

Hon. J. E. DODD: I shall be glad if the Minister can find out from the Solicitor General whether any power is given in the direction I have indicated.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 10th November, 1920.

	PAGE
Questions: Wheat, delivery, etc.	1534
Repatriation—(1) Settlement of Northern districts; (2) Settlement in North-Western division	1534
Leave of absence	1534
Annual Estimates, Votes and Items discussed	1534
Bills: Public Service Appeal Board, returned	1534
Treasury Bonds Delinquency, returned	1534

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

QUESTION—WHEAT DELIVERY, ETC.

Mr. MALEY asked the Premier: 1, As stripping has already commenced in the northern districts, when will delivery of wheat be taken at sidings, so that risks from fire may be avoided and the stubble paddocks be made available for grazing stock? 2, Is it intended to provide in the wheat marketing legislation to be introduced that consacks may be made a charge against advances as hitherto? 3, If not, why?

The PREMIER replied: 1. In anticipation of the passing of the Wheat Marketing Bill arrangements are being made to receive wheat in the northern district as from 15th November. 2 and 3, Yes.

QUESTIONS (2)—REPATRIATION.

Settlement of Northern Districts.

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. Teesdale) asked the Premier: Will he suggest to the officer controlling soldier settlement the advisability of consulting the member for the district concerned before settling soldiers in the northern portions of the State?

The PREMIER replied: The officer controlling the soldier settlement scheme will be pleased to receive any advice or suggestions which the member for the district may have to offer.

Settlement in North-Western Division.

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. Teesdale) asked the Premier: Is he aware that country has been taken up in the North-Western Division, where natives are hostile, and new chums have been placed on this area by the Repatriation Department, which action can only lead to trouble and expense to the Government?

The PREMIER replied: Advances have been granted by the Repatriation Department to approximately eight settlers in the division referred to. Some of these, however, have had experience in the division, and the risks involved, which are not considered great, have been impressed upon the settlers, who are mostly working in small parties.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Angelo, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Durack (Kimberley) on the ground of urgent private business.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1920-21.

In Committee of Supply.

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

Education Department, Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Minister; (Hon. J. Mitchell, Premier, in charge of the Estimates).

Vote—Education, £456,122.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [4.38]: Several members have spoken at some length on the Education Vote. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) made a speech which was somewhat lengthy and in parts somewhat foolish—

Mr. O'Loughlen: Crude.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: And which here and there contained some shrewd and sound common sense comments which might be taken to heart by members and by the department, but which was clouded by mis-statements, misconceptions and inaccuracies. We had also a speech by the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner). He dwelt at some length on the subject, and as an ex-Treasurer and a former colleague of the Minister controlling the Education Department, we may attach to his remarks some importance in that he would be possessed of information which would not be known to an ordinary member. His remarks also might be taken to heart. The leader of the Opposition and the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) practically

said ditto to the remarks of the two speakers who preceded them. The consensus of opinion amongst those members was that the State is not getting a proper return for the money expended on education; in short, that the country is not getting value for its money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did not say that.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: They told us that this feeling was abroad among the community, and that the time had arrived when a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the working of the Education Department. I would be the last one in the world to oppose the appointment of a Royal Commission on this question. If things are as satisfactory as the reports of the Minister and the Director of Education would lead us to believe, both the Minister and the Director should welcome the appointment of such a body to investigate the work of the department. After leaving the House that same night, I overheard some remarks of a conversation conducted rather loudly by two gentlemen in Hay-street. One of them made this not very profound remark—"The Minister for Education is a perfect fanatic on education, and has instituted a system whereby a school is opened wherever eight children can be gathered together." The speaker did not display a very intimate knowledge of back country conditions, because such a system would prevail only in the back country, but his remark might be taken as indicative of the views which other members of the community, including some members of this Chamber, hold with regard to the Education Department. We should therefore make inquiry and ascertain whether we are getting value for the money we are expending. I have heard highly placed officials in the department declare stoutly that everything in the department was of a very bright and verdant hue, and that no pruning or cultivation was required; everything was going on as it should be. On the other hand, I have heard other equally highly placed officials who asserted that the time had arrived when an inquiry should be held, and that never was an inquiry more urgently needed than at present. When the member for Pilbara tells us that, under the new system of education which he proposes for this State, he would cut out geography, one wonders what the outlook of that hon. gentleman is. Most of us have seen that map of Australia representing all the countries of Europe placed within its borders some 200 or 250 miles from the coast, thus demonstrating that the area was sufficient to accommodate all the millions of people of Europe. A reproduction of that map was published in a Japanese magazine in September, 1919, which shows that someone in Japan is studying geography and to some purpose. This also gives us an idea of the Japanese outlook. It shows pretty plainly that the Japanese are thinking seriously about our vast empty spaces, and are

taking such steps as they think fit for the future. The isolation of Australia has gone forever; we no longer enjoy the isolated position of bygone years.

Hon. P. Collier: Do not take a gloomy view of it.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Pilbara ridiculed the idea of placing before a child an examination paper to test its knowledge of the names of the towns on the railways between Brisbane and Melbourne, the mountains, lakes and rivers of Australia, the climate, the buildings and the principal towns of the South island of New Zealand; the mineral resources of Great Britain; the lake system of Canada and other outstanding features of the Empire, and said that knowledge of all these matters was useless.

Mr. Underwood: I said it would be forgotten.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A good deal may be forgotten; but does the hon. member assert that we should not teach geography in the schools? That strikes me as one of the most extraordinary things I have ever heard in this Chamber. It is true that in my own school days I was taught a lot of useless matter in the way of geography. I remember being taught every bay and cape and inlet around the coast of Great Britain, representing a great deal of valueless repetition. However, that is a good many years ago, and such a system of teaching geography has largely disappeared from the school curriculum. The young Australian should be taught the geography of his own country, at any rate. The incisive question of Rudyard Kipling, "What do they know of England who only England know?" might be adapted to Australia. The isolation of Australia has disappeared. Things are moving fast in these times. I may say that I do not think such remarks as those of the member for Pilbara would be received so quietly in any other Parliament as in this one. The young Australian ought to be taught the work of the early pioneers, who should be held up as examples to our rising generation.

Mr. Munsie: It is a pity that our schools do not teach a little more Australian geography, and a little less of the geography of foreign countries.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Young Australians should be taught the possibilities of their country. They should know its rivers and lakes and mountains, and the places to which its products go, and the places from which its imports come. The young Australian should learn to believe in his country as the young American is taught to believe that America is the best country on God's earth.

Hon. P. Collier: That sort of thing leads to wars, you know.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Pilbara said that teaching clouds the memory. We know that there have been striking examples of men who had had no teaching at all but still possessed magnificent memories. However, the moral of the observation made by the member for Pilbara appears to be,

"If you want to learn, don't go to school." The hon. member contended that the best teaching one can get is that which one gives oneself; but, still, it is no use to leave boys to teach themselves if they have not sufficient initiative. This remark applies to my own children. A proper system of guidance and teaching is perfectly right. However, I am in accord with the hon. member as to the desirableness of getting the best results we can from our Education Department. Possibly there are some useless things being taught in our schools; possibly there are certain fads and frills, to quote the hon. member's words, which might well be cut out; but, as I have observed the education system in the country districts, there are no frills on it.

Mr. Underwood: The children are learning cookery at York.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes, and learning it very well. As regards the growing expenditure of the Education Department, our population is growing, though perhaps somewhat slowly; and with the opening up of the country districts there is a demand for more schools. Again, the increase in teachers' salaries accounts for a certain proportion of the increased expenditure. We have been told that during the past 12 months no particular new departures have occurred in the Education Department, but there are certain activities in the country schools on which I wish to dwell for a minute. Some five years ago I first mentioned in this House a line of development which I thought should be followed; and I am pleased to know that that line of development is being pursued to-day. I refer to the institution of parents' and teachers' associations, which would take a real live interest in the schools and help the Education Department to get better results from the system of teaching than can be obtained without active co-operation between parents and teachers. I believe Buckland Hill was the leader in this matter, and first started a parents' and teachers' association. Then the Thomas-street school followed suit, and now the movement has spread throughout the country. As a result there has been great stimulation not only of the teachers but also of the pupils. Home products clubs have been established in many of the schools—not home products clubs of the kind, which, according to the member for Pilbara, Mr. Milligan observed in America, where the system, according to Pilbara's representative, was to chase the child up week-days, Sundays, and holidays, to grow corn plants, rear poultry, keep pigs, and so forth. The clubs I refer to have accomplished remarkable results. The idea is to get children interested in their surroundings, in the growing of flax, sugar beet, wheat, and the various kinds of vegetables, in the making of various things to which the hon. member referred as "wood butchery," but of which I have seen something at a school fair held in York recently, where the youngsters ex-

hibited good, solid, useful step-ladders, hens' nests, milk-stools, coat-hangers, rope work, nets for keeping things in, onion nets, tennis rackets, and hammocks. All these articles had been made on practical lines, which showed that the children had been taught by somebody who knew something about the game. I only regret that there was not a little of that sort of teaching in my own schooldays. My youngsters can show me points in the use of hammer and nails and a bit of timber, and can do many useful things which their father cannot do.

Hon. P. Collier: Are they good on the axe, or do they leave the wood heap to dad?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Pilbara argued that education was not very much good because it turned out educated wasters. But I suppose there are uneducated wasters as well as educated wasters. The fact that some educated men make a failure of life affords no ground for asserting that all educated men will turn out badly, any more than all uneducated men turn out badly. One point on which I agree with the member for Pilbara is that the schools should not be turned into nurseries. This applies more particularly to the cities. A good deal of expense could be saved if the teachers who are now engaged in looking after children from four or five years of age upwards devoted their time to teaching older children. To look after children four or five years of age is the work of nurse-girls, not of teachers. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), when he was Minister for Education, wisely fell in with a suggestion made by the country districts. It was pointed out that many schools in the country districts could be kept open if they were permitted to admit children a little below the age of six years, and that a hard and fast rule excluding children below the age of six years would prevent many districts from having any schools at all. The member for Pilbara said that he did not wish to imply that the teachers were not doing good work; he added that he considered the teachers fine men and women. But when he tells us that some of the teachers of business methods are men who have failed in business, because otherwise they would not be teaching—

Mr. Underwood: I said business methods were being taught by men who had never been in business, or, if they had been in business, had failed.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That seems to me rather a poor compliment. However, the hon. member also said he did not know what business methods were; so he cannot be much of a judge of the teaching of them. As regards the Education vote, let us by all means build schools if necessary; but let us also build the very best school of all, namely, the school of opportunity, of environment, and of example. Equally important is the training of the children in our rural districts. As hon. members know, I have been year in and year out barracking for better educational facilities in the country districts. In

that respect a good deal has now been provided, and in that connection I wish to bear special testimony to the work accomplished by the Education Department. Just to take my own electorate, apart from what is being done in the Toodyay and Avon electorates, let me say that the inspectors are doing very fine work indeed.

Mr. Foley: The inspectors?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes. By their enthusiasm they are working the teachers up to get the best results obtainable from those country schools. The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) knows of a certain school at Mt. Hardy. I passed by that school just recently. It is in the charge of a little lady, quite a young girl. Her pupils include only two boys of any size; the others are either infants or very young girls, and it is interesting to see what those children have done in their spare time. She has those children so interested in their surroundings that the work they have turned out would be a credit to a person much older than this young teacher. This is proof that the method adopted by the inspectors, so far as the teaching staff in the country is concerned, is on the right lines and is yielding good results. I agree with those hon. members who have spoken that if the education system of the State were inquired into, the investigation would result in good for all parties. If the department are doing good work, they should have nothing to fear; as a matter of fact, they should be proud to disclose what they are doing. If, on the other hand, we are not getting that which we are paying for, the investigation will have the good effect of revealing where the weaknesses exist.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.4]: The member for York (Mr. Griffiths) began his remarks on lines similar to those which he has adopted on previous occasions. That is, he set out to misrepresent members who have spoken. He stated that the member for Irwin, the leader of the Opposition, and the member for Rocbourne had expressed the opinion that we were spending too much money on education. None of those hon. members made any such statement.

Mr. Griffiths: I said we were not getting value for our money.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those hon. members stated that in their opinion it was necessary that an inquiry should be held in regard to the education system of Western Australia, and they pointed out that an inquiry was promised 12 months ago by the then Minister in charge of the education vote. The promise, however, has not been fulfilled. They added also that they were not against the expenditure of large sums of money on education so long as value was given for that expenditure. I want the member for York to include me amongst the members to whom he referred, because I hold

views similar to theirs. I am of opinion that a good deal of overlapping takes place in the Education Department, and it is an overlapping that could be avoided if a proper investigation were held. It is useless, however, to appoint anyone to conduct an inquiry unless he be a man accustomed to dealing with the education of the young. I should like to see a board appointed to investigate the education system of the State, and my opinion is that the personnel of that board should include some of the teachers at present connected with the system. I believe there is want of unity in the conduct of the Education Department. We have a director of technical education, but he is such in name only; in actual fact he is not a director of technical education, because he has to carry out the instructions of the Inspector General. So far as the overlapping is concerned, the blame cannot altogether be put on the shoulders of the inspectors or the teachers. It is the system that is at fault. Let us take the position in regard to technical schools and continuation classes. In the country districts where there are no technical schools, there may be continuation classes, which no doubt could be made very useful; but in those districts where technical schools and continuation classes do exist, there is no need to pay two sets of teachers to do a similar class of work. The position to-day is that no boy can attend a technical school unless he is apprenticed to a trade. If he is an apprentice between 16 and 18 years of age, he can attend the technical school classes, but if he is not taking up a trade, he must go to the continuation class. Take a boy who sets out to learn plumbing. He may also desire to make further progress in regard to arithmetic and primary education generally. He is attending the technical school. There might be a dozen or less in the arithmetic class in the technical school, and the same subject is being taught in the continuation class by another teacher. In such a case one teacher should be sufficient. It is the same throughout. We find that two teachers are engaged in the work of imparting similar knowledge. Take shorthand. We find that the continuation classes teach shorthand, and we find also that this art is also taught in the technical school. When it was suggested that there was no necessity to have shorthand taught in both the technical school and the continuation classes, the reply came that it was necessary to teach it in the continuation classes in order to induce the children to attend. That which is taught in the continuation classes is almost useless, because in those classes they do not work on lines similar to those adopted in the technical school. When the students attend the technical school they have to go back in order to take up the work which they were not taught in the continuation classes. That is the kind of thing that costs money. I may cite an instance where in one district a ninth standard was started for

boys and girls, and where in the same district a similar standard existed in the technical school. It was not possible to get a sufficient number of students in the day school class, and they gathered students from the sixth and seventh standard in order to make up the number, while the technical school could have embraced the lot. That procedure meant the appointment of two extra teachers at £200 per annum each when one should have been sufficient. It is matters of that kind that require to be investigated. There is no doubt that if an inquiry had been held, as was promised by the Government a year ago, it would have revealed that many improvements were capable of being effected.

The Premier: You can have the inquiry.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Pilbara pointed out that it was impossible to learn a trade at a technical school. I would remind him that a technical school is not brought into existence to teach trades, but to aid those who wish to learn trades. The hon. member said that there was no necessity for a person to go to a technical school to learn blacksmithing.

Mr. Underwood: I said there was no theory in blacksmithing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let me point out an advantage that the State derives by including blacksmithing in the technical school curriculum. Many attend the blacksmithing classes in order to get merely an inkling of the trade; they may not have any desire to follow it up as a trade, but their desire may be to acquire a knowledge of it so that they may be able to turn it to useful account at a later period when going on the land. I know many men who have availed themselves of the opportunity to learn something of blacksmithing with that object in view.

Mr. Underwood: That is exactly what I said. Read "Hansard."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member said that those people had no right to attend the classes.

