

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, and I have seen crops there yield 30 bushels, in the wet season of course. In off seasons it is only possible to carry stock.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What would be the most suitable stock?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is good sheep country. I support the second reading.

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

House adjourned at 8.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 11th November, 1937.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Sheep Transported in Wheat Trucks.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that steel wheat trucks were supplied at Katanning for the loading of sheep on the 5th November, 1937? 2, Will he give the reasons why those trucks were supplied? 3, What trucks, and how many, were ordered for the despatch of sheep ex Katanning on that day? 4, When were they ordered? 5, Is he aware that a number of sheep were killed and injured in transit from Katanning on that occasion? 6, If so, does he agree that the use of the

wheat trucks mentioned was mainly responsible? 7, Will he give an assurance that such wheat trucks will not be supplied in future for the carriage of livestock and that sufficient sheep trucks will be available on due notice being given? 8, Will he consider making some compensation for the sheep losses mentioned?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, for portion of sheep loaded. 2, Consignors desired to send sheep after purchase and elected to use open trucks in preference to waiting until sheep trucks were available. 3, 70 sheep trucks ordered. 4, The day of sale. 5, It has been so reported. 6, No. 7, The number of livestock trucks is limited. At the same time, there is no compulsion on the consignors to load in trucks that they consider unsuitable; the alternative being to wait until the orthodox trucks are available. 8, No.

QUESTION—LANDS.

Rocky Gully Area.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands: 1, On exactly what terms is land available for selection or leasing at Rocky Gully area west of Mt. Barker? 2, How many applications have been received for land there since the 1st January, 1936? 3, How many blocks have been taken up or leased in that period? 4, Have any applications been rejected? If so, why? 5, Were any, and how many, applications withdrawn?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Under Conditional Purchase conditions at prices ranging from 9s. 10d. to 34s. 4d. per acre (inclusive of survey and improvements) subject to the condition that the existing improvements are maintained by the selectors. Fourteen of the locations are also available for leasing for grazing purposes on the following terms:—(a) the leases to be for a period of 10 years; (b) that the successful applicant shall be required to top-dress annually all land sown to pasture with a minimum of 60 lb. of super to the acre; (c) all suckers on cleared and partly cleared land to be destroyed and this land kept free from suckers and seedlings during the term of the lease; (d) that any timber felled and not burned shall be cleared up by the lessee; (e) that any fencing erected by the lessee may be removed at the termination of the lease; (f) that no rent be payable during the first three years of the lease, and after that a rental as fixed by the department

shall be paid for the remaining seven years of the lease; (g) that each lessee shall deposit a sum of £10 with the department, such sum to be forfeited if the work set out above is not carried out to the satisfaction of the Minister. 2, Two applications—one under Conditional Purchase and one for leasing. 3, Ten blocks—one under Conditional Purchase and nine blocks comprising one holding of 4,000 acres under lease. 4, Nil. 5, No.

BILL—ELECTRICITY.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

BILL—ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE REIGNING SOVEREIGN.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of four amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Employment in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2: Insert after the word "Act" in the first line of the clause the words "or under any industrial award or agreement made or entered into under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1935."

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The amendment provides that the proclamation to be issued by the Governor specifying the date of the King's Birthday shall cover awards and agreements as well as Acts of Parliament. The awards and agreements providing a holiday for the King's birthday are few and cover only a small number of workers. The mover of the amendment in the Council gave two reasons for it. The first was to prevent any worker from obtaining two holidays for the King's birthday as a result of the passing of the Bill. Had the Bill been passed as originally introduced, that eventuality could not have occurred. It was stated in another place that the Shop Assistants' Union had an award giving shop assistants in the metropolitan area a holiday for the King's birthday, and that as all the shops in the metropolitan area would be closed as a result of the proclamation, assistants would obtain a holiday on the proclaimed day and

later could legally claim a holiday for the actual birthday. The award in question grants no holiday to shop assistants for the King's birthday. I think the misunderstanding arose in another place because the shop assistants' award gives a holiday for Foundation Day, and until this year Foundation Day and the King's birthday were usually observed on the one day. However, there are a few awards and agreements that provide a holiday for workers on the King's birthday. The second point taken in another place was that complete uniformity should be obtained in the observance of the holiday. Although generally it is not wise to interfere by Act of Parliament with any provision of an award or industrial agreement, I feel that, in the desire to obtain complete uniformity, there can be no very serious objection to the amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I believe the Minister is quite correct. When the Bill was previously before us I had an idea that the date for the holiday would be fixed definitely, that awards would include a reference to the birthday of the King, and that a complication might arise through some businesses deciding to observe the proper day on account of its being stipulated in awards. Nobody, however, would desire to have the holiday observed on two different days. In the past the birthday has been observed on the following Monday, and thus we have not accepted the exact date.

The Minister for Mines: Unless it happened to fall on a Monday.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. I associate myself with the remarks of the Minister that it is not right for Parliament to set aside any provision of an award. That is a matter for the Arbitration Court. For that reason I am reluctant to agree to any legislation to set aside an agreement arrived at between parties with the approval of the court. It is wise to leave matters affecting awards to the parties and the court.

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

No. 2. Clause 2: Delete the words "by any such Act" in line 11, and substitute the word "thereunder."

No. 3. Clause 2: Delete the words "the provisions of any such Act" in lines 11 and 12, and substitute the words "any such provision."

No. 4. Clause 2: Add after the word "Act" at the end of the clause the words "award or agreement."

On motions by the Minister for Employment the foregoing amendments were agreed to.

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

BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [4.48] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is in part a measure to continue the operations of the Dried Fruits Board under the Dried Fruits Act of 1926. In addition to extending the provisions of the parent Act for two years, it contains some important amendments. Hon. members will observe that the date proposed for expiry of the Act is two years from its next expiry. It has been the custom to extend the Act for a term of three years; but since the parent Act provides that those elected to control the Dried Fruits Board shall be elected for a term of two years, it is considered advisable that when their term expires it should be at an even time with the expiry of the Act itself, rather than have an unexpired period.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Why is that necessary?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Since it has been the usual practice to have this legislation reviewed, the hon. member will probably admit that many measures coming into this House are given a life of one year.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: This Act has been in existence for 11 years.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Many things have been in existence for a long while, but come before this Chamber every year for review. It is a fair proposal that the term of the board shall coincide with the term of the Act. Another amendment provides for an alteration in the constitution of the board. When the last chairman relinquished office—Mr. Cox was chairman until January of this year—I used the power vested in me by the Act to appoint a commercial man as deputy

chairman of the board. I can say quite unhesitatingly that although the proportion on the board is now four growers, instead of a complete board of five growers, there is a great deal to be said in favour of having an experienced commercial man as chairman to guide the destinies of so important a board. The appointment then made was that of Mr. A. H. Dickson, who is widely experienced in these particular activities. Many messages approving of the step then taken to appoint a commercial man to control the board have been received. There is no suggestion that the power of the growers should be filched away from them, because they still are in the predominating proportion of four to one. A clause of the Bill deals with those who are entitled to vote for members of the board. It is proposed to insert in the Act words providing that only those who are entitled to be enrolled for the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to vote for the election of members of the board. That is a perfectly reasonable proposal. It is, moreover, in accord with an amendment made in the Federal Parliament during last session to prevent a dominating influence being possible of attainment by foreign growers in the industry. It is considered that if our country is worth living in, it is certainly worth being a citizen of it.

Members: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill proposes a simple little amendment designed to ensure that the composition of the board will be of men who have the interests of this country at heart. The remaining provisions of the Bill are merely amendments consequential upon the proposals I have outlined. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Thorn, debate adjourned.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [4.54] in moving the second reading said: The Bill provides that sawmills shall be registered under the provisions of the Timber Industry Regulation Act of 1926. In June of this year an inquest was held at Manjimup con-

cerning the death by accident of M. Juracich. The timber mill in which this worker met with his accident was found to be unregistered. The acting coroner returned a verdict of accidental death. He also stated that provision should be made requiring plans and specifications to be submitted and registered prior to the erection of any sawmill, and further that no sawmill should be permitted to operate prior to such registration being effected. Subsequent inquiries have disclosed that the suggested conditions are imposed by the Forests Department upon such mills as work under departmental permit. However, they are not imposed, nor can they be imposed, upon mills operating on private property. It was hoped at the time that the position of these last-mentioned mills could be covered by the issuance of a regulation made under the Timber Industry Regulation Act; but when investigations were made in that direction, it was found that there was nothing in that Act providing for the registration of any sawmill. Apparently, when the Timber Industry Regulation Act was passed by Parliament, that important necessity was overlooked. Section 23 of the Act deals with regulations; and regulations may be issued under the Act dealing with the ventilation of mills and matters relating thereto, for the prevention of dust, for the purpose of keeping mills in good order and condition, for the purpose of ensuring safety in mills, and for a number of other purposes, nearly all of them having in view the safeguarding of the workers in those mills from accident. So it does seem somewhat illogical that the Act, when passed, did not provide that sawmills should be registered under its provisions. Accordingly, the amending Bill proposes that sawmills shall be registered under the Act. The Bill, if passed, will make it illegal for any sawmill to be used unless it is registered in accordance with the regulations issued under the Act, which regulations it will be competent to make in the event of this measure becoming law. Where an unregistered mill is already operating, the owner will have to apply for registration within one month from the date on which the Bill is approved by Parliament: in the meantime, such owner will be permitted to use the mill. The Bill further provides that the registration of a sawmill under the principal Act shall automatically give the mill concerned registration as a factory under the provisions of the Factories and Shops Act of 1920. The Bill

also proposes to amend Section 23 of the principal Act for the purpose of adding a new paragraph to enable regulations to be issued to cover any matter associated with the registration of a sawmill, including the provision by an applicant of such plans and particulars as may be prescribed. I have pointed out that a sawmill is registered as a factory under the Factories and Shops Act, and has to be so registered. Section 20 of that Act provides for inspection and approval before registration of a sawmill as a factory can be granted. However, Section 29 of the Timber Industry Regulation Act actually took away the power of inspection under the provisions of the Factories and Shops Act, and provided for inspection only under the provisions of the Timber Industry Regulation Act. The Factories and Shops Department registers as factories only those sawmills that come under notice. None of the provisions of the Factories and Shops Act is actually applicable to sawmills except those giving inspectors of the department power to enforce awards, industrial agreements and those sections of the Act dealing with industrial conditions. The Bill does not propose to disturb that position. Frequently the first knowledge inspectors under the Timber Industry Regulation Act have of the existence of some small sawmills is obtained when a serious accident occurs. The passing of the Bill will, it is believed, assist in creating a greater measure of safety for workers employed in those small mills which are unregistered at the present time. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—WHALING.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [5.2] in moving the second reading said: This measure seeks to control and regulate whaling in the territorial waters of Western Australia. It is a Bill that will be found upon examination to be full of technicalities, and perhaps much of it will have to be taken for granted because of those technicalities. It is a Bill identical with Bills passed in the other Legislative Chambers of Australia to ratify an agreement entered into by the Commonwealth Government at

the Convention held in Geneva in 1931. As far as Australian waters are concerned, the Commonwealth Act has application only to territory outside the jurisdiction of the States. To ensure the application of the provisions of the Geneva Conference, it is necessary that the Bill be passed as complementary legislation to secure the protection of the State's rights within territorial waters. The Prime Minister is very anxious that the Bill should be passed. Unfortunately we were unable to undertake it last session, but all other States have passed similar measures. It has been drafted on the lines of the Commonwealth Act, which in turn is closely allied to the Imperial Whaling Act of 1934. Close examination has been made by our Crown Law Department to see that there is nothing in the Bill, either expressed or implied, surrendering any State rights, and I can assure members that there is no danger in that direction. The main proposals of the Bill provide for the prohibition of the killing of certain whales, for the prevention of unlicensed whaling, and the minimising of waste in the conduct of whaling operations. The Bill not only deals with the varieties of whales affected, but also sets out the specified sizes of whales and the conditions under which they cannot lawfully be killed. It will be noticed that there is reference in the Bill to "right" whales, it being provided that these must not be killed. It would seem that if one were going to kill a whale at all, one should kill the right whale, but in this case men are not to be permitted to kill the "right" whale. That refers to certain species which abound in the waters of the globe. The principal right whale is known in the northern waters as the Nordkaper. In our case, there are many types that come under this heading whose numbers have been sadly depleted because of the terrific onslaughts in years gone by, and it is desired that the remaining species of right whales should be protected. In connection with the minimising of waste in the control of whaling operations, it should be pointed out that in all factory ships now operating, both in northern hemispheres and in the Antarctic waters, very valuable and complete equipment is furnished to deal with almost the whole of the whale carcase, and we are endeavouring, by ratifying the Geneva Convention agreement, to insist that in all operations within Australian waters this practice shall con-

tinue. Whaling operations carried out with the aid of factory ships call for the highest degree of skill and the most involved machinery and these modern factory ships are equipped with every device whereby they may make use of the whole of the carcasses of the whales captured. There is no question now of massive pieces of blubber or whale carcase floating about after the whale has been dealt with by one of the factory ships. The number of whales destroyed throughout the world has increased enormously in recent years. The totalled killed in 1935-36 was 44,752 as compared with 12,797 in 1931-32. It was therefore felt by the authorities concerned that it was time some control was exercised over the whaling operations of all nations interested in whaling. All those nations signed the particular convention to which I have referred except Japan and that country, as members are aware, will be operating in the Antarctic during the coming year. During the last two years interest has revived on our coast in connection with whaling operations. In 1936 two whale fleets, each comprising a factory ship and six chasers, operated off the North-west coast. There were many complaints, which members will recall, about the continuance of those operations within territorial waters, but we had no redress and we had no control because the factory ships were able to anchor outside the three-mile limit in smooth waters in the North-West and catch whales either outside or inside as best suited them. We had no control whatever and it would be a very involved matter indeed to prove that any particular whale was taken within territorial waters. But the opportunity arose this year, as the result of consultation with the representatives of the Norwegian Government, to register an agreement with them which permitted of their ships operating within our territorial waters. During the negotiations it was found that the Norwegian Government was anxious to co-operate with us in restricting the number of factory ships operating off our coast. The unfortunate thing to my mind is that we cannot induce some of the British companies interested in whaling to take advantage of the tremendous field offering for the capture of whales when they are travelling up and down our North-West coast. The arrangement to which I refer has proved of mutual benefit to all parties. The fleets have been able to operate from specified areas of coastal waters and the agreement has been of some

value also to residents of North-West towns from whom the fleets have procured stores. In addition to that we have received license fees and royalties based on the number of barrels of oil obtained. The figures showing the whales killed in the last two years off our coast will be interesting to the House. In 1936, 3,093 whales were captured for a yield of 122,208 barrels, or over 20,000 tons, each barrel containing 42 gallons. This year, during which the fleets operated under license, the total quantity of oil obtained was 127,750 barrels produced from 3,171 whales. We were able to specify the two particular portions of the coast on which the fleets should operate, and in the period under review they operated between Cape Inscription and Point Cuiver on the one hand, and 60 miles south of North-West Cape on the other. We were able to enter into a contract with them to ensure that they should not operate in any waters other than those, and that they should not kill whales other than those provided for in the Bill. The two factory ships which have operated this year in our North-West waters dealt with 3,171 whales. To-day the price of whale oil is so attractive that all nations interested in a large way in the enterprise are entering once again the field of commercial whaling. The British companies have wonderful vessels, very well equipped, which are going to the Antarctic this year. It will be recognised that the ease with which whales can be treated in factory ships now means that the proposition is not merely an ordinary business one but also very lucrative. If the Bill becomes law it will be possible not only to control whaling within territorial waters under license, but more particularly to give attention to the main desires embodied in the convention, that is, to prohibit the killing of certain types of whales and whales of certain lengths, and generally to preserve to some extent the whale population of the world's waters. It will be found that certain types of whales are mentioned in the Bill. For instance provision is made for the killing of blue whales up to 60 feet in length. The whale dealt with on our coast is the hump-back whale, and the limit fixed for the hump-back whale is 35ft. That length was agreed to at the International Convention to which I have referred. So the Bill will not in any way interfere with the smooth running of the operations that have existed on our North-West coast during the past two years.

