

in relation to any such appeal the provisions of Subsection 2 of Section 24 shall apply, and so on.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. In connection with any appeal the appellant will have to put up a deposit of £10. I hope the Committee will be content with striking out only the words "or any other person."

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	14
Noes	..	..	..	..	8
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	6
					—

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. Tuckey
	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. H. V. Piesse	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. A. Thomson	Hon. L. B. Bolton
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, paragraph (e) of proposed Subsection 2 struck out.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 17th October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—STATE SAW MILLS, FINANCES.

Mr. BROCKMAN asked the Treasurer: 1, How has the amount of £62,024, stated

by him to have been received by the Treasury from the State Saw Mills, been built up? 2, By how much will the payment of that sum (a) reduce the yearly interest on loans being paid off by the State Saw Mills; and (b) increase the yearly surplus of the concern? 3, Is the surplus credited to the State Saw Mills or is it taken into Consolidated Revenue?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Treasurer) replied: 1, Reduction of stocks built up in years of bad markets has placed the banking account in a position to repay an advance made some years ago from Revenue. 2, (a) £3,650. (b) Profit and Loss Account charges will be reduced by a similar amount. 3, Any surplus on Profit and Loss Account, such as referred to in No. 2, is paid to Consolidated Revenue in accordance with the provisions of the Trading Concerns Act.

QUESTION—POINT SAMPSON JETTY.

Mr. WITHERS asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that turpentine piles are being imported for the Point Sampson jetty? 2, If so, why are local piles not being used?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—QUAIRADING ROAD BOARD, COMPLAINT.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM asked the Minister for Works: Will he lay on the Table of the House all papers relating to a complaint by one M. J. O'Hanlon against the decision of the Quairading Road Board granting permission for the erection of gates across Road No. 3768, which passes through C. J. Woodroffe's property at Balkuling?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (for the Minister for Works) replied: It is not considered advisable to lay them on the Table at the present juncture, for the reason that they may contain evidence that could be used by Mr. O'Hanlon in connection with certain court proceedings that he admits he is taking against the road board and against Mr. Woodroffe, but the departmental file is available to the hon. member for his own personal perusal.

QUESTION—WIRE NETTING, INTEREST CHARGES.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What rate of interest is charged against wheat farmers on the cost of wire netting supplied under the instalment payment scheme? 2, What rate of interest is charged on overdue instalments?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (for the Minister for Lands) replied: 1, £5 per cent. per annum. 2, £7 per cent. per annum.

QUESTION—DENTAL TROUBLES, EFFECT OF FLOUR PRODUCTS.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health: In view of the opinion expressed from time to time by experts that dental troubles originate chiefly from the consumption of flour products without including in the diet sufficient milk or cheese, will he inform the House whether—(a) There is any known substitute for milk which protects the teeth from the harm referred to, and (b) If the claim of the experts holds good in regard to the alleged excellence of native teeth?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: (a) The excessive consumption of starch (flour) in the absence of a sufficient supply of vitamin D leads to poor development of the teeth. In the presence of sufficient vitamin D excessive starch does not have this effect. The main source of vitamin D in the human diet is milk fat, which contains all essentials of diet up to the age of six months. So far as vitamin D is concerned, cod liver oil is a substitute for milk, but does not contain the other essential contained in milk; (b) The claims of experts in regard to the excellence of natives' teeth hold good but for other reasons than diet alone.

BILL—DIVORCE AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.35]: I have no objection to offer to the Bill. As the Minister pointed out last night when

he moved the second reading, the Bill embodies three or four small provisions designed to rectify anomalies or overcome difficulties that exist. I agree with him with respect to the referendum of the people that may be required. The more we make the conditions uniform the better it will be, and the proposal embodied in the Bill is a good one because there will be no misunderstanding. We should make all legislation in such matters conform, so that the possibility of misunderstanding may be eliminated. The other provisions deal almost entirely with Katanning and Northam and I can see no objection to the measure at all.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—ELECTORAL.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Withers in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 18—Qualification for the Council:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of subparagraph (i) of paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 the word "registered" be struck out.

It is not necessary to repeat the arguments that have already been advanced in support of the amendment. If the word be retained, it will deprive a number of people of the franchise they now enjoy. As the measure is merely a machinery Bill we should not do that, but, on the other hand, we should rather extend the franchise.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not propose to object to the amendment at this stage. There is something in what the member for Nedlands has said.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I move an amendment—

That after "province" in line 2 of subparagraph (1) of paragraph (b) of Subclause (1) the following words be inserted:—"or has a right of ownership in a dwelling house as a chattel in the province."

There is no provision in the Bill regarding any person in a province who owns a dwelling house built on a leasehold property, irrespective of what the value of the house may be. In the goldfields areas there are many houses built on leaseholds, some of which are for 21 years and others are held on a 99 years lease. Although it is possible to convert leaseholds into freeholds, which has been done in some instances, as a rule that course is not followed. The result is that we have leasehold blocks adjacent to freehold blocks, and the value of the dwelling house on the leasehold land may be vastly in excess of that of the dwelling erected on the freehold. Notwithstanding that, the person with the freehold property enjoys a vote under the provisions of the Bill, whereas the owner of the dwelling house on the leasehold block has not the same privilege. The Bill should include a provision so that a person who owns a dwelling house and has the right of ownership in such dwelling house as a chattel should be allowed to exercise the franchise. It has definitely been established in the courts that persons can have a right of ownership not only in connection with Crown leaseholds, but also with regard to dwelling houses on mining leases. Particularly do I think those who have dwelling houses on leasehold blocks should be entitled to the same consideration with regard to the franchise as is enjoyed by a person owning freehold property worth £50. Persons renting leaseholds from the Government are called upon to pay land tax, just as are owners of freehold blocks. This differentiation between people owning dwellings built on freehold and leasehold land should be eliminated. The value of the dwelling should be considered whether the structure is situated on freehold or leasehold land.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have no objection to the principle embodied in the amendment. Has the hon. member consulted the draftsman as to the proper place to insert the words?

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: No.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I think the words should be inserted after "and."

Hon. N. Keenan: They would be more appropriate in subparagraph (ii).

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, because that subparagraph deals with leaseholds.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: The amendment does not specifically refer to dwellings on leasehold. Quite a number of houses worth over £50 are built on mining leases, and the owners have no vote for the Legislative Council.

Hon. N. Keenan: Your amendment should be included in a separate subparagraph.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Why?

Hon. N. Keenan: Subparagraph (i) deals with freeholds, and subparagraph (ii) deals with leaseholds. Your amendment deals with other than leaseholds.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I do not mind where the amendment is inserted so long as the principle is established.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member desire to have the words inserted in subparagraph (i)?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I desire to assist the hon. member to get his amendment inserted, but I want it inserted in the right place. We have endeavoured to put the provisions of the Bill into proper sequence, and I wish to preserve the sequence. The amendment might be inserted in subparagraph (i) for the present, and if we find that it would be more appropriate elsewhere, its position can be altered later.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I hesitate to support any amendment of clauses recommended by the Royal Commission regarding qualifications for the Council. The Royal Commission must accept responsibility for the Bill. I am prepared to vote for the recommendations, but if we are going to start amending the qualifications, I want to begin with the first words of the Bill. I do not approve of the present qualifications for the Council as I consider the basis quite wrong, but as the Bill has been recommended by a Royal Commission representative of Parliament as a whole, we should accept the recommendations, particularly when they relate to such controversial matters as the qualifications for the Council. To make this amendment would be quite unfair to other members who desire various amendments to the Council qualifications. The Bill is not in accordance with Government policy. Parliament, however, agreed to the appointment of a Royal Commission

to deal with the matter, and if we accept their recommendations we throw the responsibility upon them. I am opposed to the amendment.

Mr. THORN: I do not know of what use Parliament would be if we could not discuss the recommendations of Royal Commissions, and determine whether to accept them or not. We should not be asked to accept such recommendations lock, stock and barrel.

The Minister for Justice: The matter was referred to a joint select committee which subsequently became a Royal Commission.

Mr. THORN: Surely we have the right to express an opinion upon all that passes through our hands.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (b) the word "registered" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Would subparagraph (iv) of paragraph (b) be a duplication of what we have already passed?

The Minister for Justice: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Is it intended that the elector shall have a vote as the owner and another vote as the occupier?

The Minister for Justice: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It seems to me this does give the elector a second vote, in view of what we have already passed.

The Minister for Justice: I have not had an opportunity of studying the matter.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That subparagraph (v) of paragraph (b) be struck out with a view to inserting other words.