Mr. Underwood: I said there was no theory in blacksmithing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have made inquiries in regard to the results which have followed the teaching of blacksmithing at the Fremantle Technical School, and I have gathered the following interesting information. "A" is a returned soldier trainee who entered the class during the last term of 1919 and who has done well. He is now employed at Bolton and Sons, and has a forge and striker continually with him. "B" is an apprentice employed by H. H. Follington, coachbuilder, and is also doing well. He has been attending the class since May, 1919. He also has a forge and a lad to strike for him. "C" is another apprentice who entered the class at the beginning of the year. He is employed at Bolton and Sons, and has a forge and a striker. "D" is a returned soldier apprentice employed at the State Implement Works

and is doing fairly well. The remaining students are not yet apprenticed, for the reason that there is a scarcity of factories in the State to which apprentices can go. I am inclined to agree that a lot of work is carried on in our schools which is unnecessary. Girls are not taught to dust chairs, or sweep out rooms, or washing and ironing, or cooking, and things of that description which can be taught to them at home. In older countries domestic duties were taught to provide domestic servants for the large cities, but they could not be taught in the home, especially where there were five or six families in one house. In Australia we are differently situated, inasmuch as nearly every person has a comfortable home and mothers teach this work. What is taught in the way of domestic duties in technical schools is very different from that which is learnt in the home. Take cooking. In a household ordinary utensils are used, but in a technical school they do not have them, and again, an ordinary person does not use the ingredients which are used in a school. Therefore, the knowledge of cookery that is acquired in a technical school is of little value in a home.

The Premier: A good cook is a very useful person.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: What these girls learn at the cooking school is of no use to their future husbands. If we had plenty of money to spend it would be all right, but the Education Vote has increased by some £123,000 during the last three or four years. Our continuation classes in country districts are certainly required; a boy leaving school secures great benefit by attending those classes. But in many of the towns where we have technical schools those schools could, to a very large extent, do the work of the continuation classes. It would mean better attendances and would abolish the system under which payment is made according to the number of scholars attending. The State has not had full value for the money expended on continuation classes. I am not blaming the teachers. The system is such that the children do not follow up the classes for more than one session, and so the State does not get full value for its money. The Premier has stated by interjection that he will afford an inquiry. That, I think, should satisfy every hon. member and the country also.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [5.17]: I wish to be direct in my appeal to the Premier that an inquiry shall be held into our educational system. I want the Premier to take the House into his confidence before the commissioners who will make the inquiry are appointed, so that we may be sure that those appointed will give the State a fair deal. Only last year a joint committee of inquiry was appointed. I have read the report of that committee and, so far as I can see, it is of very little use in respect of the education

of our children. Yet, unfortunately, we have to pay for the inquiry. The gentleman who composed that joint committee were Sir Walter James, a member of the University Senate, Mr. Alex. Monger, President of the Farmers' and Settlers Association—of course they get their noses into everything—and Mr. Cecil Andrews, Director of Education. I contend that if there is to be an inquiry into the educational system we should get the best possible men for the task, men who understand Western Australian conditions, who will not gauge the question from the point of view of St. George's terrace or from a comfortable chair in our University, or from an expensively furnished office. Nor do we want gentlemen controlling political parties. We should look around and see that we get those who will give definite results. A little while ago we had another commission of inquiry which went into every question on God's earth, notwithstanding which the State got but very little advantage from that inquiry. Those who will make this proposed inquiry should ask, first of all, "Is the State getting the best results for the money spent on education? Are our children being educated along proper lines and in a manner which will fit them to take their places as good Australians?" The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) the other evening quoted certain examination questions in history and geography. I doubt if even the member for York (Mr. Griffiths) could answer those questions. Take, for instance, the problem, "Write the life and work of Simon de Montfort." Who among hon. members could draw a sketch map of America showing the dry States and the wet States? It is safe to say that no hon. member could answer all the questions which our children have to contend with in an examination. It is only too probable that in our secondary education we are duplicating the system. The commission of inquiry should go into this question, and should also consider whether the State is getting the best returns for the money paid to teachers in our technical schools. Recently a technical school teacher was sacked and his salary paid to another man who, many times during the past three years, had declared that his position in the Education Department was so arduous that his health was breaking down under the strain. Yet he was given this position in the technical school, and allowed to attend to his duties each evening after finishing his day work. The commission should inquire as to whether the children under that man are showing improvement, and whether the State can afford to have such a man teaching our children. I hope the Premier will agree that, before the proposed commission of inquiry is appointed, the House shall be informed as to the appoints to be made.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.21] I do not think hon. members are quite fair in their condemnation of the cost of our system of

education. If Western Australia is compared with the Eastern States it will be seen that our difficulties are very great indeed. Here we have a small population spread over a vast area, and therefore it is but natural that the education we supply is more costly per head than that in the other States. However, if we compare the cost per head of our education with that of the United States, it will be seen that the United States spend half as much again as do we, while some of the Canadian Provinces spend nearly double as much. I gather this from the latest report of our Education Department, which continues as follows:—

The English Education Estimates, which stood at £14,600,000 just before the war, rose to £25,500,000 in 1918, to £41,250,000 in 1919, and to about 58 million for the present year. These figures do not include the expenditure by local authorities from rates, which amounted to £15,600,000 before the war and, presumably, has much increased since.

It will be seen that, in point of economy, a comparison between our education and other systems is very much in favour of our own. Whilst I agree with the member for Pilbara on many of the points raised by him, I must remind him of two very old sayings, namely, "Knowledge is power" and "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." If we take the history of the world in recent years, and particularly that of continental countries which have advanced to a high state of efficiency, it will be found that Germany has been one of the most efficient, and that the German system of education is about the highest that exists. We should be wise to so educate our children as to fit them for every possible avocation. In a country like Australia the prizes are to the swift, and it is only fair that those with capabilities should have the prize. So I would be loth to curtail the expenditure on the Education Vote, so long as that expenditure is on right lines. There may be one or two minor details which require removal, but I think the system of education in Western Australia is worthy of commendation. I notice in the report of the Education Department that the number of female teachers is out of all proportion to that of the male teachers. I believe that in the main the male teacher is the better. I hope that, as anticipated by the Director of Education, the position will be remedied now that we have returned to our shores the men who left the department to fight for their country. Another point worthy of consideration is the health of the children. On page 10 of the report of the Education Department will be found this paragraph—

Our system of medical inspection is lamentably inadequate. There is still only one medical officer for schools. Nine large metropolitan schools have been fully inspected, as well as ten country schools and one private school. Various special inquiries have also been held. The total num-

ber of children examined during the year was 3,316.

It goes on to show how many should be examined in the year. When we realise that only 3,316 children were examined out of all the children in Western Australia, it must appeal to us as a matter of grave regret that this should be the position. It is essential that the medical inspection of children should be made at frequent intervals. Much benefit would accrue to the children themselves, and naturally also to the people of the State, if an efficient system of medical examination were adopted. I agree with the member for Pilbara when he condemns the early kindergarten training of children, and the system of sending children to school before they reach the age of seven. It has been borne out by statistics that those children who are most crammed as a rule turn out the least efficient men and women. They break down under the pressure of intense cramming.

Hon. T. Walker: Cramming is not education; it is the very opposite.

Mr. PICKERING: I know that.

Mr. Underwood: Schooling is not education.

Mr. PICKERING: The result of training children at too young an age is harmful. I am opposed to this system of competitive examination, which is so inimical to the youthful mind. Some other system should be adopted in the giving of scholarships and awards than the competitive system, for this must lead to cramming in the desire of the teachers to fit an immature child for the examination when the child is not really capable of taking it.

Hon. T. Walker: What would you substitute for that system?

Mr. PICKERING: I think the system adopted with regard to Rhodes scholarships might be brought into use in preference to the other system.

Hon. T. Walker: You have gone through all the periods of competitive examinations before you reach that stage.

Mr. PICKERING: Some such system as that employed in regard to Rhodes scholars could be adapted to children in the early stages.

Hon. T. Walker: The children have to come out well in competitive examinations first.

Mr. PICKERING: The system is not a good one.

Hon. T. Walker: What are you going to substitute for it?

Mr. PICKERING: I have told the hon. member. A good deal has been said on the subject of technical education. The position of the trades in Western Australia is a serious one. It has been stated in this House that only apprentices should be given technical education, but to limit such education to apprentices would be a very serious step to take. There are very few apprentices in Western Australia. I found from inquiries that I made at Millars' joinery

works in Perth that the total number of apprentices and trainees was only 47. The difficulties confronting apprenticeship in Western Australia are great, because there is no continuity of work amongst the contractors, who are thus not in a position to carry the employees over. The only solution of this difficulty is to extend the system of technical education, and to train the boys for three or four years at technical schools in the particular trade into which they are desirous of entering.

Mr. Underwood: And work all hours of the day to do it.

Mr. PICKERING: I would not mind how many hours a day within reason they worked, and might even go so far as to agree that the State should pay them so much pocket money while they are engaged in learning their trade. The boys might be trained in Government workshops so that they might become fitted as mechanics. If something is not done to train our boys efficiently the State will soon be reduced to a parlous condition. Hon. members have stated that the system of apprenticeship in Western Australia is valueless, and yet no attempt is ever made to bring about an improvement. The duty devolves upon the Government of finding a solution of this difficulty, and this lies in the direction of the establishment of an efficient system of technical education. If there is one thing that is essential it is that boys should be taught to become efficient tradesmen, and this can only be brought about by placing the system of technical education on sound lines. I am in accord with the member for Irwin when he suggests that there should be a committee of inquiry into our system of education, and I welcome the assent of the Premier to that suggestion. I hope the result will be such that an improvement will be effected in the status of that system, more particularly as it affects technical education.

Mr. Maley: Whom would you appoint upon that committee?

Mr. PICKERING: Outside people who are competent to fill such positions could be selected.

Hon. T. Walker: Where are they?

Mr. PICKERING: There must be some such persons in this State. Are we so depleted of educated men that we cannot fill positions of this sort from within the State?

Hon. T. Walker: We are supposed to have our leading educational experts in the department.

Hon. P. Collier: We could go outside the State.

Mr. PICKERING: If necessary we would have to go outside the State. At all events it is essential, in the opinion of most members, that such an inquiry should be made.

Mr. Underwood: Who will make it?

Mr. PICKERING: If the hon. member suggests that there is no way of overcoming the evils which are said to exist in the

Education Department, the remarks he made in the course of his speech are valueless.

Mr. Teesdale: We shall have to import men if we cannot get them here.

Mr. PICKERING: I wish to put forward a plea for greater educational facilities in the country. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle in his advocacy of an extension of the system of continuation classes. One of the chief inducements to people to settle in the country is an efficient system of education, and it is essential that special educational facilities should be provided on subjects specially appertaining to the country. I differ from the member for Pilbara when he says that a knowledge of English and arithmetic is the only essential. A knowledge of chemistry, veterinary science in a minor degree, and of various other subjects is necessary for the successful conduct of the farms in Western Australia.

Mr. Underwood: I was talking about primary education.

Mr. PICKERING: The object of education is to teach us to remember and assimilate knowledge, and to think on the various subjects that come before us. If we were to cut down our primary education to the limits suggested by the member for Pilbara, we should be depriving the people of an indispensable opportunity for advancement. Everyone in the State should have an equal opportunity of forging ahead if he has the ability so to do, and every child in the State should be so equipped that he has a reasonable chance of making progress in life. A knowledge of geography in connection with the products of a country is very essential, the more so when it comes to a question of business relations with another country. Business is a vital factor in the life of this State. No one can enter into business relations with another country who does not possess a certain knowledge of the geographical features of that country. The more fitted in educational matters the people of the country become, the better it is for the country concerned. Had Russia enjoyed the advantages of education that Australia has had, the fearful position which has arisen there would probably never have been brought about.

Mr. Maley: It might have been worse.

Mr. PICKERING: It is the knowledge that the people of Australia possess that has taught them reason, and how to deal with the difficulties and problems which have confronted them. Our educational system has taught them reasoning powers and how to develop them. It is because of the advanced education that the people have received at the hands of the Governments of the different States that they are in a great measure immune from the troubles which appertain in other countries not so well equipped. For my part I shall do nothing by my vote that will diminish the possibilities afforded by education to the people of

Australia, so long as I have the privilege of representing the electors in this House.

Mr. DUFF (Claremont) [5.39]: After the oratorical effort of the member for Sussex one has not very much left to say. It is evident to me that some committee of inquiry into the Education Department should be appointed. There are many matters into which such a committee should go, one in particular being the construction of our schools, and the alterations that are in many cases so badly needed. I have had occasion to make several applications to the Education Department in the matter of increased educational facilities for the seventh and eighth standards at the Cottesloe school. The application was refused, on the ground of the construction of the school buildings, and the cost of the alterations to provide what is required. The effect of this refusal is that more than 100 children have to go by rail beyond the control of their parents to Claremont or Fremantle, in order that they may attend the higher classes that are required by them to complete their education. If it is only a matter of some slight structural alteration in the school, the work should be carried out for the sake of the pupils involved. This question might well form the subject of inquiry by the proposed committee. Some of our schools, which were built a few years ago, are not up to date in respect to their sanitary arrangements. At the Cottesloe school the sanitary conveniences are situated in the middle of the school ground, in view of all the people who pass. An improvement should be effected in this respect, and a more modern and up to date style of building erected. If more attention was paid to the sanitary arrangements at our schools, it would tend to preserve the health of the children to a greater degree than is the case at present. It is not right that youngsters up to 14 years of age should have to take a train journey from their homes in order to get the higher education they require, when by effecting a structural alteration at the school in their neighbourhood this journey could be obviated. The alterations at the Cottesloe school would not involve more than a few hundred pounds. These suburbs are growing, but notwithstanding this the school buildings are not growing also. If the committee did nothing else but inquire into these matters it would be doing a great amount of good.

Mr. GIBSON (Cue) [5.41]: I support the remarks of previous speakers as to the necessity for a committee of inquiry into the Education Department. We have not in the past been getting the best results from the money we have spent on our educational system, and an inquiry into the system generally would, I think, be welcomed by all. Education is a community problem, but is the cost of it borne by the whole community? I contend that it is not. In the outback centres, where there are 10 or 12 children within

a certain radius, the department provides an assisted school. A third class teacher is appointed, generally a woman, and a salary up to £75 is granted. The parents have to provide the board and lodging for the teacher, and this represents a tax upon that particular section of the community. We are always told that our education is free. I admit that in the outback places the department is doing a lot to help the people, but it should also provide every educational facility for the children there without taxing the settler to a greater extent than the inhabitant of the city is taxed. The children in isolated parts of Western Australia should be catered for to as great an extent as possible. I know that the department provides travelling teachers, and has also inaugurated a system of correspondence classes. I see from the reports of the department that much good has resulted from these correspondence classes, and that there has been a big increase in the number of pupils. In 1918 there were enrolled in the correspondence classes 100 children, in 1919 these had increased to 207, and this year they have reached 300. This indicates that people in the outback portions of the State are taking advantage of the system. There is another matter which requires attention, and that is the printing of our school books. Our school books should be printed at the Government Printing Office, and they should be sent out to the various school masters for distribution among the children at cost price. Experience shows that the books used for the older children are useless for the younger ones who come after them in the higher classes. This involves a considerable expenditure for books. It could be made much cheaper for the parents, if the Government printed the school books and disposed of them at cost price. There should be no difficulty in giving effect to that suggestion, and it would greatly assist the people outback. As the Premier wants to get on with the Estimates, I have no desire to take up any further time.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [5.47]: I quite agree with the views expressed by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) and by the ex-Treasurer, the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner), when they contended that something must be done to cut down the expenditure under the education vote. Members generally will agree that the expenditure under that heading is very large indeed. I concur in the contention that we cannot compare Western Australia with the Eastern States because of the larger area and more sparse population in this State, seeing that it is very difficult to provide educational facilities for the children in the more distant parts of the State without considerable expense. I am not altogether in accord with several members who have spoken in favour of increasing the age at which a child should start its education. The Australian in particular is an adept at learning, and experience shows that the children from six years of age up-

wards learn very quickly. It is also well within the knowledge of members that most country children have no chance of securing further education after they reach 14 years of age.

Hon. P. Collier: Why not?