Mr. Stubbs: How can the whaler distinguish the species of whales?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: He can even determine the sex. The harpooners not only work at a daily rate, but also get a percentage on the gallonage of oil. So it will be understood that they know the proper types of whale to kill. They are not allowed to kill female whales with calves at their side.

Mr. Stubbs: Could you tell whether a whale was a male or female?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No, but I presume it would be easy for the hon. member to distinguish between a ewe and a ram.

Mr. Stubbs: But the whales are under the water!

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Men who have spent their lives in killing whales can distinguish between them very easily.

Mr. Marshall: I suppose they have a look at the whale's teeth, just as one looks at the teeth of a horse to determine its age.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: In addition to the number to be killed, it is important that the whalers should know the types that may be killed. I can assure members that there is in this measure nothing that is not in the best interests of this State and of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Marshall: And in the interests of the men who are doing the whaling.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes, but until the agreement that was made last year is finalised, all that we can do is to pass this legislation in its present form. Since it may have been noticed by members that the question has been discussed whether whales shall be killed north of the 40th parallel, which would not involve the present waters, I may say that is not identical with the agreement to which the Bill refers. The Bill refers to an agreement made last year at the International Conference at Geneva. Until universal approval has been given to that agreement, I am sure the Bill is in the best interests of all concerned.

Mr. Fox: How do you propose to police the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I am glad the point has been raised. This year, because we were able to license boats on the North-West coast, we had competent inspectors, men

with extra-masters' tickets. Two qualified sea captains were appointed to board each factory ship operating in North-West waters. I can assure members we did that in the best interests of whaling in this State, because we were thus able to obtain during the past whaling season information which it would have been impossible for us to obtain when ships from other nations were operating without any control by us. We know exactly where each whale was killed during the operations of that fleet this year, and we know to a gallon the total gallonnage taken. We had our own officers on those factory ships, and those officers also spent half a week on the whale chasers. So we have from those officers tabulated information of the operations of the whaling up there.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Has Japan entered into that agreement?

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I was only wondering what might happen if their boats were to come in up there.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: We now specify areas within our waters.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But I am thinking of operations outside of territorial waters.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: We have no check, no control, over what may go on outside of territorial waters.

Mr. Stubbs: How far does that mean from the coast?

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Three miles. Nations that realised the wealth in our waters of those mammals were attracted thereby, and frequently we had fleets operating both inside and outside the territorial limit. There is in the measure nothing that is not in the best interests of the State and the Commonwealth, and we should pass it because we are the last nation to ratify the agreement made. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1, Collie Hospital Agreement.

2, Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

BILL—BUSH FIRES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 9th November.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [5.22]: The Minister says this Bill has been brought down because the Road Boards Association desire that it should be placed on the statute-book. I am sure every member will agree with the principles of the Bill, but there are many clauses which, in my judgment, are too severe, too drastic, and are not designed to afford people British justice. Consequently, when in Committee I propose to do my utmost to have some of those clauses amended, failing which I shall endeavour to secure their deletion. I listened with interest to the carefully thought-out and critical speech delivered by the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson). I am not going to traverse the ground that member covered.

The Minister for Lands: Did you say a carefully thought-out speech?

Mr. STUBBS: Yes, and I believe it was a carefully thought-out speech. Before I finish I am going to tell the Minister some home truths. The member for Swan wants every other member of the House to swallow the Bill even if he cannot digest it. I will give my reasons for saying that. As I have declared, in my judgment the Bill contains dangerous features. There are nine road boards in my electorate, and what suits some of them does not suit others. I have sent a copy of the measure to each of those boards and I have received certain letters and telegrams, but I ask the Minister that, if the second reading should be carried to-day, he will not rush the Bill through the Committee stage, but will afford me time to receive replies from the remainder of those road boards. It would suit me well if the Minister would defer the Committee stage until, say, the middle of next week in order to give me an opportunity to hear from people vitally concerned in this measure. One clause deals with smokers. Everybody realises the danger of smoking, especially in summer time when the grass is dry and inflammable. At such a time one spark may set fire to a large area of country. I have recollections of a happening that showed how a small fire can cause an enormous loss of money. The member for Irwin-Moore remarked that, if the Bill goes through, nobody will be able to smoke even in the train, if anywhere near

farm lands. I have here a specimen of an ingenious invention of a pipe which will prevent sparks from escaping. It was loaned to me by a Minister of the Crown who recently received it from London. If any member wishes to examine it, I am sure the Minister for Works, who is the owner of the pipe, will allow it to be inspected. That is all I desire to say about measures against smoking contained in the Bill. But everyone knows the danger of the indiscriminate throwing about of matches and cigarette butts. In regard to that there is in the Bill a clause that gives me a good deal of concern. This clause compels a person who is charged by an officer—to be appointed by the local authorities with power to go on to a person's property and lay a charge against that person—with having committed an offence under the Act (as, for instance, leaving a fire burning near a tree, with the danger of setting alight the country) to prove his innocence in a court of law. Many years ago the manager of a farming property received a notification from a neighbour that, owing to the carelessness of one of the employees of that manager, a fire had crossed the road from his boundary fence and caused damage on the complainant's farm to the tune of £35. I happened to see the damage. It consisted of 25 jam posts, possibly a quarter of a ton of wire netting, and 23 acres of stubble, which were burnt on the 10th January. Because the manager of the property from which it was alleged the fire came, refused to recognise the claim, a court case followed. The manager secured a K.C. from Perth who went to Wagin to defend the action. The case lasted a week. The principal witness was a boy, a ward of the State. He gave evidence that he saw the fire come out of the defendant's property, cross the road, and set fire to his master's property. He was cross-examined for a long time, and then the owner of the property which was damaged gave evidence, and brought a number of witnesses. In the end the magistrate gave a verdict for the defendant, on the ground that it was not proved to his satisfaction that the fire that burnt the farmer's property came from the property of the defendant. Imagine the surprise of the defendant when the following week he received a notice to attend the Supreme Court, that the complainant was appealing against the decision of the magistrate. Unfortunately after the case had been finished the magistrate accepted an affidavit

from the principal witness that he had committed perjury, and that the fire he alleged came from the property of the defendant had not come from that property at all. The case went before the Supreme Court, and King's Counsel was engaged for four days. In the end the Supreme Court ordered a new trial. The magistrate who heard the case in the first place refused to sit on it again. The second case lasted several days and in the end it cost the defendant £750, although the extent of the damage was said to have been £20. I am not in favour of any clause that forces a defendant to prove his innocence lest he be mulct in damages. Such a thing is unfair, and I am sure the Minister will agree that it should be amended.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, if you were not labouring under a misconception.

Mr. STUBBS: I am not in favour of any officer under the Act having power, if he sees a person walking through a property carrying a gun, to seize that gun, and all ammunition, for purposes of examination. I am not in favour of any legislation that will give any controlling officer for a local body such power.

Mr. Marshall: If he were a big man I would not assume the authority; I would let him keep it.

Mr. STUBBS: Such things should not be contained in a Bill. I support the second reading, but intend to ask the Committee not to agree to some of the clauses. I am sure a majority of the road boards consider that the Bill, in the main, should be passed.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.35]: Although I support the second reading, I think the Bill should be remodelled. The principle of fire protection in country districts is of first importance, but the method by which this measure seeks to establish fire protection is by no means the best. The Bill gives local authorities power to establish and maintain local bush fire brigades.

Mr. Sampson: That is a good idea, and is not an innovation.

Mr. CROSS: I have yet to learn that many local governing bodies have much experience in such matters.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: They will gain it.

Mr. CROSS: If the matter were discussed around the table at a road board meeting and the board decided to have a fire brigade, and discussion arose as to whether there should be carried on the fire truck a limited quantity of foam or first-aid, I

doubt if any members of the board would know the difference between the two things. Even the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) with all his knowledge could not explain the difference. He would not know which was the best for use in fighting a bushfire.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: They could always ring you up.

Mr. CROSS: The Bill gives local authorities power to appoint their own fire control officers, whether those men are experienced or not. The local authorities would not have the knowledge to say whether the officer was sufficiently experienced or had enough knowledge.

Mr. Doney: They would appoint the best men obtainable.

Mr. CROSS: Enormous powers are to be given to the fire-control officers, more power than is realised even by the member for Swan.

Mr. Sampson: Do you want to limit the control to the city?

Mr. CROSS: No, but I want the control to be effective and economical in the country. The Bill gives tremendous powers to local authorities.

Mr. Thorn: Do you suggest the appointment of permanent men?

Mr. CROSS: No. I shall have some suggestions to offer in which the hon. member may concur. The Bill gives the appointed officer power to demand the name and address of anyone, and in the event of a refusal to give such information it provides for a penalty of £10. It also gives the officer, who may be quite inexperienced, immunity in the case of any damage he may do. It gives him all the power possessed by the Chief Officer under the Fire Brigades Act of 1916. The Chief Officer possesses remarkable powers. Suppose the powers were placed in the hands of a man of a temperamental nature and a big bush fire occurred. A great deal of discontent, trouble and loss might result. The Bill gives an inexperienced officer power to take any measure that may appear to him necessary. He may cause any house, building or tenement to be entered and pulled down. He can go on premises, even if they are a long distance from the nearest water supply, and take the few gallons that are there for domestic purposes. He can blow a place up, and can do almost anything.

Mr. Thorn: Even milk the house cow.

Mr. CROSS: Seeing that such powers are to be given to individuals there should be some proper authority to see that they are possessed of certain knowledge and experience. In the hands of an inexperienced man such powers are dangerous. The officer in question will have power to take proceedings for breaches of the Act, or any regulations that may be formulated. The measure gives local authorities power to fix costs and expenses incurred by the local bushfire control officer. Any payment that may be agreed upon requires only the certificate of the chairman of the road board, or mayor of the municipality. It does not matter what amount is fixed upon. There may be an arrangement between the chairman of the road board and the officer himself, but so long as the chairman gives his certificate, that is the only check necessary upon the expenditure. Local authorities are authorised to purchase and maintain machines and equipment. They do not possess much knowledge in this direction. I understand that under the Fire Protection Act a farmer is liable for damages caused through any fire lighted by himself or his contractor. He is liable for that even if he has no knowledge of the fire. The Bill should be remodelled.

Mr. Sampson: You would not refer it to a select committee?

Mr. CROSS: Some control will have to be exercised over the operations of the various local governing bodies. I suggest that the whole of the administration of the Bushfires Act should be placed in the hands of a board.

Mr. Sampson: Which board?

Mr. CROSS: This could be a voluntary board, and in turn it could appoint an officer to control operations throughout the State. That officer could advise local governing bodies concerning the appointment of any local bushfire control officer, could assist in the establishment of local brigades, and advise upon the purchase of equipment. The central board would be able to buy the necessary equipment at a cheaper rate than would be possible by individual local authorities. Local governing bodies are to have power to make regulations. I can visualise the position in the electorate represented by the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs), if those powers were exercised, with nine different sets of regulations. Rather than have that, I suggest that the responsibility should

be placed in one central controlling board that could direct the formulation of regulations that would be suitable for nearly all parts of the State. Something of that sort should be done, otherwise I do not see why the administration of the Bush Fires Act should not be added to the activities of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I knew you were leading up to that.

Mr. Sampson: That is what he has had in mind all along.

Mr. Stubbs: That is the nigger in the woodpile.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Are you secretary of that board?

Mr. CROSS: I do not know that a central board would be more suitable than the W.A. Fire Brigades Board, and I am sure there is a good deal to be said in favour of some central control.

Mr. Sampson. There is a lot of talk but not much said.

Mr. CROSS: I do not think that if this work were added to the activities of the Fire Brigades Board, much additional expense would be occasioned and it would certainly tend towards more efficient control. I do not think more than one additional officer would be required and he would take charge of the bush fire activities throughout the State. It would be his duty to organise brigades, deliver lectures, supply advice and advise the Minister regarding proposed regulations. I do not think the cost to individual road boards throughout the State would be more than nominal. As the central body would obviously buy in large quantities to meet the requirements of the whole State, that additional cost to local authorities would be more than compensated for in the savings effected in the purchase of equipment alone. With regard to Clause 37, every member knows its contents and I shall certainly vote against that provision when the Bill is dealt with in Committee. I am utterly opposed to the principle. A man may be 30 or 40 miles away from his residence and if there is a fire in the locality and the onus of proof is placed upon him, he will have no chance whatever of proving his innocence. The clause is undemocratic and unfair. The onus should be on the fire control officer to prove the individual guilty and most decidedly the individual should not be required to prove his innocence. I support the second reading of the Bill, and I hope that we shall

be able to effect improvements when we consider it in Committee.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet—in reply) [5.49]: I am glad that members are prepared to accept the Bill, which is a purely non-party measure. I have no personal feelings in the matter at all. The measure was introduced at the request of the Road Boards Association and that body has agitated for such a Bill for some years past. Requests for its introduction were made during the time of the Mitchell Government and the representatives of the association have interviewed me on several occasions. At first I was disinclined to provide all the powers that were requested. On making inquiries I found that the question was first raised in March, 1932, when the Mitchell Government held office. A committee was appointed to deal with the matter and the W.A. Fire Brigades Board was represented on that body. The committee submitted a report and made certain recommendations, one of which was the passing of legislation and the establishment of a bush fire brigade. I find that the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson) has unfortunately a bad memory, for he said the question had not come up in his time. He seemed to be unaware of the fact that in July, 1935, he wrote to the Chief Secretary and to Mr. Latham who was Minister for Lands. I shall not say any more about that, but it will serve to refresh his memory.

Mr. Marshall: That is quite pardonable. He has just overlooked the point.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: One or two people have seen me about this matter, particularly Mr. Piesse a former president of the Royal Agricultural Society and chairman of a road board in the Wagin electorate. He saw a copy of the Bill and commended it. He said, "This is just the Bill we want." I hesitated about giving all the powers outlined in the Bill and I gave it consideration for a long time. However, from my own experience in such matters—such as it is, and it is not as much as that of other members by any means—and from discussions I had with various people, I felt that if there was to be greater control exercised in the prevention of bush fires, a measure of this description was necessary. I am sure that the risk of bush fires is increasing rapidly owing to top-dressing and the tre-

mendous quantity of grass now produced under that system. There is a danger of bush fires every year and there is that possibility this year in the Great Southern areas.

Mr. Thorn: And nowadays more picnickers go into the country areas.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There certainly is grave danger of fires in the southern areas, and because of that the Bill is before members. As I have already indicated, it is not a party measure nor is it one I regard as giving effect to a definite principle of my own. If members desire to pass a Bill that will give local authorities the power they seek, they have the Bill before them. If they desire to emasculate it, they can do so.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: No.

