

out that the primary producer, who produces the greater part of the wealth of the State, is by far the greatest users of those railways, and at present is bearing in the form of freight more than his share of the load.

I do not wish to weary the House. I thank members for the patient hearing they have given me and I hope they will agree to the appointment of this committee. It is of such vital importance to country districts and to all those interested in transport that I trust the House will support my motion. Since it was deemed necessary to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the position of the Agricultural Bank, surely it is necessary to appoint this select committee to inquire into a department in which so very much more money is involved. If the committee should not be able to complete their report before the close of the session, we have a precedent for the converting of that committee into a Royal Commission in order to carry the work to a conclusion. It is in the interests both of the railways and of the State that the inquiry should be held.

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

| | | | | |
|-------|----|----|----|---|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| | | | | — |
| A tie | .. | .. | .. | 0 |
| | | | | — |

AYES.

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. E. Ross |
| Hon. A. M. Clydesdale | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. V. Hamersley |
| Hon. R. G. Moore | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. Sir C. Nathan |
| Hon. E. H. Harris | Hon. J. Nicholson |
| Hon. J. J. Holmes | Hon. E. H. Gray |
| Hon. W. H. Kitchin | (Teller.) |

PAIR.

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| AYE. | NO. |
| Hon. C. H. Wittenoom | Hon. H. Seddon |

The PRESIDENT: I give my casting vote with the noes. The question passes in the negative.

House adjourned 8.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 31st October, 1933.

| | PAGE |
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| Questions: Railway freight on bulk wheat | 1555 |
| Case of T. F. Kelly | 1555 |
| Bills: Employment Brokers' Act Amendment, report | 1556 |
| Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, Com. | 1556 |
| Augusta Allotments 2a. | 1556 |
| Annual Estimates: Votes and items discussed | 1570 |
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| Observatory | 1570 |

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY FREIGHT ON BULK WHEAT.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Railways: Will he give the figures that led the Commissioner of Railways to consider that an additional 9d. per ton should be imposed on bulk wheat carried on the Government railways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The 9d. per ton is destined to cover in part—(a) extra tare, maintenance, and empty mileage on 200 4-wheel steel trucks converted; (b) additional maintenance and shunting on improvised trucks which are being adapted for carrying of wheat in bulk. This charge will have to be increased if rolling stock has to be altered to carry wheat in bulk..

QUESTION—CASE OF T. F. KELLY.

Mr. RAPHAEL asked the Minister for Police: 1, Will he, having regard to the previous good conduct of Mr. T. F. Kelly, have investigations made into the reason for Detective G. Smith's refusing to allow him to work on the goldfields? 2, What are the duties of a detective in a case such as Mr. Kelly's? 3, Have those duties been exceeded? 4, If the duties have been exceeded, will he take steps to recompense Mr. Kelly?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Minister for Police) replied: 1, Detective Smith has not refused to allow Mr. Kelly to work on the fields. 2, The duties of a member of the force are to protect the interests of the general public. 3, No. 4, Answered by No. 3.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 26th October. Mr. Sleeman in the chair; the Minister for Justice (for the Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of definition (partly considered):

Mr. LATHAM: I pointed out when the clause was last under discussion that the whole of the surplus from lotteries could be used for unemployed relief, and that that would be inadvisable because there was insufficient money to meet the needs of charitable institutions. When the measure was originally introduced, there was no intention to relieve the Government of any financial responsibility.

The Premier: It is not intended now.

Mr. LATHAM: But it is possible. Some of the charitable institutions are insufficiently financed, and there may be a tendency to increase taxation for that purpose. The definition in the Act provides that subject to limitations imposed by Section 19 "charitable purpose" may mean any object which, in the opinion of the Minister, may be fairly classed as charitable, and any sum up to £250 may be paid out of each lottery. I have no objection to the money being used for blankets, but the provision in the Act is sufficient. The woollen mills at Albany could not turn out 1,000 blankets in a week, fortnight or month.

Mr. Wilson: They could do it in a month easily.

Mr. LATHAM: They would not hang up the work on tweeds and other material to make blankets. Quite a different machine is needed to manufacture blankets, and the Albany mills have very few machines for that work.

Mr. WISE: I am inclined to think that the object of the clause is already provided for in the Act. Section 2 sets out the institutions that may benefit, and provision is made to include, subject to Section 19, any object which, in the opinion of the Minister, may be fairly classed as charitable. Section 19 provides

a limit of £250 to be paid out of any one lottery to any one institution. Four or five unemployed relief bodies might apply at the one time, and they would be provided for. If the clause be passed, Section 19 should be applied to it. I do not think the Minister intends to do other than validate what has already been done, namely, assist to pay for 1,000 blankets already distributed. If that is so, there can be no objection to the clause, provided the limit is imposed.

Mr. CROSS: Relief to unemployed extends over a wider field than the giving of blankets. I am a member of the South Perth committee who have provided medicine, clothing and firewood in necessitous cases. When the Lotteries Commission came into operation, they prevented us from running small raffles, and, as I think, rightly prevented us. The South Perth Unemployment Committee's share of a grant from the Lotteries Commission for this purpose was £38. The committee instituted a system of obtaining free firewood for the unemployed. The wood was cut at Roleystone, and the petrol needed for carting it was granted by the committee. The firewood was distributed only to really necessitous families. When the committee approached the Lotteries Commission for a further grant, the reply was that that was not possible under the Act. I inquired of the Crown Law Department, and was given the same reply. The request for this amendment may have come from the South Perth committee.

The Minister for Mines: No. It came from the commission.

Mr. CROSS: Our grant was £38 for blankets to be distributed amongst some 200 unemployed. I hope there will be no opposition to the clause.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The necessity for this clause becomes apparent when one realises what has been done by the Lotteries Commission up to date. Co-ordination of efforts on behalf of the unemployed was found to be necessary. Towards that end £1,000 was granted for relief of metropolitan unemployed shortly after I took office. It was decided that there must be some control over the expenditure of the money, so that every penny might be accounted for. This necessitated the establishment of a committee responsible to someone. The Lotteries Commission decided that the better course would be to have a metropolitan committee dealing with unemployed. That suggestion was carried into effect.

Amounts in excess of £250 were made available to responsible committees in various districts. At certain periods of the year it becomes necessary to attend specially to the needs of the unemployed. The Government, of course, desire to provide work wherever possible. I hope the clause will be carried.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I fail yet to understand the reason for the clause. The Minister has power under Section 2, paragraph (i), at any time to declare what in his opinion is a charitable object. The only limitation is the maximum of £250 to be granted out of one sweep to a charity. Where is the need for increasing the power?

The Minister for Justice: The demand falls entirely into one period of the year, about two months at the beginning of winter.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The commission have no power to declare charitable objects, but the Minister has that power. A body has not to be incorporated to enjoy the benefits of Section 2. Unemployment committees can receive the money.

The Minister for Justice: Up to £250.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the Lotteries Commission want to contribute to any State-wide body dispensing charitable aid, they can do so. The present objects of Section 2 are very wide indeed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: A special necessity always arises at the beginning of winter, and therefore more than £250 is sometimes needed for this particular distribution. On the last occasion of distribution of blankets the amount spent was about £1,000. The auditors queried the expenditure, and asked whether the Minister had given his permission. The reply was that the Minister had done so.

Hon. N. Keenan: Why not give the Ugly Men, who are incorporated, £750?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No doubt £250 could be taken out of each sweep, but we would be getting away somewhat from the intention of the Act. The Lotteries Commission do retain some of the profits from sweeps in order to meet urgent requests that happen to come along. Originally each sweep had one definite object—assistance to returned soldiers, the Children's Hospital, the Ugly Men, the Deaf and Dumb Institution, and so forth. But now this is organised charity. The Lotteries Commission decide on the relative merits of the various bodies applying for contributions. I am somewhat surprised that the

Leader of the Opposition, after three or four nights' sleep, comes back with the same old contentions.

Mr. Latham: They are sound contentions.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We want to enable the Lotteries Commission to allocate even a larger amount of money for distribution of blankets and clothing at the beginning of winter. The Minister would be subject to the criticism of Parliament if he gave a wrong decision in such a matter. Charity from lotteries has increased hugely, and may amount to as much as £25,000 or £30,000 in a year. In the circumstances the Government feel that a Minister should be responsible to Parliament for the allocations, supposing, for instance, by mischance an enthusiast on the commission allocated too much to one charity in comparison with the deserts or needs of other charities. The Government would not object if an amendment were moved, placing the limitation upon the amount that would be available for distribution, at 10 per cent. of the whole of the money received by the commission during the year: that would meet the requirements. Probably every member is prepared to admit it is desirable that sufficient money should be made available in winter time to provide comforts, such as blankets, for the unemployed and those who are in receipt of sustenance. It is recognised that sustenance merely means that people are allowed to earn sufficient to provide for the bare necessities of life but not for replacement of clothing, bedding or even the purchase of firewood. With the limitation of £250 provided in the Act, the amount available is not sufficient.

Mr. Latham: There is already power provided in the Act to enable what you desire to be done.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I know it is possible to get round the provisions of an Act, but I do not know that that is always desirable.

Mr. Latham: Later on I will show you how it can be done.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The member for Gascoyne showed us, but his proposal was such as would not meet with the approval of the auditors.

Mr. Latham: Because it would be done in one amount, which is not in accordance with the Act.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have already pointed out that whereas, at the outset, sweeps were run for one particular object, they are now organised so as to provide help for the charities as a whole. There has been no criticism regarding the allocations made, and there has been nothing but commendation for the provision of £1,000 for the purchase of blankets at a time when they were needed by those who were out of work.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Unquestionably the clause will extend the scope and functions of the Lotteries Commission.