I understand that the objection taken by the Chief Electoral Officer to the registration of persons who appear on the electors' list of any municipality or road board is because of the difficulty in which he is placed by Section 15 of the Constitution Act, 1899. This sets out that if the name of a person appears on such a list it automatically is placed on the electoral roll. The point he asked the Royal Commission to consider was that he could not in the circumstances check the roll. It was contended that sometimes names remained on the electors' list of the municipality or road board after the persons concerned had left.

The Minister for Justice: No, a new electoral list is printed each year.

Hon. N. KEENAN: He was compelled to put the names on the roll, whereas he knew they ought not to be there, and the qualification was no longer enjoyed by the persons concerned. The words I propose to insert, if the subparagraph is struck out, will enable the Chief Electoral Officer to verify the rolls at any time. My desire is to see that the electoral roll for another place is made as wide as possible. I am assured on the best of authority that a large number of people who now appear on the roll would be removed from it if we struck out this subparagraph. They have merely been put on the roll by virtue of their enrolment on the electors list of some municipality or road board. If my suggestion is adopted, the Chief Electoral Officer will be able to examine the qualifications of the people concerned before leaving their names on the roll.

Mr. Sleeman took the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I oppose the amendment. The contention of the Chief Electoral Officer is that the ratepayer's qualification is a hybrid sort of thing. The position is very different to-day from what it was when the Municipalities Act and the Road Districts Act were passed. Because the names of people appear on the electoral list, they go on to the Legislative Council roll. Three people may have an interest in a block of land worth £150. Under the Electoral Act each would require to have a third interest before any of them could be enrolled. Under the Municipalities Act or the Road Districts Act it could be agreed between them that any two of them should, irrespective of the value of the interests of any of them, be elected to represent all three. Such a thing was not thought of when the Electoral Act was passed. As a matter of fact, no provision of the Electoral Act leads to greater abuse than this qualification does. The list is made up in September. A man is entitled in September to be on the roll. He removes in October. Then he has no qualification; but because his name is on the list it must perforce appear on the roll, and no one can object to its being there. The election comes on in May, and the man's name is taken from the ratepayers' roll. Admittedly he then has no qualification, but the Act says that because he is on the ratepayers' roll he must neces-

sarily be placed on the Legislative Council roll.

Hon. N. Keenan: My provision is that he must continue to hold the qualification, that he only remains on the Legislative Council roll so long as he continues to hold the qualification. That is shown on the Notice Paper.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Who is to ascertain whether he is qualified?

Hon. N. Keenan: That is the duty of the Chief Electoral Officer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There may be an office building in a locality; and anybody occupying a room in that building must, under the Municipalities Act or the Road Districts Act, be placed on the roll, whereas the genuine householder, who rents a room at £1 per week, is absolutely disqualified.

Mr. Moloney: That is what the hon. member wants.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is what is wanted. When soldiers were at the Front and two or more families of soldiers were living in one house, the soldiers were not allowed to be on the Legislative Council roll. On the other hand, a businessman who takes a room for a week, puts in a table and a couple of chairs, and is in occupation on the 30th September—when the roll is made up—is entitled to be on the roll, even though the business he is engaged in fails at the end of the first week. Still, we do not want any wholesale disfranchisement on the eve of an election. Doubtless most of the people affected will have some other qualification entitling them to be on the roll. But the ratepayer's qualification should not be allowed to continue. On referring the matter to the Crown Law officers I was given as an instance of the abuses which may take place under the law as it stands, the fact that only recently some 50 claims for enrolment were submitted en bloc by a local governing body, the Kalgoorlie Road Board.

Hon. N. Keenan: Those persons must have been rated by the road board.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: They were put on the roll as occupiers, and probably they are not ratepayers. Hundreds of people on the ratepayers' roll do not pay rates, these being paid by the landlord. Such people can become ratepayers by virtue of the Municipalities Act and the Road Districts Act, because if a claim

for rates is made on an occupier he can stop those rates out of the rent due to the landlord and pay the rates himself direct.

Hon. N. Keenan: If the rate is charged in the rent, what is the difference? Who pays the rate?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Every single room in an office building is not rated.

Hon. N. Keenan: But every single room in the building is taken into account.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: An employee in a mine had a typewritten claim put in on his behalf, stating that he was a ratepayer because he was a storeman at the mine and occupied the store. That employee took no responsibility whatever for the claim. And such cases are frequent. That kind of thing was not dreamt of when the relevant Acts were passed. The local authorities do not worry in the slightest about electoral qualifications. On the other hand, the working man who rents a room in a house at £1 per week is rigidly barred from getting on the roll. I know of a case in which four Thomsons were, without inquiry, placed on the roll as occupiers, merely their surnames appearing, without initials, so that the persons could not be identified at all. There has been too much roll-stuffing in connection with the qualification. We ought to have a clearly defined qualification set forth in the Electoral Act itself, and not a qualification dependent on something appearing in some other Act, which may be amended from time to time. While we are trying to continue the original scheme, other Acts affecting the matter are amended in such a way as to upset the whole scheme of qualification. The Bill follows the Act of South Australia, which is the only State that deals with qualifications of the Legislative Council by themselves. In other States the ratepayers' qualification is the qualification for Council electors, and when the qualifications of ratepayers are altered, it means an alteration also in the qualification of Legislative Council voters. In this State the Municipalities Act of 1895 provided that the qualification for a Legislative Council elector should be the qualification of a ratepayer, but in 1906 the Municipalities Act was amended by throwing the onus for the payment of rates on the occupier instead of on the

owner. Now it is suggested that we should revert to the conditions of 1900 by accepting the qualifications of ratepayers. In view of the experience we have had in the past, I am not inclined to agree to any amendment not in accord with the Royal Commission's decision.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The Minister has made a comparison between the occupier of an office and the occupier of a dwelling house. But it must be remembered that an office is separately rated, whereas a single room in a dwelling is not separately rated.

The Minister for Justice: But why not?

Hon. N. KEENAN: Of course the moment a house is divided up into flats by the inclusion of artificial walls, then everything in that house is rated separately, with a result of a much increased rating for the whole of the building. Thereupon each occupier of a flat in that house is entitled to get on the roll. It is suggested that there are numbers of bogus cases. No doubt there are, just as there are in the Assembly rolls. Let the Minister go through any electorate after the publication of the rolls and find out how many names are not there, and it will surprise him. On the occasion of the last election two ladies at West Subiaco who have been 10 years in the same house were not on the roll, notwithstanding that they were still residing in the same premises. Probably when the canvasser called they were not at home, and he forgot to call again and so their names were left off the roll. What I am concerned about is that this provision will put off the roll a large number who in the past have been on the roll, and that I hold is not desirable. The Minister wishes to wipe out quite a lot of these people and so enormously reduce the number of electors on the roll. Rather than reduce the number on the roll, it is desirable that we should increase it. I hope the provision will be struck out.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	..	23
					—
Majority against	..	..	..	..	8
					—

AYES.

Mr. Boyle	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Warner
Mr. Norib	Mr. Watts
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Welsh
Mr. Sampson	Mr. Doney
Mr. Seward	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Clothier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Cross	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Fox	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Willcock
Miss Holman	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wise
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Moloney	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That the following be inserted to stand as Subclause (2):—

(2.) (a) The Chief Electoral Officer may require any applicant under subsection (1) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), or (v) by notice in writing addressed to such applicant to produce for his inspection all such paper, writings, or other documents as may be necessary to establish the bona fides of his qualification for enrolment as an elector.

(b) If the Chief Electoral Officer is dissatisfied with the evidence so tendered to him he may reject the claim and must thereupon give notice in writing to the applicant of such rejection.

(c) The applicant may thereupon appeal against such rejection as provided in section fifty in the case of claims and *mutatis mutandis* the same procedure shall be followed.

At a previous sitting the Minister asked whether any suggestion could be made which would safeguard the position and enable the Chief Electoral Officer to keep the roll in proper order notwithstanding that we removed the qualification of leaseholds and determined that they had to be registered. In an endeavour to achieve that object I have drafted this proposed new subclause. It will be remembered that in many cases so-called leases are quite sufficient to maintain the bona fides of a qualification, although not legally leases. In order to enable the Chief Electoral Officer to satisfy himself as to their bona fides, I have drafted this subclause. It provides that the Chief Electoral Officer can call upon an applicant to produce for his inspection all papers to establish the bona fides of his qualification, and that if the claim is rejected the applicant has the right of appeal.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I hardly think the amendment is necessary.

It does not provide any power beyond that which the Chief Electoral Officer has at the present time.

Hon. N. Keenan: I am not pressing the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: At the same time I thank the hon. member for his offer of assistance.

Mr. Marshall: Does the Minister intend to vote for the new subclause?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 5 the definition of "Registered" be struck out.

This is a consequential amendment.