Mr. Doney: We do not want that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I wish to deal with some objections raised by the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson). I desire to do so because the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) told me he was impressed by the opinions of the member for Irwin-Moore and the very thorough investigations he must have made. Let us see what they are. The member for Irwin-Moore said, "It is not altogether the power to be given to local authorities but those to be delegated to other people with which I am concerned." Powers are not to be given to any other person. Whatever powers are to be given to other persons will be the powers delegated by the local authority.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That is all I said.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bill gives no power to anyone except local authorities who can delegate their powers to other persons.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I said so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The local authorities can appoint those other persons and can dismiss them. A local authority could not exercise power except through its officer and the local authority must take the risk regarding the type of man appointed. I tell the member for Irwin-Moore that he was wrong when he said that powers were given to certain people, because those powers are given to the local authorities who will appoint the men to whom powers are delegated.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And that is exactly what I told the House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The local authorities will delegate their powers to the

fire control officers they appoint. Then the member for Irwin-Moore said, with regard to the establishment of fire protected areas, "This is one of the things we have been seeking for quite a long time." That provision has been in the existing legislation since 1925, so it has been the law of the land for a long time. He raised some objections to the powers to be given to the Commissioner of Railways and the Conservator of Forests during the limited periods mentioned in the Bill. Everyone knows that the work done by those authorities is very extensive and cannot be compared with that of ordinary leaseholders. All that work is carried out under the strictest supervision, as members know. The Commissioner of Railways is compelled to burn off the railway reserves and in doing that he is protecting the property of other people and lessening the risk of fire spreading from railway reserves. The Commissioner of Railways and Conservator of Forests can only burn for a period not exceeding six weeks, and must start early with that work in order to protect their own properties and adjoining properties of private landowners.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The farmers want the same right to protect their properties.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We will come to that point. I urge the hon. member to keep an open mind, because I assure him that in regard to some matters he is labouring under a misconception. I do not blame him for that, but he must not be obstinate. The Commissioner of Railways and the Conservator of Forests will exercise authority and act under the provisions of the Bill as they are acting under the existing Statute. Already they have all the powers proposed and no additional powers that I am aware of are being given them. With regard to burning off during a prohibited period in order to protect houses and haystacks, the prohibited period is that time which is gazetted at the request of the local authority, in which fires must not be lit. Hon. members know that prohibited times are gazetted in respect to certain districts when no fire whatever must be lit. The member for Irwin-Moore wanted to know why certain privileges given to settlers to burn ten chains around their homes or haystacks were not enlarged so that they could burn off round their crops. The hon. member knows, as others do, that during certain periods farmers are not allowed to burn off at all. Provision is made that settlers may

burn a break to protect their houses and haystacks and if they were allowed to burn around their crops as well, there would be no prohibited period. All that is in the Bill is what is already provided for in the existing Act. Will any hon. member say that that has not been a very useful measure, or that it has been abused? Will any farmer in this House say that in the period from November to February he would take the risk of burning breaks around his paddocks? I am surprised at members objecting to the proposal in the Bill since it is the law to-day. We are merely carrying it on. Members know from experience that it is a wise provision and that it should not be amended in any way. The member for Irwin-Moore said the Bill would make it illegal to burn from the 1st October to the 3rd April. It is already illegal. The existing Act makes it illegal.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That was when you and I were boys; it is absurd now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The gentleman who was responsible for the introduction of the Act was the late Mr. George Throssell.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It was all right at that time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member would not deny that the late Mr. Throssell knew something about the subject. Will the hon. member say there is anything wrong about that prohibition? He cannot do so. It is a natural thing that there should not be a fire, except under special conditions, from the 1st October to the 3rd April. Only a month ago I came down from the Murchison, the 15th October I think it was, and to my surprise I found wheat being carted into Mullewa. Will any person in his right senses say that a fire should be lit in an area where wheat-carting was going on at that time? Bearing all these matters in mind, and in this country where the seasons are irregular, it is wise to prohibit the lighting of fires from October to April.

Mr. Stubbs: Who is disputing that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In that period certain times are gazetted in which persons are not permitted to burn under any conditions. Those conditions have existed for years past, and there has never been any question raised about them, or even any objection. The only alteration in the Bill is that the conditions have been made more stringent by requiring the clearing of

breaks. The hon. member also complained about the penalty provided for not putting out a fire which, he stated, might have been lit accidentally. The penalty in this case is the same as in the case of burning, because the danger from fire is just as great as in the case of a fire when the landowner allows it to burn. What is the difference?

Mr. Stubbs: Who is going to prove that the farmer actually lit a fire?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We will come to that. I do not deny that a farmer would pay for the damage that had been caused to someone else's property. I believe every farmer would. I know the farmer's good nature. But after all, that has nothing to do with the Bill. An action for damages would lie if somebody had been burnt out. An action will lie in any case whether the Bill becomes law or not, so that is another matter entirely, and has nothing to do with the Bill. A fire might be lit by a settler, or it might be accidental, in which case the person is called upon to do certain things, and if he does not observe the conditions, he has to prove that he was not aware of the fire. A person will have to prove, likewise, that he complied with the Act, that he notified his neighbours and the fire control authorities that he did the things he should have done. So it is not a question of a man proving his innocence; all he has to prove is that he observed the conditions set out. It has to be proved against him that he lit the fire and what he must say is that, the fire being there, he took the necessary precautions as set out in the Bill, that he ploughed firebreaks, that he had a number of men there.

Mr. Stubbs: He might not know anything about the fire.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If he does not know anything about it, he can say, "I did not see it; I did not know it was there." But does the hon. member really think that a man does not know of the existence of a fire on his property? He would know, unless he was blind, and if he happened to be blind he could prove that. The member for Irwin-Moore also took exception to the lighting of a fire at least three feet from any log, tree or stump. When the Bill is in Committee, members can make the distance what they think is fair. I shall not offer any objection. The hon. member also complained about the paragraph prohibiting persons from smoking a pipe, cigar, cigarette or other sub-

stance within 20 yards of any stable, stack, rick or field of hay, and he said that if the Bill became law it would be impossible for any person to smoke in any railway train or on any road in the State. Does he not know that that is already the law of the country?

Mr. Sleeman: Why re-enact something that is already the law?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the provision is not passed, it will still be there.

Mr. Sleeman: Why bring it in again?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member does not know much about it. The Bill does not set out that a pipe, cigar or cigarette shall not be smoked within 20 yards of inflammable material of any description. The Bill says "or other inflammable vegetable production." This would not apply to any bush growth. It means a crop which would have to be produced by cultivation.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You are a past-master in the art of misrepresentation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When I state facts, the hon. member charges me with misrepresentation. In any case, the onus of proof is not on a defendant at all.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Read Clause 37.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The charge will have to be proved against the defendant.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The clause does not say that; it is the reverse.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It has to be proved that the defendant observed the conditions. The hon. member also complained about picnics and fire-lighting. It is provided in the Bill that it is an offence to leave a fire burning under such conditions, but it would be almost impossible to obtain a conviction, because it would be necessary to prove which person actually lit the fire.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Irwin-Moore complained of the power proposed to be given to fire-control officers, but he did not object to similar power being given to forest officers. The forest officer is an officer under the Conservator of Forests and acts on the instructions of the Conservator of Forests. The fire-control officer will act on the instructions of the local authority. Therefore all that is being done under this measure is to give the fire-control officer simi-

lar power to that exercised by the forest officer. In any event, the local authorities are asking for this power, so they do not entertain the fears mentioned by the member for Irwin-Moore. The hon. member also said that an investigation of an outbreak of bush fire should be made by a coroner. He said there had been a general demand in the country for coronial inquiries into bush fires. The hon. member is mistaken there because Section 13 of the existing Act provides for coronial investigations. Thus it is not true to say that there has been a general demand because the provision is already on the statute-book.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: How many coronial inquiries have been held?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The only alteration proposed in this Bill is that a forest officer may also ask for a coronial inquiry. Regarding the payment from Consolidated Revenue, the hon. member said the Bill provided that a moiety should be paid by the local authority. He asked what the moiety would be and said he would like it fixed. A moiety is one-half. The Minister does not fix it; that provision appears in the present Act.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Where does it say that the moiety shall be one-half?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A moiety means one-half. The hon. member also said that the Bill would place a big responsibility on local authorities. All I can say is that that is a responsibility which the local authorities are seeking, and they have asked for it without any compensation at all. They want the authority. Another complaint by the hon. member—and the member for Wagin made the same error—was that an officer under the Act would be permitted to seize a gun. That is not correct; the measure gives no such power to an officer. The measure provides that the owner or occupier of land may seize the gun to examine the type of ammunition used. That is provided in Section 9 of the existing Act. Therefore what those two members complained of as something that might be abused has not been abused in all the years that the Act has been on the statute-book. It has been suggested that the fire-control officer should consult the farmer before taking any action on a farm where a fire breaks out. If it were necessary for the fire-control officer to consult

the farmer, the control that could be exercised would not be of much value. Imagine a gale raging and the fire-control officer waiting to consult the farmer! What would happen while the pair were arriving at some agreement?

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That is what they will do.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I hope they will, where possible, but in some cases it cannot be done. The farmer might not be present to be consulted.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: He will be there all right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Does the hon. member think that the fire-control officer and the farmer would hold a deliberation while a fire was raging through the country? To suggest that would be no less ridiculous than to say that they must go to arbitration. If the farmer said that the fire-control officer could not use a water supply, or could not do something else, what is going to happen? Such an attitude could not be permitted under a measure of this kind. The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) raised the question of exempting town sites from the operation of the measure. I have no objection to his proposal. Most of the townsites have a fire brigade and come under the Fire Brigades Act, and I do not think they need to be exempted. Some members appear to be under the impression that the measure will place on the defendant the burden of proving his innocence. I thought I had already explained that point clearly. When moving the second reading, I told the House that the Bill provided that no person, while being conveyed in any moving vehicle in any part of the State outside any town boundary, shall throw out of such vehicle any lighted cigar, cigarette or match. The onus of proof under that provision would not rest on the defendant because there are no conditions by which the doing of such an act may be made legal. Where there is no provision to do an act that may be made legal, the obligation cannot be on the defendant to prove his innocence. Where there are conditions to make something legal, the onus is on the defendant. If a man threw a lighted cigar, cigarette or match out of the train, there are no conditions in the Bill providing how that might be done. Since there are no conditions to make the act legal, there can be no prosecution com-

elling the defendant to prove his innocence. It is only where there are conditions to be observed that the defendant must show he observed those conditions. Clause 37 provides that in any proceeding for an alleged offence against this measure or any regulation or by-law, the burden of proving the observance of the conditions which would excuse the matter alleged in the complaint shall be upon the defendant. That is the only onus placed on the defendant—the burden of proving the observance of the conditions.

Mr. Cross: We do not know what regulations you might make.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No regulations can be made under the clause that would be inconsistent with the Act. Thus it is specifically provided that the doing of certain things is made legal by observing certain conditions, and all that the defendant has to prove is that he observed the conditions. Members appear to be under a serious misapprehension as to the defendant being required to prove his innocence. It is only where some conditions are imposed that the defendant will be required to show that he observed the conditions. That is not new, either; it is a common provision in various laws. Members talk about the good old system of British justice, but the good old system of British justice has always made people responsible for the observance of conditions. That is not placing an obligation on the defendant to prove his innocence. All the defendant is required to do is to prove that he safeguarded himself by doing certain things that the law required him to do in the circumstances. To justify burning during a prohibited period, a firebreak must be burnt around a house or haystack and the burning must be done between 8 p.m. and midnight. If a fire got away, all that the defendant would have to prove would be that he had put in the firebreak and that the burning had been done between 8 p.m. and midnight.

Mr. Stubbs: To whose satisfaction would he have to prove that? The court's? He might be summoned without having done it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He is summoned now. The hon. member himself cited an instance of a fire having occurred and of a person having been sued for damages, not for an offence against the provisions of the Act. That is the law to-day. The defendant has to prove that he was not

responsible, but in the case cited by the hon. member the defendant was unable to prove it. He had to prove that the injury suffered by the other man was not due to any act of his. That is the law as it applies under other Acts. The only obligation on the defendant would be to prove that he made a firebreak and burnt between 8 p.m. and midnight. The complainant would have to prove that the fire occurred, and the defendant would have to show that he took the necessary precautions under the Act. Is there anything wrong with a provision of that kind? To show that this principle is not new, I will give instances. On this point the member for Fremantle raised objection. Take the Agricultural Products Act, 1929. Section 8 provides—

In any proceedings in respect of offences under this Act . . . (b) the person whose name is marked on the outside or inside of any package containing products for sale, or on any label thereon, as the seller or packer thereof, shall be deemed to be the seller or packer thereof until the contrary is proved.

The members for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson) and Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) supported that section. There the obligation is put upon the defendant to prove that he is not a seller or packer.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: But that is only as regards selling foodstuffs.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now let me quote the Agricultural Seeds Act of 1923. To Section 16 of that Act no objection was made by Mr. E. B. Johnston, Mr. Latham, and Mr. Sampson—

In any proceedings the burden of proof that any agricultural seeds were not dealt with or prepared or offered or received or held in possession or kept or exposed or sent or forwarded or supplied or delivered or intended for sale or for purposes of sale, or sold, or that the same were not intended for planting or sowing, or that a statement or label containing the particulars mentioned in Subsection 1 of Section 6 was written or attached to the parcel of seeds, shall in every case be on the defendant.

The defendant has to prove that. There was no objection to that provision on the principles of good old British justice, and there ought not to have been any objection. The Alsation Dogs Act, 1929, by Section 5, provides—

On the hearing of any charge of an offence against this Act the burden of proving that the dog has been effectively sterilised shall be on the person charged.

That good old principle of British justice! The burden ought to be on the defendant, too. What is wrong about that? The Industrial Arbitration Act by Section 129 provides—

Nothing in this section shall prohibit the suspension or discontinuance (not being in the nature of a strike or lock-out) of any industry or of the working of any person therein for good cause independent of an industrial dispute; but in a prosecution for any contravention of this section the onus of proof that any such suspension or discontinuance is not in the nature of a strike or lock-out, and that such independent good cause exists, shall lie on the defendant.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you know why I did not oppose that? Be fair!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know.

Mr. Sleeman: The Minister ought to know. He is old enough to know.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I admit that. However, old as I am I do not know. Section 132 of the same Act says—

In any proceeding for any contravention of this section it shall lie upon the employer to show that any worker proved to have been dismissed or injured in his employment or prejudiced whilst an officer of an industrial union or association or such a society or body, or whilst entitled as aforesaid, was dismissed or injured in his employment or prejudiced for some reason other than that mentioned in this section.

The burden of proof shall rest upon the employer. The hon. member did not object to that.

Mr. Sleeman: Be fair! You know why I did not object. How could I object?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So the onus rests upon the employer. The member for Fremantle did not object to that.

Mr. Sleeman: Now, be fair! You know why. How could I object?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: To be perfectly candid, it was a party matter.

Mr. Sleeman: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But what excuse is that for one who talks about good old British justice? There is a principle of the Labour Party involved, but then what about the good old British justice of all the centuries? We have done all those things. We must be open-minded. The next section of the Industrial Arbitration Act, Section 133, reads—

In any proceedings for any contravention of this section it shall lie upon the worker proved to have ceased work in the service of

an employer whilst the employer was an officer or member of an industrial union or association or of such a society or body, or was entitled as aforesaid, to show that he ceased so to work for some reason other than that mentioned in this section.