Mr. HICKMOTT: The great majority of the children have to take a share in the work of their parents' farms before they reach that age. If those children are taken at the age of 14 to the sixth or seventh standard, which should be the groundwork for a solid education, it should be enough for most purposes. Education up to the standard I mention should be enough to enable them to do all that is necessary in their future life. It should be the duty of those having children in the metropolitan area or in the country, if they want to give their children a higher education, to bear the expense involved and not throw the extra burden upon the State. We could save a great deal of money under this vote, more even than the £20,000 mentioned by the member for Pilbara. The educational system is like a lot of other functions exercised by the Government; it is abused. Many people well able to pay for the education of their children, are getting their children taught at the expense of the State.

Mr. Teesdale: They have been doing that for years.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Wealthy people have been getting their children educated free, and this point should be taken into consideration by the Government. Mention has been made of an inquiry into the work of the Education Department. It appears that we have had one just recently.

Mr. Malley: There will be inquiries into everything, it seems.

Mr. HICKMOTT: I have not had the pleasure of going through the departmental report which must have been placed on the Table quite recently, and not many members seem to have read it, in order to see what the result of that inquiry was. I was surprised at the remarks of the member for Irwin with reference to the necessity for an inquiry into the working of the Education Department, because he was one of the foremost to advocate that such an inquiry should be held, not only regarding the Education Department but other departments as well. Members also understood that that hon. gentleman volunteered his services to go through the departments and see what could be done in the direction of making savings.

Mr. Malley: Anything to shift the responsibility.

Mr. HICKMOTT: When he was in office he had the opportunity of going through the departments to see what could be done. It would appear that he did not do so. Either he could not get any assistance from his colleagues in Cabinet or he did not pursue the matter.

Mr. Johnston: He was Treasurer in the Government.

Mr. HICKMOTT: He could have gone through every department had he desired to do so.

Hon. P. Collier: He had no opportunity of going through the Education Department.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Perhaps not, but he could have taken some action to have the inquiry set on foot.

Mr. O'Loghlen: He did, but he did not get any help from other Ministers.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for Irwin as Treasurer did not have a roving commission through the Education and other departments.

Mr. HICKMOTT: As Treasurer he should have had more help from his colleagues. It may be that he did not get sufficient assistance to enable him to make the inquiry he sought. In any case, I think it will be conceded that the children should be given a solid grounding in the work up to the seventh or eighth standard. Such an education would fit them in the right direction for after life. Should some children be brighter and have prospects of following some higher profession, it should be the duty of the parents to shoulder the financial burden of the higher education themselves, and not foist that added cost on to the State. Money is spent on elaborate buildings and still, in the metropolitan area, there is a cry for more expenditure. We cannot afford this increased expenditure at the present time. Such extensions should be left for some future date. I am in favour of reducing the education vote, but I am not in favour of reducing the facilities for primary education. Reference has been made by the member for Cne (Mr. Chesson) to the work of the correspondence classes. I have seen some of the work in connection with those classes, and I am certain that the activities of the department under that heading will be of great assistance to the children outback. It will enable them to receive at least some knowledge of the rudiments of education. Money can be saved in connection with the construction of our schools. Small buildings are put up in country districts, which resemble something in the nature of a big tent. They are run up to suit the requirements of the district for the time being. In a few years the district progresses, the children increase in number, and there is a clamour for larger school buildings. If more foresight were exercised, more roomy buildings would be erected which would save the necessity for extension later on.

Hon. P. Collier: Presumably you want more accommodation for the boys at Shingle Hut.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Yes, and at any other hut. We want foresight exercised so that buildings will be erected to cater for the requirements for all time, and thus save the necessity for constantly adding to the school buildings.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [5.55]: I did not intend to take up any time discussing these Estimates, and perhaps I should have allowed the opportunity to pass had it

not been for the remarks of the last speaker. So much has been said in favour of the principle of education, that it is unnecessary to add much on the present occasion. I want to draw the attention of members to the view that seems to have obtained currency, that the children of the poor man in this State should be satisfied with the three R's, or with the sixth or seventh standard of education, and that all above, beyond, or in addition to that, should be the peculiar province of the rich, or of those who have money at their disposal to pay for extra education. It should not be forgotten that education is a national asset. It is as valuable to us as the land we cultivate; in fact, without education, the land is valueless. I presume the member for Pingelly is a farmer, and I ask him what was done with his farm while the blacks were there? It could grow crops then. It had as much potential fertility as it has now. It had all the promise of wealth. Why did not the blacks cultivate it? It was because they were ignorant.

Mr. Hickmott: That is not a parallel case at all.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is absolutely a parallel case.

Mr. Underwood: It was because the blacks did not know geography.

Hon. T. WALKER: It was because they were ignorant.

Mr. Underwood: It was because they did not know history.

Mr. Hickmott: We have some illiterate men who make the best farmers.

Hon. T. WALKER: Not in farming; they are educated as to the value of that kind of industry. Most farmers have been taught and trained. It is knowledge applied to the land that causes the land to be properly cultivated and to throw off its fertility and wealth. Without that knowledge, the fertility and wealth of the soil becomes absolutely useless. Take the gold mines. What were they to the savages? They were valueless. Mineral wealth of all kinds is absolutely useless to an ignorant people. It is only knowledge when applied, that creates wealth. If I were inclined to indulge in a lengthy speech, I could point out to the member for Pilbara something of the history of the peoples who have had their bright and prosperous ages and their dark ages. Their dark ages were the ages of poverty, misery, and ignorance. I have not mentioned them in their true relation, because ignorance precedes all others. Ignorance leads to poverty and misery, disaster, and misfortune of every kind. It is knowledge that spares us from all these, and knowledge of whatsoever kind is the result of education. It is education that gives knowledge to us, and which passes the accumulated knowledge on from generation to generation. In the process of handing it on there is also a process of sifting analysing, rejecting and adding. So that we may say that we now live in an age of greater knowledge and wider diffusion of

knowledge than civilisation ever knew before. Though our education is costly, it pays us in the long run. A tribute was paid by one member to the initiative, the quick intellect and the ready response to necessities of our men at the Front. I think it is universally admitted that our men, put into emergencies to which they were not accustomed, more quickly adapted themselves to their surroundings than did any other body of men fighting in the war, and the inference was that it was because they were not disciplined soldiers, but let me say it was because almost from the cradle they had been tutored by the State to use their brains, from the earliest childhood their mentality had been exercised; they had been taught to accumulate knowledge and to exercise reason. Their brains, therefore, were disciplined, and they were more responsive and receptive to the influences of surroundings and environment. The nervous temperament that comes from nerve cultivation, because brain cultivation is nerve cultivation, with that quickness which comes from such cultivation these men were apt and ready and responsive on the spot at the time, and they knew more precisely what to do than did the more sluggish intellects whose training had been neglected. Now it is said, "Yes, give the farmers' son the three R's, keep him off everything else; and make the other man pry for his knowledge." That has been the policy of Europe from the time of which we read in our books, from the earliest written knowledge. Let those specially favoured by fortune have the advantage of an education. Let them be able by reason of their superior knowledge and intellectual training to lord it over their fellows. What is it that keeps a people servile and subordinate? It is the fact that a few people have the necessary knowledge to guide, direct, order, command and control them, and the class that can control them believe in keeping the vast majority of the people in what they call their place. I am not so old but I remember the arguments when I was a youth about educating the poor. There were those who actually sincerely believed that it was an evil to give education to the sons of the poor.

Mr. O'Loughlen: One member of this House believes that.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not surprised. It was argued that education makes them discontented with their lot. It makes them see more clearly the real condition of affairs. It makes them agitators. It makes them desire to better their conditions. It unfits them for the slave life which is so congenial to those who employ them. Therefore they damn all education. They say that education is only for the rich, only for those who are wealthy, or for those who have to follow some particular profession in some line distinct and apart from the necessity of toil. Let the poor toilers, the humble workers be born in ignorance, pass their lives in ignorance and die in ignorance. That

is the policy, and I hear it advocated by some members of this Chamber. What crime has the poor man's son committed that he should not enjoy all the blessings of every kind that education can give to him? What curse is upon mankind that poverty should debar him from the acquisition of knowledge? If we get that distinction here, we at once abolish the cry of democracy. I admit that, as we interpret democracy in our modern times, it is an empty or a misleading word, but taken in its highest significance democracy means that to every man born in the community, the same opportunities shall be open, that there shall be no privileges belonging to any specific class, to any district order or caste in society, but that the humblest in the land shall have at least the same opportunity as the richest in the land. If we get this distinction in education, if we make it free to the poor only up to the three R's, and thus allow the rich man to whom it costs practically nothing, because he can afford it, to pay for his children's education, all our democracy vanishes because the poor man cannot compete; he cannot enter upon the same course. His family have the doors shut upon them at a certain age, and unless exceptional circumstances give an opportunity that is not granted by the laws or customs of the land, they are doomed to be ignorant throughout their lives. It has been rightly said that the leading nations of the world are those who have paid most attention to the education of their poor, the people who are called the lower classes. The efficient nations of the world prize education in respect of its value to the citizens, to those who are to take part in the industries of the land. It is precisely those nations who are still brutal, still barbarous, still savage, who have no appreciation of education. Those who follow their own bent, who know nothing of geography; those, for instance, in the centre of Africa, who know and care about nothing; those tribal peoples who have no education and do not want education and do not appreciate the value of education are the peoples who are savage at the present time. The nations who stand foremost in the world and highest within the pale of civilisation are those that have the largest distribution of knowledge amongst their people. America has long understood the blessings of having her sons educated. The British peoples, more especially those in the dependencies of Britain, have understood the blessings and the actual cash value of education, and they tower above their fellows in the rest of the world purely as a consequence of education.

Mr. Johnston: Western Australia included.

Hon. T. WALKER: Western Australia included undoubtedly. I do not put Western Australia behind any of the nations. It is quite true that in some of the older countries of the world, the secondary and the higher education is upon a nobler and per-

haps a higher plane, but in our preliminary education and the general training of our schools, I am positive that the Royal Commission, if appointed, will never be able to give a back place to Western Australia.

Mr. Griffiths: Inspector Miles, who has returned from a trip to America, said we have nothing to learn about elementary education from either Canada or the United States.

Hon. T. WALKER: Or from England itself. There is no part of the world where the people are so keenly alive to the methods of education, the methods of imparting knowledge and creating enthusiasm for it in the child as are the people of this State, and nowhere does the system excel ours. I have seen schools in operation in all parts of the world. In fact my earliest start in life was as a school teacher, and I have always taken an interest in teachers ever since. In every part of the world which I have visited I have endeavoured to find out what they were doing, not to cram children with knowledge, but to create in them a thirst for knowledge, and to allow the children to imbibe naturally and joyously the knowledge presented to them.

Mr. Griffiths: That is a great point.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is how it is done in Western Australia. Our education methods will bear comparison with those in any part of the world. Why should we growl at the expense? Education in itself is not responsible for the increase in expense; in fact, I should like to go to a little more expense. I quite agree with some of my friends here that outback portions of the State are more or less neglected because of want of funds. Out on the trans-Australian line, for instance, I know that when I was Minister for Education, we promised a school for Zanthus where there are 30 or more children. This school has been promised again and again, and the Minister knows that it has not yet been provided. I could find fault with the Government for not having provided a school. I would increase the vote to reach even the most outback places. I am glad that something is being done by our methods of correspondence, but those methods are not adequate to meet the requirements of the outback provinces. What is costing us the money is that we have such an enormous area to cover with our educational facilities. Right away in the North-West we have to find schools; away in the far South-East we have to find schools; in every settled area, however small the population, we have to find schools and teachers, and as new districts are opened up we are faced with the expense, not only of education in the way of providing teachers and school requirements, but the expense to the Works Department of having to put up new schools. It is a big expense, but the explanation of it lies in the fact that we have such a big area to look after. It is expensive in every direction, but the expense cannot be

avoided. It must become yet more expensive because, as population increases, the new areas come under cultivation, as new districts are settled, we must follow up that education, and the expense of doing this is extremely costly. I do not wonder, therefore, that our bill is heavy, but it is like all initial expense in that it is hard to meet at the beginning, but the reward will come to us by-and-by. I would like to ask members who find fault with our education system, especially as to its cost, what country in the world has shown a greater response to the expense lavished upon it than has Western Australia? What nation of the world has so got ahead with her products, her wealth, mineral, timber, agricultural, and pastoral?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. T. WALKER: It surprises me to find that there are those amongst my companions in this House who desire to increase the cost of education by importing someone to make an examination into our system. We have spent a lot of money in getting all the information the world can produce as to the best methods of education, and perhaps I ought not to find fault if we spend a little more in order to give us that stable vanity we are after, namely, a position in the front rank of educationists. I feel confident that this is all that can be done by any commission in reporting upon our system of education. If the commission is for the purpose of seeing if we can do without education in any particular line, I submit that it will be a danger rather than a benefit to the State.

Mr. Underwood: That is to say that the Director of Education is right.

Hon. T. WALKER: I prefer to take the view of the Director to that of the hon. member.

Mr. Underwood: You may be wrong.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not likely I am wrong on a point of that kind. We may be cutting off a certain portion of our education which may be very injurious to the people. We may make a sharp line between the sons of the poor and the sons of the rich, which would do incalculable injury to the State. I would not like to see anything of that kind happen.

Mr. Teesdale: Would you have the sons of rich people educated at the expense of the poor?

Hon. T. WALKER: Why deprive the poor altogether of higher education?

Mr. Teesdale: There is more money for them if it is not wasted on the rich.

Hon. T. WALKER: Surely the hon. member believes we can have no degree of equality unless the same door of entry is open to all, whether rich or poor.

Mr. Teesdale: We have expensive colleges. Let the rich send their children there.

Hon. T. WALKER: Undoubtedly, and they do. There are private colleges and there is

private education, and the rich send their children there in preference to the State schools.

Mr. Teesdale: A percentage of them do, but some have been loafing on the country for years.

Hon. T. WALKER: And the hon. member would have them loaf on the country still more. That class of people does nothing but loaf on the country. It is the poor, after all, who will have to pay for the education of the sons of the rich, even if we make that distinction; but the poor man will never be able to keep pace with the rich man because the doors of higher education are closed to him. The rich man will always have the whip hand over the poor and be able to subordinate his fellow man. I desire to see the poorest in the land afforded an opportunity to avail themselves of the knowledge to be derived from every public institution in the State.

Mr. Teesdale: Certainly, and every reasonable man would want to see that, too.

Hon. T. WALKER: Not if the price is more than the poor, individually, can afford to pay. Collectively the poor have to pay for all that the rich enjoy. It is the productiveness of the poor that creates all the wealth that is lavished on the favoured few. It will not diminish the burden upon the poor. They have to bear that expense after all. What it means is that the door is closed to the poor.

Mr. Underwood: Would not the poor man sooner be a rich man?

Hon. T. WALKER: Of course!

Mr. Underwood: He has to use his own personal effort to become rich.

Hon. T. WALKER: What can any man achieve except through personal effort? There is a difference between personal effort unaided and personal effort guided and assisted by the personal effort of others. No man can do all things for himself. The world works for every man in it, and every man contributes his share of the work that is done. Every man is enriched by the labours of others and the efforts of others. If the hon. member had to start as a naked savage to make his own clothes, to cut his own hair—

Mr. Underwood: I nearly started that way.

Hon. T. WALKER: I dare say, and he has not reached a much higher plane in respect to some things. He is still a good deal of the savage, uncultured and uncouth, as someone once said—

The CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing the hon. member.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member would interrupt me and use himself as a personal illustration. I was obliged, therefore, to take notice of him. In fact, he has delivered to us—I did not intend to notice him at all—a speech opposed to education.

Mr. Underwood: No; you are wrong. You do not understand. Your understanding is "crook."

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member spoke against education as we have it in this State.

Mr. Underwood: As we have it! That is a different thing.

