If the Chief Electoral Officer can have direct communication with the Minister without first applying for permission or anything of that sort, it makes the position much better. In my opinion, the Chief Electoral Officer ought to be given more consideration. From what the Minister said earlier in the session I regard myself as safe in assuming that he did not use any influence on this officer during the last election.

The Minister for Justice: Certainly not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have no complaint to make regarding the Mt. Margaret election. The only difficulty was occasioned by the members for Menzies (Mr. Panton) and Leonora (Mr. Heron). Those two hon. members did cause some commotion in my electorate. They brought a huge deluge of wind and water to bear, and put me at the top of the poll; so I am not complaining. There are, however, certain things that should be cleared up. The Minister, it has been asserted, was responsible for many things that were not very pleasing during the election.

The Minister for Justice: I wish that anyone who hears anything of that kind would communicate with me, and I would at once have inquiry made.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not suggesting anything. I am pleased to hear the Minister's declaration that the statements in question can be refuted. Two important positions in the service of the State are now filled by acting men.

The Minister for Justice: Which two?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Perth police magistracy, and the Perth Local Court magistracy.

The Minister for Justice: The senior position is filled by a permanent officer.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Who is the permanent officer?

The Minister for Justice: Mr. Wood is the senior magistrate of the city.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I thought the Perth police magistrate was the senior.

The Premier: Mr. Wood gets £200 a year more than any other magistrate.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then the position in the local court is the senior position. How-

ever, the Perth police magistrate is acting, and there is also another acting magistrate.

The Minister for Justice: Because of the press of work.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is about time the Minister thought of making permanent appointments.

The Minister for Justice: The Premier will tell you that he has represented the matter to the Public Service Commissioner repeatedly.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not want to revive old troubles, but I know what happened in regard to the last Perth police magistrate. He was retired on account of age, and the man now holding the position is considerably older than his predecessor was at the time of retirement. That seems rather strange.

The Premier: The present man was not put on. He was on.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I take the responsibility of having put him on.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not complaining about his having been put on. My only suggestion is that it is time the position was made permanent.

The Premier: It is a most difficult post to get filled. Many qualified men do not want it.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: We passed an Act making it compulsory for a magistrate to have had certain legal training, and I understand that the men with the necessary training will not accept the position at the salary.

The Premier: The Government have nothing to do with either fixing the salary or making the appointment, but the fact is that we cannot secure a qualified man for the post at the salary.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The law compels the Government to appoint a man with certain qualifications. However, there are men who have been carrying on as acting magistrates and wardens for years, but who have not passed the legal examinations necessary to qualify them for appointment to this position. I regard the law as a foolish one, which should be repealed.

The Premier: It seems hard to suggest that years of experience do not qualify such men to do the work. They are at an age when they cannot pass examinations. Their names will readily occur to anyone.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Premier knows of two or three such men who have served under him, and who are quite capable of

administering justice from the bench though they have not the necessary legal qualifications for the position. If a younger man without experience is appointed to the position because of his legal qualifications, he has to be trained in the business of the court after he is put on the bench. It is absurd to have men acting in such positions. I suppose the men now holding positions of the kind temporarily cannot be appointed permanently because of their age.

The Minister for Justice: Because of the Act.

The Premier: These men have the necessary qualifications, but I suppose they are beyond the age.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: One man in the department was appointed because of general knowledge, and acquired knowledge, and natural ability. I mention no names. I am disappointed that we are not getting near the police in these Estimates.

The Minister for Justice: They are in the next division.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Perhaps the Police Department had better be left until the Minister has discussed it.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.27]: Seeing that there is an attempt to introduce uniform electoral rolls for the State and the Commonwealth—

The Minister for Justice: That is not intended now, as the Upper House has thrown out the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: Uniform rolls are not wanted up there.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I was hoping that the Bill would become law.

The Minister for Mines: It is out.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: One matter that the Minister might well consider is the question of the closing time of polls.

The **CHAIRMAN**: That would necessitate an amendment of the Act, and I do not think it can be discussed now.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I was merely throwing out the suggestion.

The Minister for Justice: The Federal authorities are thinking of bringing their Electoral Act into conformity with ours in that respect.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It will be all right so long as uniformity obtains. Again, the northern elections might well be held simultaneously with the southern in these days of aviation. It is not as if ballot papers had

still to be conveyed to the North by steamer; they can be sent up speedily by aeroplane. Therefore the same day of election might well obtain throughout the State. I invite the Minister's attention to representations I have already made regarding the necessity for police protection at Tummin.

MR. MANN (Perth) [5.29]: I wish to bring under the Minister's notice again the need for appointing a city coroner. Owing to the demands upon magistrates and acting magistrates for general police work, inquiries into deaths are mostly left to honorary justices. Last year there were 252 inquests, and although 118 of them referred to accidental deaths, the others were somewhat involved and required thorough investigation. Several instances have occurred in which a person has been indicted or committed by a coroner's jury and, after a deal of expense and worry and trouble, the Crown have declined to file a bill. Recently a young fellow was committed for trial and had to go to the expense of retaining a solicitor. Then the Crown entered a nolle prosequi. If the coroner had been an experienced man the chances are the young fellow would not have been committed. Honorary justices do not know the value of criminal evidence, and at the coroner's court all sorts of evidence is admissible. The coroner's jury, unless they are well directed by the coroner, take notice of hearsay evidence, and so return some charge against the man and he is committed for trial. On the other hand some persons may be allowed to go free who should be committed for trial. Seeing the large number of inquests we are having now, I certainly think a city coroner should be appointed. There is plenty of work for him to do. The authorities endeavour to pick the most experienced justice they can for an inquest, but even so those justices do not appreciate the value of evidence, nor do they know how to direct a jury. The result is we get verdicts that would not be given if we had an experienced coroner in charge of the proceedings. The cost of creating this office would not be large, and the services of the coroner would be fully utilised, for on days when he was not sitting as coroner he could be sitting as a magistrate in the courts. I commend this to the Minister for Justice for investigation.

The Minister for Justice: We are already considering it.

MR. MANN: One interesting point is that 33 per cent. of the deaths inquired into last year were due to transport accidents; motor car, tram and cycle accidents. Whether or not there was criminal negligence in some of them is a very fine point. For that reason, alone it is worth while appointing a city coroner. The Leader of the Opposition touched upon the value of licenses. I wonder if the Minister could advise us as to what means are used by the licensing court in fixing the amount an applicant has to pay for getting a license. Is it done just by speculation or guess work, or do the court call in the municipal valuers? It seems to me the last two or three amounts assessed by the court are irreconcilable. For instance, for a general license the Cafe Anglaises, Gordon's Hotel, had to pay £4,000. It is true they had a beer license before, but a beer license does not carry 25 per cent. of the value of a general license.

The Minister for Justice: They have a big turnover.

MR. MANN: I admit that. At the same time the Bohemia Hotel, next door, was bought for £35,000. Take the value of Gordon's Hotel and compare it with the value of the Bohemia Hotel, and ask what is the value of the license for Gordon's Hotel. I should say it was £10,000. The Royal Hotel, at the next corner, was sold recently for £65,000.

The Minister for Justice: But that is a fine building.

MR. MANN: No, it is a very old building. The licensing bench let it be understood that the purchaser would have to spend another £10,000 in improving the place. So that license is going to cost £75,000. Recently the King Edward Hostel was sold for £45,000.

The Premier: But you are mixing up various freehold properties with the amounts paid for the licenses.

MR. MANN: I am asking what would Gordon's Hotel be worth as a freehold without a license. I think that license was worth at least £10,000.

The Premier: That might apply to all licenses.

MR. MANN: I want to know how the bench arrived at the valuation. They charged the licensee of the Brighton Hotel £3,000 for his license. That does not seem to be in keeping with the £4,000 for Gordon's Hotel.

The Minister for Works: Was it not assessed by tender?

Hon. G. Taylor: No.

The Minister for Works: I think it was.

The Premier: Gordon's Hotel was fixed by tender.

Mr. MANN: Of course it was. In this way: the owner of Gordon's Hotel made application to the court for a general license. But first he had to get a majority of the electors in an area defined by the court to support him before the court would hear the case. The majority was secured. Then the court heard evidence and on that decided that another license was necessary. Then they called for tenders. But, of course, the only person that tendered was the licensee. Who else could tender?

The Premier: The successful tenderer would have the right to build another hotel.

Mr. MANN: That does not alter the position.

The Premier: It would affect the price.

Mr. MANN: The court should have rejected the tender and said it was not sufficient.

The Premier: No. They said another hotel was necessary, and the licensee's tender was the highest submitted. You could not justify increasing the price when the price was fixed by open tender.

Mr. MANN: The court could have said it was not adequate.

The Premier: But if nobody would pay more, how could it be said that the license was worth more?

Mr. MANN: If the Premier thinks that a satisfactory answer, it certainly does not appeal to me. Following on that, the court charged the licensee of the Brighton Hotel £3,000.

The Premier: For a full license.

Mr. MANN: He had a full license previously.

The Premier: Gordon's Hotel had a part license, one of the best beer licenses in the city.

The Minister for Mines: If the application had been for a full license, it would have been worth £10,000.

Mr. MANN: But I do not think that point counts at all.

The Minister for Mines: Nobody could justify the building of another hotel right there when there was a wine and beer license there already.

Mr. MANN: However, the Minister for Justice should know what means the court have of valuing these licenses.

The Minister for Justice: They get information from every possible source.

Mr. MANN: They do not take it on evidence through the court. It must be done privately afterwards.

The Minister for Justice: They know the value of every hotel in the city.

Mr. MANN: Their investigations do not lead them to such knowledge, or if they do I think the members of the court are very poor judges. The hotel next door to Gordon's brought £35,000.

The Minister for Mines: That was freehold.

Mr. MANN: So was Gordon's.

The Premier: The Bohemia Hotel is on one of the most valuable blocks in the city.

Mr. MANN: It is not so valuable as the adjoining one which is a corner block. However, if the Premier and the Minister are satisfied that they are getting the revenue to which they are entitled, very well. I do not think so, although in respect of the Brighton Hotel they got more than they were entitled to.

The Premier: I do not think so. It is a great big pile of buildings practically worthless without a license, and the payment of £3,000 for the license turns it into a valuable property.

Mr. MANN: The question of how the previous license came to be taken away should have been considered.

The Premier: No, it was taken away under the law of the land. The bench had only to deal with the application for the new license.

The Minister for Mines: The place was delicensed by a magistrate under a local option vote.

Mr. MANN: And that was not very satisfactory.

The Premier: No, it was not. The magistrate delicensed that house and allowed a wine license to remain.

Mr. MANN: I say that should have been taken into consideration. The taking away of the original license amazed everybody. The Premier has kept it in mind.

The Premier: Because I thought it was a bad decision.

Mr. MANN: So it was. When the bench were considering the application for the new license, they should have considered the circumstances in which the original license was taken away while the license for a wine saloon at the bottom of the hill was allowed to remain.

MR. FERGUSON (Moore) [5.44]: I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister the necessity for making some additions to the court house at Moora. It is a very tiny little room. Across one end of it is a counter. Then there are a table, the witness box and the dock, together with the necessary books and papers. There is not much room left in that courthouse. The clerk of courts, who is rather on the big side, has great difficulty in getting about the court. If he wants to go from one end to the other, he has to wriggle along sideways. Then we have a big policeman, too.

The Premier: Yes, a 19-stone policeman.

Mr. FERGUSON: With the clerk of courts above ordinary stature, and with this 19-stone policeman, who has just been sent up there, I do not know how they are going to get on if the prisoner happens to be a big man. The court proceedings will have to be held outside. There is no other courthouse within 100 miles of Moora and consequently a good deal of business has to be transacted in that little room. All the electoral work is also done there, and the Savings Bank work as well. Additions to the building are very badly needed. When the courthouse was originally erected it was never intended that it should remain so small and provision was made for its extension. There have been many complaints about the inadequacy of the accommodation, and magistrates who have visited the court from Perth have had something to say about the lack of room. I urge the Minister to give the matter consideration.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.47]: I desire to stress the need for a courthouse at Armadale. The districts around Armadale are advancing rapidly. The Peel Estate is not very far distant, whilst the number of settlers at Roleystone and Bedfordale has increased in recent years. There is also considerable progress being made in those districts between Armadale and Fremantle and also from Armadale towards Perth. If a courthouse were established at Armadale, petty cases could be dealt with by justices and a magistrate could visit the district at intervals. Armadale is also a railway junction. Another matter to which I wish to refer is the large number of names that are permitted to remain on electoral rolls when they should be removed. In many cases the names are those of people who have long since left the district. When the totals

are calculated and the percentages are worked out, the rolls lead to the belief that the poll has been small. If the rolls were purged more carefully and more frequently it would be a distinct advantage. We know that the names of those who die are struck off with regularity, but the names of those who have moved out of a district are permitted to remain on the roll, in some cases for years.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [5.49]: I have no complaints to make about the Pingelly electorate which has been treated fairly well, but I should like to stress the need for a courthouse at Kondinin, a very progressive district. Police quarters are being erected there now and a courthouse will be necessary. There are people living 30 miles east of Kondinin and the court jurisdiction should extend that far. Regarding the courthouse at Pingelly, the fence which surrounds it is in a deplorable condition. In fact it is an eyesore and should receive attention. Another matter, too, is that in the past the only morgue we have had is a small structure that was formerly the out-house for the court buildings. Originally the courthouse was a school. It is a standing disgrace that a town of the size of Pingelly should not have a proper morgue.