The obligation is put upon the worker there. We put the obligation on the employer in one section, and upon the worker in the next. What about the good old principle of British justice that is so sacred to all of us in this House? Now I come to the Dairy Cattle Improvement Act of 1922, Section 12 of which reads—

In any prosecution under this Act an averment in the complaint that a bull is unregistered or that a bull is over the age of nine months, or that the defendant is the owner of a bull, shall be deemed to be proved until the contrary has been proved.

Where is the sacred principle in that legislation? There was no objection to it in this House, none whatever. The Child Welfare Act, 1907-1927, by Section 6 provides—

Upon the hearing of any complaint in respect of the maintenance of a legitimate child the allegations in the complaint that the person complained against is a near relative liable to maintain, and is of sufficient means to maintain, the child, and that any sum has been expended upon or is due or owing for or in respect of the maintenance of the child, shall be received as prima facie proof of such allegations respectively, and the onus of proving that such person is not a near relative, as stated in the complaint, or is not of sufficient means to maintain such child, or that some other person is prior in order of liability or that the sum stated in the complaint to be expended or due or owing is not due or owing or was not expended shall lie upon the defendant.

Again what about the good old principle of British justice? There was not a solitary objection to that in this Chamber. Now I come to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1902-1926, Section 10—

... the owner or manager of the mine shall each be guilty of an offence against this Act, unless he proves that he had taken all reasonable means by publishing, and to the best of his power enforcing, the provisions of this Act to prevent the contravention or non-compliance.

Mr. Cross: That is different from lighting a fire in the bush.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The obligation is upon the manager. Section 11 of the same Act provides—

... the owner and manager of the mine shall each be guilty of an offence against this Act unless he proves that he had taken all reasonable means by publishing, and to the

best of his power enforcing the provisions of this section to prevent such contravention or non-compliance.

The obligation is upon the owners and managers. The owner or manager has to prove that he did the necessary things. A similar obligation is imposed by Sections 12, 13, 44, 45, 49, and 52. Then Section 71 of that Act says—

In any proceedings under the provisions of this Act against a mining manager or person in charge of the mining operations in or upon a mine, the burden shall lie on the defendant of proving he is not such manager or person.

He has even to prove that he is not the manager or person who did not comply with these conditions! The good old principle of British justice has been battered by all this legislation. There was no objection to that provision in the Coal Mines Regulations Act. Again, the Dairy Products Marketing Regulation Act, 1934-1936, by Section 57 lays down—

The person whose name is marked on the outside or inside of any package containing dairy products intended for sale as a seller or packer thereof shall be deemed to be the seller or packer thereof until the contrary is proved.

Mr. Sleeman: Did I oppose that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Mr. Sleeman: Have another look.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member can look the matter up. If he did oppose that provision, I shall be glad to acknowledge that he did. The Marine Stores Act, 1902, Section 19, reads—

In any prosecution under this Act any allegation or any information that any person is unlicensed need not be proved, and such person shall be deemed unlicensed until the contrary be proved by the production of a license or otherwise.

The defendant has to prove. The Plant Diseases Act, 1914, by Section 32 provides—

In all proceedings taken against any person for any offence against this Act the averments of the prosecutor contained in a sworn complaint shall be deemed to be proved in the absence of proof to the contrary.

That Act was passed under Sir James Mitchell, who, I may say, was responsible for a good deal of similar legislation. The Dog Act, 1903-1928, Section 11, reads—

In any proceedings under this Act the proof of due registration or that any dog is under the age of three months or has not been kept by the owner thereof, shall in each case be on the defendant.

There was no objection to that. The police Offences (Drugs) Act, 1928, by Section 7 provides—

In any proceedings against a person for an offence against this part of this Act, it shall not be necessary to negative by evidence any license, authority or other matter of exception or defence, and the burden of proving any such matter shall lie on the person seeking to avail himself thereof.

Neither was there any objection to that. The Factories and Shops Act, 1920, by Section 136 lays down—

In any proceedings against the occupier of a factory for employing any person in breach of this Act . . . (2) when a person employed is, in the opinion of the justices, apparently of the age alleged by the complainant, it shall lie on the defendant to prove that such person is not of that age.

Point of Order.

Mr. Sleeman: On a point of order. I would like you, Mr. Speaker, to order the Minister to withdraw the last statement he has made concerning myself. If he looks on page 908 of "Hansard" of 1929 he will find that I did take exception. Therefore I hope the Minister will be fair enough to withdraw, as his statement is not true.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member cannot make a speech on a point of order.

Mr. Sleeman: No; but it is just as well to stop the Minister in time, Sir.

The Minister for Lands: It is quite possible that a mistake may be made in this. The hon. member rose to a point of order.

Mr. Sleeman: I want to know whether the Minister is going to withdraw the statement, which is deliberately untrue.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is making statements now.

The Minister for Lands: Of course there is no point of order in this.

Mr. Sleeman: No; but if you were a man, you would withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Sleeman: I ask for a withdrawal, Mr. Speaker. The statement is wrong, and I want a withdrawal.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows it is not necessary for the Minister to withdraw. There is nothing offensive in what he has said.

Mr. Marshall interjected.

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member knows he has no right to interject when the Speaker is addressing the House. The member for Fremantle has not given the

Minister an opportunity to say anything yet.

Mr. Sleeman: I should like to ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, on this point: If the Minister finishes his speech without having withdrawn the statement I want withdrawn, will it not be too late then to ask for a withdrawal?

Mr. Speaker: No.

The Minister for Lands: I do not know why the hon. member is so excited. I am prepared to say that he opposed every one of those clauses.

Mr. Sleeman: Most of them, I did.

The Minister for Lands: I do not know whether the hon. member did.

Mr. Sleeman: Well, read on.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member should know—

Mr. Sleeman: I should know that you ought to tell the truth when you come here.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member is grossly disorderly in saying that I am telling an untruth. Under the Standing Orders he is out of order in interrupting my speech at all. He really has no point of order. If I said that he was telling a lie he could rise to a point of order. However, I will accept his word that he opposed all of those clauses.

Mr. Sleeman: Hear, hear!

Debate resumed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But that does not affect the principle this House agreed to. Take the Marine Stores Act, 1902. Section 19 reads—

In any prosecution under this Act any allegation or any information that any person is unlicensed need not be proved, and such person shall be deemed unlicensed until the contrary be proved by the production of a license or otherwise.

There was no objection to that and it is still the law today. Section 136 of the Factories and Shops Act, 1920, is as follows:—

In any proceedings against the occupier of a factory for employing any person in breach of this Act . . . (2) when a person employed is, in the opinion of the justice, apparently of the age alleged by the complainant, it shall lie on the defendant to prove that such person is not of that age. (3) When any person apparently of the Chinese or other Asiatic race is found in a factory it shall be deemed that he was employed therein, and it shall lie on the defendant to prove that such person was not employed therein.

There was no objection to that. Section 35 (c) of the Fertilisers Act 1928 reads—

In any proceedings, civil or criminal, with respect to any fertiliser analysed under this Act, the allegation that any fertiliser was sold shall be sufficient evidence of the fact which constitutes a sale as herein defined until the contrary is proved and the onus of proof that any fertiliser was not for sale shall lie upon the defendant.

I can find no objection raised to that. Section 34 of the Fisheries Act 1905-20 to 21 states—

In any prosecution for an offence against this Act or the regulations in which it is material to show that the accused person was engaged in catching fish for sale proof that such person in fact caught fish shall be prima facie evidence that such person caught the fish for sale, and the burden of showing that the fish were not caught for sale shall rest on the accused person.

So that if any person catches fish the burden of proving that he did not catch it for sale rests upon the person catching it.

Mr. Sleeman: Which year was that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not find any objection to that.

Mr. Sleeman: You would not, because I was not here.

Mr. Marshall: Only the fish would object to that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Act was amended in 1921.

Mr. Sleeman: I was not here.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In Section 13 (2) of the Game Act 1912 appears the following—

In every prosecution under this Act an averment in the complaint that the person charged with the offence was an unlicensed person or employed by an unlicensed person, or that the native game was taken or killed for sale or barter, shall be deemed to be proved in the absence of proof to the contrary.

Section 47 of the Gold Buyers Act, 1921, states—

Mr. Sleeman: I was not here; not guilty!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Section 47 states—

Mr. Sleeman: I was not here but I advocated its repeal.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The section reads—

In any proceedings against any person licensed under this Act for any failure to comply with any of the requirements thereof, the burden of proof that such requirements have been complied with shall be on the defendant.

Section 24 of the Inspection of Scaffolding Act 1924 reads—

(a) Where by this Act any owner of scaffolding or gear is required to give or serve any notice, the burden of proof that this Act has been complied with shall be on the owner.

(b) The burden of proof that any scaffolding or gear was not, on any date alleged in a complaint, in the place alleged shall be on the defendant.

There were no objections to that.

Mr. Sleeman: You make sure now! You made one mistake.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member can make sure, but let him not get excited. It is not worth while. The hon. member can no more be consistent than any of us can. There has been a lot of heroic talk about the good old principle of British justice.

Mr. Stubbs: We will alter it in this Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not care; if the hon. member wants to make it unworkable it is his responsibility.

Mr. Stubbs: We will have a try.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But I advise the hon. member not to be stupid and, because an objection has been raised and that objection has been shattered, say "we will stick to it in this Bill." If hon. members want to nullify the legislation and make it impossible for local authorities to carry out this Act the responsibility rests upon them. Hon. members can do what they like with it but so far as the main principles are concerned I am going to do my best to get the consent of Parliament to them. Furthermore, I say that with respect to the objection raised against placing the onus of proof on the defendant, in no place in this Act is the responsibility placed upon the defendant to prove anything except that he has complied with certain conditions provided under the Act to safeguard the community against bush fires.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1937-38.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 19th November, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Vote—Education, £733,390 (partly considered).

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [8.10]: I congratulate the Minister upon his attention to the needs of the School of Agri-

culture at Narrogin. I am not going to reflect upon his colleague, the Minister for Works, because he was Minister for Education for only a brief period; but apart from that I wish to say it has been the habit for many years before the coming of the present Minister rather to neglect the requirements of this important and deserving institution. The £2,700 spent from the Jubilee Fund and referred to the other night by the Minister was wisely spent. I would like to tell the Minister, who has not yet seen the results of that expenditure, that there is now at the farm a particularly well-constructed and useful building. I was amongst those who regretted that the Minister's injuries did not permit him to join the rest of us at the opening ceremony. The Minister has indicated that there is other expenditure necessary at the Narrogin farm school and I was glad to note that this expenditure is likely to be made shortly. I am sorry to have to introduce here a slightly less satisfactory note. I should like to explain again that the present Minister is in no way responsible for the unnecessary expenditure of which I am now going to complain. Both the Minister for Works and the Minister whose Estimates we are now discussing made reference the other night to the East Perth Girls' School. I am among the very many in this House and outside of it who are dissatisfied with the huge cost of that school. I do not want my words to be construed into anything uncomplimentary towards the principal architect, Mr. Clare. Quite the contrary. The principal architect was all the time acting to instructions and no one will deny that the school is likely to remain there for many years as a monument to his outstanding ability. It is not of the appearance of the school but of the cost that I complain. I learnt to my amazement, when the Minister for Works was introducing his estimates that the school cost the huge sum of £82,340. That is a staggering amount for a purpose of this kind, particularly when we remember that the building houses only 600 scholars. It may be that at a pinch two or three dozen more could be squeezed into it but I am given to understand that the official holding capacity of the school is 600. The Minister perhaps has already made the calculation that that equals £137 for the school housing of one metropolitan child. Naturally, as a country member, I am led

to make a comparison. I want to show the Committee what the position is regarding country schools and country children, and I want to compare this most modern of our city schools with the most modern type of building now being used in country areas. Members will agree that that should be a fair comparison. Take the type of school most commonly used in the country, namely one with a holding capacity of 50 children. I ascertained last year that the cost of constructing this type of school would range from £360 to £440 or £450, depending generally on the locality. That is for the lined type of school, while the unlined type costs on an average £360. But irrespective of whether the school be lined or unlined, if we take £400 as being the average cost, I think that will be pretty fair. Now £400 to house 50 scholars is £8 per scholar. I want the Minister to compare that £8 to cater for the country scholar in the most modern type of country school, with £137 similarly to cater for one metropolitan scholar. It will be seen that the metropolitan cost is 17 times as high as that in the country. I have heard it asserted that the curriculum in the East Perth school is of a considerably higher grade than that which obtains generally in the country. But if that be the only argument the department has to depend upon, it does not amount to very much, for I understand the curriculum at the East Perth school is substantially the same as that which obtains at, say, the Narrogin or the York or similar schools. So the matter of the curriculum really need not enter into the question at all. Having regard to these facts, I want to put it to the Minister whether he does not consider it rather ill-advised to have spent that huge sum of £82,340 to house merely 600 scholars at a time when, as all members know who visit the Education Department, it is very difficult indeed to get what is wanted for school structural purposes. You, Mr. Chairman, know very well that we are constantly being told, "We should be very glad to do this for you, but there are no funds." That is difficult to believe, when £82,340 is spent so readily merely to house 600 scholars in the metropolitan area. I do not know whether the Minister has this information, but if he has I should like him to tell the Committee exactly who was responsible for the passing of this amount. It would, of course, be Cabinet in the first place, pos-

sibly the Premier personally. Otherwise I assume the Treasury officers would not have passed so large a sum. Of course, it may be possible for the Minister for Education to justify this expenditure; maybe there are factors of which I have not learnt; but, having regard to the housing capacity and the cost and the fact that the curriculum is nothing out of the ordinary, from my point of view it would be difficult indeed to justify the expenditure of £137 to house just one metropolitan scholar.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [8.21]: I should like the Minister to know that there is still a great number of under-nourished children at our schools. Attention has been drawn to a statement made by Miss Glasson, who is conducting a nutrition survey for the Commonwealth. She said she was shocked at the numbers of under-nourished children. Also in her statement she said she was shocked at the poorness of many of the homes, and the difficult living conditions of many of the inmates. Some of the homes, she said, were poorer than anything she had ever seen, and were of a lower standard than anything she had seen in the other States, or even in London. Then we have our own Dr. Stang, who, in her health report, says that in this year 28 per cent. of the school children whom she examined were definitely under-nourished. Last year it was 26 per cent. Therefore it will be seen that larger numbers of children are under-nourished to-day although we are supposed to be living under more prosperous conditions. The Minister was reported to have said last year that he would see what could be done and that he would provide free milk for the children. When a deputation waited upon him he was reported to have said that he would consider giving a subsidy of pound for pound to secure free milk for the children. So far nothing whatever has been done in this regard. It was suggested at the deputation that the supplying of free milk to all children who needed it would cost £18,000. However, the Free Milk Council has ascertained that it would not cost nearly so much to supply with milk all the children who are under-nourished. In a broadcast speech, Mr. W. M. Hughes reported that Professor Darr deplored the fact that 40 per cent. of the children of Australia were suffering from under-nourishment. And a similar statement was made by Professor Harvey Sutton. Dr. Dale, the medical officer of health in Mel-

bourne, found that 43 per cent. of the 5-year-old children were suffering from mal-nutrition. He also said that for the sake of the children of school age, we must have a policy providing for a dental examination. I believe we have done something in that regard in this State, but I still consider that something more must be done, and done at once. I know it was a matter for merriment when on a recent occasion in this House I mentioned the case of a "C" class relief worker with 12 children. As a matter of fact he had 14, but I was afraid to say so. People with large families on a very small income are quite unable to provide nourishment for their children, and there are many poor people with large families. Only yesterday at Subiaco I was speaking to a woman who had seven children, all under the age of 11 years.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can hardly bring that in under the Education Vote.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am going to connect it up with the supply of free milk. If those children were nourished, they would be able to go to school and get some education. I wish to point out to the Minister that if we could do something now to get free milk in schools, it would mean a great outlook for this country. Mr. Morrison, the headmaster at the Bagot-road, Subiaco, school, took a census of those children who had milk and those who had not. He reported that those who received milk gained approximately 4 lbs. 12 ozs., while those who did not receive milk gained only 2 lbs. 14 ozs., the difference being 2 lbs. 2 ozs. The test was taken from the 30th April to the 30th June, and from the 30th June to the 30th August. Mr. Morrison said that if the children were ill-clothed or under-nourished, they were unable to work. I have had similar opinions from other headmasters. Therefore I should like to see something done. At present we have a number of delinquent children mainly because they are under-fed. They cannot take in tuition at school as they could if they were more comfortably fed. Those children are mentally unable to do the work because they are definitely under-nourished; and that is principally because their parents have not the money with which to buy them food.