Hon. T. WALKER: If ever there was an illustration of the need for education, it has been afforded by the hon. member himself. So far as his logic is concerned, he is a living illustration. His speech answered him as he went along. I do not know, therefore, that it is worth while wasting any time upon it. What could be more childish than his condemnation of geography, on the ground that some examiner had set a question to be answered which he could not answer, not having been in the school and having gone through it?

Mr. Underwood: I could answer it but it is of no use to me.

Hon. T. WALKER: He condemns geography on that ground. Is it not absurd? How are we to know where the electorate he represents is if we know nothing of geography? Where is Pilbara?

Mr. Underwood: Do you know?

Hon. T. WALKER: Where is the North-West and where is the South-West?

Mr. Underwood: Do you know where Pilbara is?

Hon. T. WALKER: If I do not know then I am defective in geography. One must have a knowledge of geography to understand where the Pilbara electorate is.

The Minister for Mines: Where is Doodlakine?

Hon. T. WALKER: We should have no conception of where these places are if we had no knowledge of geography. Is it not something to know that London is a part of the British Empire? How could we know that without possessing a knowledge of geography?

Mr. Underwood: By reading the newspapers.

Hon. T. WALKER: How could we know that Germany was in Europe except that we possessed a knowledge of geography?

Mr. Underwood: By reading the newspapers.

Hon. T. WALKER: In the newspapers we are reading about geography?

Mr. Underwood: Of course you are.

Hon. T. WALKER: But we would not be reading about geography in the newspapers if those who conducted them had not a knowledge of geography. I mention this merely to show the absurdity of the hon. member's arguments. Another reason he gave for his opposition to the present system of education is that some people forgot much of what they had learned at school. There is not a member here who has not forgotten, in the course of his life, more than he actually knows at present. Notwithstanding this, what he has learned in the past has had a substantial effect upon his training and his appreciation of similar subjects when he meets with them again. His early training has ripened his intellect, matured his judgment and enriched

his mind generally. The more knowledge that has come to us in our lives, the finer does our appreciation become of knowledge of a similar nature when we meet with it again. It is true that we cannot retain all that we have ever learned, but we must have benefited by what we have learned. The step we are on to-day is the step we stepped from, so to speak, yesterday. Yesterday we forgot, but the knowledge we had yesterday helps us to-day. I wish hon. members to keep that in mind. All our education of the past has helped to build up the glories of the present, of whatever kind they are.

Mr. Underwood: Uneducated men built our railways.

Hon. T. WALKER: There could have been no railways without Stevenson and Watt, and there could not have been Stevenson and Watt unless there had been men with knowledge preceding them. Education is knowledge that has been imbibed and has become a part of us and our way of thinking, from whatever source it has come.

Mr. Underwood: An uneducated man invented the printing machine.

Hon. T. WALKER: He could not have invented a printing machine unless there had been printing done before his time. There could not possibly have been an inventor of a machine for that kind of work unless work of that kind had been done before; and the knowledge of that work had influenced the brain and stimulated the thought, and given that necessary impetus and energy to the intellect, of the man who created the machine. Start dead level in England without any influence of the world outside upon you, and what can you become? Can one have a Shakespeare or a Bacon or a Newton among savages? Can there be an Edison amongst cannibals? Geniuses come as the product of the accumulated education of the nation. They are the result of the influence of environments, of all educational forces upon the individual, stirring and inspiring the inner resources of man. That is the reason why we have men eclipsing others in their sphere of life. They could not do that without the atmosphere, without the environments; and these must be educational, must be the result of not only individual effort at the present time, but of the combined individual efforts of the world of the past. That is what education does for us. The member for Pilbara has spoken of the University. He is not acquainted with what really a university is and does. None of our universities may be perfect, but some of the universities of Europe have contributed to the knowledge of the world in a way to enrich enormously every individual member of the community, and immensely to increase his blessings, whether he be a wage slave or a rich proprietor of the soil matters not. The men in the universities, by their researches, by their discoveries, by their application of science to material provinces, have made the whole world richer. The hon. member knows nothing of them. He is a living illustration of what vanity com-

bined with ignorance can do in decriing those great benefits of which he himself is taking selfish advantage every day that he lives. I shall not lengthen my speech, nor deal with this subject as I should like to do. Time is pressing. I know the Premier wants to get away, and I am anxious to oblige the hon. gentleman in that respect. However, I think it is unnecessary to say more in order to convince the Committee that education is the greatest asset of the State, that an educated general citizenship is the greatest assistance that a State can possibly have towards its welfare, that all our riches, both natural and artificial, are valueless unless we have education to appreciate them and to utilise them.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [7.50]: I understand that there is a new departure either contemplated or already decided upon, namely to transfer agricultural education from the Department of Agriculture to that of Education. I shall not traverse any of the ground covered by previous speakers, but shall merely refer to what transpired in the course of a speech delivered some weeks ago by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale), and that is the fact that portions of our school grounds are plotted out with cereals, vegetables and flowers, the art of cultivation thus being taught to children attending the country schools. I consider that that branch of education can be generally applied for the benefit of certain new industries in this State. I do not know of any form of agricultural education that is likely to secure better results. The Education Department would do well to put in small plots at our country schools, from the South-West to the far North, plots of say 12 feet square, so as to ascertain the nature of the soil, the climatic conditions, and whether insect pests are present which will interfere with growth and development. These experimental plots should be planted with flax, sugar beet, and tobacco. We know that in those parts of the State where the growth of tobacco has already been attempted, insect pests have punctured the leaves so that the crop was of little commercial value. I am of opinion that the experiments which I suggest would prove of material benefit to the possible new industries of flax-growing, sugar beet cultivation, and tobacco culture. I trust that the Minister representing the Education Department in this Chamber will take note of those few words.

Mr. LUTHEY (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [7.52]: There is only one matter I wish to bring forward in connection with the Education Estimates, and that is the position of the school teachers known as "supplies." I consider that these teachers should be given increases of salary similar to those which the permanent teachers are likely to receive as the result of the understanding arrived at with the Government. Some of the "supplies" are employed only for the actual teaching

time, and when the holidays come their services are dispensed with, instead of the "supplies" receiving payment for holidays in the same way as the permanent teachers do. Further, a number of these "supply" teachers who are qualified therefor by examination should be transferred to the permanent staff. Some of the "supplies" have made application for such transfer, but the excuse of the department has been that they are waiting to fill the vacancies with returned soldiers. That excuse has been put forward for two years or more, and the authorities ought by this time to know how many returned soldiers are still to be placed in the Education Department. I trust that the Government will take note of the position, and that they will treat the teachers known as "supplies" in a fair and equitable manner.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Seaddan—Albany) [7.54]: The Premier, who has charge of the Education vote, desires me to express his regret that an appointment has compelled him to leave the Chamber and that, therefore, he is unable to reply to the criticisms levelled at the Education Department by various hon. members. The attitude adopted by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is hardly one that can be dealt with in connection with the Estimates. It is quite right that that hon. member should use this occasion to express his opinions on the matter; but if he desires to translate those opinions into action, then he must move Parliament to amend the Education Act, which lays down a certain method to be followed. The Act, for instance, provides that children must compulsorily attend school at the age of six years and remain there until the age of 14. Therefore, if we desire to alter the conditions of education in that respect, the Education Act must be amended. Many people may hold views somewhat similar to those of the member for Pilbara as to the waste of money and energy in attempting to educate children of six; but it is a remarkable fact that the Imperial Government, notwithstanding the stress resulting from the war, have enormously increased their expenditure on education by providing compulsory schooling for children of a much younger age than that previously in force, and even by providing nursery schools to be attended by children from the age of two years upwards. I think the leader of the Opposition suggested that it is practically an act of insanity to take children of the age of five years into schools; but it would appear that the Imperial Government are perpetrating an act of something more than insanity by providing that children shall attend school at the age of two years. I am not suggesting that we should follow the example of the Imperial Government, but am merely pointing out that the Imperial Government are providing funds for the education of such very young children.

Mr. Johnston: But we desire to keep the children at school longer.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Exactly. My view is that 12 months' education after the age of 13 or 14 years is of more value than education during all the five years from the age of five to ten. I could mention numerous cases of boys who have made good in different walks of life and who received practically no education until they had reached the age of ten. I do not desire to be like the Welshman who said, "There are good men out of work, and I am one of them"; but perhaps I may be permitted to mention the circumstance that I did not receive three months' education until I was ten years old. However, I did not leave school until I had passed what was then called the sixth standard, the equivalent of what is now called the seventh or the eighth standard. I may say that I was not wearied, and that therefore I enjoyed the process of education. There is always a possibility that a child who is kept hanging on to humdrum school life for a number of years will get utterly tired of it. There is an opportunity to extend our educational system to the further advantage of the State by applying our efforts in the direction of finishing off rather than in that of starting off. I think I mentioned last session the case of Pupin, who had no education until he reached the age of 18 years. Pupin went from Austria to America and commenced work there, and during the time he was earning just sufficient to keep himself he went to school. Finally he proved, in a certain sense, a genius. In fact, the possibility of telephoning from New York to San Francisco is due to Pupin. He became a marvellous scholar. His case, however, does not prove that if no attempt were made to educate a person until he had reached the age of 18 years, that person would necessarily prove a success. The case of Pupin proves the exception rather than the rule. I believe the opinion of the community is that, subject to funds being available, the State should give each child an opportunity to commence its education as soon as the child is in a position to understand what education means, and that that education should be so finished off as to yield the greatest possible advantage to the child and also to the State. The burden of the complaint made by the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) was the increased expenditure on our educational system. While it is quite true that there has been a good deal of criticism from time to time regarding the increased expenditure, it is also true that no one has yet suggested any definite method by which that expenditure may be reduced. A year or two ago the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) suggested that the Government should merely take a pen and write £150,000 off the annual expenditure. I cannot for a moment think that the Committee would agree to the adoption of any such course. In all these things the difficulty is to make a reduction of such an amount as will be a real benefit from the aspect of

economy, and at the same time to avoid making inroads upon the essentials of an educational system which is recognised as probably second to none in Australia or in the British Empire. Last year the excess expenditure amounted to about £24,000. But let hon. members bear in mind the increase granted in school teachers' salaries.

Mr. Underwood: But last year's vote showed an increase over the previous year's.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. We have to realise the fact that the number of children attending our schools is increasing. We would be going backwards if it were not so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You increased the teachers' salaries after Parliament closed down last time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I was coming to that point, too. Take our classes generally from the primary schools to the University. The numbers attending are increasing all along the line. As a matter of fact, the £24,000 in excess of the amount voted by Parliament was due to the fact that we were compelled, not reluctantly I will admit, to grant increases to the teaching staff amounting to something like £25,000.

Mr. Johnston: That is where it comes in.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is easy to estimate the expenditure in the Education Department from the point of view of the teaching staff. Little difficulty need be experienced in framing the Estimates on that basis, unless a decision has been arrived at to increase salaries, but no definite amount fixed. The balance, such as contingencies, can also be very well estimated, with the result that the Education Estimates are nearly always fairly accurate. If, after passing the Estimates, an increase is granted to the teaching staff, that cannot be foreseen. It would be hardly feasible to provide a round sum to cover increases in the event of a decision being arrived at to grant increases when framing the Estimates. If such a decision were arrived at, it would not be possible to state accurately the amount such an increase would involve. This year the increase is about £40,000. This is due largely to the increases to the teaching staff, and I am not sure whether this amount represents the total increase, because we have provided a tribunal for the reclassification of the teaching staff, as well as of the public service. Next year the same condition will probably arise. There will be an excess over and above the increase granted by Parliament. We cannot help that. The conditions at the moment will not permit us to do so. I do not think that, taking the whole of our schools into consideration, it will be suggested that they are over-staffed with teachers. There are some teachers trying to educate our children with 60 or 70 scholars in the one room. It is impossible for one teacher to give sufficient attention to that number of children. Such a condition of affairs merely tends to make education wearisome to the children, and impossible for the teachers.

Mr. Harrison: Often the scholars are in different classes although in the one room.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so. But even supposing they were all in the one class, it is impossible to properly teach 60 or 70 children under such conditions. Members may complain about the salaries paid to the teaching staff, but if they are not overpaid, members cannot complain of any increases under that heading. The increases which have been complained of are entirely due to the extra payments to the teaching staff. Quite a number of other subjects were mentioned by the member for Irwin and other members as well. One could very well reply to most of them, but in the light of the criticism of the member for Irwin that an inquiry should be made into the educational system and the cost of the administration of that department, it is as well that I should make the position quite clear. Both the member for North-East Fremantle and the member for Irwin have asserted that I promised an inquiry into the department. As a matter of fact, what I said was, and what I repeat now is, that personally I think it would be a good thing if an inquiry were made. I have no objection to it. At the time, I consulted the Minister for Education, who said that he had no objection, and I spoke for him on that occasion. There was no collective suggestion that there should be some inquiry. Should any member merely say that he thinks there should be an inquiry into the Mines Department or the Railway Department, the Minister concerned would not be justified in saying, "All right, we will have an inquiry." On this occasion, however, not only has the Minister for Education no objection to an inquiry being made, but I am authorised by the Premier to say that he will have an inquiry made into the administration of the department and the education system generally.

Mr. Maley: By whom?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Perhaps by the member for Greenough.

Mr. Pickering: The hon. member did not suggest a Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. Underwood: He would be better than the director.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I hope that the member for Pilbara will not pursue his policy of forever saying that every officer we have is incapable of advising. The member for Pilbara says that the member for Greenough would be better than the Director of Education. Perhaps he might be, but I am not suggesting that we should appoint Mr. Andrews to conduct an inquiry into the administration of his own department. My own view is that it would be better to call in some person from another State who has a knowledge of modern education systems, and of results achieved. I suppose the member for Pilbara will disagree with that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I suppose you will give the teachers a chance to be heard.

Mr. Underwood: Will the Government give an uneducated man a chance at the inquiry?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Is the hon. member looking for a job? I do not know whether it would be unwise.

Mr. Underwood: You might do for that yourself.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not looking for a job. It is beyond me, I confess. However, I do not want the member for North-East Fremantle to obtain from me a statement of my personal views and afterwards say that I promised that the inquiry would be made in a certain direction. I do not know what the inquiry will be, except that it will be into the education system and the rest of administration, from the point of view of securing the best results for children. In arriving at a conclusion on such a question, the teaching staff naturally would be taken into consideration.

Mr. Underwood: If you ask a teacher to give his views he will say the system is all right.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know whether we can do anything to satisfy the member for Pilbara.

The Honorary Minister: Impossible!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Pilbara takes a view of the education question different from that of 99 per cent. of the community.

Mr. Underwood: Would not my views be worth listening to?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In one sense, yes. I do not suggest that the hon. member would not be entitled to present his view to the commission of inquiry.

Mr. Underwood: To present my views to the commission is another thing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not suppose the hon. member would ask the Government to give instructions to the commission to accept the views of the member for Pilbara without discussion. We must have a commission of inquiry on the basis of the evidence that they can collect, and of a knowledge of the systems operating elsewhere and the results achieved there, in order to say whether the member for Pilbara's views are correct or whether the views held by others are right. To suggest that instructions should be given to the commission to accept anyone's views on the education system without having regard to systems established elsewhere, would be absurd. I do not think that even the member for Pilbara would suggest that. All I am entitled to say on the present occasion is that the Minister for Education has agreed to an inquiry being held and that he will welcome an inquiry into the whole educational system. The Premier has endorsed that view, and an inquiry will be held. More than that I cannot say regarding the Education Department's Estimates, beyond to emphasise the point that the excess of expenditure complained of has been due to the increases granted to the teachers.