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

New Clause:

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I move—

That the following new clause be inserted to stand as Clause 54:—(54.) The Registrar of Titles during every month in each year shall forward to the Chief Electoral Officer a list in the prescribed form of the transfers of titles to land that have been effected during the preceding month, together with the names of the transferors and transferees.

It is important that the Electoral Registrar should have the information as suggested in the amendment. We have a provision in the Bill for the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, to send along information to the Chief Electoral Officer to enable the rolls to be kept up-to-date, and also for the Comptroller General of Prisons for a similar purpose. I have no doubt that the information those officers can supply is of assistance to the Chief Electoral Officer, and I am satisfied that nothing could assist him more than information with respect to the transfers of land during each month, because it is in connection with qualifications respecting titles for land more than from any other cause that there are more names on the roll than should be there. It constantly happens that people are transferring qualifications for enrolment to some other person, and it is necessary that the Chief Electoral Officer should be in possession of that information. We find that even in the preparation of new rolls the names of persons continue to appear on the rolls with the qualifications of a title for land when, for years, they have lost that qualification by having transferred the land to someone

else. It is necessary that a check should be kept at the electoral office of all transfers. I have known of three persons having been enrolled, those three persons holding the one qualification in connection with a block of land in Kalgoorlie. If one were prepared to pay half-a-crown and lodge an objection to the names of the three persons thus enrolled, his objection would certainly be frivolous in connection with two names. It is always difficult in such cases to determine which of the three is entitled to the qualification in connection with such enrolment. Whilst the Bill as it stands provides that a list shall be sent to the Chief Electoral Officer from the Comptroller of Prisons and the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, there is no provision for a list being supplied by the Registrar of Titles. Therefore I have framed my amendment to give the Chief Electoral Officer authority to get the information. I take it it is his duty to keep the rolls clean and not wait until someone raises an objection to certain qualifications. When he finds, as he will find from the list, such as is indicated in the amendment, that certain qualifications appearing on the roll have been transferred to other people, he will be in the possession of information which will justify him at least in requesting the people concerned to supply him with proof that they still possess the qualifications under which they are enrolled.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Had the Bill been passed as it was introduced the amendment would have been very desirable, in fact almost necessary; but we have altered the Bill with regard to registrations and the Registrar of Titles would never be able to supply 20 per cent. of the information that the Chief Electoral Office would require. I find that because of the numerous transactions going through the Titles Office there would be a good deal of cost involved, and as the Chief Electoral Officer has now every facility for acquiring information regarding the ownership of land, without casting upon the Registrar of Titles the expense of supplying that information, there is no need for the amendment. Moreover, in many instances the information would not be of any value. Had we kept the definition of registered freeholds it would have been a different matter. I regret it cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: The only sound argument the Minister has advanced has

been that respecting the cost. I do not know how much it would cost or anything at all about that aspect. The list supplied by the Registrar of Titles would show the changes in the qualifications for enrolment.

The Minister for Justice: You must remember the thousands of blocks worth £30 or £40 that change hands.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I should like to know where they are.

The Minister for Justice: At Triton, for instance, there would be 40 or 50 blocks.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: How many blocks are there worth £40 as compared with blocks worth a good deal more than that? At least 90 per cent. of the qualification held by those on the Legislative Council roll concerns land worth more than £50. The smaller values attach to blocks in remote areas and, in all probability, the owners have not made application to be enrolled. The Minister suggested that the Chief Electoral Officer was checking the rolls all the time to ascertain that the electors retained their property qualifications.

The Minister for Justice: That is so. I do not refer to the Chief Electoral Officer himself but to his staff, who are on the work all the year round.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I do not think it possible for them to be checking up the whole of the electors, but if it is the job of the electoral staff, then what assistance do they require to a greater extent than that indicated in my amendment?

Amendment put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1935-36.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 15th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Minister for Mines (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Minister).

Vote—Mines, £123,767:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. W. Munsie—Hannans) [6.5]: In introducing the Mines Estimates for the year, there is no doubt in my mind that the production of gold for the current 12 months will not quite reach the production for the past year.

Members need not be alarmed at that statement. That result is due entirely to the fact that for approximately six weeks during the first two months of the year, the principal producing mines of the State were not working owing to an unfortunate industrial trouble. Increased activity has been shown in the mining industry, because each month since then there has been a continuous increase in the production of gold as compared with the corresponding months of the previous year. As a matter of fact perusing the returns for nine months and comparing them with the total for the previous year, it would appear that we will be well down in production; but the last three months of every year are the busiest of the 12 months from a mining and production point of view. Therefore, I anticipate that at the end of this year our production will be fairly close, although I do not think it will be quite up to that of last year. Increased production month by month is a good sign. Another pleasing feature to which I draw the attention of the Committee is the increase in the number of men directly employed in the industry. Last year there were 13,310 employed, and this year there are 13,500 engaged in the industry. I shall quote some other figures at this stage because I think that course is justifiable. The total production of gold from Western Australia has now reached 41,091,651 fine ozs., valued in sterling at £174,546,215, or in Australian currency at £186,599,696. With regard to the prospecting scheme there are some comments I have to make, particularly in view of the statements I listened to last night. I shall deal with the State Prospecting Scheme inaugurated by the present Government on the 1st July, 1933. Full assistance under that scheme has been granted to 2,800 men by the payment of sustenance and the loan of tools, and 360 men have been helped by the loan of tools only. The total number of men associated with the scheme, therefore, was 3,160, and at present there are 752 men still under the scheme. The total cost from the inception, including supervision and equipment, has been £77,000. To the 31st August last the advances refunded totalled, in round figures, £11,000. Crashings reported from those prospectors amounted to 20,000 tons, from which returns totalling 8,600 ozs. were obtained, valued at £68,800. Crashings reported and put through by men who had been previously assisted and are

new supporting themselves represented 8,050 tons for 3,508 fine ozs., valued at £28,064, or a total value of production derived from men operating under the prospecting scheme of £96,864. That does not represent all that has been done for the prospectors. Last year I attended a conference in Melbourne. At that gathering, which had been convened by the Commonwealth Government, I submitted a scheme for the relief of unemployment and suggested that money should be made available to initiate an additional scheme for prospectors. The Commonwealth granted the State £50,000 for prospecting, but I am sorry to say that we have not been able to spend the money because we have not received the necessary applications.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I suppose you could not get suitable applicants?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There must be many people who are willing to go out.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Everywhere I have been, I have made the position as plain as possible. More particularly was that so when I have heard talk about men walking about the country ill-fed and ill-clad. I believe that is quite so, but the fact remains that they have not made application to go under the new scheme and receive 15s. a week with which to feed themselves.

Mr. Rodoreda: Is that available for men in the North-West?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, not at 15s. a week but at £1 a week. I have not had any applications from people in the North-West who desire to go prospecting.

Mr. Fox: Is not the trouble regarding that scheme that there are not sufficient experienced prospectors to go out with the inexperienced men?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am glad of that interjection. As far as possible, we have tried not to send men out unless experienced men could go with them. Unfortunately, we have had to abandon that attitude because it is impossible for us to secure experienced men for that purpose. On the other hand, men without experience are being assisted and sent out without the advantage of experienced men with them.

Mr. Patrick: Very often they are the luckiest.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If such men will only be straight and tell us that they have had no experience, they can receive advice from the departmental officials,

and when they do go into the outer areas, they are sent where we know experienced men are available and where supervisors are in close contact with them. While that system has been in operation, each of the two supervisors has reported that the best type of men sent out under the scheme are those who were originally without experience. The reason for that is that such men do as they are told and therefore have a better chance than others. I want the people of the State to know that there has always been, during the year, vacancies for not less than 300 men under the Commonwealth scheme, if only men will go out prospecting. That is the position with regard to the Commonwealth prospecting scheme. Under it, 1,419 men were provided with full assistance, 40 were supplied with the loan of tools and 12 with rail fares only. That makes a total of 1,471 men assisted from the inception of the scheme, and at the present stage there are only 725 men remaining under it. I could keep up the full quota of a thousand all the year round if a sufficient number of applications were received. The reports we have received to date indicate that it is estimated 75 per cent. of those men have left the scheme and obtained permanent employment in the industry.

Mr. Patrick: Because of the experience they have gained?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and because they happened to be in districts where mining was carried on and where opportunities were created. Still we hear that there are hundreds of single men walking about the country ill-fed and ill-clad.