Mr. Fox: Why have they not the money?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: That is a matter for the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot bring that in under the Education Vote.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [8.28]: I desire to compliment the Minister on the very able manner in which he presented the Estimates of his department and also on his recovery from his painful accident. Probably it served to cramp him physically for a little while, but I am glad to say it did not cramp him mentally.

Mr. Raphael: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. NEEDHAM: When presenting the Estimates the Minister stressed the importance of the Education Department. We all agree that the education system is of the utmost importance. There is one branch of it in particular that is of importance, namely the technical branch. During the four years that I have been in this House mine has been like a voice crying in the wilderness in the effort to improve the conditions at the Perth Technical College. So far my representations have been in vain. Every Minister for Education with whom I have come in contact during that period has realised the necessity for providing better conditions at the college. That is all they have done. Consideration has been given to the various requests for additional accommodation and staff, but to-day we are in the same position as we were in four years ago. The Minister, in referring to technical training, said that the Government was very anxious that the excellent work in technical education should be extended as widely as possible. He said it was hoped that much more would be done in the future than had been done in recent years. The Government, he indicated, had co-operated in every possible way in the effort to obtain from the Federal Government a grant of £2,000,000 in four instalments, and a permanent subsidy of £100,000 to extend facilities for technical education, and it was hoped that something would be achieved. I do not know how to take that statement, whether the £2,000,000 that the State Government hope to obtain from the Federal Government is to be for this State, should it be granted, or whether the money is to be divided amongst the States for the purpose of assisting technical education. I do not know whether the £100,000 as a permanent sub-

sidy is to be for this State, or whether it is to be divided amongst all the States. When the Minister replies I hope he will give us some information upon that point. I have here the report of the Education Department for 1936 wherein there is a very interesting paragraph relative to the Perth Technical School. It says—

No additional buildings have been provided at any centre. At the Perth Technical School there was an increase of 578 individual students on the 1935 numbers. When the present buildings were made available in 1910 there were 800 students. Now there are five times that number. Every year there is a considerable increase. It is impossible to carry on efficiently in such circumstances. New buildings and equipment should be provided.

I suggest there is no technical college in any capital city of the Commonwealth so badly circumstanced as is ours in Perth. The wonder to me is that the officers can carry on as well as they are doing, with the very limited accommodation at their disposal. There are classrooms which are a disgrace, and every Minister for Education for the past four years has admitted that this is so. One particular classroom is known as the Black Hole of Calcutta. It is not fit for human habitation, but the students continue to study there and the officers are in attendance.

Mr. North: It is a very valuable site.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Some years ago a suggestion was made by the then Director of Education and other experts that the front portion of the land should be sold, and the money obtained used to increase the accommodation for students. When members realise that 27 years have elapsed without any addition having been made to the building, whilst the number of students has increased from hundreds to thousands, they will surely agree it is time that something was done. The Minister has admitted that the technical staff is doing good work. The marvel to me is that they have been able to do such good work. It must be realised that the assistant superintendent of the college has to go to the boys' school in Perth almost every night in the week to attend the overflow classes there. I hope the Minister will inform members whether there is any possibility in the near future of improving these conditions. They are not a credit to the State. No member of the Committee can deny the importance of technical education. I bring this matter up as a hardy annual. I hope the Minister in his reply will give us

some information as to the real meaning of the £2,000,000 to which he referred, and when, if ever, some improvement will be made in the accommodation for the students and staff at the college.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [8.37]: I compliment the Minister upon the administration of his department. I know he has the interest of the children of the State at heart. I have always found him approachable and willing to do his best both for the children and the schools. When looking up the Estimates I see there is an increase of only £190 on the item dealing with furniture, books, sale of stock, etc. There is a large increase under the heading of salaries, which is as it should be. It is a pity the Government cannot get more money with which to do more for the schools in the matter of furniture, manual training materials, and sewing materials. The State Government should not carry all the responsibility. The member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) said that Mr. W. M. Hughes had made a certain speech in which he said what should be done. What Mr. Hughes should do is to persuade the Commonwealth Government to assist the State Government in the matter of education. The Commonwealth Government disclaims responsibility in the matter, and even takes money from the people in connection with education. We have only to consider the action in charging letter postage on correspondence lessons. If a teacher puts a simple personal note to a child in the backblocks in the package, it is charged at letter rate, and no argument or pleading with the Federal Government has met with any success. It is a shame that postage rates should be imposed on correspondence packages. The Minister said that 140 schools in the State were now equipped with wireless. That represents 140 guineas for the Commonwealth Government, and taken from the people who have to pay the license fees. One hundred and forty guineas would go a long way towards providing some of the requisites needed in our schools. That amount is almost as much as the increase provided on the Estimates for furniture, books and other contingencies. My particular interest is in the country and country schools. Recently I had an opportunity to make some inquiry as to the number of youths in the country who are unemployed

and not at school. In a very limited survey I found that in about 11 centres in the timber area 80 youths were not doing anything. I do not blame the teachers for the fact that most of these youngsters leave school on attaining the age of 14 years. A country teacher has a big job. It may be that one teacher has to instruct many classes in the same school and the whole of that teacher's time is occupied. Some of the teachers are very good in taking children for extra study after school hours, but that cannot always be done. The system of changing teachers makes a big difference because different methods are introduced into the school. Those 80 unemployed youths have no prospects before them. If the Government could extend the scholarship system and provide that every country child should have two years at a metropolitan or town school, it would be much better for the children and for the State as a whole. The question has been raised as to whether the children are getting a good education. I agree with the letter published in this morning's paper in which the writer pointed out that it was not the education the children were receiving at school that was at fault but the lack of employment and perhaps proper nourishment after leaving school that dulled the lessons learnt at school. The time should be opportune to raise the school-leaving age. If it were compulsory for children to attend school until reaching the age of 16, a great advantage would accrue. As I mentioned, each country child should have an opportunity to attend a large school where it could study for the junior certificate or take higher technical training. I have had personal experience of young boys who have come to town in the hope of securing apprenticeships in the Railway Department. Unfortunately the training in the country is so limited that it is not possible to give them the equivalent of what they would receive in a Perth school and so they often fail. Children in the metropolitan area receive a good training and may attend the Technical School at night for further instruction and so they have a greater opportunity to get apprenticed in the railways and in other trades. A Government hostel should be provided under proper supervision for country children. During the last week or so I have had a petition from Donnybrook where parents asked for a free

bus service to the High School at Bunbury. Seven children from Donnybrook and surrounding districts are attending the High School at Bunbury, but if a bus or other service were provided, there would be 44. Those children would come from different parts—18 from Donnybrook and Argyle, 10 from Boyanup, 10 from Stratham and six from Dardanup. Parents, even if they could afford to pay 22s. 6d. or 25s. weekly to board their children in Bunbury, would not do so. I have been informed that between 100 and 200 children are already boarding in Bunbury. No proper supervision can be exercised over those children after school hours, no matter what good intentions the boarding-house keepers may have. There cannot be any proper control or supervision such as there would be in a Government hostel in charge of a matron and warden. There children would receive proper food and would be under the necessary supervision to attend to their studies. As I have indicated, only seven children from the Donnybrook area are attending the Bunbury High School, but 44 would attend if a bus service were provided or a Government hostel were conducted under proper supervision. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) mentioned the East Perth school. Though I represent a country electorate, I consider the East Perth school a wonderful achievement. It is a land mark in the history of Western Australia. Six hundred girls are receiving education there under the very best conditions. The school was a long felt want and is an absolute credit to the Government. I say that in spite of the fact that in the Forrest electorate we have not got everything we desire.

Mr. Marshall: Does the East Perth school accommodate country girls, or is it confined to girls in the metropolitan area?

Miss HOLMAN: It would accommodate girls from the country if there were a hostel in the city where they could stay, but many parents are not willing to send girls of 14 to live in the town under somebody else's control.

Mr. Cross: Frequently the parents have not the money.

Miss HOLMAN: That is so, but even those who have the money do not care to send young girls and boys to live in the city. If more scholarships and a Government hostel were provided, more children would

be sent from the country. That is one direction in which the Federal Government should help the State to improve the education system. The Minister referred to the work of the parents and citizens' associations. No words are needed from me to show the merit of those societies and the good work they do. As president of the State organisation, however, I must say that our advice to parents and citizens' associations is that they should help only with the luxuries and extras in the schools and that it is not their job to provide what the Government should supply. Parents and citizens have been responsible for installing wireless sets in many of the schools. Parents of girls attending the East Perth School have recently installed there a marvellous wireless and broadcasting set with loud speakers in other parts of the building. I believe that the parents and citizens in the country are responsible for more than the extras in the school. The great need for an increase for needle work and manual training material has not been met. I realise that the Government are hampered for money, but very little needle-work material can be provided for a child for the large sum of 5d. One other matter to which I wish to refer is that of playgrounds. I know it is the policy of the department to insist upon a large block of ground being set aside wherever a new school is being established. Some of the old schools are still very deficient in that respect. Some of the old schools still have playgrounds that run up the hill, and not very far up the hill at that. I would like the Minister to see what he can do for the old schools as well as put in force his policy with regard to new schools. I may mention the school at Argyle, where there is a tiny little yard that runs up a little bit of a hill, and where the children cannot play at all except on the road or on the railway line. In days gone by we did try to get a playground on the riverside for those children, but at that time the area could not be secured. I hope the Minister will bear in mind the old schools and not only look after the new ones. Now as regards furniture in schools. It is a recognised fact that the posture of a child has a great effect on its after-life. If children in school assume an unhealthy posture, that fact may lead to various ailments later in life. I would like to see the department scrap the old-fashioned desks in country schools. I have seen tall children crouched at small desks, and little children sitting at

large desks. I have seen desks propped up on a couple of bits of jarrah, too. This is all urgent work. No doubt all work associated with education is urgent, but I would like to see all the old-fashioned furniture in country schools scrapped altogether and replaced by new furniture. I also want a new school. I want it at Worsley, which has a very old school that has got very dingy. If one goes into the school, one finds the walls blackened and the roof blackened, the only spot of brightness in the whole school—

Mr. Withers: Being the hole in the roof!

Miss HOLMAN: No; the pictures that various teachers have put up around the walls. May I suggest to the Minister that he favourably consider my request for a new school at Worsley. Worsley is a very old-established centre, and likely to exist as long as we shall know about it, at any rate. The steps at the school are all eaten away and broken down, and the verandah is patched and old. The building should be scrapped altogether. I believe a new site has been chosen, but that is as far as we have got. In connection with old schools that cannot be replaced, I suggest to the Minister and his department that they white-wash the interiors or paint them a light colour to attract to the interior all the light that can possibly be attracted. The member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) has on many occasions referred to the subject of free milk; but before ever the hon. member came here, that question was mentioned.

Mr. Thorn: Who mentioned it?

Miss HOLMAN: I did. In addition, the Parents and Citizens' Association and other bodies, such as the Labour Women's Organisation, have gone on deputation after deputation to the Government and asked for something to be done in that regard. We have had an encouraging hearing from the Minister for Education, but unfortunately he is not the whole Cabinet, and he has not been able to persuade the Treasurer up to now that we must have milk for all school children. The difference between the member for Subiaco and myself is that I advocate free milk for all school children in the State, without any distinction.

The Minister for Employment: The member for Subiaco is a strong upholder of capitalism, and all the time she is crying out for socialism.

Mr. Thorn: That is cattishness.

Miss HOLMAN: In this House there is no distinction between members, and as therefore there are no women here, there can be no cattishness. Women are supposed to have all the cattishness in the world. I would like the Minister to give further consideration to the request for free milk for all school children. I would also like him to see what can be done about Dr. Stang's report in which she advocates educational health camps. She says that Western Australia entirely lacks a scheme embodying permanent educational holiday camps as well as outdoor schools. In these camps backward and delicate children could stay from three to six months, or even longer, according to their particular needs. Such camps, she states, should be educational. If members wish to read Dr. Stang's very interesting report, they will find it on page 22 of the Public Health Department's report. At any rate, we do not appear to be doing sufficient to help those children who have not the advantages they ought to have. There are many matters in which the Commonwealth can help, especially if it will not make a general grant. There is the postage for correspondence schools. There are the wireless licenses in connection with schools. I do not know why parents and citizens' associations and groups of parents should have to pay wireless license fees to the tune of £147 annually to the Federal Government. The Federal Government has quite enough money, and so has the Federal Broadcasting Commission, to allow the schools wireless sets for the furtherance of the education of the children. Wireless sets should be given to the schools, and no license fees should be payable on them. As regards films also the Federal Government could help, having the Film Development Bureau and officers to take pictures. They have the subjects, and they could help by sending films around to the various schools. Finally, I would like to see the Government raise the school age as soon as possible, if practicable this year, to 16 years. I would like the Government to establish hostels for school children to board in. I would like to see special classes in country towns or in the metropolitan area for country children, so that every one of them could enjoy the advantages available in the cities. In my electorate, for instance, which stretches over a length of 156 miles and over a great breadth of country, there is not one technical class and not one con-

timination class. Schools are there, and they do their best, but it is not enough. Country children are being absolutely denied their birthright, and the advantages that city children are able to get. I conclude by saying I know that any shortcomings are not the Minister's fault, because the Minister has done well with his department and is always willing to listen to requests of members, and to give favourable consideration to those requests if at all possible.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.59]: I have noted the kindly references to the manner in which the Minister has introduced his Estimates, but I am quite sure the satisfaction experienced is minor as compared with what it would be if the money which is necessary to carry on all the work were made available. The position unfortunately appears to be that in spite of the fact that each year's Estimates show an increased amount for the Education Department—this year's increase is £17,352—it is impossible to do all that is necessary. I regret that even minor matters, such as supplies of gravel to schools where the playground is more or less a swamp, and equipment such as maps and furniture, appear to be impossible of provision. Again, from a health standpoint the continuance of the pan system in schools, in place of the more modern septic system, is a source of great disappointment. In very many centres this filthy and dreadful system continues, and I will indeed be glad when a policy of installing septic tanks is made possible in connection with the schools. The difficulty of teaching several classes in one room may be emphasised. I know that in very small districts it is quite possible that that position cannot be avoided, but persistent objection on the part of the department in districts where the average attendance is steadily rising, to add a room to the accommodation available, is very distressing, particularly to those people whose children are thereby placed at a severe disadvantage. A whole chapter of commendation could be written expressive of praise of the work of the teachers. By far the greater proportion of them are different from workers in practically every other section of industry. In most instances they find great pleasure in their work even when school hours are over. I have noticed, time after time, when children's sports are held or project clubs of various descriptions are

formed, the teachers almost invariably throw themselves into the work with enthusiasm. That is an indication that the teacher is not concerned alone with the money payment which he gets out of the job. His heart is in his work, and because of that the children receive tuition along lines not included in the departmental curriculum. In some of the outlying suburban districts, pruning and other competitions are carried out annually, and the work done by the children is encouraged by the teachers in respect of various industrial matters. I presume they are regarded under that heading, for the activities include cooking, painting and art work, subjects really outside those on the ordinary curriculum.