Item—Witnesses and jurors, Supreme Court and Quarter and Petty Sessions. £4,000:

Mr. SLEEMAN: A lot has been said from time to time about the payment made to jurymen. Something should be done in this respect. I would like to know whether there is any possible chance of increasing the fees received by jurymen. Very often men who are on the basic wage are called away from their work and they receive the large amount of 10s. per day.

Mr. FERGUSON: The time is long overdue for revising the scale of fees to juries and witnesses. A little while ago I gave evidence at considerable inconvenience and I found that the land agent and a plumber who were on the jury received more than I did.

Mr. Mann: You were a witness; you were not on the jury. Witnesses are paid on a varying scale.

Mr. FERGUSON: I desire that this scale should be revised, because it is on an absolutely unfair basis. No man should be

called upon to give evidence and be the loser thereby

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £221,211:

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [5.55]: The amount voted last year was £211,502 and the expenditure was £215,908. This excess was made up of £835 on salaries, and £3,571 on contingencies, a total of £4,406. The estimate this year is £221,211 or £5,303 over last year's expenditure. The additional figures have been brought about by the ever-increasing activities and expansion of the department, consequent on the development of the State in the wheat belt and the South-West, and the need for additional men in connection with the regulation of traffic in the metropolitan area. It is rather interesting to draw attention to the fact that the strength of the police force on the 30th June last was the same as on the 30th June, 1901. We have, however, reached the stage to-day when it is necessary to add to the numbers, particularly in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Mann: The police have had a dozen different jobs in the last few years.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: As a matter of fact the police do a tremendous amount of work for the State in various ways. Most of the courthouses, about which we have heard so much in the last four or so, have been conducted by the members of the police force and they have done very well too. It would be very nice if we could afford to provide the full-time courts that have been asked for. The police could also attend to electoral matters in various parts of the State. The Leader of the Opposition will be well aware of the need for the exercise of care in creating new positions. There has been a great disinclination on the part of the Treasurer to agree to increases in the personnel of the civil service. There has always been a need to keep a tight hold on expenditure in that direction, and everybody will agree with that. We hear it said that the Government departments are overrun with civil servants, but there is not sufficient work to keep them going, and that therefore there should be a clean-up. That is not the position. There is any amount of work to be done, but we want to see, before anyone is em-

ployed in any of the Government departments, that there is sufficient work to keep all profitably engaged the whole of the time. Something has been said in the House with regard to examinations for promotions in the Police Department, and it was suggested that the examinations were not popular. I may inform the House that no fewer than 63 members of the police force are entrants for the examinations for promotion. The force do consider the examinations of value and are prepared to make use of them, whether the individual entrants are fit for further advancement or not.

Mr. Mann: The examination for a police constable should not be the same as that for candidates for the C.I.D.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No.

Mr. Mann: But it is so. A man can be an excellent policeman, but a failure as a detective. Yet the examination is the same for both.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Of course there are taken into consideration temperament, character, general demeanour, capacity, etc.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is necessary that that should be so.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so. The Government recognise that it is a very important position. A man may be a smart and capable policeman, yet he may be quite incapable of carrying out the work of criminal investigation.

Mr. Mann: Yet if an applicant failed when he went up for the police examination, he would not have an opportunity of becoming a criminal investigator, although he might be a good man in that capacity.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is necessary that such a man should have a certain amount of knowledge of police work.

Mr. Mann: But that is not the point. Failure to pass the examination would debar him from entering the C.I.D. where he might be an excellent officer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That may be so, but still the examination to which the members of the police force have to submit themselves, is not so hard that a man of ordinary capacity should not be able to pass it in a comparatively short period. It requires a man of more than ordinary capacity to successfully fill the position of an investigator of crime.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Some men can pass examinations, and yet have no capacity at all.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I admit that even if a man were to pass the police examination, he might not be at all successful in the Criminal Investigation Department. But I have pointed out that in order to be successful in that capacity, a man must be much above the average. Such a man should be able to pass the promotional examinations without any trouble. The administration of the Traffic Act of 1919 that came into force in 1920, has imposed upon the police force a tremendous amount of work. It has grown into a big undertaking and it is rendering a special service to a special section of the community. In his annual report the Commissioner of Police has always pointed out his conviction that the department should receive some portion of the license fees that are collected. No direct payment is made in respect of the regulation of traffic, notwithstanding that as a result of those services assistance is rendered to the people who use the roads. The work gives greater security to motorists and is of great advantage to them and to pedestrians, saving many accidents. Moreover, that special service is rendered to the public in the metropolitan area only. In other parts of the State the regulation of traffic is undertaken by the local authorities themselves. Yet in Perth where the work is much heavier, and far more important than in smaller centres, the police force have to undertake it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What does it matter? The returns go into revenue.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is not so. In the country districts the money goes to the local authorities. The municipalities get a certain proportion of it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, that is public expenditure, although not by the State.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But under the present system, it means that the taxpayers of the State have to find the money to afford the necessary protection to motorists and others in the city, without deriving any benefit whatever themselves. This heavy work has entailed the employment of 30 or 40 extra policemen within the metropolitan area, and the taxpayer at Northam, who receives no benefit and has to pay something locally towards the traffic ar-

rangements of his town, has to contribute his quota towards defraying the cost of traffic inspection in Perth.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are law-abiding people in Northam, and the work does not cost much there.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But still the ratepayer there has to pay his proportion towards the cost of traffic regulation in the city.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the police could give more attention to this gambling business.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I regret that during the past 12 or 18 months several retirements have taken place among the higher officers who were attached to the Police Department. Those officers left because they had reached the retiring age. They rendered good service to the State over a long period of years and it was rather unfortunate from the departmental point of view that four or five senior officers had to retire within such a short period. Those concerned included Chief Inspector Duncan, Inspector Houlahan, Inspector Congdon of the C.I.D., and Inspector Mitchell, while Inspector Smith, of the Traffic Department, died during that period. All those officers have left the department within the last 18 months or so. I believe we have been able to fill their places very creditably.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who is the chief inspector now?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Inspector Sellenger is acting in that capacity. He is a good officer, but, unfortunately, owing to the regulations, he will have to retire in 12 months or so. It would be to the advantage of the State if the senior officers who are capable of rendering years of service could be retained in the department. However, it is part of the industrial conditions and of the agreement that officers shall retire at a certain age, and they have had to take their departure.

Hon. G. Taylor: A living example of that is Mr. McKenna who had to retire from the position of senior inspector.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so. In fact, Mr. McKenna is a younger man on appearances than one of his sons whom I know. However, the age limit had to be laid down and under it officers capable of rendering many more years of service to the State have had to be retired.

Mr. Sampson: Cannot the regulation be amended?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No, I do not say that it should be amended. I am merely drawing attention to the fact that it is unfortunate that so many had to retire within so short a period. Hon. members will notice that the salary of the Commissioner of Police has been raised to £1,000. That is not too much when we take into consideration the importance of his position. He has grave responsibilities to shoulder, and recently several important sub-departments have been brought within his jurisdiction. During the last four or five years the work of the licensing branch has increased considerably, the duty of traffic regulation has been added to the department, and the administration of the Weights and Measures Act has also considerably increased the Commissioner's responsibility.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who is in charge of the Weights and Measures branch?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Inspector O'Halloran.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I should think he would have enough to do with the licensing work.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The heavy part of the licensing work has been done. There is a certain amount of administrative work to be carried on, but the heavy work that necessitated inquiries and long and careful consideration regarding the de-licensing of premises has been practically completed. The actual work in connection with weights and measures will be carried out by inspectors and mechanics, and Inspector O'Halloran will have sufficient time to exercise effective supervision over their operations. Three new police stations have been erected at Bassendean, Bencubbin and Perenjori, and a police camp at Salmon Gums. A new station has been constructed at Kondinin and it is anticipated that it will be occupied at the end of the month. Tenders have been called for the erection of a police station at Palmyra in the East Fremantle district, and that building will be erected shortly. It is also intended to construct stations at Mt. Hawthorn and Margaret River during the present year, and we also hope to be able to provide better accommodation at Williams. Regarding the Weights and Measures Act, hon. members will remember that it came into operation on the 1st July of this year. The task of supervising and testing weights and measures and of making the legislation effective in a short time, is a big one and we have

concentrated upon the centre of the city where the largest number of weights, scales and measures are in use. The work will also be undertaken at Fremantle and almost immediately the application of the Act will be extended to country districts throughout the State. We have been held up to a certain extent because of the want of proper accommodation and supervision at Fremantle.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you intend to have a staff stationed there?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We do not intend to have a large staff. Most of the work will be carried out by members of the police force. Of course, we will have to appoint some officers, but they will carry out duties under the Traffic Act as well. Arrangements are being completed regarding suitable quarters at Fremantle for the accommodation of those who will take charge of the inspection of weights and measures and traffic work as well. The traffic office at Fremantle is in almost as bad a condition as the Perth office was two or three years ago. I hope we will be in possession of more suitable premises in a short time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Everyone will be in the Government service soon.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is all very well for the hon. member to talk like that. Just now he wanted more electoral officers appointed! There is always a tendency to increase the number of civil servants, seeing that the State is expanding and progressing. The public are entitled to the protection that is extended under the Weights and Measures Act. They have not been given a fair deal for the last ten or twelve years. At the same time, we do not desire to unduly extend the personnel of the service by increasing the staff more than is necessary. We must go slowly. The members of the police force have given a lot of attention to ambulance and first-aid work, and 98 per cent. of the force hold first-aid certificates. That means that throughout the State in country centres and elsewhere, should accidents occur there is always a policeman available who is at least able to render first aid to the injured. Experiments have been carried out by the Westralian Farmers Ltd. with a view to providing a broadcasting outfit for use by the police patrol in the metropolitan area. It was anticipated that we would be able to instal a wireless plant for £300 or £400.

When the experiments were carried out, however, we found that an inadequate service would be obtained. Hon. members will agree that it is useless to have an inefficient or inadequate service. During the last week or so we have been conducting, in conjunction with 6WF—the Westralian Farmers' broadcasting station—further experiments in that direction, and if it is demonstrated that an efficient service can be rendered without undue cost, we shall go ahead with the project. If we find that the expense is too great, the scheme will go by the board. If it is proved to be an economic proposition, we hope to instal the system during the year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will you have a wireless set at each police station?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. The idea is to have a plant installed on the police car so that, should its services be required, instructions will be broadcasted and the patrol will be able to pick up the message and speed away to the point where their presence is necessary.

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Coxon went up North and conducted some successful experiments there.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The experiments I refer to are being conducted by Mr. Coxon as well.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have very little to add in conclusion. The Police Department are fully cognisant of the necessity for employing motor vehicles to assist in the regulation of traffic. To this end it is proposed to increase the fleet of vehicles by two extra motor cycles.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [7.31]: I notice that the salary of the Commissioner of Police has been raised to £1,000 a year. When we remember the increasingly large number of duties devolving upon that officer we can all approve of the increase. He has done wonderfully good work in that office and has an excellent force. No State is better served by its police than is Western Australia. I take it that the regulation of traffic includes the control of people who sell sweep tickets in the streets. I understand that comes under the supervision of the police and is not a matter for the municipal authorities.

The Minister for Justice: Anybody who obstructs traffic can be proceeded against by the police.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the police will not be interfered with but will be allowed to administer the Act.

The Minister for Justice: They are.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is a law against gambling of any sort, and while we can never hope that it will be perfectly administered, it is a pity that so many people should be permitted to engage in selling tickets in Perth.

The Minister for Justice: It is very difficult to refuse permission.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not see how the Minister can approve of it.

The Minister for Justice: It is decreasing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Decreasing! The Premier told representatives of the Council of Churches that the Government had put down gambling, and yet it goes on worse than ever. Then the Minister for Mines said if he had his way he would put down gambling, and still there is more gambling. Now another Minister tells us that gambling is decreasing. I should like to believe that it was.

Mr. Marshall: If we are going to put it down we should start on the racecourses.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member always starts at the wrong end. He has an imperishable instinct for taking the wrong turning. There is too much gambling nowadays, and it is regrettable that so many people should be selling sweep tickets in the streets. If it is the duty of the police to control that sort of thing, they should discharge their duty. It was pointed out the other day that a great deal of money was sent from Western Australia to Tattersall's, and it was contended that our people might as well be given an opportunity to gamble here and keep the money in the State. There is a difference between Tattersall's and other sweeps. Tattersall's deduct 10 per cent. of the proceeds and the balance of the money is devoted to prizes, but many of the local sweeps give prizes amounting to probably £100 and collect £1,000. It is possible to do that because there is no limit to the number of tickets that might be sold.

The Minister for Justice: There is a limit of 50,000 tickets.

Mr. Panton: The applicant for permission has to state the number of tickets and present a balance sheet.

Hon Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Fifty thousand tickets at half-a-crown would amount to a considerable sum. Most of the sweeps, I believe, are conducted for charitable purposes.

The Minister for Justice: All of them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is not so much objection to sweeps when the proceeds are devoted to charities. Still, gambling has a very bad influence on young people.

Mr. Sleeman: All Governments have conformed it by imposing a tax of 1d. on every ticket issued by a bookmaker.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That has been done for years.

Mr. Sleeman: They are prepared to wink at gambling on the racecourse, and they refuse to give the same facilities elsewhere.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member must admit that it is possible to have too much gambling, that its influence is too widespread and that it is proving harmful.

Mr. Sleeman: Do not touch the big fellow!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not a question of the big fellow. I suppose the hon. member goes to the races.

Mr. Sleeman: I would not go to such a place.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I dare say the hon. member goes occasionally and puts a pound on a horse. I have no objection to that, but I am satisfied that gambling does no good. A lot of people are prone to say that big men are permitted to gamble and other men are not.