General debate concluded; items discussed as follow:

Item, Government Schools, Forage, lodgings, etc., £350,000:

Mr. LUTEX: There are a number of teachers who have been temporarily employed for a number of years who are termed "supplies." They are fitted to take places on the permanent staff, but have been told from time to time that the positions on the permanent staff have been reserved for returned soldiers. Surely sufficient time has now elapsed to enable the department to say definitely whether or no these supply teachers can be placed on the permanent staff. Under existing conditions, these officers are not entitled to come under the Public Service Appeal Board, and being temporarily employed, they should get a higher rate of pay than the permanent staff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot enlighten the hon. member regarding the position of teachers on supply. I know that there are a number of teachers who, for various reasons, left the permanent staff and were subsequently taken on as supply teachers. I do not think the Teachers' Union would agree to the suggestion which has been made, that these teachers on supply, irrespective of the conditions under which they took their present appointments, should be placed on the permanent staff. Such a move would be detrimental to others who are waiting to be put on the permanent staff themselves. If the hon. member has a knowledge of any particular case or cases to which he would like to draw specific attention, I would suggest that he refer them to the Minister for Education, who will be in a position to deal with them.

Mr. PICKERING: I understand from the Minister that there is a shortage of teachers, and judging by a letter in the "West Australian," that statement is borne out by a member of the teaching staff. If there is a shortage, that should support the case mentioned by the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe.

Hon. P. Collier: The report of the Director of Education shows that they have a plentiful supply.

Item, Furniture, books, etc., £11,000:

Mr. WILLCOCK: The member for Cue mentioned a matter regarding school books. For the past few years there has been considerable agitation with a view to having the printing of school books done at the Government Printing Office. A deputation waited on the Minister some two years ago and he gave a promise that something would be done. The movement has reached the practical stage, and recently in another place members had a sample of what was being produced in the Government Printing Office. On that occasion it was stated that the policy was to be extended, so that the whole of the printing of the requirements of the Education Department would be done there. Since we have embarked on the policy

of preference to Western Australian production I think that policy should be extended. I should like the Minister's views on that proposition. The staff of the Government Printing Office are quite capable of doing the work.

Mr. Griffiths: Have not some primaries been printed here?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, the "Swan Reader" for the fourth standard has been produced in the Government Printing Office. I understand it is quite equal to the imported article and much cheaper in price. The whole of the printing for the Education Department should be done in this State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot tell the hon. member any more than he knows. A start has been made, and I expect the policy will be continued until we shall be doing all the printing necessary.

Item, Secondary scholarships and bursaries, £9,500:

Mr. PICKERING: The Minister for Education should put up an alternative system for the conferring of scholarships and bursaries. It is detrimental to the health of students to submit them to cramming for these competitive examinations. I know of one girl whose health was positively ruined by study for examinations.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I can only suggest that the hon. member communicate with the Minister for Education.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: When speaking the other evening, I moved that the vote be reduced by £20,000. My motion was ruled out of order, with the intimation that it could be moved on the last item. I now move—

That the vote be reduced by £5,000.

We could well devote an hour or two to the amendment of our Standing Orders under which the ruling was given. The position is that a member can speak on the general debate and again speak generally on the last item.

The CHAIRMAN: No, he may only move on the last item. None of the items has yet been passed, and consequently it is open to any hon. member to move a reduction in the vote.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And give his reasons?

The CHAIRMAN: The vote has been pretty fully discussed. I can allow the hon. member to move to reduce the vote, but I cannot allow any further general discussion.

Mr. Johnston: But surely, under the Standing Orders if the hon. member moves a motion he has the right to speak to that motion!

Hon. P. Collier: He spoke to it on a previous occasion.

The CHAIRMAN: I have given my ruling. If any hon. member desires to dissent from that ruling, he is at liberty to do so. I cannot allow any discussion on the motion which the hon. member desires to move.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then, if I desire to move the motion, I must move it without comment.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I will accept the motion for a reduction of the vote.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Without comment?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then I decline to move it.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Public Health, Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Minister (Hon. T. F. Broun in charge of the votes).

Vote — Medical and Public Health, £180,988:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [8.22]: The estimated expenditure for last year under this heading was £183,584, and the actual expenditure £240,935, being £57,451 in excess of the amount provided on the Estimates. The cause of this excess was to a great extent the influenza epidemic which occurred during the year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We have not had much influenza during this year. This has been the excuse for the last three years.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am referring to the increased expenditure over and above the vote of last year. The outbreak cost the State £54,505. Fortunately there was no repetition of the outbreak this year. A considerable amount of the expenditure incurred in that direction was on preliminary measures taken to prevent the outbreak reaching this State. To a large extent those measures were successful, inasmuch as they prevented the outbreak for a number of weeks, with the result that the influenza scourge was not nearly so severe as otherwise it would have been, which proves that the department was wise in its endeavours to keep it out as long as possible. The increased expenditure on the Wooroloo Sanatorium was due to cost of provisions, bedding, etc., and increases to the staff. Otherwise last year's expenditure was well within the estimate. The amount required this year is £180,988, or £59,947 less than last year. Of this amount £53,818 is on the item "contingency." This is the bare cost of last year's influenza outbreak. The assistance to hospitals for this year shows a decrease. This does not indicate that the Government desire to evade responsibility to those afflicted or in distress; on the other hand such cases will meet with the fullest sympathy. But it has been considered that there is a lack of uniformity in the administration of the various hospitals. Some hospitals show much better conditions than others. In some the collections are very low indeed, as low as 15 per cent., whereas in others the collections are as high as 60 per cent. It is considered that by exercising greater care a big saving can be effected in the administration of a number of

hospitals. Consequently, that vote has been cut down in the hope that more care will be taken in the direction of obtaining a larger revenue from those using the hospitals. Owing to the war there was a serious shortage in the medical staff generally, with the result that those in the department had to work unduly long hours, more especially during the influenza epidemic. Dr. Shearman rejoined the department as bacteriologist in 1919, and during the year the services of Dr. Dale as Medical Officer of Health and Inspector of Hospitals have been secured. The work of the Government hospitals is on the increase. The number of patients in 1917 was 4,279 and in 1919 the figure reached 4,418. The average number of beds occupied in 1917 was 196 and, last year, 235.3. The cost per patient per day was 6s. 8d. in 1917 and is now 8s. 5d. This of course is due to the increased cost of administration and of commodities generally. For some time past we have experienced considerable difficulty in getting district medical officers for the various towns. Now, however, all those positions are satisfactorily filled. It is intended to push on with school medical inspection and hygiene. Dr. Jull has done splendid service in this direction. During last year she examined 4,000 children. The department is taking steps to see that the rising generation are physically sound, and this year provision on the Estimates has been made for the employment of a second medical officer and a second nurse for this purpose in the hope that, in future, instead of 4,000 children being examined, the number will increase to something like 10,000. Also provision is made for a full-time dentist. Undoubtedly this is necessary, because decaying teeth and dirty mouths are detrimental to the health of our children. Every precaution should be taken to see that the teeth are carefully attended to. In the past, members of the Odontological Society have carried on fine work in this regard. There was a dental clinic health department open for two hours each morning, but it was found absolutely impossible to deal with all the cases presenting themselves, and so the department has decided to appoint this dentist. Not only will he attend to the children in the metropolitan area, but he will go out into the country districts as well, and probably his services will be available for all school children at a nominal fee. Institutions with children have suffered in the same direction through not being able to get the necessary attention, but it is hoped that that difficulty will now be overcome. I wish to say a few words regarding the Old Men's Home. The leader of the Opposition the other day referred to the fact that the home was very much over-crowded. This difficulty has recently been overcome. The verandahs which were previously enclosed and used as wards are not now required for that purpose. The verandahs were covered in and ventilation was thus prevented.

Hon. P. Collier: Where have you put the men who were on the verandahs? You have turned a number out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, because it was not necessary for them to be in the home. Formerly men were able to enter the institution by merely making application and without undergoing medical examination. It was found that under this system there were men in the home who should not have been there, because they were capable of earning small wages and keeping themselves. Consequently, the number of inmates has been reduced. There are now no wards on the verandahs, with the exception that one corner is used to accommodate a couple of beds, and it is not now necessary to provide any additional accommodation. The total number of men discharged from the home was 86 and the average age was 56 years. No man was discharged from the institution until work was first found for him, and the wages received were from £5 to 10s. a week and keep. The number in the institution dropped from 731 in April last year to 580. Thus, with a smaller number in the institution, it is not necessary to utilise the verandahs as wards. Yesterday I placed on the Table a report dealing with the Medical and Health Departments for the two years ended the 31st December, 1919. Hon. members, by perusing the report, will find all the information necessary to give them an insight into the working of the Medical and Health Departments, and there is, therefore, no need for me to add anything further.

Hon. W. C. ANGLIN (North-East Fremantle) [3.32]: Yesterday we had placed before us the report of the Medical and Health Department. We have not had time to dissect the report to see how the work has been done during the past two years. Last year we received no report at all, so it will be realised that we require a little time to study the various statistics embraced in this very large report covering two years. The Medical Department has a number of sub-departments charged with the duty of caring for the sick and for those in need. I could not help being struck with the remarks of the Minister relative to the various hospitals. He pointed out that the public contribute largely to the upkeep of some hospitals, while other hospitals receive scarcely anything at all by way of donations. I wish to direct attention to the fact that there are some hospitals which receive very large contributions, but they are carried on under entirely different conditions from those hospitals known as Government hospitals. In the timber country and in the big mining areas the contributors to most of the assisted hospitals, which at present, unfortunately, are receiving very little assistance, are entitled to medical attention for themselves, their wives and families in return for their contributions to the hospitals. It is

necessary to read the list of Government hospitals set out in the report. They are, Albany, Broome, Bunbury, Carnarvon, Coolgardie, Collie, Derby, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Katanning, Marble Bar, Menzies, Narrogin, Northam, Onslow, Pinjarra, Roebourne, Southern Cross, Wyndham and York. It was necessary to read that list because of a deputation which waited on the Minister recently. From the remarks made by the Minister one would think that there were no hospitals outside of those at Perth and Fremantle which were receiving assistance. I cannot understand why the Minister overlooked the Northam hospital, which is in his own district. The whole of the hospitals I have named are Government hospitals and they are maintained almost exclusively by Government funds. Fees for patients are paid and in some instances donations are contributed, but these amounts are very small in proportion to the total cost of upkeep. The assisted hospitals are Beverley, Bridgetown, Broad Arrow, Busselton, Cue-Day Dawn, Greenbushes, Kanowna, Laverton, Leonora, Meekatharra, Moora, Mount Magnet, Mount Morgans, Nannine, Norseman, Peak Hill, Ravensthorpe, Sandstone, Toodyay, Wagin, Wiluna, Westonia, Youanmi. The people in the timber and mining districts contribute largely to the upkeep of their hospitals—and I say all credit to them for the manner in which they contribute—and they receive medical attention free of other charge. But it would be an impossibility to adopt a similar system in Perth and Fremantle. The doctors would not agree to such a system; they would not attend the hospitals if the people who contributed were allowed to receive medical attention free of charge outside of their donations to the hospital. The Minister, in dealing with this question, put the position very unfairly as regards the standpoint of the Perth and Fremantle hospitals. Those in charge of the Perth and Fremantle hospitals must be considered to possess extraordinary business experience such as is not found among those responsible for other hospitals in the State. I can prove this by the present Estimates. Owing to the increased cost of medicines and other supplies, the Government have found it necessary to increase the vote for carrying on their own hospitals. Last year they spent £1,500 in excess of the amount voted, but this year it is found necessary to provide £1,000 more than was voted last year, bringing the total to £24,000. Let us analyse the position. In 1916 the cost to the State for Government hospitals was £17,507, but owing to the increase in the cost of commodities, the Government found it necessary—and doubtless rightly so—to increase their expenditure this year by £6,493. The Government could not help increasing the amount for the upkeep of their own hospitals, owing to the increased cost of commodities. Now let us see how they have treated the Perth and Fremantle and the assisted hospitals of the State. By their Estimates they suggest that the other

hospitals should be able to decrease their costs, even though the price of commodities has gone up. In 1916 the assisted hospitals received grants totalling £9,775, but the Government to-day say that these hospitals from Beverley to Youanmi shall be maintained for £7,700 or £2,075 less than was granted them in 1916. Whether the Government consider that the cost of commodities is lower in those districts than in the districts where Government hospitals are situated, I do not know, but it is a reasonable conclusion to draw that, if it is necessary to increase the vote to Government hospitals, it is also necessary to increase the expenditure on assisted hospitals. In 1916 the Perth Public Hospital received a grant of £20,000. The number of patients in that institution has increased considerably. The hospitals at Perth and Fremantle do not cater for the Perth and Fremantle districts alone. Patients from all over the State go to those institutions, because they are the two largest hospitals in the State. Notwithstanding the big increase in the cost of commodities, the Government have told the management of the Perth Public Hospital that they must maintain the hospital on a similar amount to that granted them four years ago. Is it possible for them to do so? Of course it is not. In 1916 the Fremantle Public Hospital received £5,750. This year the Government say that the management must maintain the institution on £5,000. Yet the Government, by their own Estimates, have proved that it is impossible to maintain their own hospitals unless they have an increase of approximately £6,500 over the expenditure of four years ago.

Mr. Harrison: The country districts made a special effort to assist their hospitals.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Some of the country districts. During the last two years the people of Fremantle subscribed £2,032 towards their hospital, and the fees received from patients amounted to £4,359, making a total of £6,392.

Mr. Johnston: The people of Fremantle subscribed only £689 last year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But a special effort was made at the end of the previous year. The amount of the donations last year was £367 6s. 11d., and in the year previously £1,665 7s. 1d.

Mr. Harrison: It is very little more than that of Kellerberrin.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Kellerberrin hospital has just been opened and is not mentioned in the report. Another special effort is being made at Fremantle now. No doubt the position obtaining at Fremantle is typical of what obtains at Perth. How is it possible for the management to carry on these hospitals under such conditions? If the Government persist in meting out treatment of this kind, it will mean that these hospitals will have to be closed. The Government find that, owing to the increased cost of commodities, extra money has to be provided for every sub-department throughout

the State and yet, after putting the control of these hospitals into the hands of boards, they say to the boards, "You must manage on the same amount of money or even less than you received five or six years ago." The action of the Government places an unfair burden on the shoulders of those persons who are attempting to carry on these semi-Government departments. Having regard to the manner in which these assisted hospitals are maintained, there should be no occasion to cut down this year's vote by approximately £2,000. The Government cannot carry on their hospitals at that rate; why should they expect hospital committees to carry on when they find it impossible to do so themselves? I hope the Government will give consideration to the Perth and Fremantle hospitals. It has been realised that the Children's Hospital cannot carry on, and the grant has been increased this year from £3,000 to £6,000. I do not object to that, but the Government have reduced the amount for the other large hospitals I have mentioned, as well as the assisted hospitals. I wish to refer to the treatment of cases of venereal disease. In another place Mr. Dodd asked certain questions of the Minister for Education. From the replies to these questions we find that 40 cases of venereal diseases were secretly reported. Of these, 32 were examined by a medical officer, and only 26 were found to be infected. It is strange that in all these cases no man is ever found to be affected; it is always the woman. Why is the man allowed to go scot-free?

The Minister for Works: They have not yet got hold of a man.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The fact that only 26 cases were found to be infected proves that the system by which secret charges can be lodged against women is a wrong one. Of the 32 cases, six produced negative results, and five others were lost sight of. There were six persons, therefore, against whom secret information had been given but who were proved by medical examination not to be suffering from the disease.

The Minister for Works: What about the 26?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They were found to be suffering from it.

Mr. Maley: That is a fair proportion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is not the point. I want to show the fallacy of secret information being given without those who have been wrongfully charged being able to force the informants to pay compensation for the indignity they have been called upon to suffer.

The Colonial Secretary: It might not have been necessary.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know nothing as to that. Is it not a fallacy that persons who give false information in this manner should be protected? It is time the Minister considered whether this part of the Health Act should not be wiped out altogether. If any man makes a false statement to the effect that some other person is suf-

fering from venereal disease the person innocently charged should be made acquainted with the name of the person who has lodged the charge against her—apparently it is always the woman who is charged.

Mr. Pickering: Quite right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The system is a dangerous one, and the sooner it is abolished the better. Of all the cases that were reported there is one still pending, and two other cases in which the conclusions were unsatisfactory. The remaining cases I have already dealt with. Parliament should take some action in this matter. It is unfair to put a woman to this indignity when it is proved that there is no ground for the allegation.