The Minister for Justice: Subject to the Minister's approval.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At any rate, the clause will enable the commission to go beyond the intention indicated in the Act. It is questionable whether we should extend that objective to cover what is something quite separate and apart from charitable institutions. The provision of relief for the unemployed is a question we approach in a manner totally different from that which we regard as assistance to charities. If we desire to secure funds to relieve those who are unemployed, we can go to the Loan Council and discuss the matter from the standpoint of national responsibility. So far, the support of charities has been left solely to the States. The raising of funds within the State for charitable purposes has proved so difficult that the present method by means of sweeps has been adopted. I do not like it, but the limitation has been placed upon the lotteries from the standpoint of provision for charitable objects only. It is quite natural that appeals for assistance should be made to the Lotteries Commission by unemployment relief committees, but I do not know that such requests should be submitted to them. At the same time, we can appreciate the action of the commission in providing blankets at a time when they were required. I do not like the extension of the powers of the commission in such an unlimited manner as is indicated in the clause, but the Minister's intimation that the Government would be prepared to accept a specified percentage makes the proposal more acceptable to me. Without some such limitation, the commission might spend the whole of the surplus for the one purpose at a particular season.

Mr. Wise: The Minister for Employment and the Minister for Justice each made it clear that that was not the intention.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But if the limitation were embodied in the clause, it would make the position clear that the provision of funds for charities was the main objective.

The Minister for Mines: There are other institutions that are worthy of assistance, and yet you could not class them as charities.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so, and the Minister can accept the responsibility of adding such institutions to the list of those qualified to receive financial assistance. There is something in the point that the commission, under the Act as it stands to-day, could anticipate the possibility of expenditure in a certain direction at a particular period, and accordingly make provision for two or three months ahead. They could order the blankets and enter into an obligation to meet the expense when the blankets were required. Although the auditors may have raised the point indicated by the Minister, that difficulty could be overcome along the lines I have suggested. Then again, the inclusion of a limitation representing 10 per cent. of the receipts might do more harm than good. Under the Act as it stands, there is practically no limit, because the expenditure can be anticipated and provision made beforehand.

Mr. WISE: I was interested in the explanations furnished by the Minister for Employment and the Minister for Justice. I can appreciate their point of view, but I cannot understand why it is suggested that the amount be limited to £250 per lottery. I accept their opinion that the whole of the money should go through one channel, and I quite understand that that is the best way. On the other hand, under Section 19 of the Act, 20 or 40 unemployed relief committees could each receive £250 at one time.

The Minister for Employment: That is not desirable.

The Minister for Justice: They do not want it.

Mr. WISE: I can understand that. Although at present there is no danger of abuse under the clause as it stands in the Bill, still there is the possibility of abuse. I would prefer the inclusion of a limitation as suggested by the Minister for Justice. It does not matter what the limitation is as

long as the Act does what was originally intended.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have drafted something which may commend itself to the Committee. I move an amendment—

That after "State" in proposed paragraph (gg) there be inserted the words "provided that not more than 10 per cent. of the proceeds available to the commission for distribution shall be allocated for this purpose."

Hon. N. Keenan: Proceeds over what period?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Annually. They can take 10 per cent. of their surpluses over the year.

Mr. WISE: When progress was reported last Thursday I had a similar object in view, and so I consulted the parliamentary draftsman, who informed me that this paragraph is to be added to the definition section of the Act, and that any amendment such as the Minister has now moved must be made to Section 19 of the Act.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will oppose the amendment, for I see considerable danger in it, especially when we remember that a subsequent clause provides for the Minister controlling the distribution. There is so much unemployment at present that we may have unemployment relief committees springing up in every centre. Already we have a formidable union coming into operation.

Mr. Needham: Formidable?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, very formidable.

Mr. Wilson: Are you a member?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will be. It is a really formidable union, and it will be entirely outside of political control. Are these unemployment relief committees to be allowed to receive allocations from the money controlled by the commission, and then contribute to the funds of this union? The Minister has toned down the amendment by putting a limit to the amount to be allocated, but even so the amendment is a very far-reaching one. The matter should be left in the hands of the commission. This unemployed union is going to be very strong.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is nothing in the Bill about an unemployed union.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Relief committees will be making applications to the board from all over the State.

Mr. LATHAM: I am inclined to think the point raised by the member for Gascoyne is correct. This proposed paragraph

is to be added to the definition of "charity," and certainly it seems to me the point raised by the hon. member is worthy of consideration, and that the amendment moved by the Minister will have to go under Section 19 of the Act, if it goes in at all.

The Minister for Justice: If it be in the wrong place, I can move it at the end of the Bill.

Mr. LATHAM: The definition of these bodies is "any body which has for its object the relief of unemployed persons in the State." Does that mean any unemployed relief committee in any part of the State? If so, will not the amendment put a premium on a number of those bodies which have sprung up? What supervision will there be over the expenditure of this money?

The Premier: The money will not be handed out to any irresponsible body.

Mr. LATHAM: What I fear is that we shall have a number of these unemployed relief committees formed for the purpose of getting something from this fund. It will be pretty difficult to stand up against. We shall have every member of Parliament coming along with a request on behalf of various bodies in his electorate. Some of our members cannot stand up against these small organisations.

The Minister for Justice: But the commission will.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not so sure. The commission have done very good work, but I can see what is possible under this amendment: thousands of unemployed relief committees can spring up, and in many instances it will be impossible to say whether they are really genuine.

Mr. Cross: Why cast aspersions on people who have done good work in an honorary capacity?

Mr. LATHAM: I am sorry the hon. member should be so unsophisticated. Some people can be trusted with anything, but others cannot. From every sweep £250 can be set aside for the provision of clothes and food. I have no objection to that, but why not let it accumulate until the winter months, when it will be more urgently required? There is nothing in the Act to say the money must be distributed immediately.

The Premier: The amendment does not extend existing powers at all.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, I think it does. Under the amendment the whole of the available money can be allocated to the relief of unemployment.

The Premier: The Minister will insist upon the money going to a charity.

Mr. LATHAM: The amendment will be a license to innumerable little bodies to form themselves into unemployment committees and demand money from the commission.

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that the point raised by the member for Gascoyne is valid. The Minister may move his amendment at the end of the Bill.

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

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 22 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 16 |
| | | | | — |
| Majority for | .. | .. | | 6 |
| | | | | — |

AYES.

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Clothier | Mr. Muusie |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Needham |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. Raphael |
| Mr. Cross | Mr. Rodoreda |
| Mr. Hawke | Mr. F. C. L. Smith |
| Mr. Hegney | Mr. Tonkin |
| Miss Holman | Mr. Troy |
| Mr. Johnson | Mr. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Kenneally | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Lambert | Mr. Wise |
| Mr. Marshall | Mr. Wilson |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Mr. Brockman | Mr. Patrick |
| Mr. Ferguson | Mr. Piesse |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Keenan | Mr. J. H. Smith |
| Mr. Latham | Mr. J. M. Smith |
| Mr. McDonald | Mr. Thorn |
| Mr. McLarty | Mr. Welsh |
| Mr. North | Mr. Seward |

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 3:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That after the word "been" in line 4 of page 2, the following words be inserted "at any time since the coming into operation of the principal Act."

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4—Distribution of moneys for charitable purposes being made available with the approval of the Minister:

Mr. LATHAM: This is the clause which makes the lottery a State lottery, because it hands the control over to the Minister. The Commission have proved that they are cap-

able of and competent to administer the funds, and we should leave them alone. It is now desired to saddle the Minister with the responsibility for the funds. That is wrong. The commission will have to do just what the Minister tells them. In the hands of a man who desired to be unscrupulous, this is a tremendous power. He would be in a position to let the money accumulate, disburse it at the general elections and make himself exceedingly popular. I hope the Committee will leave well alone.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Parliament decided that all these lotteries should be under the strict control and supervision of the commission. Since Parliament has given that statutory authority, the Government feel that someone should be responsible to Parliament for the administration of the Act. For that reason we consider that the Minister should approve of what the commission do. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the Minister could save up the funds and make a good fellow of himself in his own electorate. If a Minister did transgress in that way, Parliament would be very quick to carry a vote that would be unpalatable to the Minister concerned. It is designed to bring the control of these funds directly under the notice of Parliament through the Minister. If the commission did anything wrong, there would, without this amendment to the Act, be no one in Parliament upon whom to throw the responsibility. To bring the business into line with Parliamentary Government, we think there should be this control over the commission. We should not continue to give carte blanche to the commission although we have had excellent results from their work. Members of the commission will not be there for ever.

Mr. Latham: You are not proposing to change the personnel, are you?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We have no such idea. The hon. member himself often suggests that so and so may not always be in office.

Mr. Latham: I am getting a bit suspicious now.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The hon. member was suspicious lest the Minister for Police should not always hold that portfolio. I know of no intention to alter the personnel of the commission.

Mr. Ferguson: The appointments are made annually?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. Some members of the commission may not

desire to go on giving up all their time to the work. Again, one member of that body may exert undue influence in the direction of a particular charity, and unless Parliament is made aware of this there may not be an even distribution of the funds. It is certainly important that Parliament should have the control over the commission that I have referred to.

Mr. SAMPSON: When the Bill was first introduced, many were the expressions of opinion concerning the good work carried out by the commission. Now that we know what is in the Bill, we find that many vital principles of the Act are to be altered. Why these warm praises for the commission? A good deal of money is involved. When the parent Act was debated, this matter was discussed at great length. We were told how the money was to be disbursed. A year or so has passed and it is desired to amend the Act. It is said that we should not give carte blanche to the Minister, but if the clause goes through we shall be doing so; the Minister will have absolute power in respect of the most important question, that of the distribution of the proceeds of the lottery. Then why not bring in a new Bill to deal with the matter on the lines of a State lottery? At present it is a nondescript type of Bill and in the final analysis the result of the lottery will become the plaything of the Minister. It will be he who will decide what is to be done with the money. That is entirely different from what was intended when the original Bill was introduced. The distribution of the money is also a matter of importance to the Minister for Health. In the parent Act there was a provision whereby free wards in hospitals might be assisted. Many of those who were seriously opposed to the Bill looked upon it with a kindly eye because it was believed by them that the distribution of the money would be in accordance with the definition set out in Section 2. I shall vote against the clause.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I intend to oppose the new clause. Nothing has been said to induce me to support the change desired, that of placing the commission under Ministerial control. Everybody realises that good work has been done by the commission and no adverse comments have been heard regarding the distributions that have taken place up to date. The new clause proposes to remove the authority from the commission and place it in the hands of the Minister.