Mr. Thorn: They like to pick their jobs.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not much sympathy with single men who will not take 15s. a week for tucker and a chance to do something for themselves.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Before tea I was dealing with the prospecting scheme and had stated it is estimated that at present 725 men remain on the scheme, and that at least 75 per cent. of the men who were sent out under the Commonwealth scheme had obtained work on mines. The men under the Commonwealth scheme also have produced 1,430 tons of ore for 542 ounces of gold, or a total tonnage production from both schemes, State and Federal, of 29,480 tons for 12,650 ounces of gold,

valued at £8 per ounce, or £101,200; and all told there have been assisted 4,590 men. So I do not think anyone can say that the prospectors have not been assisted in Western Australia; and what is more, I do not think anyone can say that the result up to date has not been magnificent.

Mr. Marshall: According to your figures, the prospectors have put back into circulation more money than it cost to send them there.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, considerably more. Now I wish to say a word or two about State batteries and water supplies. The sum of £1,000 has been advanced for battery treatment of ore at Hall's Creek. £1,000 for a crushing-plant at Jacoletti in the Yilgarn district, and £2,500 for a battery at Leonora. In each case a condition of the advance is that the owner shall crush for the public during certain periods in each month. Also £4,250 has been advanced for a battery at Nullagine, conditionally on its crushing for public requirements.

Mr. Marshall: For what period is that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No definite period has been fixed. I do not know of any battery that has had assistance from the Government under those conditions and has ever stopped crushing for the public; there may have been, but I do not know of one that has stopped after having been assisted by the department.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If they do not wish to work full-time for themselves it would be profitable for them to work for the public.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Two assistant geologists have been appointed, so the work of speeding up surveys is going ahead. The Commonwealth branch has also got some assistance in that direction. The Commonwealth made available £5,000 a year for five years, to be divided between three Schools of Mines for the purpose of assisting in technical education. We received our third share of that sum. They have employed a full-time lecturer in geology at the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie, and outside of that we have appointed an assistant lecturer and an assayer, while provision has been made for an additional cadet, who has now been appointed.

Mr. Marshall: What is the total number of geologists in the State?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I think there are four, apart from the School of Mines, which makes five in all. For some

time we had one geologist, then two, and now we have four, together with the man at the School of Mines. It is noteworthy and very gratifying to me to see the activity in the various fields. Many companies which were floated early last year, or in the middle of last year, have come into production, some into production and others into good development. Those most noteworthy amongst the new concerns are the Triton Gold Mine at Reedys, the Lancefield, the Big Bell, the Norseman mines, and the Yellow-dine mines.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Are all in the producing stage?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, three or four of those will be in a state of production very soon now. There are many small shows developing splendidly, and plants are being put in on them. Many private crushing plants are again in operation, and particular attention has been given to the North and North-West portions of the State. Our State battery system was established very many years ago, and it is still being run and supported by the Mines Department as practically first aid to mining. No doubt the State battery system has had a wonderful influence on the mining industry in this State. It was primarily designed for the assistance of prospectors and small syndicates, to enable them to test out shows and find how the ore would bulk before they went to the expense of erecting batteries on their own mines. Since the date of inception, up to the end of August of this year the State battery system has crushed 1,925,450 tons of ore for a result by amalgamation of £5,982,370; from sands treatment £1,290,904, from slimes £265,266, and from residues £9,353, or a total value produced of £7,547,984. In addition, the State has run, and is still prepared to run if necessary, an ore dressing plant for tin. From that source they have treated 81,768 tons, and black tin to the value of £93,833 has been recovered, and from residues £572, or a total production from the system, including gold and tin recovered, of £7,642,300. There are still 21 State batteries directly under the control of the Mines Department. Then these figures are rather interesting: During August the State batteries crushed 9,493 tons of ore for a yield by amalgamation of 6,332.10 ounces, valued in gold at par at £22,795, or in Australian currency at its

present value £46,729. During the same month the total value cleaned up at State batteries was £10,865. So the total yield from the system for that month is £57,994. I may say that while the State batteries treat ore for prospectors and small holders at a rate lower than applies to most private mills, the department renders assistance by allowing a carting subsidy of 1d. per ton per mile for carting over five miles and up to 20 miles. Similar subsidies apply to ore sent to the State batteries by rail. Recently the Railway Department, without consulting the Mines Department, found it necessary to revoke the low-grade charge of ½d. per ton per mile on ore railed in empty returning trucks and impose a rate of slightly over 1d. per ton per mile. In approved instances the Mines Department have made arrangements to meet this additional cost. We realise that with gold at its present price, ore that could not profitably be mined under ordinary conditions can be mined and made to pay under State battery conditions. If people have rich ore, they should pay the extra railway freight, but it is difficult to discriminate between one parcel and another, and we considered that in the interests of the industry, seeing that the Railways had to be made to pay, it was only fair for the Mines Department to assume the burden of the increased freight. That has been done. Let me quote some figures drawing a comparison of the results of the State batteries for the first six months of 1934 and 1935—

1934—

Milled 44,118 tons; 23,122 ozs.
Cyanided 42,677 tons; 7,302 ozs.

1935—

Milled 50,911 tons; 24,079 ozs.
Cyanided 45,443 tons; 6,435 ozs.

The figures show that the State Batteries, during the first six months of this year, treated more ore for less gold, particularly from cyanidation, than in the six months of the previous year. The extra quantity crushed was 6,793 tons, and the results by amalgamation were 957 ounces more than in the six months of the previous year. As to tailings, we cyanided 2,766 tons more in the first half of this year, but obtained 867 ounces less than in the first six months of last year. The reason for that is found in the price of gold and the treatment of

lower grade ore. The lower the grade of ore put through the batteries, the less there is in the sands. Last year's tonnage treated at State batteries constituted a record since the inception of the system. I have heard people state quite recently that while there is activity in the mining industry at present, it is nothing like as great as it was in the good old times of 15 or 20 years ago, but I point out that last year we treated more ore from prospectors than ever in the history of the State Battery system.

Mr. Marshall: I suppose you had more batteries.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Possibly, but that does not support the argument of there having been greater activity in the industry 15 or 20 years ago, because it is still being contended that prospectors are not getting a fair deal, and that there are not so many in the field.

Mr. Marshall: If we had a few batteries at Nullagine and in the North-West, you would have a lot more ore to crush.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have already stated that an advance of £4,000 has been made for a battery at Nullagine.

Mr. Marshall: There is room for a few more.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When we have proof that there is room—

Mr. Marshall: You do not want proof.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is necessary to show that there are reasonable prospects in a district before a battery is provided. There was reasonable certainty in the areas where batteries have been provided. This year's tonnage, I am satisfied, will surpass that of last year. There is no doubt that the activity of the State battery system is a fair indication of the activity in the industry generally. Though the results from the treatment by cyanide have been less—and I am not complaining of that—they have more than justified the treatment of the low-grade stuff, because of the additional men kept in employment in raising the ore. Now as to the financial position of the State batteries. The working profit on the system last year was £15,196. Against that must be debited cartage subsidies paid by the department amounting to £15,639, and the increased payment to battery employees, £16,000, a total of £31,639. Subtracting the £15,196 profit on working expenses, the result is a loss of £16,443. Those

figures include the cost of all the assistance given to prospectors by the State battery system.

Mr. Stubbs: Do those figures allow for wear and tear?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No; those are the actual working results.

Mr. Cross: The Laverton battery is six months behind.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member should not speak of something he knows nothing about. If no more ore were carted to the Laverton battery, its operations would cease in three months.

Mr. Cross: That was reported in the Kalgoorlie "Miner."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot help that. One or two of the batteries are practically congested, but on the whole they are keeping well abreast of the orders received. I never want to see the time when the State batteries will stop for want of ore. I would rather see them booked up ahead for two or three thousand tons than have them waiting for ore to be sent to them. There is still an agitation amongst prospectors and others for a reduction in the cost of cyaniding. I admit that we take 2 dwts. 8 grains, which is a fairly high sum. I would be prepared to reduce that to-morrow by 50 per cent. if all the ore we treated contained 2 dwts. 8 grains. We treat thousands of tons a year which do not pay to treat, but it is better to treat such ore than to have to shovel it out of the road. The cartage subsidy is increasing. The State battery system is treating ore at a cheaper rate than any private battery system in the State. The prospector under the Mines Department is certainly getting a fair deal. The carting subsidy paid between 31st August, 1934, and 31st August, 1935, amounted to £18,243. I have told the prospectors before that if they want a reduction in the amount deducted for tailings, they must give us something back somewhere else. They cannot have it both ways. Seeing the conditions they are getting under the State battery system, I am definitely of the opinion that they are not being harshly treated. If they are going to demand that we take less than 2 dwts. 8 grains, we shall have to consider seriously either dumping the lower-grade sands, and not treating them at all, or else stopping the cartage subsidy, which I believe is of wonderful assistance to the prospectors. Seeing that the State