The Minister for Education: Those are domestic matters.

Mr. SAMPSON: That phase is very gratifying indeed. It can be said in respect of people who live in the country districts that they give practical assistance to the Minister and his department with regard to the provision of various facilities that are necessary. In those areas the parents and citizens' associations are very live and useful bodies. The parents there are not only interested in voicing their approval, but they assist in a practical way to aid the work of the teachers by making school life more attractive and providing additional equipment. That is very satisfactory indeed. It is a source of gratification to everyone that it should be so. It is remarkable, however, that in the cities the interest shown is so different, yet the parents and children belong to the same human family. Nevertheless the assistance the department receives is very different in the cities from that experienced in the country areas. There is one other matter to which I desire to refer in conclusion. I allude to the amazing policy that the Government carries out in respect to the compulsory withdrawal of officers at 65 years of age. It is indeed disappointing that any Government should attempt by a fixed line of demarcation to determine when an officer of a department has reached the stage at which he is no longer qualified to do his work. I specially refer to the retirement of the Director of Education, Mr. Klein. Evidently he had reached the age of 65. I do not know that he had, and the only thing that prompts me to that conclusion is his withdrawal from the department. He certainly never gave anyone

that impression by appearance, speech or general lack of activity and keenness. It is generally conceded that a man is not as good physically at 50 to 65 years of age as when he was younger. For instance, we do not find a man 65 years of age putting up an effort such as that of Opperman to-day.

The Minister for Employment: Of course we do. What about the last Beverley to Perth road race?

Mr. Marshall: A man aged 61 won that event.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is true.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think we can discuss the Beverley-Perth road race when considering the Education Vote.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is definitely linked up with it. The instance referred to was a most outstanding example, but we must not forget that that rider was on the limit mark and that limit was very much extended. In those circumstances his win must not be taken as an example. Any person is physically better at 25 years of age than at 50 or 60 years.

Mr. Warner: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: In 99 instances out of 100, the man who is 60 or 65 years of age is much better mentally than he was at 25.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Are you including yourself?

Mr. Marshall: Yes he is flattering himself.

Mr. SAMPSON: I make no personal comment on the member for Murchison who has interjected; but if he does change, he must improve.

Mr. Marshall: I may be contrary to the rule, and may not improve.

Mr. SAMPSON: God forbid.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the Estimates.

Mr. SAMPSON: I shall return to the subject. I desire to refer to some outstanding personalities in the history of the world. So often it is stated that because a man is unable to carry out labouring work efficiently as his years increase, he is therefore unable effectually to carry out intellectual exercises. We have just heard of the death of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. We also know something about Mr. Lloyd George.

The CHAIRMAN: Were they employed in the Education Department?

Mr. SAMPSON: Then there is William Morris Hughes. The mere mention of those names goes to prove that attainment of 65 years of age certainly did not bring about the mental deterioration of those individuals, but rather the opposite.

Mr. Marshall: Johnny Walker started in 1820, and is still going strong!

Mr. SAMPSON: I would also mention the great William Ewart Gladstone. We rarely, if ever, have a man exercising his physical qualities and standing up in competition with the rest of the world on attaining that age, but Mr. Gladstone could stand up against the House of Commons and win them to his way; that is, if a vote is ever won in Parliament. But the policy of the Government is deplorable. When a man reaches 65, no matter how outstanding his qualities, and how capable he may be, his reaching that age means ipso facto that he must finish. It is to be regretted because the State is frequently deprived of the services of a man of unusual ability, and such is the case in this instance.

Mr. Tonkin: Did you speak that way when you were sitting behind the Government?

Mr. SAMPSON: I regret this very much. I know it is simply the carrying out of policy, but the policy is a bad one. The Director has evidently been called upon to resign, and to do it very quickly. He does not even finish the year. If a private employer behaved in that way he would be criticised in the Press and would be condemned from Dan to Beersheba, and even you, Mr. Chairman, would grow eloquent in the condemnation of such harshness. It is a great mistake that as men attain a state of efficiency, and are at the zenith of their careers, they should be thrown out of their positions. So far as I know there has been no complaint against Mr. Klein. I have not read of it in the Press. But upon attaining a certain age, through some process of irrational reasoning, every man suddenly becomes incapable of doing his work under the present system. There are examples, and Mr. Klein is an outstanding example, of men who last far longer than 65, and are very well able to do the work which they have been doing, and probably are better able to do it than at any time before in their lives.

Mr. North: Should a man die in harness?

Mr. SAMPSON: No, I do not say that. I realise it is difficult to determine when the stage of retirement is reached. It would be a very difficult work for a committee appointed to go into this matter to decide when a man should be called upon to resign. But to call upon a leading man in the Department of Education to withdraw when he is 65 is ridiculous and stupid to a degree. I wonder what is the age of some of our members. How old is the member for Irwin-Moore?

The CHAIRMAN: It is very disorderly of the hon. member to ask another member his age. I request the hon. member to confine his remarks to the Education Estimates.

Mr. SAMPSON: I shall not continue that discussion.

Mr. Thorn: Why not move for a select committee?

Mr. SAMPSON: I express my regret at the 100 per cent. carrying out of a policy which has very little to commend it. The State is the poorer to-day because of the carrying out of the policy to which I have made reference.

Mr. Fox: Why do you not shed a few tears about those who went out without a pension?

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [9.15]: The vote is an important one. This is entirely a spending department. The cost to the taxpayers of this State is £2 per head but every penny of that is justified.

Mr. Marshall: It is £2 5s. 8d.

Mr. STUBBS: It is about £2 for every man, woman and child in the State. If the arguments of metropolitan members were heeded, the Minister would have to get the Treasurer to put an extra tax on the people because there would be nearly £1,000,000 required. I will pass over the metropolitan area; hon. members look after that very well indeed. I want to say a few words about the country schools with which I am well acquainted. I ask the Minister whether it is not possible for the maps that are so necessary in the country schools to be replenished. It would probably surprise the Minister to know that in one or two schools in my electorate maps have been refused on the ground that there is no money available for their purchase. If £80,000 can be spent on one school in East Perth—and I do not say it was not justified—surely the Minister who authorised that expenditure would not refuse necessary equipment for

some of the country schools. I appeal to the Minister to see whether it is not possible to make a sum of money available so that the Director may respond to the requests made to him for necessary equipment for some of the country schools. I know of an appeal made by one isolated school situated at the top of a hill and has no verandah. The kiddies have to stop in school in the winter, or else get wringing wet. With due respect to those who are advocating septic tanks and other equipment in the metropolitan area, I say that before those schemes are thought of, the provision of other necessities for country schools should first be given consideration. The present Minister and his predecessors have been generous in the establishment of schools in all country districts. Wherever it has been proved that there was an average attendance of ten scholars, sums of £150 to £200 have been found for the provision of schools. I must give credit where credit is due. If the Minister can see his way clear to make a promise during his reply that a few pounds will be placed on this year's Estimates to replenish the maps in some schools, and to provide maps for those schools that have not got them, I am sure it will be a step in the right direction. I support the Estimates and commend the Minister for the good work the department is doing.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [9.18]: Quite a lot has been said during the debate on the necessity for supplying milk to children attending schools, and it has been questioned by members on the other side of the House whether the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) was the first to introduce that subject.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What does it matter?

Mr. FOX: It does not matter a great deal but I intend to give a little advertisement to those who are entitled to receive it. Years ago a milk scheme was introduced in Fremantle by Mr. Gray, M.L.C., and continued for quite a long time. A few years ago a committee met at the Beaconsfield school and the meeting was attended by members of the Milk Board who addressed the parents on the necessity for supplying milk to children attending the school. It will be realised that in a place like Fremantle, where most of the work is of a casual nature, it is a hard matter to raise money to give free milk to the whole of the children attending schools, and

a charge was made for the milk. When that was done it was found that those who needed the milk most were not able to pay for it. Consequently all the money was put into a fund and that was supplemented by contributions from sympathisers, in addition to which the committee conducted various entertainments. That work has been going on unostentatiously for quite a long time. Since that committee started operations it has supplied nearly 50,000 bottles of milk to children attending the school and a quantity to indigent people. An attempt has been made to extend the system to the whole of the schools in Fremantle, and for this purpose a central committee has been formed. In the near future it is hoped that milk will be supplied to all the children attending schools in the Fremantle district.

Miss Holman: Free?

Mr. FOX: Well, they will all get their milk. An endeavour is being made to carry that out. I know the Minister is very sympathetic in regard to the granting of free milk, but with so many children at school it is a big task for the Treasury to supply free milk to the whole of the schools in Western Australia. However, where we have a live committee and where such good work is being done, when we consider the financial position of the parents residing in that district I think the Government should give them at least pound for pound on the money collected. There is not the same need for a subsidy in some other parts of the metropolitan area as there is in the Fremantle district, and when Cabinet is discussing the question of giving a grant for the purpose, it should be given to those who most need it. I desire to pay a tribute to Mr. Hines, of Fremantle, Mr. Swinbourne, Mrs. Gilbert, and the committee who have done a power of work in this regard. They have no children going to school, despite which they have proved themselves a very philanthropic body in the work and the time and money they have devoted to the provision of milk for children whose parents cannot afford to give it to them. I notice from the annual report of the Director of Education that during the year 7,162 pupils were examined by dentists, and that it was found that over 60 per cent. of them required further attention. There are over 57,000 children attending school in Western Australia, and so we realise that the number dentally examined is not very large. And in addition to

that, we have to consider that quite a number of children who live at some distance from railways have not had much opportunity to get themselves examined dentally. I want to show what has been done in the Fremantle district for the dental care of children attending school in the West Province, and I wish to pay a tribute to the teachers in that district. A few years ago a meeting of the teachers and other residents was held with the object of establishing a dental clinic. They realised that the children's teeth were in a bad state and that a determined effort should be made to remedy the defect. The meeting was held in the Town Hall, Fremantle, and a request was made to the local authorities in the district for donations towards the clinic. Similar requests were made to the Lotteries Commission and to the Public Health Department. Donations were forthcoming from all those bodies, with the result that a dental clinic has been in operation there for nearly two years. The local authorities of the district supply £300 a year, the Health Department supplies £200 a year, the Fremantle branch of the State School Teachers' Association supplies £50 per annum, while the Lotteries Commission supplies £100 per annum, making a total of £650. It takes the whole of that amount to run the clinic, including dentists and one attendant. It is very good to have a body of teachers that takes so much interest in the welfare of the children as to go out of its way to establish a clinic and help find the money to carry it on, doing all the work in a voluntary capacity. The Director's report contains the statement that the department is alive to the necessity for educating children to understand the environment that present-day civilisation has created for them, and also the necessity to educate them to recognise their responsibilities in the changing order when their time comes. It is heartening to know that the Education Department realises that there is necessity for change in our social system. I could tell the member for Subiaco, if she were here, that when the time comes there will be no necessity for taking up street collections and going to the Government for money, all in order to supply the school children with milk, for that will be readily available. This is a most important statement, coming as it does from the Education Department. We all realise that without the means to enjoy other amenities

of the civilised life it is not of much use to have a good education; education without the other amenities is of very little avail. I am pleased to know that the department will endeavour to impart to the school children the knowledge why it is so hard for them to secure jobs on leaving school.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, that is the point that requires elucidation.

Mr. FOX: If, for a generation or more that education is given to children, they will come to understand the rotten position in our time. With that kind of education in the schools for a generation or two, a new era will be ushered in. Among the subjects that might be taught would be the trials and tribulations of the farmers and what it costs to produce crops, the cost of super., the cost of transport and of marketing. Also the children might be taught who it is that gets the rake-off. That is one of the most important subjects they could be taught. Again, it is surprising to note the number of people who know very little about the Parliamentary system of Government or of the local governing bodies. Take the last election and consider the number of informal votes cast. Many people could not say how many Parliaments there are in Australia, what their functions are or how the members are elected. Therefore I am pleased to see that item in the report, coming as it does from the head of the department. I believe that students educated along those lines will be in a better position to effect a change when the time comes for it to be made. Another item in the report—I mention this without any wish to be critical—is that a system of safety measures on the roads has been instituted at the Cottesloe and North Fremantle schools. South Fremantle is very modest about such matters, and does not advertise itself at all, but that system was first introduced by Mr. Moore at the Beaconsfield school, and later was copied by Cottesloe and North Fremantle. Imitation, we are told, is the sincerest form of flattery. I make that correction in order to give the person concerned the credit for having initiated that useful method of getting children safely across the road at the intersection near the school. Another matter that I have not brought under the notice of the Minister is the overcrowding at Bibra Lake school. The attendance has increased lately and I believe will continue to increase, and I should like the

Minister to consider erecting at least another room.

Mr. Marshall: Signs of prosperity down there!

Mr. FOX: Yes, no "C" class men there. There are places near Fremantle where water could be obtained at a shallow depth, and the department might consider providing money for a well and pump equipment in order that the school children might grow flowers and lawns. The cost would not be great, and the provision of water in that way would enable the children to be taught something useful that would tend to make them good citizens. I wish to add a word of praise for the good work done by the parents and citizens' associations throughout my electorate. We have a live association in almost every centre doing much work and supplying many of the wants that would not be provided by the department.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [9.33]: The Vote has increased this year and is attaining very large proportions. No doubt as time goes on it will further increase and become a very heavy responsibility for the Treasurer. I am wondering whether the time has not arrived when the Treasurer should not consider the grant of £40,000 to the University. I should say that was a big draw on the Treasury and should receive consideration. I was pleased to hear the complimentary references to parents and citizens' associations. Country members greatly appreciate the work of those organisations as well as the co-operation that exists between the associations and the teachers. The teachers are deserving of thanks for the time they give in training the children in sport. Only last Saturday I had the pleasure of attending the hills districts schools sports, and was delighted to notice the keen interest displayed by the teachers in order to provide a good day for the children. The co-operation of the parents and citizens' associations also contributed to the success of the gathering. Last year the Minister for Works paid a visit to Wanneroo and the surrounding districts. We took the opportunity to show him the Wanneroo school, which is in a most deplorable condition. He consented to have the fence re-erected, which was lying on the ground. The school is simply a patchwork system. Bees take advantage of openings and swarm

and carry on their good work inside the linings. There are several beehives in the school, and at times it is difficult to get them out of the cavities. The building is in a very dilapidated condition and the district certainly is deserving of a better school. The school ground consists of black sand, and parents have reason to complain that they send their children to school in clean condition and that they return home as black as niggers. That is most unsatisfactory. Lately two fairly large amounts have been spent in the Middle Swan electorate for the improvement of two schoolgrounds there. That amount would have provided for at least three schools in the country that are in need of similar improvements. I should like to refer to the red tape methods adopted by the department. The school at Herne Hill, against the wishes of the residents, was built in a swamp. The owner of a large estate offered a piece of ground for a school, whereas a more suitable site, higher and well drained, would have had to be purchased. That school-ground is nothing but a puddle every winter. Two or three years ago I requested the department to do something to improve the ground. I suggested that instead of placing the job in the hands of the Works Department, and sending inspectors out to see what was necessary and then making another inspection when the work was finished, an amount of £5 or £10 should be allotted to some local man to gravel the surface. However, two inspectors went out to look at the ground. They had a few loads of gravel dumped there, and later went to inspect the job, which was not half finished. Those inspections must have cost far more than the actual work. Some time ago I requested the department to provide a school at a little siding named Beechina between Chidlow and Wooroloo. At that siding are quite a lot of settlers engaged in burning charcoal, cutting wood and otherwise working hard for a living. They experience great difficulty to secure education for their children. The youngsters have to make use of the train to travel to and from school. The train leaves Perth at 7 a.m. and in due course the children arrive at Wooroloo, but the trouble occurs in winter time, after school is over. The children have to hang around Wooroloo for some time until the train comes, and parents do not know what they are doing. The

children arrive at the siding after dark; often the weather is wet and parents have to track through the bush with hurricane lamps and escort the children home. One needs to see conditions at the siding and have a knowledge of what parents and children have to submit to in order to appreciate their difficulties. I could not prevail upon the department to build a school there, but I have made representations for the provision of a driving scheme. I hope the department will agree to that because it will relieve the farmers of a lot of trouble. It will be very helpful if the children can be placed in the hands of someone responsible to take them to and bring them back from school. This is an important department. It must be assisted, and must necessarily make progress. It means the education of our children and the future citizens of the State. I congratulate the department on the efforts it has made and the good work it is doing.