Mr. Sleeman: You are always afraid to tackle the big fellow.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is a cheap sneer that ill-becomes the hon. member.

Mr. Sleeman: It is true.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not true.

Mr. Sleeman: The Government collect a penny on every ticket issued by a bookmaker and then you talk about gambling.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It may seem illogical to collect that tax when gambling is really illegal.

Mr. Sleeman: It is inconsistent.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is not illegal to gamble with a bookmaker on a racecourse. He is licensed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The racing clubs sell the licenses in order to catch the fees.

Mr. Sleeman: And the Government practically license bookmakers by collecting the tax.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The fact of the Government collecting a tax on bookmakers' tickets does not make the act logical because, in effect, it is equivalent to the Government licensing bookmakers. I do not know that gambling on racecourses does as much harm as does the gambling carried on elsewhere. The member for Fremantle is waiting anxiously for me to say something about White City. I am deploring the fact that gambling has become so general, and the Minister also must deplore it. It cannot do good; it must be doing considerable harm.

The Minister for Justice: The sweeps have been severely curtailed. Not more than one a month is allowed, whereas previously they were run promiscuously.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They never were run promiscuously.

The Minister for Justice: They were.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not at all.

The Minister for Justice: When I first took over the department numbers of sweeps were being run.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Very few were being run.

The Minister for Justice: Even the few have been curtailed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no proof of that.

The Minister for Justice: There is proof in the records.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Formerly people did not spend the whole of their time selling sweep tickets, as is done now. If it is the duty of the police to stop it, there is no reason why they should not carry out that duty.

Mr. Sleeman: Gambling throughout the State is either right or wrong, and if it is wrong it should be stopped.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The member for Fremantle is a whole-hogger.

Mr. Panton: All Fremantle members are whole-hoggers.

Mr. Sleeman: Gambling cannot be right for one lot of people and wrong for another lot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course not. It may be inadvisable for one lot and it might not hurt the other lot very much. It is no more immoral to put 5s.

on the totalisator than to pay 5s. to go to a theatre.

Mr. Sleeman: Or play cards in a club.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But there should not be opportunities in the streets for young folk to gamble. The member for Fremantle must surely approve of that sentiment.

Mr. Sleeman: Treat all people alike.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection to that.

Mr. Sleeman: Stop the lot or let them all go.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection to treating all alike, but if we did it we should make ourselves look ridiculous.

Mr. Sleeman: You are determined to be inconsistent.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: For many years it has been the custom to hold race meetings periodically and no great harm has resulted. From that, however, all sorts of gambling has grown up, and if the duty of controlling it devolves upon the police, they should be allowed to do it without interference.

The Minister for Justice: There is no interference.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then I hope they will go to White City and tackle the gambling there at the earliest opportunity.

The Minister for Justice: You know it is a different White City from what it was three or four years ago. The unlimited gambling on wheels and that sort of thing has been absolutely cut out.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope that it has; I do not know because I have not been there.

The Minister for Justice: You can accept my word that it is so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Very often I hear the march of feet on the way to White City. If the police have control of those people, I hope they will exercise it and not permit the wholesale gambling that is going on at present. I should like to call the Minister's attention to the fact that the salary of the Chief Inspector is to be reduced this year.

The Minister for Justice: No, there is an allowance to be added to that amount.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The salary for the office was £622 last year and the amount provided for this year is £550. There is a great disparity between that

salary and the salary paid to the Commissioner, and this inspector ranks next to the Commissioner.

The Minister for Justice: The Chief Inspector comes under the police award.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He comes under the Public Service Commissioner.

The Minister for Justice: Not now.

Hon. G. Taylor: Does he belong to the Police Association?

The Minister for Justice: Police salaries have nothing to do with the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They have something to do with us and that is sufficient for me. A salary of £550 as compared with a salary of £1,000 shows a big difference, and all the other officials in the force have to rank below the salary of the Chief Inspector.

The Minister for Justice: I assure you that the occupant of the position is drawing the same salary that his predecessor received. The difference is made up by allowances.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I assure the Minister that it is not so on the Estimates. I understand that the present occupant of the post is merely acting in that capacity.

The Minister for Justice: He will get the same remuneration as the previous occupant. In addition to his salary he gets an allowance of £72 a year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We can only deal with the Estimates as they are printed. A chief inspector reaches his position after many years of service. When we compare the salary paid to this official with the salaries enjoyed by other officers, we cannot say that it is a magnificent remuneration. The other inspectors must have their salaries based on that of the chief inspector.

The Minister for Justice: They all receive allowances. That is the worst of the police force. You cannot tell what a policeman is earning. Members used to think a policeman received only 10s. a day, but with all the allowances he gets, such as for food, clothing, lodging, etc., we find that he receives up to 15s. a day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They must have uniforms. They are scattered about all over the State where the conditions vary, and naturally they must receive allowances. The force is an excellent one and doing wonderfully good service. I should not like to be on point duty in

Perth. If I were a magistrate dealing with cases that were brought before me I should make the penalty pretty stiff in the case of those who transgressed the traffic law when there were no policemen about. Although the fines do seem heavy, I do think that when people drive too quickly, merely because they are not in the presence of the police, they should be severely dealt with.

The Minister for Justice: It is seldom an accident happens when the traffic is being regulated.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: People should be severely punished when they drive furiously when out of sight of the police. All men are apt to drive quickly when they are late for dinner, or there is some other apparently important reason. I think Mr. Angwin was once fined for passing on the wrong side of a lamp post. There is nothing in the Estimates to which I can object. It is merely a matter of the police being allowed to carry out their duties in every direction without interference. I hope that will be the case for the future.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [7.48]: On these Estimates we are dealing chiefly with wages and salaries, and there is not much we can discuss. I have been reading through the report of the Commissioner of Police, who makes a number of suggestions for the information of the Minister. He says:—

In my opinion the section of the Traffic Act dealing with the punishment of drunken drivers requires amending. It should be compulsory for the court, on conviction, to disqualify such a person for life from holding a driver's license.

The Minister for Justice: If the hon. member had to put up with all the requests that I receive from people for remissions of penalties, he would find himself a busy man. I do not take much notice of them.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not attacking the Minister, but I merely wish to know whether the report of the Commissioner carries enough weight with him.

The Minister for Justice: Of course it does.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Commissioner goes on to say—

In regard to the dangerous driver, more particularly the "road hog," he is almost as great a menace to the safety of the public as a drunken driver.

The Commissioner realises the danger of this class of driver. Anyone who takes liquor or is likely to drink more than is good for him should not attempt to take charge of a motor car. Something should be done in this matter. The Commissioner goes on to say:—

The court should have power when an offender of this description is convicted to disqualify him for life from driving a motor vehicle.

The Commissioner, with his experience, must realise the seriousness of the position when he makes a recommendation of this nature. He is not putting up these things for pastime, or for the good of his health. I do not believe he would dream of putting up anything so drastic as that for embodiment in an Act of Parliament. I believe the Commissioner has said these things in his report to direct the attention of the Minister and the Government to these matters. His object is to cause some power to be given to those administering the law to overcome these difficulties, so that any steps that might be taken would be taken at the wish of Parliament itself.

Mr. Sleeman: He may change his mind.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think the Commissioner would like to see anything like this embodied in a Bill. His remarks are designed to draw the attention of the Minister to the enormity of the situation. He goes on to say—

I am of opinion that when it can be shown to the court that a person has caused an accident through losing control of the vehicle from the causes I have set out, he or she should be disqualified for life from obtaining a license.

One could hardly think that the Commissioner would advocate in cold blood such harsh treatment unless it were a case of desperate remedies being required for desperate diseases. I am sure his desire is to direct the attention of the Minister to the matters under review. I do not know whether his remarks will have that effect. I know the Commissioner, and when I read these remarks in the report I was amazed. I have had many conversations with him about matters affecting my district, and I have always found him to be a most rational man, anxious to oblige, and who always looks at things through wide spectacles. It makes one think there must be some necessity for tightening up our laws in this respect.

The Minister for Justice: It is a condemnation of those people who are inclined to transgress.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Such people do not read the Commissioner's report. If they did read it, and realised that these points had not been emphasised by the Minister controlling the department, and that Parliament had taken no heed of them, the advice would never serve as a deterrent to them. We ought to take some heed of these things. If we are of opinion that these words are written without rhyme or reason, then we cannot expect other people to pay much attention to them. I suggest the Minister should have a conference with the Commissioner of Police if he thinks he has written this report without justification. I am satisfied that he has had strong justification for his remarks.

Mr. Panton: You have only to read the papers to see that.

The Minister for Justice: The courts are inflicting stiff penalties upon offenders.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: And they should do so. I am pleased that the Commissioner has made this reference. Members of his staff read this report. If they think no heed is paid to it they will say, "What is the use of disturbing ourselves. Here is a man we ought to arrest, but if we do take him up he will only be fined a few shillings."

The Minister for Justice: More like £20.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If they think that Parliament takes no heed of these statements, or of the advice that is given by the Commissioner to the Government, this must have a bad effect upon the force. On the other hand, if the advice of the Commissioner is followed, his staff must say there is some semblance of enthusiasm in Parliament in the direction of protecting the public from these road hogs. This would have a stimulating effect upon the force, and would also tend to retard the activities of those who come within the definition given by the Commissioner. I am grateful to the Commissioner for giving us this information, and for emphasising it as strongly as he has done. If we wish to have a good and efficient police force, we must have a contented one. We must have a force that realises that those who are administering the affairs of the country and making its laws are standing behind them when the time comes for them to see that those laws are observed. They must feel that the Government

are standing behind them in the execution of their duty. The only way we can have a contented force is by showing that our sympathies are with it. I am sure members of the police force must feel we have not much sympathy for them when they find that we are leaving legislation which affects them so much, at the bottom of the Notice Paper. The Police Act Amendment Bill has been left at the bottom of the Notice Paper close to the Dog Act Amendment Bill.

The Premier: You cannot discuss that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Premier cannot give instructions to the Chair.

Mr. Sleeman: You know the Commissioner does not want it. He has changed his mind within 12 months.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members must not interject.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If the Government are anxious to give the Commissioner that which he does not want, and have a burning desire to withhold from him what he does want, as set out in his report, I do not know where he will find himself.

Mr. Sleeman: He may change his mind about that later.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I know I cannot discuss that measure, but I also know I shall not have any opportunity to discuss it.

The Premier: You would not have a contented force if its members were not permitted to form an association. I do not know anyone who has caused so much discontent in the force as you have.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not know that I have done so.

The Premier: Oh, no! You chased them out of your office when they wanted permission to form a union.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I did not chase them out.

The Premier: This is a very belated championship of the police force.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The change of front by the Premier is trying to accuse me of doing nothing like his on the question of unemployment.

The Premier: Is that so?

The CHAIRMAN: Hon. members must keep order.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Did not the Premier lock the doors to keep them out?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Will you keep the Premier in his place, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must keep order.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am keeping order, but you allow the Premier to interject, and there is not a word from the Chair. I am not going to be bluffed by the Premier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will call the hon. gentleman's bluff. Let him not think he is going to give instructions as to how the business of this Committee is to be conducted:

The CHAIRMAN: Hon. members must keep order and cease from interjecting.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I say we shall not have a contented force unless we give those concerned some consideration. The Government have not given them the consideration that Parliament desires they should get. Parliament desires these men to be treated as they ought to be, and Parliament also desires that their wishes should be met.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will ask the hon. member not to deal with that subject.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have got in that much, anyhow.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member must not reflect on the Chair.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not reflecting on the Chair.

The Minister for Lands: You are treating the Chair with contempt.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not treating the Chair with contempt. If Ministers were as courteous to the Chair as I am, we would get on better. I am pleased to observe that the Estimates contain provision for increases. I would like to know what is the salary provided for the last appointee to the position of inspector in the C.I.D. I do not see the item on the Estimates. The appointment is one on which I heartily congratulate the Minister. I have known the promoted officer for many years. He is a most capable man. Whatever the salary attaching to the position may be, I know the man appointed is worthy of it. Let me add that those who preceded him in the position were also highly capable men. The police force is a credit to the State, and I hope that whatever this Parliament may decide, it will not do anything unfair to the officials of the Police Department. On the other hand, I trust there will be an opportunity for Par-

liament to do something to create a better feeling among the members of the police force.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.3]: Western Australia has a fine record in respect of its police. I doubt whether in any part of the world a more painstaking or more capable set of police officers is to be found. Our force sets a great example in the conduct of traffic and in the discharge of police duties generally. Motorists are frequently criticised, and undoubtedly in some cases with ample justification; but it is remarkable that in connection with road traffic horse-driven vehicles escape criticism almost entirely. Yet if at night we go through the suburban and the outer suburban districts, to say nothing of the country, we find many horse-driven vehicles provided with merely a hurricane lamp hung midway between the two wheels. The result is that other users of the road are in doubt, until they reach the vicinity of the horse-drawn vehicle, whether it is going or coming. In that matter need and opportunity for action exist. The same remark may be made of wandering stock, which are a great danger to road users. I do not say this in any spirit of carping criticism; but while we hear so much of lack of consideration on the part of motorists, we seldom if ever hear anything of the same sort about drivers of horse-driven vehicles, which are often more dangerous than motors, and frequently do not carry a light at all. As to motor traffic and motor drivers, if any suggestion can be made it is that there should be a stricter examination prior to the issue of a license. No one could object to the examination being made a strict one.

The Minister for Justice: It is not the new driver generally who gets into trouble, but the experienced driver, who takes risks.

Mr. SAMPSON: The new driver, because of the fact that he or she is not used to the vehicle, will occasionally lose his or her nerve and push his or her foot on the accelerator when it should be on the clutch or the brake.