battery system as a system is still showing a fairly big loss, I am of opinion, with gold at its present price and with the present prosperity associated with the industry, that it is unfair to ask the general taxpayer to pay more than he is doing in the assistance that is being rendered to mining through the State battery system. It is not fair to ask for anything further. At the end of April last year Cabinet decided it was necessary to send someone to England. As I was Minister for Mines, and the mining industry was in great heart, it was decided that I should be the selected one. Cabinet believed it would be of great benefit to the State for a Minister of the Crown to go to England and get in direct touch with those who had money to invest, so that the position as we saw it in connection with mining might be put to those interested. I reached England in June. After a preliminary investigation I soon discovered there was no lack of capital in London for investment. I was rather astounded to find so much money available for investment.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think £80,000,000 was invested in gold mining in Africa last year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: About that. For a great deal of the money that was available there were no investments. There was a great shyness about investing in the gold mining industry in this State. I was given to understand there were two causes for this. The first was labour troubles in Australia, and the second was the original Kalgoorlie boom. There is no doubt that many people who speculated in the mining industry in Kalgoorlie in the early days, on the occasion of the first boom, had their fingers burnt, and that has made them shy ever since. No matter where the gold boom occurs, the average man realises that he does not always get a prize. He is lucky if he gets a prize once in three or four times. The people there look upon the industry as a means of gambling, but they were not prepared to gamble in Western Australia. Only two or three heads of companies who had money for investment, and had some investments in this State, were anxious to obtain knowledge concerning other investments here. I could not disabuse the minds of people concerning the first boom, and did not attempt to do so. A meeting of the chairman of directors of the companies that now have interests in Western Australia, and the principals of other com-

panies who had interests in other countries in gold mining, was called so that I might meet those people. We had a heart-to-heart talk about disruptions and strikes in Australia and other matters affecting the industry. I am satisfied that, after the talk we had, those men held quite a different impression from that which they had before the meeting. All with the exception of one man congratulated me on the statement I made, and said it had cleared the air so far as strikes in Western Australia were concerned. The only man who did not congratulate me left a little while before the meeting closed, but he wrote to me to the same effect a few days later. They all appeared to be quite satisfied. I also attended another gathering. This was a complimentary dinner given to me by people interested in the mining industry. At that dinner I think there were present representatives of all the principal banks in England, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, the president of the Chamber of Manufactures, and representatives of practically every important industrial organisation in England. I decided not to talk of the millions that could be made by investing money in Western Australia, but was satisfied to give the gathering the history of the gold mining industry in Western Australia, believing that would be the best advertisement I could give the State. I merely placed before those present the actual facts as I knew them. I was rather astonished to find the ignorance of otherwise well-informed people in London concerning Western Australia. They knew nothing about the State. I was asked on several occasions if Sydney was the capital of Western Australia.

Mr. Marshall: That is what our Agents General are doing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not the Agent General's work. Those people had no idea what Australia or Western Australia was like.

Mr. Marshall: Invite them out here.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I did invite them, and I think many of them will send their money out here. I say in all sincerity, no matter what Government may be in power, that a representative of the Government should be sent to England certainly once in every two years. I believe the benefit to the State would repay the cost ten times over. The questions London people ask are amazing, and those people seem astounded upon learning the facts concern-

ing Western Australia. I pointed out to them that this State has nearly a million square miles of territory, two-thirds being either proclaimed goldfields or auriferous country; that the population is 442,000 all told; that slightly less than three per cent. of that population is engaged in the mining industry. I was asked repeatedly, "But have not the original prospectors and the mining companies already found all the gold that is to be discovered in Western Australia?" My reply was, "How can three per cent. of 442,000 people prospect adequately not less than 750,000 square miles of territory in 50 years?" Let me say that Western Australia's gold output during the first half century of the industry here is more remarkable than that of any other country in the world, not excluding South Africa. In view of the fact that the small population of this State has produced over £180,000,000 worth of gold in half a century, it must be acknowledged that there is gold in Western Australia. In London I also pointed out the results achieved by some of the Western Australian gold-mining companies. One of these companies has repaid the capital invested in it five times over each year during a period of 27 years—ever since the inception of the company. My reference is to the Great Boulder. I produced the company's balance sheets to prove my statement. I was careful not to make any statements from mere hearsay, but always had at hand figures to prove my assertions. One Western Australian gold mine has been paying 30 per cent., another 40 per cent., and a third 60 per cent. dividends on the capital invested here during the last seven months. If people are prepared to risk a little gamble, what better venture can they make than investment in gold-mining here, having regard to the figures I have quoted? Those figures appealed to the people in London, and made them more inclined to listen to representations on Western Australia's behalf. For at least three weeks after that function I was kept busier even than I have been this week, all my time being occupied in interviewing people who were seeking information concerning Western Australia. Such a visit, I say, does good. I desire also to take credit for the flotation of three companies that took place while I was in England. They represent a total capitalisation of £2,250,000, and I can claim that the sub-

scription of at least half of that capital was directly due to my visit to London. Let me say also that it was a great pity the Italian-Abyssinian war cloud developed at that time. During the last weeks of my stay in London, many men who had previously interviewed me rang up to have a further word with me. It appears they had come to the conclusion that it was better for them to wait awhile. They wanted to see how things would go. The possibilities of war had rendered them timid. I believe that the cloud will lift, and when it does—or even if it does not—the result of my visit to London will be that at least one and a half times as much capital will be invested in Western Australia during the next three years as has been invested here in the past. Now I wish to refer to a few men who, as the result of my visit, became interested in Western Australia, men who stand high in the mining world. There is Lord Lee. There is Sir Charles Walker, the chairman of Distillers, Ltd., and Lord Denman. Again, I interested Mr. F. T. Beale and Mr. Case, the representatives of the American Smelting and Refining Company Ltd., and of the B.A.N.Z. At Corby I went over Brassert's iron and steel works, and had an interview with the principals. These people are now definitely interested in Western Australia, not only as a matter of thought, but as a matter of actual investment of capital here.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Has not Lord Lee been interested in Western Australia for some time? Has he not two shows here?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Now he has—the Youanmi mine and the Hill 60. Strictly, it is Lord Lee's son who is interested, but the father has found the money. Brassert's are the people whom Sir James Connolly interested in Western Australia. They wanted to see me for the purpose of having a chat with me. I looked over the steel works, and also talked with the heads of the firm. I have never seen an organisation equal to that of the Corby steel works. The works are not complete yet by any manner of means. They are being built in three sections. Up to date only one section has been completed, the second section being about half built. However, the first section is working. I was amazed when being shown the operations of the small-pipe section, right from the inception—

from the mining of the ore to the completion of the pipe at the other end, the whole operation occupying only 19 hours. Only 19 hours elapse from the time the ore is lifted from the mine into the bin and goes into the smelters, which convert it into steel, and the issuing of steel pipes at the other end. The work never stops but goes on throughout the 24 hours, seven days a week. There is no question about the organisation there. Yampi Sound has been talked of for 10 or 15 years, to my knowledge. I have been interested in it for about 11 years now. Though there has been much talk, very little has ever been done. I believe this firm can, if anybody can, establish works at Yampi Sound. Since returning to Australia I have been told that Brassert's have no hope of getting a contract from the Japanese. That is possible, but I have definite information from them that they already hold a signed contract. So we shall wait and see. It is well-known, I believe, that the firm have the contract. I am of opinion that before the end of February next year they will have a large number of men employed at Yampi Sound mining and supplying ore. There is not much more I want to say on these Estimates.

Mr. Patrick: Is there not some talk of a revival of lead-mining?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will not say that it is not so, but I have not heard of it. I am prepared to give the Committee information only on matters that I believe to be absolutely correct. I do not know anything about the reported revival in lead, but I noticed in this evening's "Daily News" that tin has dropped with a thud, so that the base metal market is not now as solid as it was. I believe that the gold-mining industry in Western Australia will continue to prosper. I said, when introducing the Mines Estimates last year, that within three years we would be very close to our maximum output. I am still of that opinion, and I believe that two years hence our production will closely approximate that of 1903. I make that statement with some knowledge of the number of mines that are erecting plants, proceeding with development and will come into production within the period I indicate. I do not anticipate that one of the old-established mines will stop working and close down within that

period, so that each new mine that enters the productive stage will increase the output of gold. I have pleasure in submitting the Estimates to the Committee.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.12]: As one of the few representatives of the outer goldfields districts, I cannot allow the Mines Estimates to pass without some comment. I agree with the remarks of the Minister, and members must have been delighted to hear his optimistic references to the gold-mining industry. There is no doubt that there is a fairly good time ahead of those who invest their capital in the industry in Western Australia. It is true that some will fail, but I am with the Minister in that I am convinced Western Australia never possessed brighter prospects from a goldmining point of view. I make that claim because we are beginning better to appreciate the value of low-grade propositions that 25 years ago would have been looked upon as comparatively valueless.