The Minister for Justice: It does not.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Undoubtedly it does.

The Premier: You are never wrong!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is subject to the Minister's control no matter what the commission may say. If the Minister does not approve of the commission's proposals, they will not be carried out. The commission will have no authority; the Minister will possess it. Why impose the stigma of party politics on what is likely to happen? It is all right for the member for Hannans to smile, and call out, "Ha, ha!" but he knows that what I am saying is true. Is the Minister not satisfied with the way the work has been done? Why endeavour to make a State lottery of it now? Why not go on as we have been doing? The new proposal will lend itself possibly to a charge being laid against the Ministry of using some of this money for party purposes. Of course I do not for a moment suggest any such motive, though the public may think there is an ulterior motive.

The Premier: The suggestion will be put into the mouths of the people in the bush where there is no Press.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The people in the bush are so unsophisticated that they will accept anything. I cannot understand why there is a desire for a change when everything has worked so smoothly. Is there an ulterior motive? Is there a nigger in the woodpile? I suggest to the Ministry that they should leave well alone and I appeal to the House to reject the new clause, because Ministers have quite enough burdens to carry without adding this one to the load.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is the right of Parliament to see that safeguards are provided wherever they are necessary. It is possible to frame regulations to protect the rights of the people and if those regulations conflict with public policy, Parliament has the right to reject them. One would think that the Leader of the Opposition had never had any Ministerial responsibility. He should know that a Minister is not likely to do anything that may be contrary to the wishes of Parliament or against the ordinary policy to which we subscribe. He knows well, too, that Parliament reserves to itself the right to scrutinise and criticise every possible governmental function.

Mr. Latham: Why differentiate between this and trotting and racing? They, too, are controlled by an Act of Parliament.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not going to enter into a discussion of racing control. All

boards are indirectly represented in Parliament.

Mr. Latham: Because Government moneys are involved.

Mr. LAMBERT: No; what about the Whole Milk Board? I could understand the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition if he were without experience of Ministerial office.

Mr. Latham: I do not know that the Whole Milk Board report to Parliament.

Mr. LAMBERT: Parliament reserves the right to reject regulations made by municipal councils, and that is consistent with its retention of control in other directions.

Mr. Latham: The Auditor-General is Parliament's representative.

Mr. LAMBERT: He will be, when this provision is passed.

Mr. Latham: He acts at present.

The Premier: Only when requested.

Mr. LAMBERT: The commission have an independent auditor, though I do not think there would be any objection to the Auditor-General's officers auditing the accounts of the commission. I see no danger in the clause. We can totally disregard the remarks of the member for Nelson.

Hon. N. KEENAN: My objection to the clause is that it amounts to a complete reversal of the policy in the principal Act. That policy was to create a non-political body and give them the control of lotteries and the allocation of the surplus money. Section 15(d) provides that the commission shall, within 30 days of the drawing of a lottery, furnish to the Minister a true and accurate account of the receipt and disposal of all property and the conduct of the lottery, accompanied by a certificate of the auditor, certifying whether the conditions of the Act have been complied with. If the Minister is not satisfied, he has power to appoint a special auditor. It has been said that the clause is necessary. Why? It cannot be necessary to tighten up the control of the moneys because the Act provides for that. The clause will entirely alter the non-political complexion of the commission. If the clause be passed there will be no need for the commission. The Minister will have to issue his approval before any distribution can take place, and the distribution will be according to the will of the Minister. Only very grave grounds could justify such a reversal of the policy of the principal Act.

Mr. Lambert: The Minister would not continue long if he exercised that right.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Then why give him a right if he is not to exercise it?

Mr. Lambert: I mean, if he exercised it in the manner you suggest.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am not suggesting anything. The object of the Act was to bring into existence a body entirely removed from political influence. Is it wise to make the change? If there had been some scandal, I could understand it. No reason has been given for the change, save that the Minister for Police, in moving the second reading, said the commission had asked for it. That is not possible. No commission would ask to be made mere rubber stamps, and that is the position they will occupy if we pass the clause. The Minister will tell them what to do, and they will have to do it; otherwise they will be acting outside the scope of their powers. I hope the Minister will give the clause further consideration and, in the absence of any grave reason for making this fundamental change, will not proceed with it.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not follow the argument of the member for Nedlands. The commission desire some sharing of the responsibility. No doubt requests are made to them to which they would like to accede—

Mr. Thorn: Do you know whether the commission asked for the change?

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. Lambert: It is their wish that the clause be inserted.

Mr. TONKIN: I am prepared to accept the statement of the Minister that the commission have asked for it. The commission would submit their ideas of distribution and the Minister, if satisfied with the allocation, would approve of it. Thus the responsibility would be shared by the commission and the Minister.

Mr. Ferguson: You do not seriously suggest that the commission would appreciate a left-handed compliment like that?

Mr. TONKIN: Instances might occur in which the commission would not be quite certain that the proposed allocation was the right one.

Mr. Latham: What! Four men!

Mr. TONKIN: Four men or fourteen men might have doubt. With Ministerial approval necessary, there would be some safe-

guard, possibly against the criticism of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. LATHAM: The commission now have to consult the Minister and to submit a return showing how the money has been allocated. Their transactions are subject to an audit. In reply to the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, I say definitely that the Government auditor does audit the accounts and that he questioned the right to spend the money on blankets. The Auditor-General reports to Parliament.

The Premier: The Auditor General does not audit their accounts unless specially requested to do so.

Mr. LATHAM: Then he must have been requested.

The Premier: He was; I specially requested him to make an audit.

Mr. LATHAM: I know that he made an audit and that he raised that point.

The Premier: He would not do it unless he was requested.

Mr. LATHAM: I have not seen his comments, but no doubt there will be some reference in the Auditor General's report.

The Premier: He would only report back to me who asked him to make the audit.

Mr. LATHAM: The Auditor General is an officer, not of the Government, but of Parliament.

The Premier: It is not his function to report at all on the lotteries.

Mr. LATHAM: There are already ample safeguards, and the reversal of form, as pointed out by the member for Nedlands, is not justified. Such control would make the commission political.

The Premier: A reversal of the form of last Parliament? Many of the members of that Parliament are not here now.

Mr. LATHAM: The Chamber is the poorer for their absence. I cannot agree to the clause.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: Prior to the passing of the principal Act lotteries were being conducted, as many thought, haphazardly, and the Government of the day felt some form of control to be urgently necessary. Parliament agreed with that view. Several members object to this clause because it will establish Ministerial interference. Prior to the passage of the Act we were doubtful as to the distribution of funds secured by organisations through lotteries. Parliament

authorised the establishment of the Lotteries Commission so that we might at least be informed as to the disposal and distribution of the moneys raised. How is that information to be obtained without direct Ministerial control as provided by the clause? Under the clause the governmental representative must furnish reports and balance sheets of lotteries. We have had to assume the correctness of previous accounts because there were no means of checking them. So far the Lotteries Commission have, I consider, distributed the profits from lotteries wisely. Statutory authority being granted to a Lotteries Commission, Parliament is entitled to a report on the subject from a Minister.

The Premier: Under the present Act the Minister cannot report.

Mr. MARSHALL: He cannot report, and he can refuse to have anything to do with lotteries. The Leader of the Opposition interjected that the members of the Lotteries Commission have not asked for this power since in doing so they would stultify themselves.

Mr. Latham: I have never said anything of the kind.

Mr. MARSHALL: "Hansard" will show. The commission have statutory authority to do certain things, and their right to exist can last only as long as they do those things properly. How is it possible for the four members of the commission to be assured that in the distribution of funds they are doing one hundred per cent. right in the eyes of the Government responsible for their existence? What the commissioners want is that the Minister should join them in bearing the responsibility of distribution among charities worthy of support. It is now assured that the lotteries will continue for years. If the Lotteries Commission are to carry on to the satisfaction of successive Governments, they must have the co-operation and sanction of a Minister. The member for Nelson expressed himself as strongly opposed to State control. However, two of the biggest and most successful sweeps in Australia are State sweeps. Over the large Eastern States sweeps control has been exercised, without protest, by Governments of all political complexions. Yet the member for Nelson suggests that State lotteries in Western Australia would involve political corruption and upheavals. In my opinion, direct control by the State is preferable to control by a commission.

Mr. SEWARD: My principal concern is whether Parliament has a more effective control under the present system than it would have under the clause. My small political experience tells me that Parliament has a better control under existing conditions. In moving the second reading of the Bill the Minister gave an account of the work of the commission, stating the amounts of money received and distributed and giving particulars of expenditure. Had those figures been unfavourable to the commissioners, Parliament would probably have refused to grant them re-appointment at the end of their term. Most likely other commissioners would have been appointed. Thus the commissioners are under compulsion to give of their best. If we agree to the clause, it will place the commission under the control of the Minister. If Parliament were dissatisfied, the same opportunity to correct matters would not exist. If we desired to alter the conditions, it would mean having to turn the Government out of office because we could not deal with the Minister. To my mind the present position is more satisfactory. Then again, if we agreed that the Minister should have the power to approve of allocations, we might just as well do away with the commission altogether and have the work carried out by a small office staff.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have a keen recollection of the debate on the Lotteries (Control) Bill last year, and it will be of interest to recall to members the words of the then Minister for Railways who moved the second reading of the Bill. He said—

Personally I do not agree with State lotteries. I suppose it can be said that if you legalise lotteries at all, and particularly if you appoint or make provision for a statutory authority to conduct a lottery, then, to all intents and purposes, it is a State lottery. There is, however, this difference about it: If the State conducts a lottery it becomes a State affair; it is conducted under the control of the Minister, and in the circumstances the Minister's decision on most matters prevails; but where it is conducted by a statutory body with restrictions imposed upon that body, those restrictions must be complied with in exactly the same way as they would have been complied with by a private individual or a company with the right of proper supervision by the police. With the Minister administering the Act, he could avoid the consequences of non-compliance with any of the restrictions without suffering any serious penalty, but a statutory board would, under the provisions of this Bill, be subject to serious consequences for any breach or breaches of the Act or regulations, and thus it becomes something far re-

moved from what would be the conditions under a State lottery.