[*Mr. Sleeman resumed the Chair.*]

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.40]: Perhaps unfortunately I have one of the most thickly populated electorates in this State. I am not going to apologise, therefore, for making a reference to schools within it. I actually represent three or four times as many people as do most of my friends opposite. Although a fair amount of money has been expended on schools that amount has not been sufficient. I draw the attention of the Minister to the position of the schools in South Perth. Because of the way in which the population is growing it is imperative that early steps be taken to obtain a site for the school that will soon be required on the eastern side of the Fremantle-road to serve the area between Forrest-street and the Kensington-street school. Even around the Forrest-street school the vacant land is being built upon. The ground at Forrest-street is insufficient for the building of further class rooms. Although representations have been made to the department that it should purchase three or four blocks that are now available it has declined to do so because of the cost. It is essential that immediate steps be taken in this direction, otherwise it will be impossible to get a decent block of land suitable for a school. The attendance at the Kensington-street school is increasing every month. Although one new room has been provided, between 30 and 40 children are being taught

in the cloak room and the washing room. Immediate steps should be taken to remedy the position by adding another room. The Minister is aware of the situation at Queen's Park. Over two years ago he was agreeable to the construction of a new school there, but the position meanwhile has gone from bad to worse. I have some 30 complaints from that centre. The Parents and Citizens' Association is thoroughly exasperated over the position. The average of the class in the cloak room and washing room is 36. The average attendance at the school itself in June, 1935, was 123, and in June of this year it was 159. I have a table prepared by the Parents and Citizens' Association showing the extent to which the average attendance has increased. Many new houses are going up in that area, and in the new year there is bound to be a considerable addition to the number of children attending the school. This does not exhaust the situation. Practically every school is in a similar position. The Minister is au fait with what appertains at Applecross. I hope he will consider scrapping the old school, and in its place providing an up-to-date brick building. He has made a promise to that effect, and we are anxious to know what will be done. The Minister also made an inspection of the Mt. Pleasant district some time ago. The people there are anxious to know whether there is to be a new school, or whether provision is to be made for the transport of children to and from the Applecross school. I have given notice of a question on that matter. Two months ago I sent in a request to the Minister setting out a series of matters concerning schools in my electorate. My letter has not even been acknowledged. The list was certainly a formidable one. There are many schools in my district because of the increase in the population. I hope all these matters will receive consideration. The parents and citizens' associations are doing remarkably good work in the Canning electorate. The association at Kensington-street has raised more than £100 in the last eight weeks for improvements to the school grounds. The work is a credit to that body. I hope the Minister will visit the school and see the splendid example the association is setting kindred bodies throughout the State. I know that every parent and citizens' association is doing good work, and this should be appreciated by the department. I hope the Minister will reciprocate by providing a new room so that the children may be suitably

housed. In the matter of school grounds, I know that some money has been spent on gravel. The Minister made a promise with respect to the Como school. When the new room was built at Como the department did what is always done in the metropolitan area. The new room was built on a gravel area, as is done in other places, but the school itself was not given a corresponding area of gravel in place of that which was lost. In Como the gravel yard is a disgrace, and we have asked for another 400 square yards of material to improve matters. This work is urgently needed. There is not a much worse playground anywhere in the State. No great appreciation has been shown for the work that has been done by the Parents and Citizens' Association there. I hope the Minister will go into the list of complaints I have stated. I assure the hon. gentleman that if he does all the work required in connection with schools in my electorate, there will be nothing left for any other electorate.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [9.51]: I hope that a considerable proportion of the increase of £17,000-odd will be spent in the Murray-Wellington district.

The Minister for Education: What for?

MR. McLARTY: I shall answer that question as I proceed. First of all I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of the work of the retiring Director of Education, especially my appreciation of the interest he has shown in rural education. I think that if he could only have got the necessary money, he would have done very much more for the benefit of country children. Throughout his short term of office he has been handicapped by lack of funds. In the near future the Minister will be called upon to appoint a new Director of Education. In making that appointment he will incur a great responsibility, because the office is one of the utmost importance. In introducing these Estimates the Minister said he hoped—I think those were his words—that a comparatively young man would be appointed to the Directorship. It is true that the retiring Director had only a year or two before his time came to retire. We now have three ex-Directors of Education drawing pensions. I hope that the next Director, whoever he may be, will have a reasonable term during which to fill the

position. However, the Minister's statement that he hopes to appoint a comparatively young man makes me wonder what the hon. gentleman would consider a comparatively young man—perhaps a man of 45 years, or even 50. Let us take the age of 45. Suppose a Director aged 45 years was appointed; then under the present system he would retire at 65. Thus he would have 20 years during which to fill the position. I do not know that it is altogether wise for us to appoint a man for a period of 20 years, especially in an educational position. We know that tremendous strides have been made during the last 20 years in the matter of education; and changes are likely to continue. Because of those facts it is highly necessary that the Director, whoever he may be, should be able to keep up with the times. Therefore I suggest to the Minister that in making an appointment he should take into consideration the appointing of a Director for a much lesser period than 15 or 20 years. My suggestion would be a period of seven years, or perhaps ten. Then if at the end of that term the Minister holds the opinion that the Director is still up to standard, he should be reappointed. I do not consider that we should appoint him for an indefinite period, or for a very long period. Many of our head officials are appointed for a certain term, and I am inclined to favour that system. By the Director's report I see that there has been an increase, although only slight, in the number of male teachers employed. That is a pleasing fact. I should like to see a greater number of male teachers in the department. It is necessary that we should have a considerable number of women teachers, but when we get a young man into the department we have a good opportunity of keeping him there until he reaches the retiring age of 65. As regards the girls, we lose a great many of them, and frequently not long after they have finished their training. I agree with the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) as to wireless sets in schools. I believe that in every case these sets have been provided by the Parents and Citizens' Associations. It is wrong that the Federal Government should charge an annual license fee of a guinea on them. I hope the Minister will take the matter up with the Federal authorities, so that the license fee may be

abolished in these cases. The Director in his report makes special reference to the need of the child in the country for receiving a thorough education. We all agree with him in that. Perhaps the Minister could do more to encourage education in the country after the children have left school. Education does not finish when a child leaves school. During the few years between leaving school and attaining manhood or womanhood, children learn a great deal. Reference has been made to the formation of young farmers' clubs throughout the country districts. They are becoming more numerous and more popular year by year, and I appeal to the Minister to take an interest in them and through his department do all he possibly can to encourage them. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox) suggested certain things that should be taught to children—for instance, to take some interest in public affairs. I agree with that suggestion. It should be impressed upon children that it is to their advantage to take an interest in the public affairs of their country. It would, of course, be disastrous if any political bias were introduced into that phase of education. Whilst the average Western Australian child receives a good education, I cannot but conclude that the recent informal vote at the Federal election indicates that there is still room for improvement. Certainly that informal vote did not reflect credit on us. However, I agree that children should be encouraged to take an interest in public affairs, so that they may record intelligent votes when they grow up.

Mr. Marshall: And so that they may realise their citizenship better.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. Every member who has spoken has said something about the requirements of his district. No doubt the Minister wishes he were in a position to grant all these requests; but I notice that the hon. gentleman has a little list of buildings which—

The Minister for Education: A little list?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, like the Mikados. A little list of buildings that he considers are urgently required. About six years ago I was told by the then Director of Education—

The Minister for Education: Do not be too severe in this case!

Mr. McLARTY: I am not blaming the Minister.

The Minister for Education: I have a note of that case—the Mandurah School.

Mr. McLARTY: Then I shall say nothing about it, except to say that the Minister's interjection gives me great pleasure. Now, at Mundijong there is a schoolroom which is crowded with children. The verandah has been pulled up; only half of it remains. The guttering has fallen down. The windows are broken. The whole place is in a dilapidated condition. That room was condemned, and a new room promised some considerable time ago. I presume that lack of funds has prevented the Minister from putting up an additional room. If he is unable to find money for the additional room, I hope he will find sufficient to put the present one in a reasonable state of order. When speaking on the Works Estimates recently, I referred to the need for improvements to be effected on some school grounds particularly at Harvey and Hamel. Those yards are flooded in winter, and it is not possible for the children to enter the schools dry-footed. I hope the Minister will bear that in mind and endeavour to effect improvements. A promise was made by the Education Department that the grounds would be improved and it was admitted that present-day conditions should not be allowed to continue. I know that this multiplicity of requests represents a tremendous drain on the departmental resources and that work should be undertaken with due regard to relative urgency. When the list of works is drawn up, I hope the Minister will bear in mind the matters I have referred to.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [10.1]: I wish to support the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) in her references to the necessity for accommodation for scholars attending the High School at Bunbury. Of the 300 children in attendance, about 50 per cent. are from the outer country areas and although one small hostel controlled by one of the churches caters for some of the girls quite satisfactorily, the remainder of the children have to find accommodation with families in various parts of the town. Naturally the parents believe that, although those children are in good homes, they are not enjoying the home life that they would if they were living with their parents. The Donnybrook people have been agitating for a bus service. I am not altogether in accordance with them, because the children would have to travel from 20 to 25 miles

in the morning and a similar distance at night and I do not think that would be altogether satisfactory. I would prefer an extension of the facilities already available at the Bunbury High School by the provision of a hostel. If that were done, the difficulty would be overcome. I realise that the High School cannot provide for any more children, as suggested by the member for Forrest, because the attendance is up to the full capacity already. If a hostel were provided, possibly between 140 and 150 children would be adequately catered for, and that would make a wonderful difference. The report of the Education Department indicates what a great asset wireless installations have proved to be, particularly on occasions such as Armistice Day when special services can be broadcasted. During the Address-in-reply debate, I complained, as I had done previously, about the position regarding the wireless installation provided by the local Parents and Citizens' Association and pointed out that it was of very little value because of interference by industrial activities adjacent to the school building. Motor garages are located on three street corners nearby and the railway yards are quite close. These make it almost impossible for satisfactory results to be secured from the wireless set. I have placed a proposition before the department with regard to a new school site, but unfortunately nothing has been done. The Education Vote shows an increase of £17,000, but I am sorry it is not much more. Over a period of years, the Vote has always totalled between £600,000 and £700,000. We must appreciate the fact that the State is progressing, and the population of Bunbury has increased considerably during the past 8 or 9 years. Although the department was good enough to provide a school at Rathmines, or East Bunbury, that school provides only for children of tender years and there are between 30 and 40 scholars there. That avoided the necessity for those young children attending the senior State school at Bunbury. The same conditions apply at South Bunbury and have continued to do so for the past 20 years. In that part of the town a larger number of dwellings have been erected than elsewhere. Children at the South Bunbury school are taught up to the third standard and after passing through that class have to proceed to the senior school, which, however, has not the necessary accommodation. When the school was

built 20-odd years ago, it was appreciated that the building would have to be extended in the future and walls were left much in the same state as those of Parliament House, as it were, "to be continued in our next." The people of South Bunbury are agitating for children at the local school being taught to the sixth standard, from which they would then gravitate to the High School instead of having to go to the senior State school as at present. We appreciate the commercial course that has been inaugurated at the Bunbury High School. I congratulate the Minister upon having granted those facilities as a first instalment. Unfortunately, there are not sufficient typewriters available for the use of all the children who desire to participate in the commercial course. I trust the Minister will extend the facilities already available. At present children can gain their leaving certificate at the Bunbury High School, but if they wish to provide themselves with a commercial education, they have to go elsewhere to complete the course. I hope the necessary improvements will be effected so as to obviate that necessity. Much has been said about the provision of free milk for children attending school. I quite agree with that, but why wait until the children attend school? They do not go there until they are five or six years of age, and surely the need for milk is greater when they are younger than that.

Mr. Marshall: Their mothers, poor unfortunate wretches, should be considered too.

Mr WITHERS: I am quite aware that this is not altogether a matter affecting the Education Department, but it has been linked up with it. Probably the reason is that those who are behind the movement believe that the Government, through the teachers, could provide the necessary assistance to make the work effective. No doubt it is a laudable object, but I think the agitation should be in favour of children getting a sufficient supply of milk during the first years of their life. Probably if the children received an adequate milk supply when they were a year or two old, they would not require it so much when they reached school age.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.10]: It is good to see members so eager to participate in the debate on the Estimates of the Education Department. For

the last two hours members have been vying with one another to catch the Chairman's eye, and that is something new in my experience in this House, which of course is not over-long. Such keenness augurs well for the future of education in Western Australia, but I am afraid that unless we can get aid from elsewhere we shall not be able to make the progress that is so essential. There was a time, of course, when money for education was voted very grudgingly, when the majority of the people and the majority of members of Parliament believed that money spent on education was more or less wasted, and they therefore were averse to providing large sums of money, or reasonably large sums of money, for the purpose of giving education to children. But over the years a gradual improvement has taken place in the outlook, so that we have now reached the position where most members, if not all members, believe in the true value of education, and are prepared to undergo certain sacrifices in order to see that the general standard of education continues to improve. We have reached the stage when the burden to the State is about as large as we can expect to carry. While the Education Vote is a large one all the schools are short of equipment; and the equipment that is there is anything but up to date. Maps in schools are hopelessly out of date in most cases and, as the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) said, some schools cannot get maps. In many other directions the equipment is short. It seems to me that thereby a great economic waste is occasioned. We have efficient teachers whose salaries amount to a considerable sum, and those teachers would not cost any more if they had all the equipment necessary to enable them to carry out their job in the most efficient manner possible. But because they are short of equipment they cannot do the good work that would be possible for them if they had the various teaching aids that are so necessary. To my way of thinking, it is a foolish policy to have high-class workmen short of materials, because, in the long run, it is a great economic loss, and it would be well worth while to the State if an extra effort were to be put forward to provide this additional equipment because of the extra value that would be given in the education imparted. I admit, however, that to do all these things that are so necessary appears to