The Minister for Mines: They were valueless then.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. What would have been regarded as a valueless proposition upwards of 30 years ago is the very proposition that investors require to-day. Up-to-date methods and mass production bring huge profits to the investor, and I consider, notwithstanding the fact that those who are sent out prospecting to-day have had no lengthy experience in such operations, they will, generally speaking, learn what there is to know about prospecting much more quickly than did those who prospected the goldfields in the very early days. If the records of the boom days of goldmining in this State are examined, it will be obvious that the prospectors at that stage chased the alluvial gold. You, Mr. Chairman, as one of those who were on the goldfields when comparatively young—you will agree with me that that is a very long time ago—will know, that an announcement would possibly be made that gold had been discovered at Darwin. It was remarkable how information spread in those days. News would travel 150 miles in the course of a few days although people had to "pad the hoof." In consequence of such an announcement, there would be a stampede to Darwin. The alluvial and, perhaps, a few rich quartz veins would be discovered, and then the disappointed majority would be off

again. It is easy to assume that much of the time of early-day prospectors was spent in travelling, and systematic prospecting was not seriously considered at all. Young fellows who go out to-day have definite prospecting work to engage their attention. I do not suggest that every ounce of alluvial gold in Western Australia has been discovered. That is by no means the position; prospectors now do not depend upon the discovery of alluvial, but pay more attention to the occurrence of reefs or lodes. Thus it is that in these days the young prospector has to learn the A.B.C. of the game, whereas in the early days they looked for slugs on the surface. Fortunately for Western Australia they found a large quantity of them. Thus we can say that Western Australia has now reached the stage at which it has embarked on a very successful career. The mining industry has become established; the profits derived from investments are apparent, and the possibilities ahead are untold. No one can gauge the quantity of gold yet to be discovered in Western Australia. I do not suggest that it will be discovered in new country. As a matter of fact, the Minister and every goldfields member knows that some fine discoveries are being made within the immediate vicinity of old-established goldfields towns. With the advantage of more modern methods of treatment, many of the old abandoned and alleged useless propositions have now become wonderfully good speculations. I do not think anyone can go wrong regarding investments in goldmining.

Mr. Stubbs: If it is done wisely.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Wagin must remember that no one can tell what is beyond the point of the pick. What is a valuable proposition to-day may be a positive dud to-morrow. That applies more particularly to quartz propositions. The experience in this State is that low-grade propositions do not fluctuate to anything like the same degree as quartz country. We have had some wonderfully rich deposits, but unfortunately they have not proved long-lived. If we take into consideration the history of goldmining and remember, for instance, what happened in connection with the Great Fingal mine, which, but for mismanagement, might still be a good proposition to-day, we must retain confidence in quartz mining. In investing, one has to take

chances, and when I said that a man could not do better than invest in the goldmining industry, if he is so inclined, I meant that I do not think there is any country in the world that lends itself to that form of investment, nor provides better opportunities, than does Western Australia. Unfortunately Western Australian quartz reefs will not compare in point of size or value with those of South Africa. Yet we have several wonderful quartz deposits in Western Australia, which indicates that there are more to follow, and that with the lesson of the past we can look forward to the future with great confidence in even our quartz propositions. I would not advocate that the Government should do anything which would place an embargo on the industry having the effect of making it unattractive from an investor's point of view. But the Minister must admit that our experience in the past has been a very sad one. The Minister will know that the system of management that was adopted by several companies, one in particular, merely meant taking the eyes out of the mine, showing huge profits on a tonnage basis, and after removing the most valuable portion of the vein they closed down the mine. I could name several mines on which I worked which would be working to-day had the companies been compelled to mine their properties on a scientific basis rather than manage them for the express purpose of carrying out by managerial contract the production of a certain tonnage with a certain profit. With better management many of our mines that are closed to-day would still be working. We do not want a repetition of that. If the industry is going to be of value to investors, we should come to some arrangement that every ton of ore that can be treated and made to yield a profit should be subjected to the correct method of mining—by compulsion if necessary. I know a syndicate that is inclined to adopt the old method of getting rich quick and paying themselves handsomely, after which the State is a loser, because the mine is practically ruined by bad management and the State asset abandoned. The Minister should give consideration to that aspect of gold mining. Another point in the history of gold mining which presents a sad feature is that of recent years, when I go up to my electorate I find more men maimed and bandaged and limping round the town than I have every previously seen. I cannot give the reason for it, but I

am going to suggest that it must be due to some laxity in the Mines Regulation Act. Here again I suggest to the Minister that he should call a conference, if it be possible, of all the mining inspectors at a convenient centre with a view to getting the collective knowledge of those men as to what should be done, without burdening the industry too much, so as to prevent the very serious number of accidents that are taking place in the gold mines of Western Australia. It does not do to look at the investor's interests all the time. While giving the investor every opportunity of getting a return on his capital, we should not blind ourselves to the fact that far too great a sacrifice is being demanded in order that that return shall be produced. I think we could give some reasonable protection to which no humanitarian would object. It may be that I have visited my electorate during abnormal periods, but I must confess that Wiluna in particular presents a very sad sight. I repeat the statement, for it cannot be repeated too often, namely, that I have never before seen so many men limping and bandaged, nor have I previously known so large a total of fatal accidents anywhere on the fields as have occurred in Wiluna. I do not think we should ask the workers in the industry to make too great a sacrifice in support of our eager desire to secure the confidence of investors to the extent that they will invest their money in the industry. I am prepared to share the profits of the industry equally between capital and labour, but I cannot see my way clear to calling on the workers in the industry to make such heavy sacrifices as they have been making. I ask the Minister to take this matter into consideration and see if those charged with the responsibility of administering the Mines Regulation Act—some of them are good practical men and others are highly technical men—could not be called together and between them put up a report which would serve materially to reduce the existing rate of sacrifice. I agree with the Minister in regard to the prospecting scheme, and I congratulate the Government on their foresight in formulating that scheme. In that regard, what a different picture there is to-day from that which was presented when the present Government first took office. In those days in the Immigration Home and at the Blackboy Hill Camp we saw young men, single men, with no outlook in life and no prospects whatever.

I used to see those fellows when I was visiting the Wooroloo sanatorium on Sundays. They would be trudging down from Blackboy Hill Camp into Midland Junction for a little break in their surroundings, to get away from the camp. They were all helpless and forlorn, with no prospects whatever. It is very pleasing to-day to find that many of them accepted the offer made to them by the present Government and went on to the fields, where they are getting at least a reasonable living, while others have been successful in prospecting. It is true that there were not 100 per cent. of successes, but that was not to be expected. A percentage of slackers existed as in other organisations and they soon drifted back to the city. They did not want an opportunity to help themselves. It was sad to think that there were a few men of that type. Most of the men, however, say that when they were in Blackboy, they could not imagine any possibility of again earning a living in or around the city, but they would not be prepared to return to the city now. After they have been down for a month or so, back they go to the open fields and freedom.

Mr. North: May the present price of gold last.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but the point is, will it? I am hopeful that quite a lot of the mines will reach the productive stage before any material reduction in the price occurs. I am one of those who believe that we shall never see the price of gold revert to the old standard. However, one never knows what might happen and my belief might be erroneous. How sad the outlook for this State would be but for the enhanced price of gold! Thousands of men have found employment in the industry, and what a blessing our gold mining industry has been to the Eastern States! The number of Eastern States people who have established themselves on the goldfields of Western Australia is astounding. Huge numbers have secured employment there, and I hope they appreciate the fact that the Cinderella State has been most valuable to its older sisters. I recall the first rush to Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and Boulder, when my people migrated to Western Australia. I am often asked by Victorians why I have not a good word to say for that State. Victoria could ill-afford to provide me with the necessities of life or to treat me humanly. I came to Western Australia, which has done so much for me, and yet people wonder why

I appreciate this State so highly. I hope that those who have found the Cinderella State so generous to them and their families will at least appreciate the benefits they have received. In the nineties Western Australia proved to be the salvation of Victoria, and to a large degree it is providing many Victorian families with a good livelihood to-day. I am pleased that the Minister has added to the Geological Department. This is one of the most valuable aspects on the technical side.

The Minister for Mines: The most valuable.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is a department that can be of material assistance to prospectors. Now that the Minister has the aid of those scientific men, I hope he will not be foolish enough to lend their services to any company as was done in the past. A considerable amount of geological assistance could be afforded to the men engaged in prospecting in the Murchison. The advice of geologists in districts like Peak Hill and Sandstone would be of material assistance.