The Minister for Works: But 26 cases were found.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not object to the information being lodged, but I say that the person lodging it should be made responsible for his action in the event of the statement being false, and the person against whom false information is lodged should have an opportunity of getting compensation for the indignity suffered. The answers to these questions show that the Act is working unsatisfactorily, although the Health Department take the contrary view.

The Colonial Secretary: It is satisfactory.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is it a satisfactory procedure to bring these women before the medical officer and put them through the indignity of examination when some person is allowed secretly to lodge false information against them without their knowing the name of such person?

The Colonial Secretary: But for the Act we should not have found the 26.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would rather let them all go than see one suffer unjustly. Apparently the Minister is prepared to allow the person who lodges false information to go free. When there was an agitation for this extreme legislation we were told that one person in every five was suffering from some kind of venereal disease. There is a population of 324,000 in this State, and yet the report of the department shows that the disease in some form or other was found in only 1,038 persons.

Mr. Teesdale: This year?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is in the last report. They may be the same persons mentioned over and over again.

Mr. Teesdale: There were many more last year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The figures last year were 1,400 odd, and this year 1,038. The average is a little over three persons in every thousand, and yet when this legislation was first brought forward medical evidence of an alarming nature was produced to prove that the disease occurred in one out of every five persons. If it had not been that members of Parliament were somewhat scared by this medical testimony the legislation in question would never have been passed.

Mr. Toesdale: The Act has been copied in two or three other places.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It has been copied in Victoria and one or two of the other States of the Commonwealth. Western Australia was used under false pretences to enable some of the other States to be got hold of. The figures given to us to-day prove that the statements put forward at the time this legislation was introduced were entirely false. The result is we have on the statute-book an Act which is derogatory and unfair to the women of this State, placed there because of statements made which have not been borne out by subsequent facts. There is no doubt that those statements were entirely wrong. I am pleased that such has turned out to be the case. We said at the time that the statements must be exaggerated. I hope we have seen the last of this Act and that it will never be brought forward for re-enactment, and that if it is brought forward members will have the good sense to throw it out. If any person does lodge information against another that person should sign a statement, which should be made available to the person charged in the event of the statement being proved to be false.

Mr. Griffiths: Do the figures you have quoted apply to the whole State?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. It is time the department took steps to remove the high wall that surrounds the women's home at Fremantle. At present the building is too much like a prison, for the wall prevents the inmates from seeing anything of the outside world. In the old days the building was an asylum. Something should be done to make this place more of a home than a prison for the old women who are quartered there.

Mr. Foley: It should be moved altogether.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That would cost money. Eventually this site will be too valuable for the purpose for which it is now used. No doubt when the money is available the Government will move the home elsewhere. In the meantime an opportunity should be given to the inmates of this institution to see something of the outside world. At present they cannot even see the ocean. In fact they can see nothing from behind these walls. The staircase in the building is an old-fashioned one and some of the women are unable to climb to the upper story. The result is that the ground floor is unnecessarily overcrowded. Either a lift should be provided to take some of the inmates to the upper floor, or there should be extensions of the ground floor to provide the necessary extra accommodation. It is to be hoped that the Medical Department will look into these matters, and be a little more generous in the expenditure of the funds at its disposal.

Hon. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.58]: I would not have spoken on this vote but that I hold the position of chairman of the

Perth Public Hospital, and the vote for that institution has been cut down this year by £5,000. It is unnecessary for me to traverse the ground already covered so ably by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). It is a misnomer to call the institution in question the Perth Public Hospital. It is really a hospital for Western Australia. There is no portion of the State from which patients do not come to be treated there. Unfortunately, these patients are largely those who are eligible to be treated as persons who cannot afford to go to a private institution. Those hospitals which are controlled by the State have had their votes increased, but those which are subsidised by the Government, and supported by the management to the best of their ability, have been cut down. If the expenditure of Government institutions is largely increased by reason of the high cost of all commodities, it is indeed unreasonable and unfair for the Government to demand that the boards of management of hospitals, such as the Perth and the Fremantle, should be able to conduct their institutions with a reduction of one-fifth in their votes. The Minister says that the Government consider we were getting too much previously. Let me ask the Minister upon what the Government base that opinion? At the close of the financial year ended on 30th June, 1918, the board of management of the Perth Public Hospital were overdrawn, or in debt, to the tune of £5,500. Our vote had to be excessed to that extent by the Government. In the following year our subsidy was cut down by that amount. Having financed carefully, we were again in debt to the extent of £5,500. For our last financial year we requested a subsidy of £25,000, which was granted. With great difficulty we lived within our means. The Government took up the attitude of increasing the votes to their institutions. At the Perth Public Hospital we did not adopt such an attitude. We again asked for a vote of £25,000, and in doing so informed the Minister for Health that we would endeavour to live within our means. Instead of giving us what we asked for, the Government cut down our vote to £20,000—a reduction of £5,000. Is there any justification for cutting down the vote of an institution working under less favourable conditions, while increasing the votes of kindred institutions working under more favourable conditions? It is plain on the face of the facts that an injustice has been done to the Perth Public Hospital. The Minister will argue that the board of management should exercise greater economy. But how can we exercise a greater economy when our expenditure on ordinary necessities, such as groceries and dispensary drugs, during the last year has increased by £4,186 as compared with the expenditure before the war? While every other employee, from one end of Australia to the other, has during that period had his or her remuneration increased, in the Perth Public Hospital only the orderlies and housemaids have received increases, the nurs-

ing staff and other employees not having received any. No matter what the Committee may do, no matter what the Government may do, provision must be made to increase the remuneration of nearly every individual to-day employed at the Perth Public Hospital. If there is anybody who should be considered, if there is anybody who earns his living, it is a member of the nursing staff in such an institution. In view of our subsidy having been reduced by £5,000, and in view of the imperative necessity for increasing salaries at the institution, I do not know what is going to happen. The only way out that I can see is to reduce the facilities which the institution gives to the public. There are now six wards at the hospital, and in order to keep anywhere near the subsidy offered we shall have to close at least two of those wards, reducing our staff accordingly.

Mr. Teesdale: What paying wards are there at the hospital?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There are no paying wards. We have two medical wards, male and female, two surgical wards, male and female, a gynaecological ward, and an ophthalmic ward. Unfortunately, the hospital gets, as a rule, a class of patient not too well able to pay. From those who are able to pay, we get what we can; but it is very difficult indeed for us to collect money. If the hospital were an ordinary business, we should be able to select our clients. But we have no option in the matter. If a case comes in ill or hurt, the first thing the staff think about is to cure the patient. They do not think of payment.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you think the institution is abused?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There is nothing in this world that I know of that is not abused. I believe the hon. member himself has been taken down in his time, wily though he is. We do our best. It is very difficult, when a patient is restored to health just sufficiently to be able to leave the hospital, for us to worry him for a few shillings, especially if, as frequently is the case, he has not a feather to fly with. We make those pay who can pay; we even take them before the courts. I hope the Committee will express a desire to the Government that the hospital vote should not be cut down. If we had double the amount of money available that we actually have, our facilities would not enable us to meet the demands on the hospital. We have not the necessary number of beds. We turn people away every day. Two or three times a year we are compelled to insert in the newspapers advertisements desiring the medical profession and people in the country not to send us cases, because we have not room for them. We need another ward to accommodate 100 patients just to meet the growing requirements of the metropolitan area and of those outlying districts from which many of our patients come. I have no wish to enter into controversial matters, but the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon.

W. C. Angwin) has spoken about the Health Act. I have not the figures bearing on the subject, because I did not think the matter would crop up. However, night clinics have been established in connection with the Perth Public Hospital since the passing of certain health legislation; and a large number of cases of a certain disease have been treated at those clinics. I suppose they have treated 1,000 cases or more. I did not hear all the observations of the member for North-East Fremantle, but he referred to six persons who were wrongly charged with having a certain disease, were medically examined, and were found to be free from the disease. Remembering that the hospital treats thousands of cases, the fact that there have been so few complaints shows that the Act has worked well.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But these are six out of 32 against whom that statement was made.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: When it is borne in mind that during that period the Perth Public Hospital has treated 1,000 or more other patients who were worse sufferers—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But there have been only 1,038 cases in the State altogether.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The last time I spoke on this subject, 12 or 18 months ago the number of cases treated was over 1,000. On that occasion a Bill to amend the Health Act was before the House, and I had the figures at hand. I have not got them now. However, the Perth Public Hospital has treated over 1,000 of these patients.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The report says there were 1,038 of them in the State.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If the number of patients is now less, that is proof of the justice of this legislation. It goes to show that we are cleaning up the disease. That is the purpose for which the Act was passed. If the disease increased and prospered while the Act was in force, undoubtedly the measure would have to be pronounced a failure. Knowledge gained by me as chairman of the Perth Public Hospital enables me to say that it would be a sorry day for the State when the operation of that Act was terminated.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There were 40 dealt with out of your thousand.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No matter. We have proof that the disease is there, and that this Act remedies it. At the hospital we get only those patients who are compelled to come to us; we have no knowledge of the number treated by private practitioners. These latter are not recorded.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, they are.

Hon. P. Collier: They must be recorded.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: They are not included in the figures I have given.

Hon. P. Collier: But your figures are not correct.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I shall verify them tomorrow.

Hon. P. Collier: They are incorrect.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: They are absolutely correct.

Hon. P. Collier: Then this report is incorrect.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: What report is the hon. member referring to?

Hon. P. Collier: Last year's report of the Health Department.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will guarantee that nearly all the cases referred to in that report have been treated at the Perth Public Hospital. I am confident about that.

Hon. P. Collier: Then the report must be incorrect.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not responsible for the report. I will verify my figures to-morrow morning, when I go to the Perth Public Hospital.

Hon. P. Collier: We must rely upon the published departmental report. We have no other source of information.

Mr. Willcock: The disease is notifiable, and must be notified.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I repeat, the great majority of the patients referred to in that report, if those are the only cases reported, have been treated in the Perth Public Hospital.

Mr. Troy: The Fremantle Hospital has a reputation.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I know that we have to accept patients from Fremantle for other medical and surgical treatment. They come to us even from Fremantle, notwithstanding the very fine hospital there. People who are sick will go elsewhere if they think they can obtain better treatment elsewhere, just as people go from Western Australia to consult medical practitioners in the Eastern States, in the belief that medical science is more advanced there than it is here. We have even had people from the electorate of the member for Boulder at the Perth Public Hospital. The facilities necessary for dealing with the complaints of those people were not available on the goldfields, and the cases were sent to us in Perth. We have sent them back jolly and hearty, and I suppose they will be voting for the hon. member in March next. I hope the Committee will not form an opinion upon any scare as regards this health legislation. If any member desires to come to the hospital with me I will show him what is being done. I am satisfied that the figures justify the Act.

Mr. Lambert: On a point of order, I would like to ask for my own information whether His Honour the Speaker is in order in addressing the House in his robes as Speaker. If he is going to speak in his capacity as a private member he should speak in his seat as an ordinary member of Parliament.

Mr. Smith: Where is his seat?

The CHAIRMAN: The Speaker is quite in order in speaking in his robes. His Honour has no seat on the floor of the House as a private member.

Mr. Lambert: Am I right in asking whether His Honour is speaking as Mr. Speaker or as the member for Mt. Margaret?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will clear that up.

Mr. Lambert: I do not desire His Honour the Speaker to correct me at the present juncture. I desire the Chairman to give a ruling as to whether it would be preferable for the Speaker to address the House in his capacity as member for Mt. Margaret.

Mr. Troy: He is trying to gag you.

Mr. Lambert: I ask the Chairman to have regard for precedents which exist in other Parliaments of the world before giving a ruling on this matter. It may be somewhat serious.

Mr. Troy: He is a stickler for Parliamentary etiquette.

The CHAIRMAN: For the past 10 years it has always been customary for the Speaker, when he desires to address the House, to speak from the floor of the House as he has been doing to-night. He is quite in order and I call upon the member for Mt. Margaret to resume his remarks.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, that my personal appearance has somewhat hurt the feelings of the member for Coolgardie.

Mr. Teesdale: He has only recently been married.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am at a disadvantage in not knowing whether or not it was the solidity of my arguments in favour of the Perth Public Hospital, the Fremantle hospital and other similar institutions, and in opposition to their votes being cut down in these Estimates that gave offence. Whether that was agitating the member for Coolgardie or not, I am afraid that if the member for Coolgardie were Minister and I was appealing to him for consideration on this matter, I would be depending upon a very rotten reed in seeking favourable consideration for the sick and ailing. I would not be able to speak on the floor of the House if I were not representing a constituency. I happen to have been member for Mt. Margaret for the past 20 years, and by virtue of that position I am addressing the Committee to-night. Even so, I would not have spoken if I had not been Chairman of the Board of Management of the Perth Public Hospital, whose vote has been cut down by £5,000. It was my desire to place facts and figures before the Committee with a view to influencing the Government to restore the amounts they have cut off the Estimates. I have addressed the House since being Speaker only on subjects of importance affecting the Perth Public Hospital and the Public Health Act.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have been entirely out of it regarding one aspect, although you are all right regarding the hospital.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am dealing with the Public Health Act and I desire to ask the Committee to be assured that, as the accuracy of the figures I have quoted has been questioned, I will verify them to-morrow and give the information to the House. If I am wrong, I shall express regret, but I believe I am right

regarding the number of patients who have been treated.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They would never have been treated had it not been for the the Act, but there is that secret statement, you know.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: We have had patients who would have had to suffer from this disease who could not have afforded to pay for the necessary treatment outside.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No; the clinics were established before then.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: They were established after the Act was passed. I can give the hon. member the day and date of the passage of the Act and the day and date of the establishment of the clinics.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do you mean to say there were no clinics before the signed statement provision was deleted from the Act?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The clinics were established after the Act was passed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am dealing with the secret statement.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It was stated that the Health Act was a disgrace to the country.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: So it was, regarding that statement.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Any Act of Parliament which cleans up a disease, to the extent of 1,000 cases, is no disgrace to the State.

Hon. P. Collier: We are dealing with the unsigned statement. We are dealing with that particular phase of the matter.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Members are clouding the issue. I say that the Act has been justified by the number of patients coming within its scope.

Hon. P. Collier: The particular aspect we are dealing with only roped in 32.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member was confining himself to the Act when he said it was a disgrace.

Hon. P. Collier: In this particular part.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member can trim as much as he likes. He spoke of the Act.

Mr. Teesdale: He said it was copied in Acts passed elsewhere.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is a weakness in their legislation.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Let members be honest in dealing with this matter.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am honest.

Mr. Teesdale: It was in the English papers, too.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the last word, then.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was a rotten thing, anyhow.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Members who are now sitting in opposition then occupied the Ministerial side of the House and introduced the legislation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not the unsigned statement.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Government of the day were complimented from all parts of Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: Now you are side-tracking the issue.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not want to raise any controversy about the matter, but I do hope that members will not regard seriously the reference to the degradation involved in having such an Act on the statute-book. I could give figures regarding the cases dealt with, but I will not weary the Committee. I hope that the Committee will express to the Government their desire that the Estimates for the hospitals under the health vote shall not be cut down.

Mr. Johnston: Why have the donations to the Perth Public Hospital fallen off so much?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is largely accounted for by members, when standing for Parliament, advocating free medicine.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Ask him if Narrogin has been knocked off the list?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is due to members advocating free treatment in our hospitals. The people are now educated up to a belief that treatment in the hospital should be free, and they consider that they can walk into the hospital and demand free treatment.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does that apply only to the Perth hospital?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: No, it applies elsewhere as well. With the present high cost of living, it is impossible for many people to secure private medical treatment.