The Minister for Justice: The new driver is more careful.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister is a careful driver of long standing, and he knows it to be a fact that when one has driven a motor for a while, one does what is necessary almost by instinct, use having become

second nature. Personally I do not want to meet a new driver when I am in a tight corner. I think the examination should be made stricter than it is to-day. I know of cases where a license has been issued when, in my opinion, the party was not qualified to take a car out on the road. A tribute may properly be paid to the co-operation which is afforded by the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia. The club is doing splendid work in sign-posting the roads, and also in inculcating a spirit of regard for the road rights of others. The club, with nearly 6,000 members, is doing great service in this State; and here, in contradistinction to the position in South Australia, the police force work in close unison with the club. There is a thoroughly cordial feeling between the club and the police, and the results are to the advantage of all concerned. I hope the club's work will be continued and extended.

MR. MANN (Perth) [8.11]: I naturally take a great interest in the Police Estimates, because for nearly quarter of century I was in the service of the department; and therefore know the difficulties with which members of the force have to contend. Police officials have many masters besides their immediate chiefs and inspectors. They have the public to serve, of course; and anything that disagrees with public taste is usually brought before members of Parliament, and through them before the Minister. Therefore the task of the police is by no means an easy one. The member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally), speaking recently of the police, said it was time the people realised that the police were just ordinary Government servants. I interjected that they were a good deal more than that; and so they are. In former times a police officer was merely a keeper of the peace. Nowadays the police have to undertake a hundred and one other duties. For instance, in the city, besides maintaining the peace and keeping the city free from crime, they administer the Traffic Act in all its phases, the liquor laws, and the Weights and Measures Act, besides other legislation; and, in addition, they render first aid in cases of accident. After serving in the city for some years, a police officer may be transferred to the country, where, besides performing police duties, he has to collect statistics, act as Clerk of Courts, register births, deaths and marriages, and attend to road board regulations. The police have to

be a little above the ordinary individual to carry out all those varied services. I think we can look with satisfaction and pleasure upon the work done by the Western Australian police force. Very rarely do we hear of any action by a police officer that is not a credit to the service. A passage in the report of the Commissioner of Police to which I desire to refer is that where he draws attention to appendix "G," which shows that last year 71 persons were killed and 624 injured in street accidents, while in 1925-26 the respective figures were 58 killed and 519 injured. The increase is large, and I am sure the Minister realises that also. It is just a question of what is best to be done to reduce the number of deaths, mostly caused by motor accidents, and the number of the injured. I consider it necessary to tighten up the issuing of motor licenses, and I agree with the Minister's remark that the temperament and disposition of the applicant will have to be considered just as well as his ability to drive a car in and out of a gate by way of test. Excellent work has been performed by the women police, work that is little heard of. The Minister would be well advised to discuss with the Commissioner the necessity for increasing their number.

The Minister for Justice: I have already done so and I am very favourably inclined to the suggestion.

MR. MANN: I am pleased to hear that.

The Minister for Justice: They are doing very fine work.

MR. MANN: A few weeks ago a neighbour asked my wife to go to a house close by and see what was happening there. Mrs. Mann found that the wife was ill with tuberculosis, the husband was intoxicated and there were three little children without anyone to care for them. They did not know to whom to turn for assistance and when my wife spoke to me about it, I rang up the women police and Mrs. Dugdale visited the home. She did all that was necessary. She called in a doctor to attend to the sick woman for a couple of days and got hold of the husband and secured his agreement to support his children in a home to which she took the children. She had the woman admitted to the Perth Hospital for a week, after which she was taken to the Wooroloo Sanatorium. Few people realise that that is part of the work of the women police. Another instance that I know of was one in which a widow died, leaving five girls.

The eldest had to take charge of the other four and one of the latter commenced to give trouble. The eldest girl went to the women police about it, and Mrs. Dugdale took the offending girl to her own home and kept her there for a week or two in order to ascertain whether there was any viciousness in the girl's character, or whether she could be properly controlled and weaned away from her companions. Looking down the list of work performed by the women police for the past year, and realising how much is entailed in the tasks set out there, I think the Minister would be well advised to double the number of women police and to have 10 women engaged in that work. In the list I find that 111 women were cautioned for drinking and neglecting their homes and children, 67 girls and women were assisted, 22 girls and women placed in homes, 23 girls and women taken to hospitals, 13 situations found for girls and women, three cases of first aid rendered, 31 women and girls located, 20 children provided with temporary homes, 13 children removed from immoral surroundings, 16 absconders located, three lost children found, five women reconciled to their homes, and so on. That is jolly fine work on the social side of our lives, and it is work that could very well be extended. I am indeed pleased to know that the Minister has already discussed with the Commissioner the question of increasing the number of women police. In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister said that the present Chief Inspector was drawing the same salary as his predecessors. I accept that statement, but there is a point that I would like to bring before the Minister's notice. There may be a technicality that prevents that officer receiving the full amount of salary because he is acting as Chief Inspector and has not been appointed to the full position. The point I desire to mention is that when that officer is retired, his retiring allowance will be calculated on the salary he will be drawing at the time, and allowances will not be taken into consideration at all. That means to say that his allowance will be based on £550 and not on £622, and that will make a considerable difference to him. I believe the Minister will overcome that difficulty if it is at all possible. Speaking as an old officer, I want to congratulate the Minister on the fine grip he has of his departmental work. He has other large departments under his con-

trol but I have been placed in a position of being able to appreciate the Minister's effective control and grip of the Police Department. On several occasions I have had to go to him with grievances and I found he knew just as much of the position as I did, if not more. I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of his attitude.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [8.21]: I wish to refer to the lack of cars for the police in Fremantle to enable them to carry out their duties. I believe the matter has received some attention and that efforts are to be made to provide cars or motor cycles. From time to time we have had the spectacle of police officers endeavouring to chase speed hogs, but the police vehicles have been wholly inadequate for the work.

The Minister for Justice: That matter has been dealt with.

Mr. Mann: The Commissioner deals with that in his report.

Mr. Davy: When they do catch an offender, it is generally the wrong one.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is certain they are not likely to catch the proper culprit in the cars at their disposal now. In his report the Commissioner of Police points out that drunken drivers and others who commit serious offences against the traffic regulations should be disqualified for life from driving motor vehicles. It is necessary to catch an offender before he can be convicted, and there are quite a number of these speed hogs who have yet to be caught. At Fremantle there are many of these offenders to be seen, particularly around the main streets. I frequently proceed along Queen Victoria-street and it is a regular thing there to see motorists speeding along at between 40 and 50 miles an hour. Unless the police are provided with fast cars, there is little chance of their dealing with this menace. I believe motor cycles are worse than motor cars, and it is no good sending an officer in an obsolete vehicle to attempt to cope with either. The officers of the Traffic Branch who are located in Fremantle are housed in premises that are altogether unsuitable and inadequate. I believe the inspector of weights and measures also requires accommodation and I suggest to the Minister that there are buildings at Fremantle that could be purchased at a reasonable price and provision made so that all the Government departments requiring

accommodation could be housed together. These include the Traffic Department, Weights and Measures Department, and the Water Supply Department, while there may be others as well. I notice the following reference in the annual report of the Commissioner of Police:—

The time is fast drawing near when at peak periods of traffic the present practice of permitting vehicles to make right-hand turns out of one street to another will have to cease at certain points in Perth and Fremantle, as well as vehicles reversing the direction in which they are proceeding in certain busy streets.

That is what the Commissioner sets out in his report, yet we have the spectacle of another Government officer compelling vehicles to take a direct right-hand turn out of Adelaide-street into Queen-street. It is peculiar that the Commissioner of Police can hold those opinions and include that extract in his report; yet an official can act directly in opposition to his recommendations.

Mr. Mann: That has been rectified.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, it has not and it is not likely to be rectified if what I hear is true. There are people who have been soured against the taxi drivers, and are not prepared to give them a fair deal.

Mr. Davy: What about Howard-street?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am simply discussing the report of the Commissioner and the attitude taken up by one of his inspectors in compelling motors to do just what the Commissioner says should not be allowed. The position is farcical. This should not be regarded lightly, and equal treatment should be meted out to Fremantle and Perth.

The Minister for Justice: We treat them alike. When that is the practice in Perth, we will do it in Fremantle too.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope that will be soon. I trust the Minister will give consideration to the suggestion I make regarding the housing of departments in Fremantle.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.29]: I am pleased to pay a tribute to the efficient work performed by the police force during the past few years. Probably that may be due to the fact that the head of the department is rather efficient in the way he controls his subordinate officers. We can with some pride review all sections of the activities of the Police Department. On many occasions I have been compelled to approach

the Commissioner for small concessions and to appeal to him to give consideration to certain requests, and I have always found him to be very considerate and usually very broad in his outlook. While I propose to criticise a paragraph in his latest annual report, I want it to be understood that I do so more with a view to assisting the Commissioner than with the object of embarrassing him. I sometimes wonder that we have so high a degree of efficiency in the force for it is well known that a large number of members of the force have a grievance against the procedure adopted in respect of promotions. Speaking here a few weeks ago, I called attention to the fact that two first-class sergeants, qualified for inspectorships, had been refused promotion—in one case for ten years. Ultimately that officer was promoted to the position that he should have got ten years before. The Minister by interjection informed me that the reason why that officer had not been promoted earlier was that no vacancies had occurred. Where the Minister got his information from, I do not know, but I do know that whilst those two officers were awaiting promotion, five junior officers were promoted over their heads. If the Commissioner is right in declaring that efficiency is the chief factor in qualification for promotion, then the two sergeants of whom I speak should have been promoted years ago. I should like the Minister, when replying, to tell us why the personnel of the promotional board has been altered. Until recently the board consisted of the Commissioner and all the inspectors stationed from Geraldton southward. For some reason unknown to me, the personnel of the board has been altered quite recently, and it now consists of the Commissioner, acting Chief Inspector Sellenger, and Inspector O'Halloran. I have no personal grudge against any of those officers, of whom I know only the Commissioner. I have the greatest respect for every officer in the force from the Commissioner downwards. All of them have rendered great service to the State, and it is up to members of Parliament to appreciate it. But I should like to know from the Minister why the personnel of the board has been altered just at a time when there is considerable agitation in the force over this very question of promotion. It is unfair that Inspector O'Halloran should have been appointed to the board. Not that he is anything but a positively good officer.

but for the past six years he has not been in close association with other members of the force. He has been delegated to a post in which he assists in the control of the liquor traffic, and so he comes in contact with other members of the force only in the course of prosecutions for breaches of the licensing law. In all probability there are in the force to-day officers whom he does not know at all. Again, acting Chief Inspector Sellenger another member of the board, is due for retirement almost immediately. That being so, probably he is a little indifferent as to what part he may play on the promotional board. I do not suggest that he would act dishonestly. But he must retire in the near future, or submit to the findings of the other members of the board. I should like the Minister to explain why it is the personnel of the promotional board has been so significantly altered. The Commissioner in his latest report has this to say on the subject of promotion:—

The names of candidates passing the examinations are registered, and a board consisting of the Commissioner, the Chief Inspector and a first-class inspector, sit as required and select in order of merit members of the force who, in their opinion, should be promoted, and in making their recommendations take into account that efficiency must be the first consideration. It may be here stated that the examination above mentioned is solely a qualifying one, and it cannot be taken for granted that the passing of the same gives one the right to promotion. There are other factors to be considered, namely, sobriety, personality, force of character, sound judgment and capacity for taking initiation, zeal, tact, and readiness to submit to constituted authority.

I take exception to the last line.

The Minister for Justice: Then you are a rebel.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not exactly. I know the Minister himself has a great dislike to those words. I do not believe the board would be as drastic as those words might seem to indicate. The Minister ought to agree to the appointment of an independent promotional board.

The Minister for Justice: You said just now that Inspector O'Halloran knows nothing about the force. How much would an independent board know?

Mr. MARSHALL: Such a board would act solely on the evidence submitted, whereas Inspector O'Halloran might be influenced by the feeling that the other two officers know more about the force than he does. An independent tribunal would not be

amenable to any influence or swayed by anything but the evidence submitted to them, whereas Inspector O'Halloran, having been segregated for so long, might be prepared to fall in with the views of his colleagues. Coming to the recent promotion in the Criminal Investigation Department, I understand that Inspector Purdue—a total stranger to me—is a very efficient and able officer. I have nothing derogatory to say of him. Having observed his very able work in recent criminal cases, I would not dare to say he is not deserving of promotion, but we must not lose sight of the fact that there are probably other officers equally efficient and as much deserving of promotion if good fortune had favoured them as it has favoured Inspector Purdue. Although that appointment has been made and has appealed to the general public as being a wise one, it does not follow that other officers, given the same opportunity, could not have filled the position just as efficiently.

Mr. Sampson: That is a half-hearted sort of blessing.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not concerned about the man who is promoted, but I am concerned about men who have not been treated fairly. An officer may render the State good service in any capacity, but another officer may get all the spectacular work and be constantly in the public eye, and it would be easy to permit an injustice to be done to the other man. I am convinced that a strict investigation into the whole of the ramifications of the police force would do no harm, and I hope that the time is not far distant when an investigation will be made. I wish to refer to Sergeant O'Halloran, stationed at Midland Junction, and to speak chiefly of his work as bailiff for the Midland Junction district. I am not concerned whether he is getting more than he is entitled to, but I am concerned about the fees charged to people in the Gingen, Mundaring, Wooroloo, and other districts where local constables are stationed. Processes are served in those districts by Sergeant Johnson, and the people have to pay not only the service fee but a charge of 1s. a mile, and they are often people who can ill-afford it. That is due to the Midland officer having the right to do this work outside his own district. It is not fair to the people. I have no axe to grind, but I object to unnecessary impositions being made that people can ill-afford to bear. The Minister should give the constables stationed in those districts the right to serve such

processes. It could be done at less expense than by concentrating the work at Midland Junction. I compliment the traffic section of the police on the able manner in which they are handling the traffic. In saying that I do not wish it to be inferred that all that is desired has been accomplished, but with the limited means at their disposal, especially the limited number of officers allowed Inspector Hunter, the efficiency of his work commands respect. The Minister can check me if I am wrong, but I believe that the revenue collected by way of fines and other incidentals almost covers the cost of administration.