The Minister for Mines: I think the geological survey has been of considerable assistance to many already.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. The advice will be welcomed, and the Minister is to be congratulated on utilising the services of scientific men to assist prospecting, but he should let the companies find their own geologists. If money is available, I should like the Minister to revive the policy of free boring, which was in operation some years ago. Quite a lot of our goldfields areas do not attract investors. I refer particularly to Peak Hill. At that place a famous dinner was given to a Governor off a plate of sheet gold produced in the mine. That mine yielded a large amount of wealth. The deposit is a unique one and most difficult for a prospector or anyone else to follow. I have inspected it and found myself unable to follow it. On such a deposit the work of geologists and boring might reveal something worth while. If the Minister can find the money for the purpose, I hope he will revive that policy and give the Peak Hill district immediate consideration. Let me appeal for consideration for the portions of our auriferous country further north. It is true that the North-West has not been prospected so

thoroughly as have other goldfields areas, but that has been due in the main to the very high cost of living and the lack of transport facilities. The Government should give special attention to that matter. Nothing will convince me that the North-West part of the State will not yet be a great gold-producing area, but it is almost impossible for the prospector to operate without scientific help on account of the cost. Again, there are no crushing facilities apart from those at Marble Bar and Bamboo Creek, though I believe the Minister said that a private battery is being erected at Nullagine. Those batteries, however, are not sufficient to encourage men to go there. If there were batteries at some of the places where the first gold discoveries in the State were made, or if liberal assistance were given by the Government, I feel confident that men would be attracted there and that their efforts would be successful. I cannot believe that all the gold in the North-West has been discovered. There are belts of excellent auriferous country, and the fact that gold was discovered there in the early days indicates the possibility of an abundance of gold still remaining to be discovered in that area. I hope the Minister will adopt a liberal policy towards the North-West. I cannot advise him what to do, but special consideration should be given to that part of the State. I do not care what method he adopts.

The Minister for Mines: We have made a geological survey of 10,000 miles of that country.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but I am opposed to the system of aerial surveys. The Minister quoted figures of State battery operations. I do not dispute the figures, but they indicated that a different system of compiling statistical returns has been adopted by the department from that in vogue in the past. I notice that the carting subsidy is a charge against the State battery administration. In the early days it was a charge against the Mines Development Vote.

The Minister for Mines: It has always been a charge against the State battery system.

Mr. MARSHALL: It did not appear in the way the Minister presented it to-night when he showed that the actual administration of State batteries represented a loss.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that.

Mr. MARSHALL: He admitted the system showed a profit of £15,000.

The Minister for Mines: On actual working.

Mr. MARSHALL: On actual working costs in years gone by the system showed a loss. State batteries were hung up everywhere for indefinite periods waiting for ore to crush.

The Minister for Mines: One man was managing three batteries at one time.

Mr. MARSHALL: The overhead charges were going on and no revenue was coming in. The deduction of 2 dwts. 8 grains for the cost of treatment is excessive. At the present price of gold that is equivalent almost to a payment in cash of £1 per ton of ore treated. There are mines in the State that do their development work, break out the ore, haul it, and treat it for that cost per ton.

Mr. Patrick: At Wiluna the cost is about £1 a ton.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have known the cost of the Sons of Gwalia to be as low as 19s. 10d. per ton, but then the manager is an expert and a competent man. The Minister must admit that the State Batteries Department can scarcely justify this deduction. In addition, the department only pay on a 90 per cent. basis per ton of sands treated, and only pay on a 75 per cent. extraction. Having regard to all the facts, we must admit that the department are getting a particularly high price for the work they do, bearing in mind the price of gold. The State Batteries Department have lagged behind in the matter of maintenance. Years ago when the industry was declining and a sufficient tonnage was not forthcoming for treatment, the superintendent used to economise to the utmost. He thought it was sufficient to patch up a breakage in any way so that the battery might be kept going long enough to crush the small tonnage that was available. Against my very good advice the department absorbed one battery piecemeal in order to keep others going. They took the copper table off first, then they took the producer, then the stamps and finally the whole battery was gone. With the pieces from this one battery the department kept other batteries going at three centres in my electorate. Unfortunately the present superintendent of batteries also wishes to keep down his costs, to make them

comparable with what used to be a reasonable cost in years gone by. That, of course, is impossible. The State batteries in my electorate are not a credit to the State. I have appealed to the superintendent to effect certain improvements. Whether he knows they are essential or not, I cannot say, but he seems to want to take the place of the Treasurer. He says it is a matter of money. That is outside his province. If it is necessary to keep the batteries efficient and in a proper state of repair, it is his job to put through the necessary requisitions. I shall deal with that matter more extensively on the Loan Estimates. Apart from the deduction of 2 dwts. 8 grains, the Government have also stopped making the rebate on low-grade ore. There used to be a rebate on all ore crushed under 5 dwts. That has ceased. That rebate should only be stopped by the manager of the State battery concerned, who should have discretionary power given to him. It is impossible to tell the value of a crushing to the owner until the facts are known. Members may see in the paper that as a result of a crushing at a State battery the yield was 10 ozs. per ton. They may presume that the owner of the ore has been wonderfully well paid for his labour, whereas he may not have been paid half sufficient for the work he did seeing that it may have taken him two years to get that quantity of ore. I may have the good fortune to possess a face of low-grade ore that is so accessible that I can back a motor truck into it and quarry the stone away. That would be profitable for me to do, and I might not be entitled to any rebate. On the other hand, there are prospectors who have misjudged the value of their ore and suffer in consequence. I do not think that merely because gold is bringing a good price every prospector who is crushing at a State battery is getting good value for his services. The Minister might well permit the rebate to be left to the discretion of the State battery manager. And this brings me to the Minister's remarks regarding strikes in our gold-mining industry. I have seen in the Press recently a tabulation of the number of industrial conflicts which have occurred in the various leading countries of the world. I was astounded at the place held in the list by Australia. In point of fact, among what may be termed advanced and civilised nations we ranked last, having fewer strikes than any other of them. However, that is not the point I wish

to make. How is it possible for English people to be obsessed with the idea that industrial troubles in the gold-mining industry of Western Australia are frequent? It is beyond my comprehension.

Mr. Hawke: It is largely due to the Opposition's propaganda.

Mr. MARSHALL: What other strike, except just the one, have we had in our gold-mining industry? The last strike was the only strike in the history of Western Australian gold-mining covering the whole industry.

Mr. McDonald: And that was not a strike, either!

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall call it a strike for the purposes of my argument.

Mr. McDonald: You will offend many people by calling it a strike.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then, to suit the hon. member interjecting, I will call it a dispute. I admit that on the Murchison, for example, there have been two industrial disputes—one affecting one mine, the other affecting two mines. The miners there passed quietly through the whole period of the war, when commodity prices and cost of living went up by fifty per cent., without receiving a single increase in their wages.

The Minister for Mines: And they never struck, either.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I believe that in some of the mining areas nearly the whole of the men enlisted.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot imagine how the idea I have mentioned can have got into the heads of the English people—that men employed in our gold-mining areas are disposed to strike. What other industry marked by such insecurity and such a bad environment in which to labour has experienced so little industrial strife? The way our miners have behaved is wonderful. If people could only comprehend the objectionable nature of work in gold-mines, they would be astounded at the law-abiding and peaceful nature of the men working in our gold mines. I do not wish to draw comparisons, but if one casts one's eyes over the whole of the Australian Commonwealth one must admit that the miners of Western Australia stand out high and dry above all others as lovers of peace in industry. After all these generous remarks upon the Minister's administration, I am sorry to have to break

new ground and voice complaints. I cannot help it, for the Minister has done wrong.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You said enough last night.