During the present debate I have interjected several times that the commission were appointed on the understanding by Parliament that they would be independent and free from political control. When the Minister moved the second reading of the Bill this session, he pointed out how effectively the commission had worked and, in those circumstances, I cannot understand why the Minister should be brought into the matter. I shall oppose his having a finger in the pie.

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

| | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 21 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 16 |
| Majority for | | | | | 5 |

AYES.

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Clothier | Mr. Munsie |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Raphael |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. Redoreda |
| Mr. Cross | Mr. F. C. L. Smith |
| Mr. Hawke | Mr. Tonkin |
| Mr. Hegney | Mr. Troy |
| Miss Holman | Mr. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Johnson | Mr. Willicock |
| Mr. Kennelly | Mr. Wise |
| Mr. Lambert | Mr. Wilson |
| Mr. Marshall | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Mr. Brockman | Mr. Patrick |
| Mr. Ferguson | Mr. Plesse |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Keenan | Mr. J. H. Smith |
| Mr. Latham | Mr. J. M. Smith |
| Mr. McDonald | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. McLarty | Mr. Thorn |
| Mr. North | Mr. Seward |
| | (Teller.) |

Clause thus passed.

Clause 5—Continuance of Act for a further period of three years:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 "six" be struck out and "four" inserted in lieu.

Members have definitely decided that they want Parliamentary control. The most effective way of achieving that will be to require the Act to be reviewed annually. The Minister for Justice is anxious that Parliament shall control the allocation of funds. There is no provision in the Act requiring the presentation to Parliament of a balance sheet. If we provide that instead of allowing the commission to operate for a further three years, the Act must be reviewed each year, it will give us an op-

portunity to find out exactly how the money has been spent.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I support the amendment. If the measure is re-enacted annually, that will provide a safeguard and give Parliament better control.

The PREMIER: I hope the Committee will depart from a practice that has grown up in recent years by which much of our legislation is turned into Bills requiring annual re-enactment.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Who made this Bill an annual measure?

Member: The previous Government.

Opposition Members: No, they did not.

The PREMIER: The Act has had a 12 months' trial, and the Committee have been satisfied to pass the Bill with certain amendments to strengthen the position. That being so, there is no reason why the measure should come up for reconsideration at the end of 12 months. In a number of Bills, we have agreed to limit the operations of the measure to 12 months to satisfy another place. But I do not think there is any need for members to be wrangling and wasting time on such legislation every year. If we agree to the commission continuing for three years, it must be realised that the Act can be amended at any time. It is not a money Bill.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is.

The PREMIER: No.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then the commissioners do not hold office, of profit under the Crown.

The PREMIER: No. Of course, I understand there is a difference of opinion on that point.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do you disagree with the lawyer who says that they do?

The PREMIER: I do.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And I agree with you.

The PREMIER: When we agreed to the amendment made by the Legislative Council last year, I said it made no difference. Should the necessity arise, either the Government or any private member may introduce a Bill to amend the Act or to repeal it altogether. I hope the House will not waste time on so many annual Bills.

Amendment put and declared negatived.

Mr. Sampson: Divide!

Members: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Is a division called for? If not, I declare the amendment negatived and the clause passed as printed.

Mr. SAMPSON: I called for a division.

The CHAIRMAN: I asked whether a division was called for.

Mr. SAMPSON: I was speaking all the time, telling you that I had called for one.

The CHAIRMAN: It requires two members to call for a division.

Mr. Griffiths: I called too.

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 6—

Mr. SAMPSON: Are you denying me the right to a division?

The CHAIRMAN: On this occasion, yes. I gave members the opportunity, and the hon. member was the only one who called.

Mr. SAMPSON: But I kept saying that I called.

Dissent from Chairman's ruling.

The Chairman: I rule that the clause is passed. Does the hon. member desire to move to disagree with my ruling.

Mr. Sampson: I would if I thought I had any chance. I will accept your invitation and move to disagree with your ruling, because it was obviously wrong. I spoke quite loudly enough. I move—

That the Committee dissents from the Chairman's ruling.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chairman: I put Clause 5 and declared it carried. The member for Swan then called for a division, but there was only one voice, and so I proceeded with the business. The hon. member has now moved to dissent from my ruling.

Mr. Sampson: Under Standing Order 190 a division cannot be called for unless more than one voice has voted on either side. There was a considerable volume of "noes" on this occasion, and I called "divide." Apparently the Chairman did not hear me, although I called more than once. He may have been under the impression that a division could not be taken at the request of one voice. As a matter of fact, more than one member called for a division, but under the Standing Order even if there were only one voice, the division must be taken.

Mr. Latham: Certainly there were several "noes". I think perhaps the Chairman was under the misapprehension that it required

more than one voice to call for a division. As a matter of fact, one member on either side may ask for a division.

The Minister for Lands: The Chairman asked did the Opposition members want a division, and there was no reply.

Mr. Latham: The Chairman will agree that there was more than one "no" in the voting.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: While the member for Swan did call "divide," he was afraid of his own voice and he used it in so apologetic a way that he did not convince anyone that he really wanted a division. He was afraid to make himself understood by the Chairman, and the Chairman probably did not think he was sincere, and so proceeded with the business. The Chairman was perfectly justified in his decision.

Mr. Sleeman: In my opinion it would have been making a farce of the Committee.

Mr. Latham: You have no right to say that.

Mr. Sleeman: I am going to say it, and I mean it.

The Minister for Health: He has already said it, which is more.

Mr. Sleeman: There was only one call for a division, that of the member for Swan, and when he called there were eight or nine on that side who said, "No, no, do not divide." I was satisfied that a division was not required, and so I proceeded with the business.

Mr. Speaker: The question I am called upon to decide is whether or not the Chairman was right in ruling that the hon. member was not entitled to a division. The whole question is bound up in Standing Order 190, which provides that a division cannot be called for unless there is more than one voice given on each side to the "ayes" and the "noes." That Standing Order covers the whole position. It is not a question of how many may call for a division, but the Chairman has to be sure that there is more than one voice on either side in the voting, in which event any member is entitled to call for a division. On this occasion what happened subsequent to that point, I am not in a position to state.

The Minister for Justice: No, it is purely a question of fact.

Mr. Speaker: All I can rule upon is that provided that more than one voice called "no," that side is entitled to a division. There can be no doubt about that. I have not yet been told, except by the member for

Swan, whether there was more than one voice asking for a division. The point is that if more than one voice called "no," I can only rule that the hon. member was entitled to a division.

The Minister for Justice: I was listening intently to the business and I got exactly the same impression as the Chairman. Members called "aye" and "no" and then someone whispered "divide." The Chairman asked the Opposition did they want a division, but the preponderance on that side was in the negative. That was all I could hear, but apparently a still small voice whispered "yes." It is a question of fact for the Chairman to decide, and we cannot appeal to the Speaker to learn whether the Chairman heard this or that.

Mr. Sampson: On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: There can be no further discussion. As a matter of fact, the Minister for Justice was out of order, for I had already given my decision. I gave that decision solely on the Standing Order, for I am not in a position to give a ruling on what may have happened subsequently.

Committee resumed.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause 6 be agreed to.

Mr. SAMPSON: Are you not going to give me that division?

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: Not after the Speaker has so decided?

The CHAIRMAN: The Speaker has left it to me to decide on a question of fact.

Mr. SAMPSON: Not at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing a division, and the hon. member cannot discuss that.

Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.

Mr. Sampson: I move—

That the Committee dissents from the Chairman's ruling.

The Chairman: Very well, put it in writing.

The Minister for Justice: Oh, don't make a farce of it!

The Chairman: Order! The hon. member has moved to disagree with my ruling.

Mr. Lambert: Not with your ruling; the hon. member now by some subterfuge is going to disagree with the ruling of the Speaker. Would I be in order in moving—

The Chairman: You are not in order at all.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

Mr. Sleeman: The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) asked whether I would allow a division on Clause 5 when I was putting Clause 6. I ruled I could not allow a division at that stage, and the hon. member has dissented from my ruling.

Mr. Sampson: I gathered from your decision, Mr. Speaker, that a member is in order in calling for a division in accordance with Standing Order 190. It would be futile for you, Sir, to give a decision and later on for the Chairman of Committees to deny me the right to call for a division. It is for that reason I moved to dissent from the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. Speaker: I can give no further ruling on this subject. It is a question of fact, as between the Chairman and the member for Swan. I have given my ruling in accordance with Standing Order 190. Evidently that is not in dispute. The only question in dispute is one of fact, as to whether a division was desired or not. The Chairman of Committees came to the conclusion that no division was desired. It would be impossible for the Speaker to give a ruling on a question of fact about which he knew nothing. I can only uphold the ruling that no division was required. This does not deprive any member of the right to call for a division, provided it is done properly and at the right time. Under the Standing Orders I have no option in the present disagreement but to uphold the Chairman of Committees on the question of fact.

Committee Resumed.

Mr. SAMPSON: Would I be in order in moving that Clause 5 be recommitted?

The CHAIRMAN: Not at the present stage.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then I will take the opportunity to do so at a later stage.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I should like to know whether when you, Sir, declared that no division was required, Clause 5 was still open for discussion, or whether it had been passed as printed.

The CHAIRMAN: I put the question that the clause stand as printed, and that was agreed to.

Clause 6—agreed to.