Mr. Mann: Do the fines go into Consolidated Revenue?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes.

Mr. Mann: They must amount to a large sum.

Mr. MARSHALL: It must be disheartening to the traffic officials when they catch a man under the influence of liquor driving a motor car and he is fined only two or three pounds.

The Minister for Justice: Much more than that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Only a couple of days ago the "Daily News" recorded two cases against men charged with having, whilst under the influence of liquor, driven motor cars. One of them was fined £3 and the other £30.

Mr. Mann: Were the cases heard by the same magistrate?

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot say. It is remarkable that there should be such a big discrepancy between the penalties imposed for similar offences. If there was not some good reason for inflicting the small fine, it is little wonder that the police become disheartened.

The Minister for Justice: They are not disheartened.

Mr. MARSHALL: They are doing good work, but the two "Matchless" motor cycles they possess are inadequate to cope with the work.

The Minister for Justice: We are giving them two more motor cycles.

Mr. MARSHALL: Probably the Government are doing their best for the department, but when the department is paying its own way, the officials deserve a little more consideration. When we consider the great toll that motor traffic exacts from the community in the shape of death and injury, the Minister should not hesitate to give Inspector Hunter something approaching re-

quisite equipment for the protection of the public. Only a couple of evenings ago a wild and woolly would-be motor cyclist, goggle-eyed, having his hair blowing back and with other disfigurements about his carcase to make him look more ferocious, essayed to escape from the police at Nedlands and finished up by colliding with a motor car and breaking his leg. It is a pity that his leg was not broken above his shoulder.

Mr. Mann: Do not be too hard.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have no sympathy for such a man. Every member in moving about the city must observe breaches of the Act being committed daily, but it is impossible for Inspector Hunter with his limited staff and equipment to obtain absolute efficiency. All things considered, he is doing good work, and I hope he will be encouraged by receiving favourable consideration from the Minister.

The Minister for Justice: We are providing two extra motor cycles and a new motor car.

The Premier: A brand-new car.

Mr. MARSHALL: Let me conclude by complimenting the Commissioner of Police and every man in the service on the efficiency of the work.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [8.55]: I note in the report of the Commissioner of Police that a serious number of pedestrians have been killed in the streets during the past year, quite apart from fatalities to people riding in motor vehicles. I am not one of those who think that pedestrians have no rights on the road. It is difficult for us to hold the balance between motorists and pedestrians because sometimes we are of the motorists and sometimes of the pedestrians, and the point of view tends to change according to whether we are riding in a motor car or attempting to escape from one.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are about right there.

Mr. DAVY: I suggest the time will come when pedestrians should regard themselves as having some responsibility for their own safety when they are walking on roads. When they are on the footpath they are within their own limits where wheeled traffic has no right to go.

The Minister for Justice: So long as they keep to the left.

Mr. DAVY: Most pedestrians, even sensible persons, and sometimes myself, tend to

wander about the roads as if they were absolutely immune from the attacks of motors.

The Premier: And but for careful drivers there would be double the number of accidents. Drivers often save pedestrians from themselves.

Mr. DAVY: In France the people are a little more callous than we are. Perhaps they are too callous, but they are very practical, although we have always been taught to regard the Frenchman as a sentimental kind of bloke, whereas in fact he is an intensely practical person. Since before the war, it has been the practice in France for a pedestrian who gets run over to be arrested and fined.

The Premier: That is a fact—fined for obstructing the traffic.

Mr. DAVY: I am not suggesting that we should follow that example, but we should endeavour to strike the happy medium and make it a recognised rule that people who walk on the roads should walk only in certain places. If they walk in other places, they should be guilty of a traffic offence. If people desire to cross St. George's-terrace they should cross at a specified place.

The Premier: They will not go straight across. They go at a great long angle.

Mr. DAVY: They do not content themselves with walking at an angle; they go zigzag, in circles and often hesitatingly—

Mr. North: Or backwards.

Mr. DAVY: Or anyway they like. I suggest that the running down of pedestrians on the roadway is entirely and absolutely unnecessary and can be prevented by the pedestrians themselves. Of course it is the duty of persons driving motor cars to look out for people on the road. It seems to me there is a certain degree of responsibility resting on the people to look after themselves and to be reasonable in their use of the road. Pedestrians sometimes make sudden movements. After all a human being on foot cannot get out of the way very quickly, though he can get in the way much too quickly. I commend to the Minister the suggestion that legislation should be brought down to cast upon pedestrians using the roadway a certain amount of responsibility for their own safety. I wish to refer also to another question. At present if a person is prosecuted for a traffic offence and succeeds in his defence he has to pay his own costs. That is entirely unjust.

The Minister for Justice: That is so in connection with many law cases.

Mr. DAVY: It is nevertheless unjust. It is constantly happening, in my limited experience, that the person charged with an offence will plead guilty in order to avoid the cost of having himself defended, although he may be certain to succeed with his defence. That is neither just nor proper. Most people, however able they may be, unless they happen to be members of Parliament or involved in talking for a living in some way or other, are not competent to go into the police court and defend themselves.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then a lawyer in Parliament has two chances to one against other members.

Mr. DAVY: Some members who are not lawyers talk more than the lawyers. The average educated and intelligent person, faced with the necessity of defending himself in the police court, is placed at a great disadvantage unless he is used to talking on his feet. There is no question about that.

Hon. G. Taylor: He would not do it if he could avoid it.

Mr. DAVY: If a man is charged with a traffic offence, even though he is conscious of his own innocence, it will not pay him to defend the case, unless the charge be a serious one. Particularly does this apply to country people who may have to spend two or three days in Perth in order to defend themselves. The police, owing to the fact that they are entirely immune from paying costs—I am not talking about the individual policemen paying costs—are much more careless in laying charges than they ought to be. I know that on frequent occasions they have made charges against motorists when they had no possible chance of succeeding if the defendants had been properly defended. The cure for this is that costs might be awarded, at the discretion of the magistrate, to the defendant if he is successful in his defence. I can see no reason why a citizen, fighting the State as a whole, should be in any less advantageous position than when he is fighting another citizen. Another extraordinary attitude has lately been adopted by the police in launching prosecutions. Whenever an accident occurs the police prosecute both parties to it, whether there is any evidence that either party is negligent or otherwise.

The Minister for Justice: I do not think that is so.

Mr. DAVY: I assert that it is so.

The Minister for Justice: In some cases, perhaps.

Mr. DAVY: I say it is the practice. A week or so ago I was called upon to defend a lady who was involved in an accident due to a collision that occurred along King's Park-road. I found that the other party to the collision had also been prosecuted. Luckily, from the lady's point of view, the other party to the collision was first on the list of persons to be prosecuted. The first witness called for the prosecution against the other party was my client. Then followed her witnesses, speaking in her favour, and then followed all the other person's witnesses, speaking in his favour. That case was concluded, and the magistrate duly convicted the first offender. The case of my client was then called on. The first witness against her was the man who had just been convicted. Then followed his witnesses and then followed my client's witnesses. Members could hardly imagine a more ridiculous situation. It is the duty of the police on the evidence before them to make up their minds as to which of the two parties in an accident is guilty of negligence.

The Premier: How did your client get on?

Mr. DAVY: She got off. She was home and dried, because the other person had been convicted first.

The Premier: Luckily so, it seems.

Mr. DAVY: Such an attitude on the part of the police is positively Gilbertian. It is the duty of the Crown, before undertaking a prosecution for what is a quasi-criminal offence, to make up their minds that they can prove the charge that they decide to launch against a particular individual. It is not sufficient to say, "This person was in the accident, and therefore, *prima facie*, was guilty of negligence." That is a ridiculous attitude to take up. Just about the time when a man begins to think he can drive his car and that he cannot have an accident because he is driving so carefully, he encounters a lunatic, such as the man who careered along Mount's Bay-road in a zig-zag fashion and ran into an innocent person who was on the right side of the road. The most careful man in the world cannot guarantee that others will not come into

collision with him. He does not know when he will meet some lunatic, or some person whose motor car has suffered a mechanical breakdown. For the police to take up the attitude that if there is an accident both parties must be prosecuted, is most unjust. That is the policy at present, though I do not know who laid it down.

Hon. G. Taylor: I suppose the Premier did.

Mr. DAVY: It is important that the Minister should inquire into this matter and see that the practice is discontinued. In the interests of justice costs should be awardable against the police in traffic prosecutions. When the City Council undertook traffic prosecutions they conducted many less than are being conducted now.

Hon. G. Taylor: Because the law was not so rigid then.

Mr. DAVY: Because there were fewer motor cars then, and because they did not adopt the policy of prosecuting everyone who became involved in an accident. In their case, however, the costs were awarded to the successful defendant, and rightly too. The time has come when the idea that the king can do no wrong should no longer stand. The basis of any costs being given against the police is the thousand-year-old idea that the king can do no wrong. We have got beyond that. When the State involves citizens in expensive litigation, and is proved to be wrong, I say the State should bear the costs of that citizen.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton—in reply) [9.8]: While it may be thought that many of the prosecutions are undertaken frivolously, or that prosecutions are launched for frivolous offences, I should like the member for West Perth to know that this is not the procedure. Many cases occur in the city where some slight carelessness is apparent on the part of drivers, involving transgression of some comparatively minor by-law. Instead of those people being brought to court, they are sent into the general Traffic Office. They are not tried, but are given an opportunity to explain their action and are given fair warning lest they should err again.

Mr. Davy: That is a dreadful state of affairs. That amounts to turning Inspector Hunter into a kind of court. By Jove, that is more outrageous than anything I have complained of.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Nothing of the kind! There are cases of trivial offences that are of such a nature as not to warrant a prosecution. Very often people who are not acquainted with the by-laws leave their cars in the street for longer than the time allowed. It is not fair to prosecute persons who have come up from the country, and who cannot be expected to know all the by-laws of the city. They may have business to do which may detain them longer than they expected. The heavy hand of the law may come down upon them, and if they are taken to court they may be fined £1. Instead of that, they are brought to the Traffic Office and warned.

Mr. Davy: It is not the job of the police to lecture people.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Members would wax indignant if a country constituent arrived in the city, and because he left his car standing in the street for 18 minutes was fined £1. Such a visitor would not be used to the traffic laws, and members would say that it was a case of the law having gone mad.

Mr. Davy: Suppose a person who was summoned to the Traffic Office told the inspector to go to blazes, what would happen?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He would say, "You will go to blazes the next time you commit an offence of that kind."

Mr. Davy: That would be the proper answer to send an inspector who called you to his office. He has no right to do that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Most men would think that was only a common-sense procedure. It is what is being done. Apparently in the opinion of the hon. member it is the wrong procedure. I am of opinion that it minimises the number of offences that are committed. It means that people are given an opportunity to learn the by-laws. After one or two of these trivial misdemeanours have been pointed out to them, they recognise that they have been fairly treated and will not transgress in the future. They have had their warning and are satisfied to abide by the by-laws.

Mr. Davy: But the inspector tells the people to call.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He asks them to call. He would not wreak his vengeance upon them if they did not call. I know many people have expressed satisfaction with that procedure.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is a wise provision for those who are unacquainted with the traffic laws of the city.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: With regard to the inspectors who are on the promotion board, I would point out that they were comprised of those officers who were south of Geraldton. They met together when the occasion demanded, and discussed promotions. The greatest grouch and cause for dissatisfaction was that the Commissioner himself took no practical responsibility for promotions. The board recommended promotions to the Minister, and willy nilly the chief administrator of the Police Department had no say with respect to them. They said he shelved his responsibility, but that it was the job for the man in supreme control of the force to have some say in these matters. That was the cause of grave discontent and dissatisfaction. They said the chief officer should be the man to take the responsibility. I thought there was a good deal in that objection, and the Commissioner, together with the two senior officers of the service, now takes the responsibility whenever promotion is made. That system is giving greater satisfaction.

Item—Weights and Measures, Inspectors, £20:

Mr. MANN: Grave injustice is being done to general traders, especially small traders, by persons canvassing for the work of repairing scales. The unfortunate trader, not being well informed, accepts what the canvasser tells him.

The Minister for Justice: All canvassers must now have licenses.

Mr. MANN: Still, I can state to the Minister concrete cases of fraud. Here is an instance given me by one of the inspectors. He told me that he called on a lady keeping a little shop in Murray-street and asked her had she had her scales tested. She replied, "Not yet; the man who does it is too busy," but he has seen me and told me the scales are out of order and the repairs will cost £5. The inspector, incidentally, says there are numerous cases of this sort. Having heard what the canvasser had said, the inspector asked the lady to let him have a look at the scales and test them. Having tested them he told her that there was nothing wrong with them; that they were in perfect order.

The Minister for Justice: Those facts show that the inspector is doing his job.

Mr. MANN: I want the Minister to take action against such people as that canvasser. Frequently I have been rung up on the telephone by traders who consider they are being harshly treated because they have to spend two or three pounds in getting scales put in order. A Leederville trader telephoned asking me what he should do in regard to his scales, and saying that a man had been to see them and had told him they would cost £2 to put in order.