Hon. P. Collier: People come from the country to the Perth Public Hospital as well.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope the Committee will impress upon the Government the necessity of restoring the vote for the Perth Public Hospital, and for other similar institutions, and thus extend to the sick and poor of the State that consideration which they deserve, and which it is the duty of the healthy people of the State to afford their less fortunate brethren. If we do not contribute sufficient to the Treasury to enable that to be done, we should get out.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [9.25]. There are only one or two subjects which I desire to discuss regarding health matters. Members will remember that the Weights and Measures Act was passed some time ago. I desire to ask the Minister controlling the Health Act whether he will do what is possible to get the Act proclaimed. It is desirable that the clauses which refer to bread and other commodities should be given effect.

Mr. Smith: What are the Perth City Council doing?

Mr. FOLEY: The council are doing everything possible, despite the lack of assistance and often antagonism from members representing metropolitan constituencies. The Act in question was not proclaimed owing to the fact that two lots of standards which were sent out from England were lost through ships being sunk during the war period. It is the duty of the Government to take over the standards that the city council have got and proclaim the Act so that the interests of the public regarding the weight of bread may be conserved. During the past year, the ques-

tion of meat inspection has exercised the minds of the Health authorities. The recent health conference provided an object lesson regarding the inspection of meat to those taking an interest in that subject. The city council have taken over the inspection of the meat in the metropolitan area and altered the system so that many small shops and manufactories have a double inspection which the Government did not impose formerly. When it was simply a matter of the inspection of meat at the abattoirs, various people with small goods shops could take over the meat and place it in cool chambers, from which it was taken without a further inspection. At the present time a further inspection is made by the municipal authorities, with the result that small goods disposed of in the metropolitan area or sent to remote parts of the State are made from absolutely pure meat. The Government are paying very little for that.

Mr. Smith: Why should the Government pay for it?

Mr. FOLEY: It is a question affecting the whole State. I notice that in the Health Department's report the Chief Health Inspector takes credit for everything in connection with the inspection of meat. The inspection of milk is another serious question which will have to be considered at an early date. The question of the control of the supply of milk has been gone into exhaustively by the municipal authorities and the supply can safely be asserted to be the purest in Australia.

Mr. Troy: In the world.

Mr. FOLEY: I know, at any rate, that it can be proved to be the purest in Australia and as pure as it can be found in many countries in the world. The supply has reached that standard largely by reason of the close inspection carried out by the municipal authorities, an inspection which has involved no little expenditure. Therefore, it is the duty of the Government to do a great deal more than they have done in the past in the direction of assisting the municipal authorities to maintain the record which has been attained. I have no desire to worry the Committee with figures, but a few which I have here might prove interesting. Comparatively speaking, very few prosecutions were undertaken. They totalled 41 in the area controlled by the Perth health authorities. There was one against the vendor of milk for carrying water, one for obstructing an inspector, three for not having tightly-fitting covers on the milk drums, six for using soap for stopping leaks, three for failing to cool milk, one for washing the udders of cows and two for using formalin, although both were withdrawn. In the metropolitan area there are 78 carts trading, of which 45 get their milk from depots. There are 23 producers vending milk in the city with carts, and 10 vendors disposing of milk obtained direct from producers. There are 92 shops vending milk and 10 milk depots and 10

dairies in the city. During the year 1,176 samples were purchased by the health authorities, and of that total 954 samples conformed to the required standard. If, by means of the rigid inspection to which I have referred, it is possible to bring the milk supply to such a high standard, we as a Parliament should do our duty and take over the whole control. The city of Wellington, during the past few years has gone into the question of municipalising the distribution of milk, and the figures they have been able to supply up to the present time do not show that any great profit has accrued to them as a municipality, although it has been clearly proved that the effect has been to infinitely improve the quality of the milk supplied. Comparing their results with those of the city of Perth—and Perth has not gone in for the pasteurisation of milk as Wellington has done—our milk supply is purer and of a better quality than that of Wellington. The Government, however, must carry out a bacteriological examination of the milk supply of the State, and if they do that they will be helping the municipal authorities to an extent that it is impossible for them to do without aid. I trust the Minister will go into the question of the distribution, and confer with the local bodies as to whether it is possible to bring about State control, or State and municipal control combined, always having in view the supply of pure milk for the community. With regard to hospitals, I am with the member for Mount Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor). I believe with him that the State should do something in the way of increasing the facilities at the Perth Public Hospital. Not many members are aware of the fact that there are surplus Red Cross funds, the war necessities having been fulfilled.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am pleased to hear that.

Mr. FOLEY: I do not suppose the hon. member will miss the chance to ask for some of those funds. There are certain sums available for the treatment of soldiers in the various States. It is all very well to say that Western Australia could assist, even supported by the Commonwealth Government, to the extent of providing 100 beds in an institution, and that that accommodation would provide everything that was needed. The accommodation that is actually required is 200 beds. I have been a military hospital inspector for the past four and a-half years and I have been in daily touch with the medical men. All those in authority have gone into the figures exhaustively and they declare that anything less than 200 beds would be useless. The Government must do all they can to get as much help as possible from the Commonwealth and get down to bed-rock and keep at them to secure some of the surplus funds of the Red Cross to assist in the provision of the 200 beds for the soldiers. The accommodation might be said

to be a gradually diminishing quantity, and if we can succeed in getting the 200 beds provided, when the soldier patients are reduced in number, we shall have additional accommodation at the Perth hospital for general use and the hospital might then be an institution worthy of the name.

The Minister for Works: Negotiations are going on now.

Mr. FOLEY: I am glad to hear that statement. I am looking forward to the time when the Perth hospital will not be a hospital where only the indigent may go. If any man, woman or child should fall sick, it should be possible to secure admission to the Perth hospital at a lower rate than that charged at the present time.

Mr. Teesdale: Why should they?

Mr. FOLEY: Let me instance some of the outback hospitals and show what is done there for the people who fall sick. Take the hospital in my own electorate. The treatment accorded to patients there is better than that which is provided at the Perth Public Hospital. If I may say so, there is a greater personal application to duty in the Leonora hospital than is to be found in bigger hospitals elsewhere. If we perfected the system of hospital accommodation, it would only be a matter of time before the people got by right and not by privilege, that personal touch which makes all the difference in hospital life. If what I have stated can be done in remote centres of the State, it should be possible to do it also in the larger hospitals. I have known of people who would have applied for admission to the Perth hospital if they could have gone there on the payment of a reasonable rate. The result has been that these people have remained in their own homes and have gone on with the doctors as far as it was possible for them to afford it, and those doctors have had to bear the brunt of what the patients could not themselves stand. There is only one thing for it and that is for the people in the metropolitan area to do what is done in outback centres, namely, to subscribe so much per week. In Leonora the community there not only subscribe towards the upkeep of their own hospital but the funds raised are also devoted towards assisting similar institutions elsewhere. I desire to pay a tribute to the assistance which has always been rendered by the State to the Leonora hospital. Every Minister who has had charge of the Health Department has never failed to receive sympathetically any requests made for additional assistance for that institution. This help has always been forthcoming for the reason that the people there have never failed to help themselves. The sooner the Government seriously consider the advisableness of introducing State insurance against sickness, so that everyone may do a little, instead of only the willing horse carrying the whole of the burden, the better it will be for everyone. I

should like to say a word on the question of the sale of margarine, a commodity sold under the supervision and with the sanction of the Health Department, the municipalities doing the inspection. As the result of those inspections it has been found that most of the margarine sold in the metropolitan area contains 25 per cent. of the best butter, and therefore its nourishing qualities are really good, while there is nothing in it harmful to health. The health inspectors all agree that, unlike the margarine sold in other places, the margarine sold in Perth is almost as good as butter.

Mr. Johnston: They are passing it off as butter.

Mr. FOLEY: Nothing of the sort; they cannot do that; they are compelled to sell it as margarine. We have heard a lot about the glories of the South-West, but those glories are not reflected in the butter produced down there. We have in margarine an excellent butter substitute within the purchasing power of the poor man, a substitute containing satisfactory qualities which are absent from much of the butter sold. I want the Minister to refuse to put any difficulty in the way of any public body having the inspection of this substitute in hand.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.50]: The remarks of the member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) will have one good effect if they serve to draw attention to the extent to which the nurses in our hospitals are underpaid. While other sections of the community have gone on strike, those noble women have remained at their posts and continued to work 12 hours a day. The hon. member has told us that they are rewarded by receiving no increase whatever in salary and no decrease in their long hours of duty.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Hon. P. Collier: The Florence Nightingales of our modern civilisation.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Yes, the sweated Nightingales of our modern times, and it is time the Minister did something for them, whether they live in the city or in the remote blackblocks. One hon. member referred to the position of assisted and Government hospitals. Narrogin is fortunate in having a Government hospital. The people of that district contribute in fees and donations 45 per cent. of the cost of that hospital, and at present a special effort is being made to increase the local assistance rendered. I believe that next year the voluntary donations contributed in that district will relieve the State to a greater extent than in the past. We have listened to the remarks of the member for Mt. Margaret in regard to the upkeep of the Perth Public Hospital. Personally I think Government control is the best for our hospitals; still, if at any time the Government decide to alter the system, I do not think any country hospitals would mind becoming assisted hospitals if their donations

were subsidised by the State on the generous scale applied to the Perth Public Hospital. I have before me figures showing the donations and other receipts of the Perth Public Hospital for the financial year just closed. The fees paid by patients to the hospital amounted to £5,624 2s. 10d. The donations and subscriptions to the hospital from the whole of the population of the rich city of Perth were £328 1s., whilst other receipts amounted to £80 17s. 2d., making a total of £6,033 1s., on which amount the Government gave a subsidy of no less than £25,000. In other words, the Government paid the trustees of the Perth Public Hospital something over £75 for every pound given to that institution by the people.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How long since you started assistance at Narrogin?

Mr. JOHNSTON: At one time the assistance was not as large as it is now. So vigorous is it at present that I should not be surprised if instead of its being about the fourth in the State, as at present, it should be found at the head of the list next year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am pleased to know they are improving.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The point I wish to make is that whilst in 1918 the people of the metropolitan area gave £1,691 in donations to the Perth Public Hospital, that amount decreased last year to £328 1s., and on that sum the Government gave a subsidy of £25,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have to take in in that other £80. That is not a grant.

Mr. JOHNSTON: No, I gave credit for that as "other receipts." I do not say the Government are justified in reducing this subsidy; on the contrary, it is a form of economy of which I strongly disapprove; but I do say that the Government are justified in expecting the rich people of the metropolitan area to raise more than £328 per annum towards the support of the local hospital. There is no part of the State where the people are as dead to their public duty, to what Mr. Colebatch has described as the steep path of social service, in regard to the local hospital, as are the people of Perth. It is not surprising that the Government should take some action, probably with the object of rousing the people of the city to at least the same sense of responsibility in regard to their local hospital as is evinced by the people outback. In looking through the figures one cannot but observe that, apparently, the farther out back we get, the higher are the local contributions to the local hospital. It is only one more sign of the large-hearted generosity of back country people, who, as the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) said, not only support their own local institutions, but as general taxpayers contribute a good deal towards the upkeep of those in the metropolitan area as well.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How much did the Narrogin hospital collect in fees?

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have not the figures, but I can assure the hon. member that we are bearing 45 per cent. of the cost now, and that we shall do even better next year. If the hon. member will accompany me to Narrogin to-morrow he shall have an opportunity of attending a special function being held in that centre for the assistance of this institution. The reduction by the Government of the subsidy to be paid to the Perth Public Hospital, although a deplorable policy, will have done some good if it makes the people of the metropolitan area pay more than £1 for every £75 of subsidy which the hospital receives from the Government.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [10.0]: In the report of the Medical and Health Departments the following appears under the heading "School hygiene and medical inspection of children":—

The report of the medical officer for schools affords irrefutable evidence of the value of the work of that branch and of the necessity for extending its application, especially in those directions which will result in the prevention of the very numerous unhealthy conditions brought to light.

The figures disclose that 20 examinations were made last year in as many different schools, out of a total of 663 schools in the State. From the tenor of the report one would be apt to conclude that this work was developing in rather a large way, but the report of the Education Department points out that the system of medical inspection of children has been lamentably inadequate. I hope that something more than passing attention will be paid to this phase of the work of the Health Department. Regarding the registration of midwives, I would like the Minister to inform me whether anything has been done respecting the Red Cross donation of £15,000 from Great Britain which it was intended should be devoted to a bush nursing scheme. The work being done in the city has been the subject of special reference by the Silver Chain League.

The Colonial Secretary: A committee has been appointed.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We have not heard much about it; in fact the scheme seems to be dead. The people in the backblocks would be glad if this scheme were brought to fruition. An item of £250 is provided for railway ambulances. This is a small amount. There are seven or eight ambulances provided throughout the State, which number in my opinion is inadequate. The work of the Silver Chain is deserving of assistance from the Government. I had the pleasure recently of attending the opening of homes in North Perth for aged people of the city. The league is doing a very fine work. It is providing nurses for the sick and needy, and in fact its activities generally are deserving of the highest commendation and the best support that can be given them. When the items are under discussion I shall have several questions to ask the Minister regarding railway ambu-

lances and school hygiene, and medical inspection of children, and I hope he will be able to satisfy me that the latter work is proceeding as satisfactorily as the report would lead us to believe.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [10.4]: I hope that the Minister will be able to give greater consideration to the subsidised hospitals in the country. The Cue hospital has received no increase during the last five years, notwithstanding that the cost of medicines and other supplies has advanced so greatly. The Cue hospital has 303 subscribers, and in 1918 the sum of £787 16s. 6d. was collected in addition to a sum of £282 2s. 2d., which was raised by other efforts, making a total of £1,069 18s. 8d. A sum of £88 4s. was collected for maintenance, which brings the total to £1,158 2s. 8d. These figures speak well for the efforts of the comparatively small number of subscribers to the Cue hospital. The subsidy received last year was £699 17s. 9d., and the Government grant amounted to £16 18s. 4d., a total of £716 16s. 1d. This is the whole amount received for the Cue hospital, and as I have pointed out, the people themselves contributed £1,069 18s. 8d. I urge the Minister to give more favourable consideration to this institution. I happen to know what it cost to run as a Government hospital. It cost the Government over £3,000 a year, and now they are paying only £700 towards its upkeep. Requests have been made for an increased subsidy, and the people themselves have been urged to make greater efforts on behalf of the hospital. The subscribers are paying £3 10s. 7d. per head towards the maintenance of the hospital, which is very creditable indeed. I do not wish to draw any comparison with Perth; quite a lot of people from outback places are treated at the Perth Public Hospital. I hope that the Government will be able to extend greater consideration to the outback hospitals. No provision is made in the Estimates for the building of a recreation hall at Wooroloo.

The Colonial Secretary: The Government are giving £1,000.

Mr. CHESSON: It is necessary that something should be done to provide a hall so that these patients may enjoy reasonable comfort. Theatrical parties visit the institution and there is practically no place in which they can entertain the patients. A recreation hall would be of value as a shelter for patients during the wet weather. I visit the institution as much as any member, and I have noticed that during wet weather a lot of the patients have to go to bed simply because there is no other place where they can go.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [10.10]: I endorse the remarks made by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) regarding the pay for nurses in public and other hospitals. The pay should undoubtedly be increased. I know of a nurse who is going on leave. She is receiving the munificent sum

of 25s. a week, and has to pay 15s. a week for her keep. Nurses have to work 12 hours a day, and I think their shifts could be reduced considerably.

The Colonial Secretary: Is that nurse in an assisted hospital?

Mr. PICKERING: No, in the Perth Public Hospital. The Government acted unwisely in reducing the vote to the Perth Public Hospital, because it must be realised that this institution is of considerable benefit to country patients. On the other hand I certainly think that some blame is attachable to the board of the hospital for the defalcations in the accounts whereby considerable loss was involved. Apart from that I do not think the hospital should be victimised in any way. I regret that the amount provided for assisted hospitals has been reduced. The Busselton hospital has been steadily improving so far as local contributions are concerned. This year a special sports gathering has been arranged.

The Colonial Secretary: The amount has not been decreased.

Mr. PICKERING: The sum for the Busselton hospital this year is less by £50, and I believe it is taken off the salary of the medical officers. In view of the increased cost of living, I am strongly opposed to a reduction in the salary of the medical officers in my district.