be beyond the power of the State, and although some efforts have been made to obtain Federal co-operation, I advocate that still stronger efforts should be put forward. It should be brought home to the Federal Government that the education of the people is just as much a Federal matter as is the defence of the people. Through lack of education, through ignorance, the nation sustains each year a tremendous economic wastage or loss. If we could improve our standard, that loss would not occur and the nation would as a whole considerably benefit. The Federal Government ought to realise that it would be a good investment for it to give some of its funds to the States to enable them to enlarge upon their programmes. I wish now to deal with one or two aspects of the department that require particular attention, and in regard to which the department can, in a measure, be congratulated. One of the most important sections of our education system is that concerned with manual training and domestic science, and it is pleasing to note that in the report for last year it is shown that there has been considerable headway towards making it possible for children in outlying districts to take advantage of the manual and domestic science training available in large centres. There was a time not so long ago when manual training and domestic science were restricted to a few children, those in the metropolitan area, or the largest towns. Last year, however, and the year before, steps were taken to make it possible for children in outlying schools to travel to the centres and so participate in the training which was available. I am glad to know that and also to see that it is proposed to extend that facility so that still more children from outlying districts will be able to get this necessary training. We have to be careful we do not make our education lopsided, and if children are to be debarred from having this manual and domestic science training, there is a danger that their education will be lopsided, and that they will not become the citizens we hope to make of them as a result of a proper system of all-round training. The educational policy of this Government, so we are told by the report, is formed so as to give as nearly as possible an equal opportunity to all children, whether in town or country. I believe that is a true statement. It is claimed as such in the report of the department, and I do not think that statement has been made without justification. The

points I mentioned a few moments ago, showing that steps have been taken to make it possible for children in outlying districts to have domestic science and manual training, indicate that the Government's policy is one of giving equal opportunity to children in the country and in the towns. This consolidation is not confined to manual training or domestic science. I am pleased to see that it is proposed to introduce consolidation so that post-primary education will be possible in country districts, and therein is further evidence that the Government is prepared to extend to children, no matter how far away they are, similar benefits to those obtainable by children living in the metropolitan area. Then, of course, there is the large extension of the correspondence system of education that has proved to be most efficient and of great value to children in outlying areas. While endeavouring to give equal opportunity to the children of town and country, I hope the Government will see that equal opportunity is given to the children of both rich and poor parents, but I am afraid that this will not be quite so easy. Take for example what happens in manual training schools. Because of the policy of the department in supplying only two types of wood, there is great difficulty placed in the way of the teacher who desires to give the very best possible training. The department supplies pinus radiata and jarrah. I have complained about this year after year. Neither of those woods is suitable for the work to be done by the children. I have a sample of the jarrah at home, and I am sorry I did not fetch it along tonight. It is a piece of wood from a plank 8in. wide by $\frac{3}{8}$ in. thick, and it is bowed something like this paper I have in my hand. That wood was absolutely wasted and might just as well have been left in the timber yard or put into the fire; because as timber to be used in the manual training shed it was of no value whatever. Apart from that, if it had been flat it was of such a nature that it could not be efficiently worked by small children. Jarrah is unsuitable. Although it has been said that the jarrah would be supplied in a planed form, that is undesirable, because it deprives the children of the opportunity to learn how to deal with timber in the rough. If they go out of school to do any carpentry work they will get their timber in the rough and

will have to plane it. So it is necessary that they should be supplied with timber that requires planing. That will not be done if they get jarrah already planed for them. I believe it has been admitted by the manager of the State Sawmills that the very fine class of jarrah necessary for these children cannot be supplied. There is another drawback to the use of those two types of wood: If they are the only two classes of timber in the manual training shed it is not possible for the children to enter into very much designing work. They are restricted to two woods, and so they cannot get that training in the matching of timbers which is so valuable in such work. If they have a number of varieties of wood they can form patterns, carry out inlay work and so make a nice article that is well worth while and which gives them good training. At present the only way they can get that advantage is by buying timber themselves. I know that in a number of schools, because of the difficulty in working the timber that is supplied, the manual training teachers call upon the children to buy most of the timber that is used by them. That brings me to the point I referred to a few moments ago, namely, that we want to be careful to see that we give the same opportunities to the child of a poor person as we give to the child of a rich person. When the manual training teacher calls upon the children to buy the wood for their work, the children of rich people will have no difficulty, because their parents will be only too pleased to buy the timber; but the children of sustenance workers and men on part-time work have no chance to buy the wood, and so they go to school without it. In consequence they must stand there and see their mates doing work much more interesting and much easier, while they themselves have to use the unsuitable wood supplied by the department. That is not fair to those children, and is setting up distinctions between them, which is very undesirable. If the department will get the right timber they will be able to remove that disadvantage from the children of poor people. I say it should be done. Then there is also the question of visual education, a modern development, of which as yet very little has been done in Western Australia. Unfortunately we are a long way behind schools in Europe

and in America; as a matter of fact it may be said we have scarcely done anything whatever in respect of visual education. This is the most modern type of education and one of the most efficacious methods of teaching certain subjects. I will say that a committee was set up to go into the question, quite a good committee consisting of two officers from the Education Department and two officers from the members of the Teachers' Union. The committee held a number of meetings, gave a great deal of attention to the subject, made very exhaustive inquiries, and went to considerable trouble to draw up a scheme, with the result that they made two recommendations to the Director of Education. One of those recommendations was that a grant should be made, however small, to enable the scheme of visual education to be launched in this State. The second was that there should be made annually provision on the Estimates for an extension of the scheme once it was launched. Those recommendations were very fair, were indeed excellent. They did not call upon the department to make available a large sum of money immediately, but they did provide that a start should be made. Then, having a start, it was desired that the work should be kept going by a small annual provision making it possible for the work to be gradually extended. I do hope it will be found possible to do something in regard to this branch of education. I feel that good support ought to be forthcoming from members representing country districts. Country children are denied a lot in point of education; they cannot visit the Museum to get the instruction which is there possible for city children; they cannot have access to libraries to the same degree that city children have. But if a system of visual education were introduced, country children would benefit to almost the same extent as city children. Such a scheme would make provision for the setting up of a film library. Gradually a number of the right type of films would be accumulated, placed in the library, and would be available for exhibition throughout the various districts. If the department once made a start with this scheme I feel sure that a great deal more help than the department anticipates would be forthcoming from the Parents and Citizens' Association. Already in some of the favoured dis-

tricts the Parents and Citizens' Association has taken it upon itself to buy projectors and purchase films so that the films can be shown in schools. It is a most interesting work and one that would appeal to parents who are members of the associations. I feel sure that if the department gave a lead and made a sum of money available to launch the scheme, parents all over the State would whole-heartedly take up the idea and do their utmost to ensure that this class of education was extended to their own children. I hope the Minister will give serious consideration to that aspect of education and will take steps to interest the Commonwealth Government in the matter and possibly obtain some assistance from that source. Experiment has proved that the silent film is the better for visual education, and silent films would be much cheaper than talking films. Therefore it would be possible to secure a larger number of them.

Mr. North: Are silent films still made?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, and especially for this purpose. In England and on the Continent of Europe where this class of education has been largely adopted, films are made specially, and film libraries are set up. Members who had an opportunity in recent months to view the silent films showing the wheat industry and various other aspects of life in portions of this State will realise how valuable such films can be as an aid to education. A few weeks ago I had an opportunity with other members to attend a theatre in Perth to view a number of films and I considered them excellent. Such films shown to children would be of great value because, if they were silent films, the teacher could, while showing the films, explain certain detail and give his lesson. As an old teacher, I know the benefit of being able to illustrate a lesson as it is given. Suppose it is necessary for a teacher to give a lesson on certain industries of Western Australia. If the teacher is without the necessary maps, diagrams or pictures, his work is rendered ever so much harder and the children need more lessons to assimilate the knowledge that the teacher desires to impart. Imagine the tremendous benefit that would accrue if the teacher had a film depicting the very things on which he desired to touch. As the film was being shown, the teacher would be able to point out the various parts of the work and explain them. The effi-

ency of the teacher would be increased tremendously. The extent to which his work would be improved in value is difficult to judge, but it certainly would be doubled, or possibly trebled. That would mean that the State would be obtaining a far greater return for the large sum of money being spent on salaries, buildings and equipment. In the present Minister I believe that we have a most conscientious man who desires to do the best possible for the department he administers. I know that the amount he is able to do for the department is limited only by the funds at his disposal. I believe he will not be prepared to take the amount the Treasurer makes available without saying anything about it, but that he will repeatedly approach the Treasurer with requests for additional funds in order that certain works shall be carried out. I wish to end on a personal note. My district has benefited considerably. The schools in North-East Fremantle, although not well equipped in the matter of pads, books, pencils and various articles of handwork, have had the grounds improved. They needed attention for years, but practically all the schools in my electorate now have good playgrounds.

Mr. Cross: I could not say that by a long way.

Mr. TONKIN: But the hon. member is never satisfied. I think he already has had more than the rest of us put together and he is still importuning the Minister for additional work. A very necessary work was done at the Richmond school. Probably for as long as 10 or 12 years attempts were made to have the wash basins connected with the sewerage system. Parents felt that there was a good deal more sickness in the school than there should have been. I am pleased that the present Minister agreed to have that work done. It cost a fair amount of money, but since the wash basins and the drainage system have been connected up, parents have no further cause for complaint on that score. The Mosman Park school is a large one and parents were greatly concerned because the pan system was still in operation and there was a good deal of sickness in the school. The Minister found it possible to have that school sewered, and I assure him that the people of the district appreciate what has been done. Of course it is impossible to meet the desires of all members who want so much done in their respective districts. I repeat my belief that

no State on its own will be able to carry the burden imposed upon it by the education system, and that ultimately the Commonwealth Government will be forced to come to the aid of the States.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.38]: There is no doubt that, with the ever-expanding demand for educational facilities, considerably more funds will be needed. We realise what a tremendous amount of good work could be done if the vote could be increased by £100,000. If that were possible instead of having one member after another pleading the case for his particular district, the department could allot funds to supply the more urgent needs and do justice to all. The vote for education this year amounts to £733,000. It is unfortunate that that sum cannot be increased but, as has been pointed out from time to time, the heavy commitments that have to be met out of revenue militate against increasing the vote. When we consider that approximately 41 per cent. of the revenue is required for the payment of interest, sinking fund and exchange, and that out of the balance all the social services including education have to be financed, we can appreciate the difficulty of obtaining a sufficiently large amount to satisfy the requirements that demand attention. The Commonwealth Government will in future be compelled to make grants to the States so that they may carry on the important work of educating the young of Australia. When the Premier goes to the Loan Council meeting he should bring this matter prominently before it, and urge that money should be made available for this purpose. My electorate is on the outskirts of the metropolitan area, and its population is growing fast. There is an ever-increasing demand for schools. The member for Toodyay referred to certain amounts that had been made available for schools in my electorate. The schools he mentioned are in a centre that is growing rapidly, and there is urgent need for providing the wherewithal so that the accommodation might be increased. I refer to the Rivervale and North Maylands schools. The population is increasing considerably there, and the department is forced to provide additional accommodation. For the past seven years efforts have been made to provide a decent playground for the children at Bayswater. That has not yet been consummated. No money has been spent upon it and the whole thing is still in the

air. Although I am supporting the Government, I am getting no more privileges or assistance from it than other members are getting. I merely have to plead my case and urge the claims on behalf of my own district. Although many of the needs of the Middle Swan electorate have been satisfied, we have by no means got all we require. Some years ago a deputation waited upon a former Minister for Education (Hon. H. Millington) with regard to a school near the hills along the Welshpool-road. For years past children have been taught in the local progress hall. The ground in the winter is a quagmire and the building is quite unsuitable for school purposes. The schoolmaster has pointed out that the lighting is detrimental to the eyes of the children. For years there has been an agitation for a school there. Some years ago the Government was approached to acquire a site for a school. A deputation put its case before the Minister, and he admitted that it was an excellent case. He also said that money would be put on the Estimates to provide the necessary relief. A few years have gone by but no relief has yet been given. I urge upon the department to examine the situation and see if it is not possible to provide a classroom in this locality. The question of a high school is of paramount importance to residents of the eastern suburbs, Midland Junction, Bassendean and the surrounding districts. For a long time an effort was made to acquire a site. Experts of the department, the Chief Architect, the Town Planning Commissioner, together with representatives of the districts concerned and the Central Council of the Parents and Citizens' Association gave up their Saturday mornings to making a tour of the districts with a view to finding a suitable site. They visited Midland Junction, Guildford, Bassendean, and Greenmount. Eventually it was agreed that a suitable site existed on the corner of the Great Eastern Highway, or Ascot Road, and the Kalamunda Road. The area of ground available is very suitable. By acquiring that land now the Government would be showing great foresight. All interested are agreed upon the site. The council of the Parents and Citizens' Association of Midland Junction considers it is the best site that can be obtained. If no attempt is made to purchase the land it may be cut up into allotments, and it would then be diffi-

cult to secure a suitable site elsewhere. It is in a centre that would serve children from the Rivervale station, along the Belmont-Rivervale Road. They could also attend from Kalamunda, Greenmount, Midland Junction, Guildford and Bassendean. It would be a very useful site. I hope the Minister will keep the matter before the Government with a view to its acquisition. I do not urge that a building be erected at the moment, but the Government should look to the future and acquire this site before it is too late. A great deal has been said about giving the schools a milk supply. This is a matter of great concern to the parents and citizens in the eastern suburbs. We all agree that free milk should be made available for the children. Having regard for the nutritious nature of milk and the opinion of advocates who say that children should get more milk, we must agree that an adequate supply should be given to them to enable them to build up their constitution. There seems to be a difficulty about it as present. Having regard for the many claims made upon the Government it should think about socialising the dairying industry so that an adequate supply of milk may be always available for this particular purpose. Alternatively, the Government should consider the possibility of going into the dairying industry, and by that means providing an adequate supply of milk to suffice for the needs of the situation. Certainly it is essential that each child should receive an adequate supply of milk. I disagree entirely with the view that it is necessary to take up street collections for that purpose. Our social system must be rotten indeed if a special day has to be set aside for begging on behalf of a daily bottle of milk for the needy child. Sufficient funds for that purpose should be made available by the Government, so that all our children may grow into strong and healthy men and women. The amount spent in this direction would be saved in hospital costs. Another matter I desire to mention is that in the Morley Park district, which is an expanding district, there was a doubt some few years ago whether a school should be established. So rapidly is the district going ahead that before long there will be need for another classroom. For some time there has been an agitation for a shelter-shed. At present Morley Park has no shelter except the small classroom. The

children come from two and three miles around in the bush, and a shelter-shed is certainly needed. I know that it is impossible for the Treasurer and the Education Department to grant all the requests which have been submitted by hon. members to-night. While occupying the Chair, I was wondering how provision could possibly be made for all the things that have been suggested. I feel sure, however, that the main requests of hon. members will be given fair and reasonable consideration, and that those best justified will be granted. The Education Vote is undoubtedly the most important Vote submitted to us, for on the education of our children, who will be the future citizens of Western Australia, a great deal depends. In days to come, when shorter hours will prevail and men and women will have much more leisure time available for recreation, it will be an excellent thing if a sound education in primary and secondary schools enables them to become readers. Much more recreation and advantage can be derived from reading than is obtained now. This country indulges greatly in sport, but sport is not the paramount interest of life. Sport is helpful physically, but development of the mind is the highest part of education. Many nations are supposed to be superior to us in that respect. For instance, it is stated that the Germans are much harder mental workers than the Australians, who are more given to sport. It is true that the Australian often finds himself set aside and others taking his place; but the young men and women of Australia, if they used their inherent initiative and ability, could take their stand alongside people from any other part of the world. I hope that next year's Estimates will show a much larger Vote for education.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.