The Minister for Justice: He could have taken them to the police office and got them tested.

Mr. MANN: All these people are not as wide awake as the Minister. I said to this Leederville trader, "Take your scales to the Police Department, and they will be tested there for you." He did so, and was informed that only a slight adjustment was required, and that he could get it done by a mechanic for perhaps half-a-crown. The mechanic's charge was 2s. 6d.; and as the police fee was 5s., the total cost of testing and repairing was 7s. 6d., as against £2 quoted by the canvasser. Another trader in the same street allowed a canvasser to take the scales away, and the total cost to him proved to be £2 10s. I am surprised that the Minister has not heard of these matters.

The Minister for Justice: I have heard of them. We are only going to license men who are perfectly honest. If we hear of a licensed mechanic being guilty of such conduct, he will not get his license renewed.

Mr. MANN: The Minister can get from Inspector O'Halloran a long list of cases in which prosecutions for fraud would lie. I want to give the matter publicity through the Press, with a view to stopping it.

The Minister for Justice: That is highly desirable.

Mr. MANN: The small traders who are being robbed cannot afford to be taken down. Sometimes they are told that their scales are utterly useless and that the canvasser will supply another scale. I hope the Minister will take steps, through the department, to stop that kind of thing.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Lands, Immigration, and Industries, Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister.

Vote—Lands and Surveys, £75,350:

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [9.21]: The record of the Lands Department is one of continuous progress. Very great interest is being taken in land settlement, and applications for land are, unfortunately, greater than the supply. During the year ended on 30th June last, applications were approved under conditional alienation as follows:—Conditional purchase, 387,715 acres; conditional purchase under Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 39,644 acres; homestead farms, 76,603 acres; and grazing leases, 1,673,676 acres. The total applications approved during the year number 3,445, for an acreage of 2,177,638. The Land Board allocated 487 blocks, and the total number of applicants dealt with by the board was 3,430. These facts are evidence of the great interest being taken in the settlement of our lands.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There may be duplications included in those figures, though.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are duplications, no doubt. The number of new settlers for the year is 1,107. The number of applicants approved during the year ended June 1926, and the acreage taken up by them are both in excess of the figures for the year 1924-25 by 170 applicants and approximately half a million acres respectively.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The land taken up was principally light land, I suppose.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not all light land. Applications for pastoral leases were approved during the year for 10,709,963 acres, and the total area now held under pastoral lease in Western Australia is 229,970,629 acres. In the desire to meet the great demand for land, particularly in the wheat belt, the survey staff has been increased, and the greater proportion of the surveyors is now being utilised in the classification and survey of new country. At present 52 surveyors are fully employed, exclusive of four district surveyors who are engaged in supervising the field work. Every licensed surveyor able to carry out the arduous work of outback surveying is employed. The number of surveyors working in the field is 46. Of these 16 are engaged in subdivisional surveys, and seven in classification surveys. Subdivisions are proceeding in the following localities:—South of Southern Cross and west of Marvel Loch, Lake King, Newdegate, east of Grass Patch, east of Ballidu, Lake Carmody, and Lake Hurle-

stone. Classification surveys are in progress south of Southern Cross and east of the rabbit-proof fence, east of Dalwallinu, Ravensthorpe, and Forrestania. The work of both subdivision and classification is proceeding with all possible despatch, and I have assured the Surveyor General that I will not stint him in regard to either men or money for that important work. I want the country opened up and classifications made. The classifications must be made before the surveys are completed. The Surveyor General has my instructions to put the whole of the service at that work, and I have undertaken to find him all the funds needed for completing the work at the earliest possible date. During Mr. Angwin's administration Mr. L. Bostock was instructed to inspect and report on Crown lands available within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of existing railways. The country was inspected from Mullewa to Albany, and eastward as far as Boddalia on the Southern Cross line. The only Crown lands not inspected within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of a railway were on the Yuna and Ajana lines, and north of the Geraldton-Mullewa line. The land on the Merredin-Naremben railway, then in course of construction, was also excluded from the inspection. Some 4,600,000 acres of Crown lands were inspected, all within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of a railway—the greater proportion being light lands. These lands are open for selection, and the Agricultural Bank is assisting on the basis of 50-50 in their development, the bank insisting that the farmer shall have a minimum of 2,000 acres. Since the inspection there have been 1,238,000 acres of land taken up, and to the 1st of the current month 689,000 acres have been applied for, making a total of 1,927,000 acres.

Mr. Griffiths: Nearly half the entire area.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. I saw some of the crops grown on this light country, not only this year, but last year and in previous years; and I was very much struck with the crops I saw in the Wongan Hills district this season. It can be maintained, I consider, that the use of light lands has been encouraged by the experiments conducted at the Wongan Hills farm. The results there have been so satisfactory up to date that large numbers of persons have been encouraged to take up light country. I do not want people to believe that they can make a living on light land, sandplain country, unless they have large acreages and carry sheep. The experiments are not yet conclusive. None of us knows how long the light land will stand cropping.

So far, however, the experiments have been, as I say, satisfactory. Still, it is too early yet to say what the light lands are capable of doing. When I speak of light lands I do not mean scrub lands or lands with a clay subsoil, but sandplain country only. If people take up these lands, they should not take them up for cropping solely, but to carry sheep and to crop once in three years, building up the land in the process. Under those conditions the light lands will, I believe, establish themselves as sound propositions. So far from the good results obtained being conclusive, I say that nothing conclusive has yet been attained. The experiments must extend over a number of years. I would be sorry to see the settlers cropping the light land year after year because, in my opinion, that type of country would rapidly become exhausted. The farmers should build up their country, stock it and not crop annually. At the Wongan Hills light land experimental farm, lupins are growing successfully and I think they will prove a big factor in the successful development of that class of country. It is a fine thing for Western Australia to see the light land carrying crops and stock. It will mean that we will have the land alongside many of the existing railways brought into a state of productivity, and there will be more produce to haul over the railways. Since its establishment in 1895, the Agricultural Bank has advanced to ordinary civilian borrowers £6,110,331, of which £2,586,034 has been repaid, leaving a balance outstanding on the 30th June last of £3,416,236. The net loss on the bank's operations to the 31st June last, after writing off £194,874 for bad debts, was £75,220. The purposes for which the advances were made were: Liabilities taken over, £374,538; purchase of stock, £522,830; purchase of machinery, £108,327; effecting improvements, £4,957,246; other rural industries such as assistance to butter factories, bacon factories and so on, £24,791, and unallotted £122,599, making a total of £8,110,331. The amount of the loans approved during the past year was £507,575, of which £351,521 was for clearing new land. Compared with 1924, the year in which the Government took office, the year's approvals show an increase of £91,425. To meet the pressing demands of settlement, the policy of the bank has been liberalised to provide for advances on land up to a distance of 20 miles from an authorised railway, where there is no doubt as to the adequacy of the rainfall.

Mr. Ferguson: Is that on light land?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, not on light land, but only where the security is adequate. Advances are also being made on suitable areas of light land for developmental purposes on a 50 per cent. basis. With this provision, as I have already told hon. members, the trustees insist that the man receiving assistance must have a minimum holding of 2,000 acres. In the Esperance district loans amounting to £219,975 have been approved.

Hon. G. Taylor: Covering what period?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: For the period that the Esperance land has been settled. The difficulties experienced in bringing the mallee land in this part of the State to a payable stage of productivity is proving much the same as with similar types of country in the Eastern States. Recently I read some articles that appeared in the "Australasian" regarding the conditions of the mallee areas in Victoria, and everything that appeared in those articles could be applied equally to the mallee areas in the Esperance district of Western Australia. Those hon. members who are acquainted with the mallee areas know the difficulties of farming that type of country. The mallee suckers and roots constitute big obstacles to farming, and until they are got rid of it cannot be expected that the farmers will get those good returns that are necessary if farming there is to be profitable.

Mr. Griffiths: What about the bogey regarding salt? Has that been exploded?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not heard anything about salt there. I suppose there is salt there just as it is to be found in other parts of the State.

Hon. G. Taylor: We will not know about that until the big trees have been taken out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But that applies throughout Western Australia and in the other States as well. Where the land is good, there is always a percentage of salt when the timber is removed. I do not know that it will be worse in the Esperance district than elsewhere. I should not think from the appearance of the country that there will be more salt in the Esperance areas than elsewhere. If it could have been arranged during the early stages of development there, I believe the best system that could have been adopted to develop those light lands would have been the grow-

ing of oats with sheep and the provision of water supplies. The oat stubble carries a good burn-off and that would help to get rid of the mallee roots. With wheat, however, it is a different proposition. The growth of the wheat is more scanty than that of oats, with the result that the farmers hardly ever get a good burn-off. I believe that is one reason why the Esperance district has not made more progress. Unfortunately there is no water supply there and it is impossible to carry sheep until that difficulty has been overcome. I am satisfied from my own experience, and I believe members on the Opposition side of the House are of the same opinion, that the best way of developing the mallee lands is as I have suggested, with oats, sheep, and a good burn-off to eradicate the mallee roots. Had that policy been adopted in the mallee country seven or eight years ago when settlement first took place I believe there would be a different tale to tell to-day. I am glad to be able to inform hon. members that although a few months ago the prospects were bad in the Esperance district, rains that have fallen have meant a great improvement. This morning I was speaking to a wheat buyer who had just returned from the district and he informed me that he felt sure there would be an average return of about nine bushels per acre. That will be fairly good. Hon. members realise that so far there is no real farming in the mallee district, and in those circumstances they will readily understand why better results are not being achieved there. However, we have to stick to that country until we prove it. The Government have established an experimental farm at Salmon Gums and we have a crop in this year. In a few years the Agricultural Department should be in a position to state definitely whether profitable wheat crops can be grown in that part of the State.

Hon. G. Taylor: How far is the experimental farm from the old Salmon Gums hotel?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is about half a mile from the township and from the old hotel. It is a nice property and conveniently situated.

Mr. Lindsay: Is it all mallee country?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the farm includes mallee and salmon gum country as well. I am responsible for establishing the farm at Salmon Gums. Three or four

sites were suggested, but I chose Salmon Gums as being most conveniently situated. It is on the railway line and that will enable farmers from the surrounding districts to visit the farm on field days and ascertain what is being done there. As a result of operations there, it is expected that we will be able to ascertain the types of wheat suitable for that locality. Consequently, the experimental farm should prove a big factor in bringing our mallee areas into a state of productivity. Under the provisions of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act, advances have been made amounting to £5,709,018 to returned soldiers, of which £1,002,481 has been repaid. The number of soldiers repatriated is 5,336, of whom 850, either through abandonment or re-possession, have vacated their holdings. A large measure of success has attended the efforts of the board in the wheat and mixed farming areas, but the results in the Metropolitan-Suburban and South-Western districts have not been so satisfactory. A general revaluation of soldiers' securities in those areas, which began while Mr. Angwin was Minister for Lands, is now nearing completion. The amount which has been found necessary so far to write off is £494,255, of which £379,495 represented advances and interest and £114,761 cost of land. These amounts will be recovered by the State from the Commonwealth grant for that purpose, and it is hoped that this relief will place the settlers in a position to make a living and pay interest and redemption instalments on their reduced indebtedness. As to the Commonwealth grant, under which relief is extended to soldier settlers, the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. rebate on money loaned for reparation purposes represents £700,000, in addition to which there was the special grant of £796,000, making a total of £1,496,000. As hon. members are aware, it has been found necessary to continue the operations of the Industries Assistance Board for another year. The active accounts on the board's books total 1,073. In respect of these 944 of the assisted settlers are receiving full, and 129 partial assistance. Since 1917 the clients under the board have been restricted to soldiers in receipt of assistance under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. It has now been agreed to extend the provisions of the Act to all qualified soldiers on approved holdings, irrespective of whether they had acquired the

land since the termination of the Commonwealth agreement in June 1924 or not. This extension of the board's functions will in itself make a continuation of the Act necessary. Of the 1,073 fully and partially assisted settlers on the board's books, 742 or 70 per cent., are soldier settlers. The total number of settlers indebted to the board is 2,031, of whom 958 are receiving no further assistance; 396 of these accounts, with an aggregate liability of £347,717, have been placed on fixed mortgage, other inactive accounts are being similarly dealt with. Advances made by the board during the last financial year amounted to £864,286, and repayments from crops, etc., amounted to £887,719. That of course is very satisfactory. The total advances outstanding on the 31st March last represented £1,880,286. The losses written off to the same date amounted to £441,103, including bad debts written off £280,283, cancelled debts £38,957 and administration and trading losses £121,893. The total indebtedness to the Treasury amounts to £2,456,545. Since June, 1924, the board has been able to finance its operations from receipts, and the same condition of affairs is expected to obtain this year. I hope that will be so because it shows a healthy state of affairs generally. The total number of clearances granted by the board during the year was 142, making a total since its inception of 1,790. The total number of abandoned properties on the department's lands, including bank, board and soldier settlement blocks, was 640, distributed as follows:—Metropolitan, including Esperance, 176; Bunbury, 170; Katanning, including Denmark and Ongerup, 131; Northam 64; Narrogin, 42; Kellerberrin, 23; Bruce Rock, 14; Kununoppin, 13; and Geraldton 7. Of those, 298 were soldier settlers and 76 have been assisted by the Industries Assistance Board. The board's losses since its inception have amounted to £441,033, but as against that the value of crops and produce grown by assisted settlers has exceeded in value £11,000,000. That provision of wealth of course is a guarantee that the administration has been sound and that the Industries Assistance Board has fulfilled the purpose for which it was created. Heavy demands for the supply of rabbit netting still continue, and during the year 490 settlers were supplied with 2,110 miles of netting. We have 900 miles of netting on hand and recently a contract was signed for an additional 200 miles. So the farmers

will be able to secure supplies, fence their properties and carry stock, which will increase their returns very greatly. Hon. members probably are not aware of the great quantities of netting supplied to settlers. Up to the 30th June, 1926, 295 settlers were supplied with 1,257 miles, costing £58,270; and for the year ended the 30th June last 490 settlers were supplied with 2,110 miles costing £96,652. For the 4½ months of the current year 240 settlers were supplied with 965 miles at a cost of £44,077; 155 applications have been approved and are awaiting the return of mortgage documents by settlers for 630 miles representing £28,683. We have now 64 applications in hand for 247 miles of a value of £11,280. This gives a total of 459 applications for 1,842 miles at a cost of £84,040.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you getting any wire-netting from the Federal Government?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, not now. All the supplies are being procured locally and the whole of the financial responsibility falls on the State.