The Colonial Secretary: Where there is more than one and where we have a district medical officer, the other man would be willing to pay something to get a practice.

Mr. PICKERING: The reduction is unwarranted, more especially in view of the fact that the assisted hospitals are doing so much in their own behalf. I would like to know if the Minister can make a statement regarding the application by the people of Capel for a subsidy for a medical officer in that district. I am glad that the Minister takes a serious view of the necessity for the inspection of school children. The report laid on the Table illustrates how vital are these inspections, and I trust that the Minister will give effect to the statement he has made. The same remarks apply to the dental inspection of children. I do not desire to stress anything on this particular vote, except that I greatly regret any reduction in the amount granted to assisted hospitals. I hope the Minister will reconsider the question of the sums paid to the medical officers of these institutions.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [10.13]: One item in these Estimates which strikes me more than any other is the decrease in the amount provided for district nursing. Probably no hospital assistance is equal to the assistance that can be given to the sick by the district nurses. The services of a district nurse must tend to lessen the expenditure of the district hospitals. In many cases if the nurse can attend in time, serious illness is prevented. If any item in these Estimates

should have been increased, it is the item provided for district nursing.

Hon. P. Collier: There is £1,000.

Mr. MONEY: Last year the actual expenditure was £2,289 and the amount of the vote this year is £2,150.

Hon. P. Collier: Last year they had to deal with the influenza epidemic.

Mr. MONEY: Epidemics are of frequent occurrence. We are constantly referring to the discomforts of country districts, and to the want of hospital accommodation and medical assistance. Surely we can help in this direction more than in any other by encouraging this system of district nursing. It would be an excellent thing if the Government would give a subsidy of pound for pound upon all moneys raised by the people in the country for the establishment of this system of district nursing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They always subsidise where there is not a medical officer.

The Colonial Secretary: A sum of £50 is provided.

Mr. MONEY: Even where there is a medical officer it is just as necessary that there should also be a district nurse. Here is an opportunity to do something to minimise the discomforts that are said to exist in country districts. People have to travel long distances to Perth to receive medical attention which could well be given on the spot at less expense and inconvenience if a trained nurse was available when required. I hope this question will be seriously considered by the Government and that some system of subsidising local effort will be adopted. This is the third year in which this matter has been brought forward but the system remains the same.

General debate concluded; votes and items discussed as follows:—

Item, Public hospitals, £31,000:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Why has this item been reduced by £5,500? The Fremantle Hospital is badly in need of funds. Last year as the result of a special effort £1,600 was raised, and only £300 has been raised since. A further effort is now being made to raise more money, but even if that is done it will be impossible for the institution to carry on effectively on the subsidy allowed. The present subsidy is less than it was in 1916, and yet there are more patients to provide for. The hospital is in debt, but it must be kept open. The committee of management was appointed by the Government and is, therefore, acting on their behalf. Some assistance should be rendered to enable the institution to be carried on.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I can only tell the hon. member that I will bring the matter before the Minister in control of this department. It was considered that these hospitals should be run on more economical lines, and it was for this reason that the subsidy was reduced. I think the Fremantle hospital committee is doing better work than the Perth hospital committee in the matter

of collection of fees, but there are many persons who attend these institutions who should be made to pay for their treatment, but who do not do so. The collections at the Perth Public Hospital represent 12 per cent., at Fremantle 22 per cent., and at the assisted hospitals 76 per cent. of the total amounts due. The number of beds occupied from 1912 to 1915 was practically the same at the Perth Public Hospital as was the case in 1919, and yet the expenditure increased from £23,000 to £34,000, and the amount contributed by the Government from £19,000 to £25,000. During 1917-18 the sum of £25,000 was written off for bad debts and in the following year £13,000 was written off. This indicates the need for greater effort in the collection of fees from patients.

Item, Assisted hospitals, £7,700.

Mr. PICKERING: The hospital at Busseton has been working under difficulties for some time past. Has a sum of money been provided on the Estimates for the necessary additions to that institution?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A sum of £1,300 has been provided for a maternity ward and quarters for the Principal Medical Officer.

Item, General, £2,500:

Mr. MONEY: Has the Minister the details under the heading of "district nurses, grants in aid, £1,100"?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This is a sum provided for payment for district nurses. Where there is a maternity home in a country town, a sum of £50 is provided for a nurse. I take it the whole sum is for this purpose.

Mr. MONEY: I understand this grant is made in localities where there is no medical officer.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not in every instance.

Mr. MONEY: I fail to see the necessity for the distinction.

Mr. PICKERING: What is the result of the experiments that are being conducted in connection with railway ambulances, and has the policy proved a success?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Ambulances are fitted up on trolleys in the different districts and a stretcher is provided. We have no ambulance actually doing that work alone. In case of emergency or accident an engine and van are provided to bring the patient to a hospital, if that is proved to be necessary. The principle may be extended if it proves a success.

Item, Woolooloo Sanatorium, £19,500:

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister stated by way of interjection that the Government were giving £1,000 towards the erection of a hall at Woolooloo. I can find no such item on these Estimates.

The Colonial Secretary: It need not be on these Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would appear on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. MUNSIE: In his report the Wooroloo medical officer says—

It is to be hoped that the public interest will be maintained regarding the necessity for the erection of a recreation building for the use of the patients, as during the winter months the inclement weather makes it impossible for a large number of the patients to get about in the open, and it is highly desirable that they shall have a building where they can enjoy a modicum of comfort and the means of entertainment.

A deputation which waited on the Government in this connection some little time ago stated that to build a decent hall would cost £3,000. A promise was made that £2,000 would be obtained from the public if the Government would grant £1,000. Even if the public give only £1,000, I hope the Government will give the other £2,000, so that a hall may be available for next winter.

The Colonial Secretary: A considerable sum has already been raised by the public.

Mr. HARRISON: Having visited the sanatorium on several occasions, and having seen the conditions under which the patients work, I have pleasure in stating that the patients show much interest in their gardening. From the medical officer I understood that the Government were granting pound for pound towards the cost of a hall.

The Colonial Secretary: No. One thousand pounds was promised to the deputation, and that is all the deputation asked for.

Mr. HARRISON: Better accommodation should be provided for the patients in wet and cold weather. Moreover, there should be a place available for the holding of entertainments. It must be remembered that the Wooroloo patients are cut off from intercourse with the rest of the population.

Mr. WILLCOCK: A hall is an absolute necessity at Wooroloo, and the original plans should have provided for one. The methods adopted in connection with the efforts of the Ugly Men to raise funds for the building of a hall have been seriously detrimental to the general welfare of the patients. The proper treatment of tubercular patients is plenty of rest and plenty of good food, and an absence of excitement. The Ugly Men competitions have reacted very adversely on the patients, who should not bear the responsibility of providing by their efforts any portion of the amount required. I hope the Government will make themselves financially responsible for the building of the hall, without calling on the unfortunate patients to raise any portion of the money.

Item, Nurses, £860:

Mr. PICKERING: During the general discussion a question was put to the Minister regarding the Government's intentions as to the nurses, who are getting very small pay.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The matter is being dealt with by the Minister himself.

Item, Health inspectors, £4,473:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I understand that early closing inspectors come under this item, and I want to draw attention to the laxity shown in allowing fireworks to be sold last Friday night in Fremantle shops, and particularly Chinese shops, after closing hours. The Chinese were selling fireworks up to 10 and 11 p.m., and the town of Fremantle suffered something in the nature of a bombardment. A lady fell fainting in the street, and a soldier suffering from shell shock was also prostrated. The affair was positively disgraceful between 9 o'clock and half-past 10. Some fireworks, costing as much as 5s. each, were thrown into the air, where they went off with a report like a cannon. It was impossible for the one or two policemen who were on duty in the streets, to control the disturbance. In fact, fireworks were thrown at the police. Had the shops been closed at 9 p.m., the disturbance would not have occurred, because the fireworks could not have been obtained. I saw one lady drop in the street in a dead faint, and I saw a returned soldier who was suffering from shell shock, tumble down in a fit.

Mr. Teesdale: What were the inspectors doing?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am drawing the attention of the Minister to what occurred in Fremantle on the night in question, and I hope the Government will see that the importation of these fireworks is prohibited.

The Colonial Secretary: It would require an Act to do that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know that.

Item, School hygiene, £1,457:

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister stated that it was proposed to appoint an additional medical officer to carry on this work.

The Colonial Secretary: And a nurse.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And I think a dentist as well. I hope the Government will go right ahead with this work. Naturally, during war time it was neglected but now that the war is over, we should continue the work and persevere with it. The report of the medical officer, Dr. Jull, who carried out an inspection in the schools last year, is very disquieting. While many of the children of course were not examined, the medical officer dealt with 3,316. The report shows that of that number 3,125, or roughly, all except 200, were defective regarding their teeth, cleanliness, and from other causes.

The Colonial Secretary: Naturally, Dr. Jull examined those cases she thought it necessary to do.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The children would not be selected. She would go through the schools and examine the whole of the children.

The Colonial Secretary: Not necessarily so. She would pick out at a glance those who needed examining.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Excluding teeth and cleanliness, 2,571 or 32.5 per cent. were deficient from one cause or another. It is no

use appointing additional medical officers to carry on this work unless some power is provided to compel parents to take action in accordance with the report submitted. Dr. Jull reports that, from her experience, the vast majority of parents ignore the reports. The time of the medical officers and the expense involved will be largely wasted unless the parents are compelled to take action in the interests of their children.

The Colonial Secretary: It would be a drastic thing to do.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At the same time, we take power under many of our Acts to compel people to do things which are distasteful and which they will not do unless they are so compelled. It is necessary to take action to compel the parents to act upon the reports submitted.

Mr. Munsie: How would you provide for a case where a medical officer has submitted a report regarding a child, which report conflicts with that obtained from the family doctor, saying that the treatment suggested was unnecessary.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In such a case, in view of the private practitioner's contention that action was not necessary, no punishment would follow.

The Colonial Secretary: A parent might not be able to afford to take the necessary steps.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so, and in such cases the Government should provide the necessary medical attention. It is most remarkable that such a disclosure as that mentioned by Dr. Jull, regarding the defective health of the children, should be made, and it is regrettable that parents show so little concern about the welfare of their children.

The Colonial Secretary: The children are only slightly defective in most cases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the slight defects lead to greater trouble in after life. In discussing this matter with a doctor, he stressed the point that operations which were simple when the child was young, became quite another matter when the child was older.

Mr. ANGELO: Do the two doctors simply examine children, or do they give the children lectures?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They examine the children and write out the results on cards for the information of the parent.

Mr. ANGELO: Would it not be as well if the doctors gave lectures at the different schools?

The Colonial Secretary: That would mean increasing the staff still further.

Mr. ANGELO: The figures quoted by the leader of the Opposition demonstrate that such teaching is very necessary. It would be well to have the doctors go round the various schools and give the children instruction on the subject.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Agriculture (Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Minister), the Minister for Works in charge of the vote.

Vote—Minister for Agriculture, £67,222.

Postponed Item, Incidentals, £5,300:

The CHAIRMAN: There is here an item postponed from 12th October. It is now open for discussion. The vote was passed other than this item.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It will be remembered that when this was under discussion the member for Gascoyne moved that the item be reduced to £4,000. He and other members were under the impression that the Minister in charge had flouted last session's resolution of the Committee that full particulars should be given of each item. Of course it was never intended to flout the Committee. However, I now have the particulars. The item is for £5,300. The expenditure last year was £4,208, so there is an increase of £1,092. The details are as follows:—Travelling expenses last year amounted to £1,359, whereas this year they are estimated to be £1,605. Freight and fares last year amounted to £990, whereas this year it is estimated the sum will be £1,331. Postage and telegrams last year cost £621, the estimate this year being £630. Stationery and offices requisites amounted to £122 last year and the estimate for this year is £120. Office cleaning and other wages represented £331 last year, the estimate this year being £350. Motor hire, sundry stores and repairs last year ran into £360, the estimate this year being £769. General expenses last year amounted to £425; the estimate for this year is £495. Hon. members will see that on travelling expenses there is an increase of £246, on freight and fares £341, on postage and telegrams £9, on stationery and office requisites a decrease of £2, on office cleaning an increase of £19, on motor hire an increase of £409, on general expenses an increase of £70. In regard to the increase of £246 in the travelling expenses, I am informed that certain experts now employed were not employed for the whole of last year, that also the scale of expenses increases with the salary, and that in addition the experts are now required to do more travelling than they did before. In regard to the increase of £341 in freights and fares, formerly seasonal railway tickets were issued, but Cabinet has decided that this year and in future the department shall be required to purchase for its travelling experts a separate railway ticket at ordinary fares for each journey taken. This increases the apparent cost of railway travelling to the department, but hon. members will bear in mind that whereas this department may have to pay more, the revenue of the Railway Department is correspondingly increased. In regard to the increase of £19 in office cleaning and other wages, this includes £150 paid to the Fremantle Harbour Trust as a recoup of their cost of collecting inspection fees, while the wages of the cleaners have been increased. In regard to the increase of £409

for motor hire, this includes the upkeep of a motor car for the dairy expert and of additional motor travelling of other experts. The increase of £70 on general expenses includes payment under the Workers' Compensation Act and payment of accident allowances to officers, seeds for experimental purposes, subscriptions to newspapers and magazines and sundry items generally. There will be a considerable payment this year in accident allowances to the sheep and wool expert, who has been in hospital since June as the result of a motor-car accident while on duty. In regard to the incidental item as a whole, the increases are generally accounted for by the greater number of travelling experts for the full year, a higher scale of travelling expenses, the necessity for the experts travelling over wider areas, the necessity for improved transport facilities, increase in wages and increase in cost of stores. That is the whole of the information I have, and I think it is in full.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister pointed out that travelling expenses, freights and fares run to approximately £1,400. How much of that goes to the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. F. Baxter) on account of his frequent trips to Melbourne?

Mr. Troy: All of his expenses are debited to the Wheat Pool.

Mr. Harrison: You asked that question last year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, I did not. Apparently the travelling expenses provided for the experts is more than their salary. The Honorary Minister presumably draws about 30s. per day in travelling expenses. If the State is called upon to pay these expenses it would be better to have a Minister stationed in Melbourne. We might appoint a new Minister to settle there, or we might for a change appoint someone to represent the consumers on the wheat board. The Minister, by travelling backwards and forwards, is wasting time and money, and nothing is being done.

Hon. P. Collier: They are doing something; they are scheming for higher prices.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If a man were stationed in Melbourne he would know what was going on. The Minister should be able to tell us whether this large amount for travelling expenses and fares is excessive.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think that the expenses of the Honorary Minister who attends the meetings of the Wheat Board are included. I think his expenses are provided from the funds of the Wheat Board.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not the Minister's expenses.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think they are.

Hon. P. Collier: It is to be hoped they are when the board is getting the benefit of his trips. If we have to pay his expenses and he is putting up the price on us it is pretty hot.

Mr. Troy: We can well afford to pay them.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister had better further postpone the item.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister desires to interject a little.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think members should be quite satisfied with the explanation I have given. The increase is £587, and from the notes supplied to me, I do not think the amount includes anything for the Minister's expenses, though it may do so.

Hon. P. Collier: If it does not we will not vote the amount.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think this amount represents the expenses of experts in visiting different parts of the country.

Hon. P. Collier: Would the Honorary Minister come under the heading of an expert?

Mr. Pickering: He ought to by this time.

Mr. Smith: Who are the experts?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know who they are. I have given more information than has ever been given before.

Hon. P. Collier: But it is not complete.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The information used to be given in the Estimates.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member had better ask questions to obtain the information he requires.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The items were given in the Medical Estimates.

Mr. Troy: Where is the Minister who has control of the department?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the train bound for the South-West.

Mr. Troy: He ought to be here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot give information which I have not got. When a cow is dry, it is of no use trying to strip her still further.

Item put and passed.

This completed the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2).—RETURNED.

1, Public Service Appeal Board.

With requested amendments.

2, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.

Without amendment.

House adjourned at 11.9 p.m.