New clause:

Mr. WISE: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—
“Section 19 of the principal Act is hereby amended by adding the following words:—
‘Provided that not more than 10 per centum of the proceeds available for distribution to the commission annually shall be allocated to the relief of unemployed persons in this State.’”

A new clause such as this would remove the difficulties outlined during the debate on Clause 2.

Mr. FERGUSON: What will 10 per cent. amount to? Can the Minister say the approximate amount available for distribution from the sweeps that have already been held? We ought to know what 10 per cent. of the total would amount to.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It seems from the sweeps that have been held, a sum of approximately £50,000 will be available for distribution annually, and 10 per cent. of that sum would be £5,000. As an earnest that the Government do not intend to devote the money to the purposes outlined by members opposite, I am prepared to accept the new clause.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not like the proposal. Why should it apply to unemployment alone? That is highly objectionable. It may come to be regarded as mandatory. Why not say that a hospital or any other institution shall not receive more than 10 per cent? All these items contained in the schedule should rank *pari passu* if the commission are to have power to allocate sums of money in any given direction. It would be fairer to say that no institution shall benefit to a greater extent than another, each year.

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

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 17 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 19 |
| Majority against | | | | | 2 |

AYES.

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Munse |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. Rodoreda |
| Mr. Hawke | Mr. F. C. L. Smith |
| Mr. Hegney | Mr. Tonkin |
| Mr. Johnson | Mr. Troy |
| Mr. Keenan | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Kennelly | Mr. Wise |
| Mr. McDonald | Mr. Raphael |
| Mr. Marshall | |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Mr. Brockman | Mr. Piessé |
| Mr. Cross | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Ferguson | Mr. Seward |
| Miss Holman | Mr. J. M. Smith |
| Mr. Lambert | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. Latham | Mr. Thorn |
| Mr. McLarty | Mr. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Needham | Mr. Wilson |
| Mr. North | Mr. Griffiths |
| Mr. Patrick | (Teller.) |

New clause thus negatived.

New clause:

Mr. WISE: I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill to stand as Clause 6:—“Section 19 is hereby amended by inserting the following words after the word ‘two’ in line 7, ‘or for the relief of unemployed persons.’”

It was definitely given as the opinion of the front Government bench that there was no desire that paragraph (gg) should be unlimited in its operation. I was quite prepared that the sum mentioned by the Minister for Justice should be the amount. Should the new clause be carried, the effect would be to make Section 19 apply. This provides that no sum in excess of £250 shall be paid to any one body or any one institution where the purpose to which such money is to be applied comes within the provisions of paragraph (i) of the definition of “charitable purposes.”

Mr. NEEDHAM: If this new clause is carried it will limit the sum to be given to any body to £250.

Mr. Wise: That is so.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I certainly will oppose that. The proposed new Section 11A, which is embodied in Clause 4 of the Bill, to my mind covers the whole position. It provides that before any distribution of money raised by the commission is made to any charitable purpose, the Minister shall give his approval in writing, and so on. If we carry the hon. member's suggested new clause, we shall be stultifying ourselves in respect to the clause already agreed to.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I should like to know whether the proposed new clause is in order. We have decided by vote that we will not limit; now we are trying to impose a limit.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee decided not to limit the amount to 10 per cent.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If anyone had desired to alter the percentages, he could have taken the opportunity to do so at that stage. Having arrived at one decision, I do not think we can now reverse it.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see that the proposed new clause is out of order.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I contend that the Committee cannot now reverse the decision just arrived at.

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that the new clause is in order.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member is only limiting this to (i), not to (gg). It was for that reason that I could not agree to support the previous new clause. All that is referred to here is (i). It will be necessary to draft a new clause dealing with (gg), which we have already inserted in the Bill. I hope the hon. member will withdraw the proposed new clause.

Mr. WISE: The Minister for Justice has already made it clear that he is quite prepared to accept an amendment limiting the operation of the paragraph in Clause 2.

The Minister for Justice: But the Committee did not agree with me.

Mr. WISE: I was quite prepared to move an amendment on the lines suggested by the Minister. At the same time the paragraphs would not have received my support originally if there had not been any intention of limiting the amount. I submit that my amendment provides what I suggest. I have had the advice of a competent draftsman and I know that I am on sound ground.

New clause put and negatived.

New clause:

Mr. RAPHAEL: I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—“Section 15 of the principal Act is hereby amended by adding a paragraph as follows:—‘The true and accurate account, together with all books and documents from which it has been completed referred to in paragraphs (d) and (e) hereof shall be made available for public inspection by the commission at all reasonable times.’”

Mr. Sampson: It would be better if all the words after “the” were struck out and “be laid on the Table of the House” inserted.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope there will not be any procedure such as is desired by the member for Victoria Park. There would be required a staff of detectives to see that the books were not removed by those who might be very much interested in the sweeps. They might even want to get away with some of the prize money. The new clause would be not only impracticable but undesirable.

New clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—AUGUSTA ALLOTMENTS.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon.

M. F. Troy—Mt Magnet) [8.49] in moving the second reading said: In the early days of the State, 1831-34, a number of lots were selected in the town site of Augusta under the then existing regulations, which provided for the selectors acquiring the Crown grant on fulfilment of certain improvement conditions. No purchase money was paid. Some of the early selectors obtained their Crown grants in due course, but a number of them never claimed a grant, although their names have stood in the books of the Lands Department ever since. Augusta had to be abandoned a few years later, owing to its being so far distant from the seat of Government, and owing to the expense of protecting the settlers from the natives. The Government offered the Augusta settlers land at Busselton in lieu of what had been assigned to them at Augusta, and although there is no evidence to prove it, there is reason to think that the settlers referred to—whether they took other land or not—abandoned their original selections. Of the original settlers none is now living. They never applied for the Crown grants, but every now and then one of their descendants endeavours to establish a claim to one or more of the lots, and except in one instance, all have failed. The question of how to clear up the records of the department in regard to those holdings has been cropping up at intervals for the last 40 years. I think almost every Minister since responsible Government has dealt with the file, and the great majority have approved of legislation being introduced. The Crown Law Department have advised that the only way out of the difficulty is to pass an Act vesting the land in the Crown and making provision that any person who may establish his claim and is desirous of obtaining a grant in fee may make application to the Minister for the fee simple. If the applicant has satisfied the Minister that he is entitled to make such application, the Government may, on the recommendation of the Minister and without consideration, grant to the applicant the fee simple of the land. The Bill also pro-

vides that where any allotment was unoccupied at the commencement of the measure, or where any person entitled to make application fails to do so within the specified time, or where any claim is not established to the satisfaction of the Minister, the Governor may deal with the allotments as unalienated Crown land under the provisions of the Land Act. Clause 3 provides that any person who was, at the commencement of the measure, occupying any allotment described in the measure as if he were the owner thereof, shall, within three months after the commencement of the measure, or within such further time as the Minister may permit, make application in the form prescribed, and shall publish a copy of such application in the "Government Gazette" and in a newspaper circulating in the district. Clause 4 provides that where such application has been made and the Minister is satisfied that the applicant is entitled to the land, the Governor may, after the expiration of six months from the date of the last publication, grant the fee simple without consideration. Clause 5 provides that any person other than the person occupying an allotment may lodge a claim within six months after the commencement of the measure, and if he establishes his claim, he may be granted the fee simple, without consideration, and freed and discharged from the claim or demand of any other person. Clause 7 provides that where any claim is not established the land shall revert to the Crown and may be dealt with as unalienated Crown land. Subclause 2 of Clause 7 stipulates that any person remaining in occupation after being requested in writing to vacate shall be guilty of an offence and may be prosecuted accordingly. It is not anticipated that any claim can be successfully sustained, but the Bill provides the only way of dealing with the land, and it is essential that the matter be cleared up. Legislation is necessary because the land is very much sought from time to time by people who wish to establish sea-side facilities at Augusta, but no one can give a title because of the unsatisfactory conditions under which the land was taken up and held. I hope the Leader of the Opposition will support the Bill. I do not know whether he dealt with the question, but most Ministers have done so. I find that legislation was approved by Mr. Bath, Mr. Johnson, and Sir Henry Lefroy.

Mr. Latham: Was not there something wrong?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I also approved of it, and I am now further showing my approval by introducing the Bill. Mr. Cecil Clifton, formerly Secretary for Lands, an old Western Australian, was very concerned to have legislation passed but for some reason it was not submitted to Parliament. Now, however, further inquiries are being made for the land, and the only way to enable us to deal with it is to pass this legislation, which will enable the Government to grant a title to anyone who can establish a claim, failing which the land will become Crown land and may be disposed of. Any claimant will have an opportunity to establish his claim within six months. Members are aware of how the early settlers went to Augusta under the leadership, I think, of Colonel Molloy, and how they had to abandon it and go to Busselton because of the distance from the seat of government. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1933-34.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 25th October; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

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

Vote—Chief Secretary, £12,780:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [8.48]: As the Minister for this Department is in another place, I do not think members expect a very explicit introductory speech. If information is required on any item, I have particulars that I think will satisfy all inquiries. The Chief Secretary's Department is a fairly large one covering 11 branches. The Chief Secretary's Department controls the correspondence despatch department, and it is claimed by the department that since its establishment it has meant a saving to the Government of £21,766. That is a fairly substantial sum. The Chief Secretary's Department also controls the Aborigines Department, including the Moore River native settlement. The traditions that have pre-

vailed over many years have been maintained. There has been no alteration in the number of missions subsidised by the Government in the past 12 years. Good work has been done at the Moore River settlement, especially by the young native girls there. From that settlement emanate most of the garments that are distributed to indigent aborigines in the State. Last year over 8,000 garments were distributed, and all were made by the girls in that settlement. This shows that the department is taking great interest in the natives. It is certainly better to employ the girls at this work than to allow them to run wild. It might be expected in these times that there would be an increase in the number of persons sent to gaol. That is not so. Last year there were fewer than there have been for many years, either in Fremantle or on the Pardellup Farm. There were actually 22 fewer criminals last year than there were the year before.