Hon. G. Taylor: You have about 1,100 miles on hand.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but we shall not have anything like that much when all these other applications have been dealt with. Now let me refer to group settlement. The groups established, including four groups amalgamated, number 136. There are 87 groups on individual piecework, 43 on group piecework, and six on partially individual and partially group piecework. There are 1,987 settlers and 2,382 group holdings. There are 367,105 acres being developed under group settlement conditions and the total population on the groups is 8,955. There have been 2,221 cottages erected, six cottage hospitals and 68 schools serving 122 groups. There are 11,288 cows and heifers on the groups, 241 bulls, 3,197 pigs and 2,337 horses. The total expenditure to the 30th September, 1927, not including drainage, has been £4,841,255, and that total cost, including drainage, roads and bridges and the purchase of the Peel Estate, amounts to £6,000,000. The Leader of the Opposition the other night criticised the administration. Before replying to his criticism I would ask him to refrain from criticising the group settlement administration. It is not fair that he should indulge in that way.

I have no desire to make group settlement a party question.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You made a speech, and I replied to it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have to justify my own administration, and I am endeavouring to do it. The Leader of the Opposition said that the success of group settlement depends first upon the land, secondly upon the settler and thirdly upon the Minister, and that whoever happens to be Minister must be held responsible. But the Minister cannot be held responsible either for the land or for the settler, two fundamental elements in the success of group settlement. I think the land, the rainfall and the settler mean more than does the administration. If we have good land, and settlers and rainfall, then the administration, be it ever so bad, cannot keep group settlement back. At one time similar criticism was aimed at the Industries Assistance Board. Yet despite inexperience, no maladministration could keep back the wheat belt with its good settlers, good seasons and good prices. One can still find Industries Assistance Board clients full of complaints against the administration. These men never seem to realise that they are themselves at fault, that what is wrong is the man himself.

Hon. G. Taylor: Surely the Minister does not wish to prevent the farmer from grumbling?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They do not all grumble. The fact that so many have succeeded under the board is evidence that the administration is not too bad. When a man, after being helped for nine or ten years, does not succeed, it is the man himself who is at fault. The Leader of the Opposition said the trouble was not with the land. I say that in many cases it is the land. He said also that the trouble was the expenditure. I want to be very definite about that, for in my opinion much of the trouble has been with the land. The poor condition of the country and the poor quality of the land have been largely responsible for the great expenditure. When we have poor country, we have to experiment with it, and until we get satisfactory results there must be heavy expenditure. A lot of the heavy expenditure on the group settlements has been due to the poor quality of the country. For some of the land we have done every thing possible and yet it does not respond. That sort of thing has

caused a lot of expenditure. I do not wish to say hard things, but I am going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to refrain from criticism on this subject; for I must defend myself and if pushed too far I will criticise unsparingly.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member has said that he believes in the South-West but that I do not believe in the South-West. He is laying himself open to harsh criticism when he makes that statement. I have just as much interest in the State as has anybody else. The Leader of the Opposition said he believed that land was never more carefully selected than was the land selected for group settlement, for it had been chosen by expert officials. I have here the evidence given by Mr. Brockman before the Royal Commission. Mr. Brockman said definitely that the land for group settlement was not carefully selected. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) was a member of the commission and he will remember the evidence. Here is an extract from it—

708. As you have been responsible for the selection of the land, I presume you have been careful?—Yes.

709. Are you aware that there are some blocks which are not regarded by the settlers as satisfactory?—Yes. There are some blocks that I felt doubtful about at the time, but I saw what had been done on similar land by others and I passed the blocks accordingly.

710. Did you always have in mind the fact that so much capital expenditure would be involved?—I did not think the expenditure would be so high.

711. What guided you in your selection of land?—I could not frame an estimate until the land had been tried. I had nothing to guide me.

735. Were you ever hard put to it at any time to get any considerable area of land?—The Forests Department held up large areas for some time. Eventually some of the country was released and then we had no difficulty.

736. If that land had been released by the Forests Department earlier would you have settled light land such as that on Group 14?—No.

737. Then you prefer to settle the forest country?—There is better land there.

740. According to your evidence you think it would have been better to have more settlement in the Manjimup area than at this end, and you would have done that had you had a free hand from the start?—Yes.

741. Then you are not altogether to blame for placing men on the light land?—No, we were stuck for land at that juncture. There was a lot of discussion about it before the land was used. We went to look at holdings comprising similar country and we were satisfied that the land would grow stuff all right.

I have seen maize 14 feet high grown on poor land.

770. By the Chairman: You have lived all your life in the South-West. Until three years ago what would you have said regarding some of the light land that has been opened up?—I would have considered it useless.

771. You selected that land as satisfactory for group settlement purposes. What caused you to change your mind?—I saw what the Spaniards had done on the land at Nannup. They had fine crops of potatoes, while vines, grass and fruit-trees were flourishing as well. There are other blocks where similar results were seen.

Mr. Brockman was perfectly honest before the Royal Commission. He was plainly in the dark and had nothing to guide him. He said definitely that had he been able to get timber country, he would not have settled those people around Busselton. That land was never properly tried out. Mr. Downs and the late Mr. Richardson reported on the land at the Peel Estate. Mr. Downs previously had been a settler somewhere adjacent to the city. He tried unsuccessfully to grow clovers when he was in charge of the Peel Estate, and in the end he left the job. I am not going to admit that the country is good, because men more practical than I know that country to be anything but good. I think if we were to consult the present board, all of whom are practical men, they would tell us the same thing. The Leader of the Opposition also said that he had had nothing to do with the scheme for the past 3½ years, and that many of the blocks since abandoned were settled after he had left office. I say that the blocks we are now abandoning were settled under the hon. member's Government. The change of Government occurred in 1924 while settlers were arriving and being placed at Northcliffe. Blocks on the Peel Estate and in the Busselton groups that are now being abandoned were settled under the hon. member's Administration. The hon. member said that when the expenditure totalled £1,301,551, there had been cleared 21,613 acres, ploughed 16,625 acres, and put under grass 11,184 acres, and he added that those were the figures that Mr. Angwin had given. The hon. member went on to say that he thought the present Minister had said it cost £60 to £90 per acre to grass the land. The Minister admitted the figure was wrong and promised to correct it. I admitted it to this extent. The Leader of the Opposition asked me if that cost included the buildings and I replied, "I do not think so." I found after-

wards that it did, but it did not include the stock. Of course the stock has not yet been charged up to any extent. I have not been able to trace Mr. Angwin's statement, but I am prepared to admit the figures quoted regarding the country cleared, ploughed and seeded as correct. That area, however, does not represent one half the expenditure; nor is it correct to say that the groups were half-way on the stage of development. It has to be remembered that the stage of development varies. In the heavy timber country it was intended to clear 25 acres and in the lighter country the intention was to clear 50 acres before the groups were disbanded. Of the area of 20,400 acres quoted as having been cleared, 11,930 acres were in the Peel Estate alone, and the Peel Estate represents only a fraction of the group settlement scheme. Peel Estate was one of the areas where 50 acres had to be cleared before the groups were disbanded. Of the area of 16,625 acres ploughed, over half was on the Peel Estate, and of the area seeded 50 per cent. would also have been on the Peel Estate. Therefore the hon. member's statement that more than half the work had been done at the time does not clearly set out the position.

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

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: "Hansard" reports the hon. member as having said it. As members generally know, it has been found necessary to clear more than the 25 acres, and statistics for the month ended the 31st July last show that the area seeded was 61,530 acres, or five times the area that was seeded up to the time the hon. member left office.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Seeding itself is not expensive.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But according to the "Hansard" report the hon. member said half the work had been done when he left office. The number of houses erected since June, 1924, is 1,081. When the hon. member left office, no dairy buildings had been erected. The cost of dairy buildings averaged £75. It is useless for the hon. member to contend that the expenditure is greater than it ought to have been. There are conditions to explain that, though I admit the expenditure has been very great. The hon. member in the beginning had no conception what group settlement would cost. It was thought, and there was a public announcement to the effect, that the farms

could be prepared for £1,000 each, but the hon. member's own estimate was £750. I have a minute from Mr. McLarty in which he stated that the clearing could not be done for that sum. I think Mr. McLarty's estimate was sounder than that of the hon. member.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We were discussing it all the time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not find any fault with that. Still, it is not competent for the hon. member to say now that certain things ought to have been done for a certain expenditure, seeing that he was so wide of the mark in his own estimates. There are certain things responsible for the expenditure. I asked the Group Settlement Board the other day to set out the position. That is a new board consisting of practical men. Mr. Rose has a very good idea of land, and so has Mr. Mazzeletti, and Mr. Hewby has an extensive knowledge of agricultural conditions in Western Australia. Those gentlemen have set about their task in a practical way, and I have every confidence that they will bring about a big improvement in administration. The board wrote as follows:—

The board has been in existence approximately one month during which period the re-adjustment and re-allocation of holdings has been in progress with a view to building them up to the standard fixed as necessary to provide a reasonable opportunity of success. . . . Whilst the gravity of the general position regarding group settlement was set out for you in the report of the late advisory committee (31/5/27), and has not materially altered except for the movement referred to above (that is the re-adjustment and re-allocation of holdings) the board is much concerned to know that in the areas visited the following facts forcibly impressed them: (1) The low quality of a large proportion of the land. The fundamental principle of successful land settlement is the selection in the first instance of good land, and this has been disregarded to a large degree. The selection of the holdings provides indisputable evidence of undue haste and want of preparation, for it would have been cheaper to subsidise prospective settlers and their families, whilst waiting if necessary, rather than place them on land where there was little hope of success and which necessitated heavy expenditure. As it is, both their efforts and the State's money have been wasted. In the case of the western groups on the Peel Estate a significant warning was issued by the Peel Estate Royal Commission three and a half years ago, and it is difficult to understand why it was ignored. (2) The attempted settlement of low-lying sour land before drainage, the cost of which work was not, and still is not ascertained, although very large sums have since been expended. The settlers are being withdrawn from a lot of this country, as it

is evident that it cannot be successfully developed under group conditions, although, as the late advisory committee pointed out, it cannot be considered as fully tested until drainage is complete, and much of it will undoubtedly be made some use of at a future period. Whether the expenditure involved will be justified is problematical. (3) The unsuccessful and expensive attempts to establish permanent pastures on (1) and (2). (4) The failure of a large proportion of the pastures, aggravated in many instances by insufficient preparatory cultivation and too early stocking, in addition to the drainage troubles already referred to. (5) A lack of farming. We noticed many cases where settlers were continuing to clear, although they already had considerable areas cleared, of which little use was being made. These areas had mostly been sown with grasses, but could not carry stock, and even should the establishment of pastures eventually become very much more successful than at present, the board considers that a considerable portion of each holding must be vigorously farmed each year in order to carry the necessary stock.

A lot of the trouble in group settlement and one of the reasons why we have made such slow progress is that the scheme in the beginning might have been a little more practical. It is evident to any impartial man that when dealing with low-lying country, country covered with water for eight or nine months of the year, it requires to be drained before it is cleared, and after it has been cleared it should be sweetened and prepared for cultivation. What has happened is we have been trying to cultivate sodden, sour, cold land, land that was under water for a large part of the year. That has gone on continually with the result that we have wasted a lot of money and made no progress. I am satisfied that had the men been employed at draining first of all, then put on to clear the land, then to cultivate it, and if the land had been sweetened in the process, we would have got much happier results and the position would not have what it is to-day. Our pastures have been over-stocked, and that has been the cause of considerable trouble and expense for feed. The board said—

Over-stocking is apparent in many cases and has resulted in the necessity to purchase feed in considerable quantities.

The Government have purchased great quantities of feed to keep the cattle alive.

Mr. Lindsay: You can blame the dairy expert for the over-stocking.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He is not now connected with the board. The board continue—

So far as our personal investigation has gone at present we are unable to say how many settlers are going to carry the stock they hold. The object of providing them with these cows was of course to get them on to the producing stage, and off contract work as early as possible, and the result is unfortunate.

We have had to feed a great many of the stock on rented properties and those owned by the State. We are keeping a large number on agistment. At Dardanup we have 155 head, at the Upper Capel 83 head, at Avondale 156 head, and at Maranalgo 385 head of young stock. That sort of thing must add to the expense of the scheme. It is no use members thinking that the expenses will come down. They must increase as the result of the conditions that now appertain. There is a further reason for the expenditure. On some of the settlements all the blocks have been fully developed. Some of the blocks, however, are such that the settlers cannot maintain themselves upon them. We are actually taking some of the settlers out for three or four miles to where they can get work, for it is only waste of time employing them on their holdings.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are they working on the roads?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are working on other locations. On the Serpentine groups many holdings are considered too poor to develop any further. The western groups on the Peel Estate are in a similar position. At Pemberton one settler had cleared the whole of his land, but it could not maintain him and we have had to find work for him until such time as he can keep himself. Several holdings on the Abba River groups have been fully cleared, but the settlers have to be employed on neighbours' holdings. While this is going on there is bound to be expenditure that cannot be justified, but in the circumstances it must be faced.