Mr. Hawke: People cannot afford to get into trouble in these times.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They may not be able to afford to keep out of trouble, but it does not cost very much, sometimes to get into trouble. The Lunacy Department are to be congratulated on the results obtained last year. I am pleased to say the Government are engaged in building an extra ward for women at the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. That has been wanted for a long time, but the financial position during the last three years prevented the Government from going on with the work. The ward will soon be completed, and will provide much needed accommodation at the asylum. The proportion of the State's insane to sane people is one to 321. This is the second lowest figure in the States. It has been argued that the expenditure on the receiving depot at Point Heathcote is too great. If ever an institution has justified its existence, it is that one. The numbers admitted to the asylum at Claremont have diminished ever since the opening of the Point Heathcote home. A good deal of this is due to the treatment that patients are now receiving. We know what conditions prevailed before the building at Point Heathcote was opened. When a person was suspected of insanity, he was sent to the receiving depot at the Perth

Public Hospital. That was an absolute disgrace.

Mr. Latham: It was more like a gaol than a hospital.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If 50 people, all of them strong-minded and certified by the doctors as being entirely free from any mental trouble, had been placed in that receiving depot for three months, 20 per cent. would have become insane. That was the place where treatment was given prior to certification for Claremont. It was only a matter of getting into the place for people to be certified as insane. Since Point Heathcote has been opened, the results have been most satisfactory. More people have been certified to as recovery cases than have gone on to Claremont. The expenditure on that institution has thus been fully justified.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.5]: It is very gratifying to hear of the good result that has followed upon the establishment of the reception home at Point Heathcote. The construction of that establishment was the work of the Government of which the Minister for Mines was a member at the time. I was successful, after much effort, in securing the site. I have voiced the opinion on numerous occasions that the establishment of this home would have the effect of reducing the number of those who were certified as insane. The result has proved that to be so. I have sometimes felt that the building was somewhat elaborate, but the answer to that may be found in the satisfactory results that have followed. We all recall the dreadful situation that arose at the old reception house. This was one of the darkest blots in the medical history of Western Australia. I do not know what purpose the place is filling now, but thank goodness it is not used any longer as a reception home for mental cases. I am also pleased to know that this State is not lower than second on the list of cases of mental disorder. The establishment of the new home has undoubtedly done something to keep down the percentage of such cases. I recall a suggestion made at the time that the new establishment should be known as the Collier Home.

The Minister for Employment: Not the Premier's home.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, the Collier Home, not Mr. Collier's home. For some unexplained reason the Premier did not welcome

the suggestion. The establishment is of great benefit to the State and the Collier Government were responsible for it.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.8]: The Minister has told us that it is proposed very shortly to complete a female ward at the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. Associated with the asylum is a farm at Whitby Falls. The land is good and a considerable amount of work has already been done there by the unemployed. It is now a fairly decent farm. I do not know how many persons are working there now, but there were a few old men employed who ought to have been in the Old Men's Home. Those people require to be carefully looked after. I suggest that the farm could be put to much better use. Numbers of people go into our gaols for short terms of imprisonment. They cannot be sent to Pardellup, but they could do very useful work at Whitby Falls. There should be sufficient to maintain continuity of effort there, and to enable the farm to be turned to profitable account. The argument used by the Minister regarding persons afflicted with insanity being brought into contact with those who are merely mentally unbalanced, can be applied with equal force to those who happen to be in gaol for minor offences. There is the habitual criminal and the man who has made a slight mistake. The latter may be sentenced to six or eight months' imprisonment, and should be kept away from the other type of criminal. They should all go to Whitby Falls, where, without very much additional equipment, they could be most usefully employed. We ought to be able to keep the gaols and the mental homes supplied with milk, dairy produce and vegetables throughout a good part of the year. This might also afford some relief to the taxpayers, as well as constitute a benefit to those who should not be brought into contact with hardened criminals.

MR. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [9.12]: With reference to the Aborigines Department, apparently it is intended to spend a sum in salaries and wages greater by several hundreds of pounds, and a sum in the purchase of clothing, food, etc., for the aborigines smaller by several hundred pounds. It is necessary that our money should go as far as possible. The main function of the department is to provide food and clothing for those placed in its care, and it is a pity that money for neces-

sities should be curtailed. I was pleased to hear the remarks of the Minister concerning the Moore River settlement. All the garments required for the other native stations are made there. That is an excellent performance on the part of the girls who do the work. I know that 15 large sewing machines are being used and all are kept fairly busy. The results are highly creditable to those concerned. Great credit is due to the superintendent and the matron there for the success that has been attained. Had it not been for the sound practical commonsense of the superintendent and the tactfulness of the matron, I doubt whether the same results could have been achieved. I have had opportunities of seeing the work that is being carried out, and it is just as well it should be made known. I would like the Minister to state whether the Government intend to do anything in the way of re-opening the Carrolup native settlement, or establishing a new settlement at either Carrolup or Gnowangerup or some other place where there has been considerable agitation for it. Having some experience of natives and half-castes, it seems to me that the time is not opportune for the expenditure of a large sum of money on another settlement for half-castes. As regards the natives in the Great Southern and South-Western districts, it would be an act of cruelty to take them away from their own districts to Moore River. It is up to the Government to provide in no miserly fashion for those natives in their own districts, the districts in which they were born and bred and have lived all their lives. Half-castes, on the other hand, take much more pride in their percentage of white blood than in what they have of native blood, and are not greatly concerned about remaining in the districts where they were born and bred, but would live just as happily at Moore River. The establishment of other institutions of the kind would mean additional overhead expenditure and the appointment of additional superintendents, matrons and staff. I hold that such expenditure would not be warranted. At Moore River there are the necessary conveniences, which could be extended. In addition, there is plenty of land at Moore River—poor land not wanted for agricultural purposes or ordinary settlement, but with abundance of running

water all through the summer. In my opinion, that place is ideal for a native and half-caste camp.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.19]: I was pleased to hear the Minister say that as a result of the change in methods at the reception home at Point Heathcote, there had been a marked decrease in the number of unfortunate people sent to the Claremont Hospital for Insane. I have had occasion to visit the home two or three times, and as a result am greatly impressed with the kindly treatment accorded to the patients by the whole of the staff, from the matron downwards. I gladly take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the staff. I have from time to time visited numerous institutions of the same nature, and I regard the improvement which has taken place at Point Heathcote as mainly due to the splendid work of the staff there.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [9.21]: I should like the Minister to state whether there is any intention of further developing the institution known as Whitby Farm. Unquestionably Whitby Farm is capable of doing much good. The report of the Inspector General of Insane complains of the crowded state of the Claremont institution. The Whitby inmates are much more fortunate than are the Claremont inmates, inasmuch as the former have pleasant surroundings and are able to find occupations which interest them. In my opinion, Whitby could be used to much greater advantage from the point of view of patients and from the aspect of productivity. There has been a suggestion that Whitby might be used as a prison farm. I hope the suggestion will not be carried out. The situation of Whitby is such as to render it totally unsuitable for a prison farm. It is close to the metropolitan area, and on one of the main arteries of the State. From these aspects it is most unsuitable. I hope the Government will not agree to the proposal.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.22]: Amongst other items of expenditure which Governments are called upon to justify is that for the Observatory. This is not the first occasion on which members have found it desirable to record, in no measured terms, their appreciation of the work done by that institution at a cost of £1,468 for one year. We are aware that during the last few months two highly im-

portant statements were issued by the Observatory in return for that expenditure. The Government Astronomer was informed, he notified the public, that some spots had developed on the sun. Probably that notification justifies half the annual expenditure. Something more startling occurred a couple of months later, when this snug home of abstruse scientific study, feeling that it was not getting the measure of publicity which it deserved, announced to a slumbering Perth public that by some microscopic measurements or calculations the Government Astronomer had discovered that the mainland of Western Australia had been slipping from the Darling Range towards Rottnest Island. Upon my mentioning that fact to a leading member of the Chamber he replied, "I hope to Heaven the Observatory will slip there first!" I am led to believe that it is not by any microscopic calculations conducted here that the fact of our mainland slipping from the Darling Range to the sea was ascertained. I have been given to understand that the reason for this slipping is altogether unknown as far as our Government Astronomer is concerned. Some fir trees were planted in the neighbourhood of a huge concrete block to discover whether there was any movement in the earth's crust, and it is said that it is the roots of those trees that are pushing our mainland towards Rottnest Island. Whether such is the case or not, I am unable to say. For some considerable time I have not seen a report from the institution. Ten or 15 years ago, when the Observatory was more or less a closed book to hon. members, I asked that a report be furnished of the activities of the institution. Speaking from memory, a report was furnished by the Government Astronomer about 1909 or 1910; but when he got to 1911, 1912, 1913 and so on to 1918, he simply reported ditto, ditto, ditto. Such was the beginning and the end of his reports on the Observatory. There is a serious side to the question, and it is to be hoped that the Treasurer will realise that the maintenance of the Observatory is not a State function. I candidly admit that the institution performs some useful services, but at the time of Federation it was laid down that the maintenance of observatories should be a Commonwealth function. Twenty or 25 years ago a congress of astro-

nomers agreed that the time had arrived for cataloguing the stars. The stars had so far been neglected, and the astronomers agreed to catalogue them. As regards our Observatory, however, it appears that the telescope was poked in the wrong direction, and as a result our Government Astronomer, in the language of the racecourse, "pinched some other fellow's stars." Whether in fact that is so I do not know and am not much concerned. However, in these times we have not any money for such luxuries. Astronomy itself is not, perhaps, a luxury, but viewed from the ordinary practical standpoint our relationship to that science is an absolute luxury. Western Australia cannot afford to maintain the institution when it is unable to provide the money for an agricultural chemist, while the exhibits of the bacteriological and entomological sections of the Agricultural Department, which deal with phases of a practical nature in connection with primary production, are housed in wretched hovels. Even the present Government see fit to maintain the Observatory at a cost of nearly £1,500 per annum! I hope that when the Premier next goes to Canberra, he will advise the Federal Government that on our Observatory buildings we have set up the sign "To Let," as we have other channels through which our money can be spent to greater advantage, and it is for the Commonwealth themselves to provide the astronomical service if they deem it necessary.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Nonsense! You are always talking about this one subject. Why not give the Committee something fresh? Year after year, you bring up this one subject.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know the member for Nelson is always after something fresh, but I am consistent. Even if I tend to weary members, I shall refuse to sit silently and allow an institution such as the Observatory to continue under existing conditions. If it served any practical purpose, I would be content.