Hon. G. Taylor: It must come to an end.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is coming to an end, because we are removing these settlers. The Group Settlement Board are employed for the whole of their time in reconstructing groups and moving these settlers. We are tied up for land at present, but little by little we are moving these people. The conditions under which the settlers have been placed upon their land have varied. The original conditions apparently provided that 25 acres should be laid down in pasture or under intense cropping.

On poorer country such as the Peel Estate 50 acres was the minimum fixed. During Mr. Angwin's term the Group Settlement Advisory Committee recommended that settlers should be assisted to carry 15 cows. The developed area considered necessary for this stock was 45 acres in the prime forest areas, to 110 acres in country like that at Abba River. We have not yet reached the stage when these people can be said to be independent of State aid. On the Peel Estate 36 settlers reached the 15-cow stage. Of these only 18 remain. I hope some areas will be fully stocked with cows in the next month or two. The capital liability has not been reduced. The settler does not pay interest, except on stock and equipment. He is not asked to pay any interest on the capital expenditure. The capitalisation has yet to be considered by the Government. The average cost of settlers' plant, horses and cows, is about £300. There are approximately 2,000 settlers on the groups. It will therefore cost a minimum of £600,000 to equip the settlers with plant, horses and cows. The indebtedness of the settlers for plant and stock is £261,635. So far as equipment goes, we have reached only the half-way mark in regard to expenditure. The board have settled down to work in a practical manner, and I am sure their efforts will be fraught with good results. It would be hopeless for any Minister to attempt to take charge of such a scheme himself. He is tied down in the office, and it is a hopeless proposition for him to attempt to deal with all the details of the scheme in which the personal element is so difficult, and the whole expenditure of which is borne by the State. The State is held responsible for everything. The Government were wise in appointing this board, the establishment of which meets with general approval. At first the board will have their hands full with questions affecting reconstitution, and finding new blocks for the men who have been removed. Later, they must turn their attention to administration. It is said too many officials are engaged in this scheme. Sometimes I wonder how they can all be employed. It is difficult for me to say what the men are doing, but the board will have an opportunity of finding that out. They will be able to move amongst the groups, get the atmosphere surrounding each, and arrive at an understanding of the whole position. If the scheme were administered by the Minister from his office, such

a method would not be likely to show very happy results.

Mr. Davy: A Minister cannot do his job if he has to hear appeals as to whether some local authority shall award a dog license or not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have heard appeals as to whether a cow or a horse was good or bad, lame, halt, or blind.

The Premier: And as to what some animals died of, and what compensation should be paid.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have been called up to deal with many questions of detail like that.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We spent £82,000 on the staff last year.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I expect the board to take notice of the staff that is engaged, and ascertain to what extent such a staff is necessary. I have visited the groups and seen things that ought not to go on. I have seen fertiliser in the sheds when it ought to be in the ground. I have heard that fertiliser has been buried instead of being put into the ground. I have heard of things even worse than that. The Minister cannot detect every detail that is going on.

Mr. Davy: It is the objection to most State enterprises, that the Minister in charge of them cannot pay proper attention to them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is not a State enterprise. We have none of the advantages of State enterprise, but all of the ills that capitalism has. The State pays everything, and the industrial element does not accept the necessary responsibility in too many cases. It is possible that the final results will be happy. I do not say that the scheme will not work out right; we shall get over our mistakes and our difficulties; and as the pasture is established and the country is drained and becomes more productive and more attractive, if the present settlers do not remain others will take up their holdings. The time is coming when the South-West will prove as attractive as the wheat belt. There is a good time for every industry, and when the South-West arrives at that stage, the man on a property there, if his capitalisation is not too great, will be in a very happy position. So I tell the group settlers that if they are wise in their generation, they will remain on their properties, striving to make a living for themselves and

their families and eventually becoming independent. The settler who expects to make a competency in a few years is mistaken. That will take 10 or 12 years. But the man who sticks to his holding is bound to come through in the end. Now I wish to say a few words about migration, and then I shall have completed my remarks. The number of assisted migrants during the last financial year was 4,766, as against 3,730 for the preceding year, an increase of 1,036. In addition, 1,910 full-paying third-class passengers arrived in the State, as against 1,684 during the previous year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Does that figure include Italians?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think so. The figures show that 6,000 people entered Western Australia last year. In addition to the migrants who have taken up land on the groups, a number have been placed on other lands of the State. Of the 687 who took up land, 36 have left, leaving 651 still on the land. So that in addition to the migrants who receive the advantages of group settlement, quite a fair number have received the advantages of settlement on other lands soon after arriving in this country. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to know why the miners settle at Southern Cross had not been settled in the country north of Salmon Gums. The reason was given in the Press, and I suppose the hon. gentleman saw it. The trustees of the Agricultural Bank and I discussed the matter thoroughly, and arrived at the conclusion that the country north of Salmon Gums towards Norseman was yet problematical, and that so far as rainfall records indicated, it was not as satisfactory for settlement as the area south of Southern Cross. Therefore it was considered far better to settle the miners on land south of Southern Cross, where there are water supplies. In the country north of Downk, while dams are there, in my opinion they do not contain sufficient water to maintain a population during the summer months. At Southern Cross, however, there is the pipe line. In addition, according to the records, the rainfall there is much better than that of Norseman. Therefore the best place to put the miners was south of Southern Cross. Those miners are not given assistance for cropping unless they fallow.

They are receiving assistance for clearing, but they must fallow from the beginning. If they adopt that practice and farm carefully, and get reasonable luck, they have a fine future before them. As regards area, I would not think of less than 1,000 acres for those settlers. When the miners get into the pure, fresh air, they will regain health and rid themselves of the dust on their lungs. Thus they will have an opportunity of prolonging their lives and of making homes for themselves and their children. Another settlement will be created for Murchison miners on the Ejanding Northward railway. The country is now being classified and surveyed, and the Murchison miners will be put there because of the lesser expense of bringing them and their houses down—the latter is being done in many cases.

Hon. G. Taylor: How many miners have you on the Cue side?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The number is not yet completed. While 34 names were taken at the first meeting at Boulder, many applications have come in since. Happily there is a tremendous demand for land by our own people. It is a fine thing to find so many of our young men anxious to go on the land, leaving the city to seek land. The whole tendency in other countries is for young men to go to the city: here the converse is the case. That is due to our having had good seasons and good harvests, with good prices. The opportunity is there—cheap land, easy to develop, and producing crops which bring good prices. I regret very much that I am not able to meet the demands of all these young men, but I am doing my utmost. I have told the Surveyor General that I want him to get the land classified and surveyed. The sooner we get our lands developed, the better. The sooner we take the tide at the flood, the better will it be for Western Australia, because our wealth is based upon production from the soil. We have not yet reached the stage of supporting great secondary industries, and I am not too sorry for that. Production from the soil is the most natural life, and the most satisfactory. The Leader of the Opposition said we should reserve these lands for our young people. That would be hardly keeping the spirit of the migration agreement.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, it would be.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. In these matters we have to act honourably.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We cannot say to the migrants, "You must go to the difficult portions of the State; you cannot be settled in areas that are certain, because the opportunities there are better." Mr. Banks Amery said, "We ought to get some consideration for our people in the wheat lands." And we were able to point out that in addition to those on the group settlements we had put 687 migrants on the wheat.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: British people, of course.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The migration agreement provided that the newcomers should be sent to the South-West division of the State, not to the South-West particularly. The agreement referred to that division all the time. The British authorities are well aware of that and they would feel hurt if we did not provide British migrants with equal opportunities to those extended to our own people, particularly when we are using the British Government's money. It may be very well to play up to the public on this question and say that one believes that the Australians should receive preference and migrants should be kept down to the South-West itself. That is all right for political purposes, and may catch a few votes, but that sort of attitude is not decent, nor is it honourable.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are a judge of that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have referred to the hon. member's own agreement and that sets out specifically that the migrants must be settled in the South-West division. Mr. Banks Amery stressed that point, and he knows the position well. He would resent strongly any attempt not to live up to the agreement. We must be honourable to those with whom we have dealings. I have no particular attachment to people from abroad and I am as good an Australian as any other individual. At the same time what is the use of entertaining people who come here and talking about the fine Imperial sentiment, inviting them to send their people to this State to enjoy the opportunities that are available if, when they come here, they are given the poorest land. In my opinion the Australian understands our conditions better and should make the better settler. I will give the Australian every op-

portunity to settle here; at the same time we must act up to our contract under the agreement. The Leader of the Opposition will realise that he made promises, and he would have endeavoured to keep those promises just as the Government have endeavoured to do.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course, I would carry out the promises I made, but not what you say.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would be quite possible for me to urge the Premier to-morrow to bring in 10,000 migrants and to settle them in the South-West, but unfortunately much of the land available there is similar to that which we have found unsatisfactory.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: In the South-West?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, not in the South-West generally, but the land that is available. It has to be remembered that the Forests Department holds the best of the country. The Leader of the Opposition is aware of that fact. I do not blame the hon. member for allowing The Forests Department to secure that good country. He acted wisely since the forest land is valuable because of the timber. We all know that the Forests Department are quite prepared to hand over the poorer class of land they hold, but that would not be satisfactory for group purposes. Without in any way degrading the country, it has to be admitted that there is some poor country there, just as there is poor country in other parts of Australia. Our experience of that type of country is that we do not get results. In years to come it will be built up, but at present it is hardly the type of country and which we should be expected to place raw inexperienced settlers. It is possible to bring them out straight away but, as I have already said, we must act up to the spirit of the agreement.

The Premier: Of course the forest country has to be retained for the Forests Department.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But there is plenty of land there that could be used for agricultural purposes. We cannot live on timber. We must have butter and potatoes and so forth, for our people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have some jarrah country in the vicinity of Margaret River, but it has its peculiarities. I do not say that it will not prove to be good land, but the fact remains that we

cannot get good results. Clover germinates there all right, but it dies back. Those conditions may not be permanent, but it is evident that the country will require a lot of sweetening.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will go ahead all right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, in the end. We have to face these conditions, however, and we must expect heavy expenditure if we are to test out the country properly. Work of that description takes time and money too. The Mitchell agreement provided that at an estimated cost of £6,000,000 the State would settle about 75,000 new migrants—men, women and children—from the United Kingdom, and establish about 6,000 men selected from amongst migrants on about 6,000 additional farms in the South-West division of the State. This was afterwards agreed to be limited to the 6,000 farms only. The new agreement provides for undertakings for public works and for land settlement, and in the latter case for every approved sum of £1,000 the State is to provide a new farm and to allot at least one-half of such new farms to assisted migrants who have sailed from the United Kingdom since the 1st June, 1922, and have not been resident in Australia for more than five years. It may well be argued that the 6,000 farms to be established under the Mitchell agreement were purely for migrants, and that local people were not taken into account, but in respect to the latter agreement, not only is the allotment to migrants limited to 50 per cent. of the farms established under the agreement, but retrospective effect is given to it to the 1st June, 1922, to bring under the fifty-fifty allocation the farms previously established under the Mitchell agreement. The number of holdings established is 2,382, of which 141 have been allocated to British migrants who do not come under the agreement, having arrived prior to 1st June, 1922. This leaves 2,241 holdings under the agreement, of which 1,336 are held by migrants and 423 are vacant. Under the migration agreement 2,331 farms have already been approved by the Commission as part of the £6,000,000 Mitchell agreement. These farms will be at the rate of £1,000 per farm. It was hoped that the amount would be raised to £1,500, but I do not think there is any possibility of that. In order to absorb the balance of the £6,000,000, proposals have been put up to

the Development and Migration Commission which have been accepted, and which, apart from public works, provide for an additional 700 farms, making a total of 3,031, which will be deemed undertakings under the present agreement. These 700 farms will be on the basis of £1,500 per farm, and the whole of the 3,031 farms must be allotted on a fifty-fifty basis to migrants. The fifty-fifty basis is made retrospective to the 1st June, 1922. If the 423 vacant holdings are absorbed by the present group settlers, 1,213 new farms must be made to complete the 3,031 farms, and on the fifty-fifty basis 179 of these must be allocated to British migrants, leaving 1,034 for Australians. So we are not doing too badly with the provision for, by settling 179 migrants, we can place in our wheat areas 1,034 Australians.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a very good agreement.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. The hon. member need not be afraid that we will not give Australians an opportunity, for under the latest agreement the fullest opportunity is given. I think the terms are very liberal indeed. I do not see how any member can object to that agreement. It should be satisfactory to all of us. The balance of the £6,000,000 will be absorbed in works incidental to settlement. The Development and Migration Commission spent several weeks in the State towards the close of last year and investigated on the spot many of the proposals that had been submitted for consideration as undertakings under the Migration Agreement. The Commission was accompanied by the British Government representative, Mr. Banks Amery, and as a result of the visit approval has since been obtained for the following proposals: The Denmark-Pemberton Railway, the Cranbrook-Boyup Brook railway, the Norseman-Salmon Gums railway, group roads, group drainage and water supplies for the Barballin area, the Narembene area and the Esperance-Norseman area. The estimated total cost of these undertakings is £1,903,134. The proposals under consideration now are the extension of the Ejanding-Northward railway, the Zalkalling-Bullfinch railway, and the question of serving the country east of Kondinin. I have pleasure in submitting the Estimates.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.