Mr. Hegney: Then you believe in handing it over to the Commonwealth?

Mr. LAMBERT: Unless it were by way of lease, I would object to the building and the land being handed over to the Commonwealth. They are State properties and the site is ideal. The building could be used to house those conducting activities and engaged in scientific investigations that are so closely

connected with primary production. It amounts almost to a scandal that this item should appear in the Estimates. I say that with all possible deference to the officer who fills the position of Government Astronomer I notice that, in addition to the Government Astronomer, there is an astrographic observer and mechanic. Exactly what is an astrographic observer and mechanic, is beyond my limited knowledge. The astronomer also has a caretaker and I think the caretaking could be done by some of the unemployed. Then again, the astronomer has an assistant who receives £231 a year.

Mr. Hegney: Perhaps he is the meteorologist.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is a Commonwealth matter. Members have been misled in connection with this Vote because they think the work of the meteorologist is done at the Observatory.

The Premier: The one cannot carry on without the other.

Mr. LAMBERT: Oh, of course not! No Treasurer in one State could continue long without collaborating with the Treasurer of another State. So this system of collaboration goes on.

Mr. Sampson: Have you ever spoken on this matter before.

Mr. LAMBERT: If I have, I certainly have never asked for the assistance of the hon. member.

Mr. Latham: Does not the astronomer fix the tides up North?

Mr. LAMBERT: I understand he regulates the tides? Some time ago when there was a question of dispensing with the Observatory, a public meeting was organised, and there was displayed an organising ability that the unemployed do not possess. There was a meeting of protest at the very idea that the State could be run without a Government Astronomer. It was stated at the meeting that the astronomical observations at the Observatory had something to do with the forecasting of tides and tidal waves in the North. Be that as it may, I hope the Vote will not be agreed to until the Treasurer can give the Committee an undertaking that we shall not continue this, from a State point of view, unnecessary institution. I understand that at a meeting of eminent astronomers, it was agreed that Australia required an observatory on the western side and another on the eastern coast. If that is so, then let the Commonwealth Government assume responsibility that is properly theirs,

and carry on the work. Whatever may be decided regarding the Vote, I hope no State Government will permit the Commonwealth to take over the property. I understand a small section of the land was leased by a Government some time ago. It will indeed be regrettable if we allow the Commonwealth, under any pretext whatever, to secure the site. It is a crying shame that a Government allowed a school to be established on part of the reserve behind the Observatory.

Mr. Ferguson: It belonged to the school long before the Observatory was constructed on its present site.

Mr. LAMBERT: I think the hon. member is mistaken.

Mr. Ferguson: I played on the ground long ago. The part where the Observatory is now was our play-ground.

Mr. LAMBERT: It did not belong to Hale School.

Mr. Ferguson: Yes, it did.

The Premier: The University was established in 1911 and the High School, as it was called then, got their property in 1913 or 1914.

Mr. LAMBERT: I think it was permitted by Sir Henry Lefroy.

The Premier: No, by Mr. Scaddan.

Mr. Ferguson: All I know is that in 1894 or 1895, that was our sports ground.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member is mistaken, but we need not waste any time on that point. I am somewhat with the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) with reference to the Commonwealth, for I would root them out rump and stump. There is no question about my attitude. If they require buildings, I would let them finance them out of the countless millions they have secured at the expense and impoverishment of the primary producers throughout the Commonwealth. I do not know that I have any more to say. I adopt a most charitable attitude towards the Observatory as an institution, and I have nothing whatever personal against the officer who is conducting it. That should be distinctly understood. I understand that in the realm of astronomy, our astronomer ranks fairly high in that profession. When one has some knowledge of the astronomical work carried out in other parts of the world and is aware of some of the activities in the United States of America, where there are such great institutions, where the equipment is so wonderful and the work carried out is so useful,

it will be appreciated that in Western Australia we are merely toying with the science. As a matter of fact, some of the foremost of the world astronomers visited Western Australia some time ago and our institution played no part in the investigations in relation to this absorbing science.

Mr. Latham: My word it did! The institution was highly complimented on the work carried out.

Mr. LAMBERT: The astronomers did not go to the Observatory, but went to Wallall. I have it on authentic information that it was not our astronomer who went with the party, but his assistant, and he camped three or four miles away from where the other astronomers were located. He did not know what was going on. That is vouched for by the official photographer, Mr. J. J. Dwyer, who accompanied him, and said the whole thing was a farce.

Mr. Sampson: You cannot criticise the small staff.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am sorry it is not competent for me to assist the hon. member in increasing the Vote by £10,000 or £15,000 so as to emphasise the absolute farce of Western Australia continuing to finance such an institution. The building could be put to use in other directions. Years ago I stressed to members representing the primary producers, the necessity for refraining from the foolish task of cataloguing the stars, and for following the lead of South Australia in cataloguing the soils, a most useful and essential work. How can we expect adequate farming where we have no proper classification of the soil? There is the salinity problem that requires investigation, and to-day efficient men are conducting field work with a view to discovering the cause of what is, unfortunately, a serious danger to Western Australian agriculturists in certain parts of the State. Notwithstanding that fact, we do not employ an agricultural chemist able to direct that work. Entomological and biological work of great importance to the State should be carried out. We should devote what funds we have to carrying out useful and practical work that should go hand in hand with the development of the State. Past Governments have been blind to the necessity for assisting primary production along those lines, and, on the other hand, we have permitted the continued subsidising of an institution such as the Observatory that should be conducted by the Commonwealth.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [9.45]: I should like to support the remarks of the member for Irwin-Moore. Had it not been for the appointment of a Royal Commission promised by the Government—of which I hope we shall hear something pretty shortly—I would have had more to say regarding the unfortunate position of the aborigines. The member for Irwin-Moore spoke of the good work that has been done at the Moore River settlement, and suggested that a settlement should be established for the aborigines and half castes in the Great Southern. There has been some misunderstanding as to why the settlement at Carrolup has not been re-opened. Had the member for Nedlands, who as Chief Secretary controlled the Aborigines Department, remained in office, I am sure some material steps would have been taken to provide a suitable place for the natives in that district. It is a pity that, since the hon. member retired from office, very little has been done to meet the needs of that part of the State. Parliament, I fear, does not realise its responsibility to the natives. Some months must elapse before the promised Royal Commission brings down its report, and in the meantime quite a lot could be done to improve the condition of the natives, particularly in the Great Southern, where another settlement should be established without delay. In the past the Protector of Aborigines has been hampered through lack of funds, and Parliament should shoulder its responsibilities and provide the money necessary for that settlement which is so much needed. Numbers of young aborigines and half castes should be put to some useful work, and it is the responsibility of Parliament to see that funds are provided for that purpose. It would not cost very much to re-open a settlement in the neighbourhood of Carrolup. I do not propose that the old settlement should be re-opened, for there are some local objections to that course.

The Minister for Mines: Can you point to any place where one can be established in the Great Southern to which there would be no objection?

MR. PIESSE: No, but I am sure that with all the vacant Crown lands we have, a suitable place could be found. On the Tone River, west of Cranbrook, there is plenty of native game available, and a settlement

could be there established without much objection.

Mr. Wansbrough: Could not a place be found on the north side of the Stirling Range?

Mr. PLESSE: In my opinion, we should have the natives somewhere in forest country where there is plenty of water and an abundance of native game. I understand there is plenty of native game along the Tone River. However, these matters could easily be inquired into by the Government through the Protector of Aborigines. I am pleased to know that the present Minister has taken a sympathetic view of the whole question, and I am sure that if given the necessary funds he would be very ready to do something in the direction asked for. But all these delays go on, and that is what I find fault with. The natives should be provided with statutory representation in Parliament, for while no responsibility is accepted in their behalf they will be allowed to go on suffering as they are to-day. I have previously referred to the meagre amount allowed the natives for rations. The aborigines are forced to live somewhere near a town in order to get their rations, and so they are not able to secure the natural food to which they were accustomed in the early days, for since the land has been taken up all the native game has gone. I know that very often the natives suffer in this respect, because the rations allowed them average only 4d. per day per native, and they cannot supplement that by hunting, as they used to do. They crave for a little meat, which is not allowed for in the rations. Those rations should be increased. If the natives had their own settlement they could grow their own meat to a large extent, and without extra expense supplement it by hunting. Many of the natives are robust and well developed and quite able to do a day's work. If there were someone to take an interest in them and direct their efforts, I am sure they would willingly conform to regulations and carry out their tasks. The work referred to by the member for Irwin-Moore as being done at the Moore River settlement has been greatly appreciated in other centres. Had it not been for the clothes sent out by the police from Moore River, many of the children would have suffered a great deal during the last few years. And what is

being done at the Moore River could be done equally well in the Great Southern, and I hope that when the Minister goes down there he will recommend the establishment of a settlement. It will be a standing disgrace if we allow the present conditions to continue: the half-castes increasing in number and not being educated. Whereas there are some 1,200 of them between Perth and Albany to-day, in a few years there will be perhaps 12,000 of them, and probably they will become a menace. I hope the Minister will be able to make his visit very soon, and from the sympathetic way in which he has referred to this matter I feel that, given the authority of Parliament, he will do something. I only hope he will not wait until the Royal Commission submits its report.

MR. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [9.55]: I am not able to endorse the remarks either of the member for Irwin-Moore or of the member for Katanning. The member for Irwin-Moore drew the attention of the Minister to the increase in salaries and the decrease in food supplies. I hope the hon. member will not be misinterpreted by the Minister, for I know the hon. member would not have so drawn the attention of the Minister with any ulterior motive in view. Probably the hon. member has not studied the Estimates as closely as could be desired. There is certainly an increase in salaries to the extent of £123.

Mr. Latham: More than that, surely!

Mr. COVERLEY: There may be.

Mr. Latham: It looks more like £600.

Mr. COVERLEY: On page 98, division 54, will be found the amount of salary for both the Government stations, and the increases represent £123.

Mr. Latham: But on page 63 the increases amount to £693.

Mr. COVERLEY: The Leader of the Opposition knows that there is a head office in Perth employing a rather big staff, the members of which are entitled to annual increases, and that those increases go on irrespective of which Government may be in office. I take it that many annual increases have become due and will be paid, and I imagine that most of the increases shown in the Estimates are to be accounted for in that way.

Mr. Latham: I think you are wrong. You will find there is a greater amount of increases than you have noticed.

Mr. COVERLEY: I am confident that my figures are correct. If the hon. member will turn to the other division he will find there one increase of £1 and another of £19.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Look at page 61 and see the increases there.

Mr. COVERLEY: If I am allowed to continue, I will deal with those increases presently, for I have a fair idea of where they have been granted. I suggest that the increases in salaries have come about by annual increments under the Public Service Act. Again, there is temporary labour to be provided for on many aborigines reserves and on the cattle stations. That is all part and parcel of the increases. Many members of the staff are underpaid. There may be some that are overpaid, and I am sure I could mention at least one, although I do not propose to do so. But those officers in charge of stations, and who have to put up with all the privations inescapable in the back country, are underpaid.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

Mr. Latham: They are under another Vote, not this one.

Mr. COVERLEY: They are in the Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. Latham: But they are on page 98.

Mr. COVERLEY: The Aborigines Department is included in that Vote.

Mr. Latham: No, it is not.

Mr. COVERLEY: If the hon. member has any explanation to make, I hope he will make it after I have finished. I will show that neither the Leader of the Opposition nor his deputy knows or understands the Estimates. The Leader of the Opposition wishes to make me say something I have no intention of saying.

Mr. Latham: You can say what you like.

Mr. COVERLEY: What I have to say to the hon. member I prefer to say outside rather than inside.

Mr. Latham: You can say what you like.

Mr. COVERLEY: And I shall not hesitate to say it, either.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COVERLEY: I was pointing out that the increases are due to the Public Service Act under which a majority of the staff work, and that the decreases as regards stores, supplies and transport would probably be due, not to any reduction in food supplies, clothing or blankets, but rather to other items, seeing that the upkeep of motor

cars, driving costs and all sorts of things are included. One might be led to believe that the decrease was due to a reduction in the supplies of blankets and clothing.

The Minister for Mines: The main item of decrease was the payment last year of what should have been paid in 1930-31, a sum of £654.

Mr. J. H. Smith: How do you account for the decrease if the department is growing?

Mr. COVERLEY: The item to which the Minister referred would swell the increase, but it is not right to allow the general public, who are on tenterhooks regarding the aborigines generally, to gain the impression that increases are being provided in salaries and decreases are being effected in supplies, etc. As mentioned by the member for Kaitangata, a Royal Commission is to be appointed to inquire into the aborigines generally, and I hope that many items in the Estimates will be discussed by the commission, particularly those items relating to transport costs and rations, etc.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [10.4]: I do not object for one moment to the expenditure under this vote, which consists mainly of items that recur year after year. The Minister representing the Chief Secretary has not mentioned the matter of the reconstruction work at the Fremantle harbour. As long as three years ago, when Mr. Stileman was Engineer-in-Chief, he made a very serious report on the condition of the northern side of the Fremantle harbour, on which he recommended very large expenditure as necessary to put it into safe and proper order. The amount was £500,000. At that time I was Minister in charge of the harbour, and I asked Mr. Stileman to state specifically whether the wharves could be safely used or not. If the wharves were to collapse, the claim against the harbour might be colossal. Mr. Stileman reported that the wharves could be used for a few years with reasonable safety, but that the problem of reconditioning or reconstructing them would have to be tackled at an early date. There the matter remained. At that time we were in the middle of the depression; it was hopeless to attempt to raise money, and the then present use of the wharves was said to be safe. So the matter was allowed to rest for the time being without any determination as to what should be done. When protests were made, as they have been made for years

past, against the continuance of the war-time surtax charge by the harbour authorities, Minister after Minister was advised by the Commissioners that the justification for the continuance of that charge was to create a fund to cover the cost of the necessary work of reconstruction. That was a very forcible answer, and I feel sure it has been made to more than one holder of the office of Chief Secretary. I would like to know to what extent the Commissioners have made provision in accumulating the money collected under that heading for the reconstruction work.

The Minister for Mines: I cannot tell you.

Hon. N. KEENAN: These are important matters; not mere questions of criticism of detail. The items in the Estimates appear year in and year out for almost the same amounts and therefore criticism must be somewhat restricted. Here, however, is a question of great importance in which the whole State is interested. The Fremantle harbour is the principal outlet of the State. It is the only harbour from which a large quantity of the State's produce can be exported overseas, and it is the harbour at which a large quantity of imported goods arrives. It is a matter of great importance that the harbour should be maintained in a state absolutely safe for use. The Minister is under a great disadvantage, as any Minister must be, in that he has no knowledge of the questions to be asked by members, and therefore he cannot, seeing that he is not administering the department, come here prepared to answer questions. If an opportunity arises, however, I should like him to make a statement in this Chamber as to what view the Government hold of the necessity for providing for reconstruction work in the harbour, and to what extent those works are to be put in hand at the earliest opportunity, and, above all, what assurance have the Government that the wharves in their present state can be used with safety.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [10.8]: I wish to say a few words on these Estimates. I have been comparing them with the Estimates of 1929-30, and have found a reduction of £42,481, and I am wondering how it arises. In the early part of the session I listened with great interest to the member for Kimberley and other members in their plea for a Royal Commission of inquiry into various

phases of the aboriginal question. The matter cannot be as serious as members tried to make out. I cannot get over the extravagant statement of the member for Katanning, who said there were 12,000 half-castes and aborigines in the South-West.

Mr. Piesse: I said 1,200.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I must have misunderstood the hon. member. In 1929-30 the expenditure was £13,889, and this year the estimate is £11,000. How are the figures arrived at? We know the Government intend to appoint a Royal Commission, but why have they reduced the expenditure by over £2,000?

The Minister for Mines: That reduction was made by the previous Government.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am pleased at the acknowledgment that they did something for the finances of the country. If the previous Government spent £13,800, why did the member for Kimberley urge for the appointment of a Royal Commission? Is it not a waste of money?

Mr. Coverley: Why did you not tell us that at the time?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Had we known what was in the Estimates we would have opposed the motion. The case is not as bad as we were led to believe it was. Could not more money be raised through the registry offices, and could not weddings be done away with altogether? It should be possible for Parliament to pass an Act that everyone should be married in a registry office. That would save a lot of money to many persons. The Premier has a wonderful brain.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not discuss the Premier's wonderful brain on this vote.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We all know it. Could not the people be forced to go to a registry office to be married so that all the fees would go to the Government instead of to the clergymen? I am glad there has been a reduction in the expenditure on gaols.

Mr. Sampson: There has been an increase.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am also glad to see the reduced expenditure on harbours. Perhaps that will mean when we send timber away from Bunbury we shall not have to pay export duties. There is also a reduction under the heading of lunacy and in-

ebriates. Probably that is due to the price of whisky. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie has for years made a dead set against the Observatory. He has built his arguments upon loose sand, which is now drifting away. The vote is becoming less and less each year. The Observatory is a valuable institution. It is nice to know in the South-West that we are going to have a cold October and that there will be no thrip. It is nice to know in the wheat areas we are going to have a mild October and that there will be no smut. It is nice to know we are to have the right sort of October so that our merino wool may grow well and fetch its 20 pence per lb.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot discuss wool at this stage.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am discussing the Observatory. Every morning the "West Australian" reports, from the Observatory, that there will be light showers in the South-Western districts of the State, which I represent. That is most heartening. The Treasurer shows himself optimistic, anticipating to save £42,000 odd on the Chief Secretary's Department during this financial year. Did the Treasurer know something when he agreed to the Royal Commission on the aborigines question? The anticipated decrease is most encouraging.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Registry and Friendly Societies, £9,256; Gaols, £25,147; Harbour and Light and Jetties, £18,256—agreed to.

Vote—Lunacy and Inebriates, £91,786:

Item, Inspector-General of the Insane and Inebriates, £1,067:

Mr. SAMPSON: I wish to express my appreciation of the work of the After-care Committee associated with the Hospital for the Insane. That work is of the greatest possible value, and provides opportunities for persons desirous of helping people who are most unfortunately placed. The dreadful tedium and monotony of those people are relieved by the committee, whose members, I hope, will realise that their work is highly appreciated. It is, indeed, work which highly commends itself to the altruistic.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Observatory, £1,168:

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the Government will follow up the work already done with a view to handing over the functions of the Observatory to the Federal Government. The work of the institution can be regarded as national. Eventually there are to be only two observatories in Australia—one at Canberra and one here. I understand the local site is to be in the Darling Range. The State should be relieved of the expense of the Observatory as soon as possible.

The PREMIER: It will be remembered that when we were in office previously we endeavoured to induce the Federal Government to take over the Observatory. Agreement was nearly reached, but negotiations broke down at the last moment because the Commonwealth Government insisted on obtaining the freehold of the whole block of land on which the Observatory is now installed. That block of land we regarded as too valuable to be held for Observatory purposes for all time, since those purposes can be served just as effectively outside the city. However, the Commonwealth would not accept a lease, and the negotiations broke down. Since being in office this time, I have not had the matter brought under my notice at all.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the Votes for the Chief Secretary's Department.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.