Mr MARSHALL: I did not state more than the facts of the case. On this occasion I think the Minister went out of his way to do a wrong. If any blame is cast on my electorate, I feel obliged at least to enter a protest. Hon. members will recollect that about 12 months ago there was a dispute concerning the Bellevue Tailings Co., otherwise known as the Mount Sir Samuel Tailings Co. That dump was held for 21 or 22 years without ever an attempt on the part of the holder to comply with the mining law. Invariably, when an application for forfeiture of the tailings area was lodged, the old argument, new again today, was put up. There was the usual objection that the company holding the area was on the verge of discovering a successful method of treatment. These tailings contain a high percentage of copper, and therefore do not lend themselves to effective extraction. If the tailings dump could be treated with economic success, thousands of tons of similar tailings or sands could also be treated. Apart from that, if successful extraction were brought about, several mines in my electorate which now are closed would immediately be worked. For example, the Start of the East; and there are one or two mines near Peak Hill likewise shut down owing to high percentages of copper in the ore rendering it at present impossible to work those properties. When a company or syndicate or an individual has held a tailings area or a dump for 20 years or even more, a reasonable term has been allowed for the making of an effort to treat the tailings. Our Mining Act, as I interpret it, was never meant to assist retrogression or promote stagnation. The provisions of the Act are all for progress, for getting the mining industry going and not for stopping it. I respectfully suggest that 20 years represents an entirely reasonable time to allow a dump to remain in the hands of any person, without any serious effort on his part to overcome the treatment difficulty. A party of young men decided to apply for the forfeiture of the Mt. Sir Samuel tailings area. The application was heard by Colonel Mansbridge as warden of the Wiluna district on the 18th September and he decided on the evidence submitted

to him, that the holders of the area had had a reasonable time within which to comply with the law. When the application was dealt with, the objector, who was the holder of this particular dump, had his lawyer present and the case was submitted as well as was possible. In consequence, Colonel Mansbridge gave his decision against the defendants, forfeited the tailings area, and, under the Mining Act, declared the tailings to be Crown property. If I interpret the Act correctly, it merely empowers the Minister to interfere when there has been a grave breach of justice. For instance, if the Minister discovered that, in the administration of the Act, a grave injustice had been inflicted, he could intervene. I admit that the Act permits the warden to make recommendations only in some instances, whereas in other directions he is given unlimited power. Where it is possible for the warden to make a recommendation only, the Minister should be cognisant of all the facts, and should set aside the recommendation if he be convinced that it involves a miscarriage of justice. In this particular instance, I think it would be very difficult for the Minister to say that that was what had happened. For a long period, I had been desirous of someone treating the sands on the tailings area because successful extraction from the dump would be of immense assistance in the treatment of similar classes of ore on the Murchison. The man who can successfully treat that dump will be a benefactor to the goldmining industry. In those circumstances, I think the Minister should have allowed the warden's decision to stand. The tailings area had been forfeited, but before the successful applicants could treat the sands, they had to get permission from the Minister to enable them to do so. He refused to grant the necessary permission and the case concluded. After the warden had declared the tailings area forfeited, and the tailings Crown property, the Minister refused permission for the applicants to attempt to treat the tailings, and during the period of an adjournment in connection with a further application, the Minister, according to the evidence before the court, gave what was Crown property back to the original holder. The Minister has no power under the Mining Act to give Crown property to anyone.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is not this the case that you brought before the Committee last year?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Well, I will have a real good talk to the Minister about it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member can do what he likes; I know what I intend to do. The fact remains that the warden declared the tailings to be Crown property, and the only way by which the original holder could regain possession of the tailings area was, according to the Act, by application made through the court. The Minister did not invite him to do that, according to the information at my disposal. On the other hand, the Minister gave the dump back to the original holder, who had held it for over 21 years and had done nothing. Under the heading of "Jurisdiction," Section 253 reads as follows:—

The warden's court shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine all such actions, suits and other proceedings cognisable by any court of civil jurisdiction as arise within the district concerning the following matters, that is to say:—

- (1) Area, dimensions, and boundaries of mining tenements;
- (2) Title to and ownership or possession of mining tenements or the products of mining.

There are other matters mentioned as well, but it is the second paragraph that I have quoted that indicates the avenue through which the holder of the dump should have proceeded in order to secure legal possession of the tailings dump, not through the Minister, whose power is very limited.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If the Minister has given away Crown lands, we should impeach him.

Mr. MARSHALL: Crown lands are not involved in the matter, so the Leader of the Opposition is a little premature with his uncalled-for remark. The Minister's power is indicated in the second proviso to Section 111, which reads—

Provided also that the Minister shall, upon the written application of the lessee, fix a sum to be paid by the lessee by way of rental, for such period as the Minister may think fit, for the surface of the land actually occupied by such tailings or other mining material; and so long as the said lessee shall make due payment of the rent so fixed, the preceding provisions of this section shall not apply.

That is what the Minister has power to do, and certainly he has no power to give back to any lessee Crown property that has legally become such by way of a declaration of the warden. I am not concerned about the parties associated with

this matter; what I am concerned about is that the provisions of the Mining Act shall be enforced. I say that with one reservation, and that is that where an apparent injustice may be inflicted in enforcing the provisions of the Act, that course should not be pursued. In this instance the dump was held for 21 years, and nothing was done with it. I can tell the Minister that there is another such dump at Peak Hill owned by the same person or company that has also been held for 21 years, and no attempt has been made to treat the tailings. But the most important factor in the success of this application was that they have only six months in which to give the syndicate opportunity to test their property. If the Minister had given them that opportunity, we would have known long ago of their success in trying out this particular class of ore. It is not right to frustrate people who are greatly desirous of doing something of a beneficial nature for the State, while giving privilege and preference to those who have failed to fulfil their obligations under the law. I do not know when this 12 months period will expire. I do not think the Minister had the power to extend it, but if he did have the power, I want to know from what date he extended it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And to whom he extended it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The records in this case are most depressing. The behaviour of the lawyer on behalf of the defendant was anything but courteous. However, I do not want to take up the time of the Committee with all that. If there be any special reference made to it, I will move a substantive motion in order that I may myself discuss it. I rose to voice a protest. If it were not in my electorate, I would not have worried about it. I cannot see eye to eye with the Minister in this, and I suggest it is not doing either him or me, or the parties concerned, very much good. He should not do it. When a party has had a period of 21 years in which to comply with the law, and when a warden empowered with all the necessary authority takes action, then I think the Minister would be well advised to adhere to the warden's decision. There is scarcely any excuse for a person who holds a dump of sand for 21 years without making any seri-

ous effort to prove whether it is treatable. I could say more but, if I did, other issues would be dragged in, and I do not want that to happen. It is from the point of view of the workers in the mining industry in this State that I have mentioned these matters. I have to protest, because it is in my electorate; if it were not, I would leave it to others. But I cannot agree with the Minister on this matter, any more than I could on the matter contained in the motion I moved last evening. I desire to thank the Minister and the officers of his department for having always given me assistance and in most instances favourably considered my requests for information. The department as a whole is fairly well administered and can boast of some very efficient officers, essentially courteous and obliging. I extend to them my heartfelt thanks.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.15]: It has been very heartening to hear the bright story of the gold-mining industry which the Minister unfolded, but I do not think that gold is the only commodity worth while. I suggest the Mines Department have not done sufficient in the direction of assisting in the discovery of mineral oil in this State. Last year the users of motor vehicles in the Commonwealth paid 15½ million pounds for the mineral oil imported into Australia. So it should easily be recognised that it would be a great boon to the Commonwealth if oil were discovered within its boundaries. Very little has been done by any State towards assisting people to find mineral oil. It ought to be possible for the Minister to take up the matter with the Commonwealth Government with a view to obtaining some financial assistance from them, so that a vigorous policy of prospecting for oil might be pursued in Western Australia. We have a very fine gold prospecting scheme which has given excellent results, but surely oil is worth looking for. It is not asking too much to expect our Mines Department to do something to encourage prospecting for oil. It is true the Act provides a reward for the discovery of oil in payable quantities, but that is not sufficient. A reward should be offered for the discovery of oil seepages, or oil-bearing formations. It would be only reasonable to ask the Commonwealth Government to assist in that direction because, even if only from

a defence point of view, the discovery of mineral oil in Australia would mean a very great deal. It is one of the avenues in which the Commonwealth Government could well assist the State, and I hope the Minister will make representations to the Commonwealth Government with a view to obtaining some assistance so that we might do something in this State to encourage people to look for oil. I have had letters from several people who believe they have discovered oil seepages. But they are people without means and so are unable to test out their discoveries. Moreover, they fear that if they make a move someone will come in and deprive them of the fruits of their labour. So it would also be necessary to afford protection to people who have discovered oil seepages. I cannot suggest how that could be done, but the Minister will know that much better than I. However, I hope an attempt will be made to protect people who have discovered oil seepages, and also to reward them if they have discovered such seepages. In that way we shall so encourage prospecting for oil that it will be likely that mineral oil in payable quantities will be found in Western Australia. If that were so, the beneficial results to Western Australia would be quite equal to the benefits we have derived from the production of gold. I have nothing further to say, other than to commend my remarks to the Minister.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [9.19]: It is as well that we should all realise that the prosperity in the gold mining industry which we are now experiencing has been brought about largely by the increase in the price of gold. I do not think it would be advisable to lose sight of that fact, and it would be altogether wrong if we were to delude ourselves into a sense of false security. It is of great advantage to Western Australia to have a prosperous mining industry; and especially at the present time, following the depression in the industry, is it of advantage to have such a measure of increased prosperity. There has been a considerable increase in the quantity of gold won during the last two years as compared with the previous three years, but one outstanding feature is that most of the gold has been won from old mines that had been abandoned and have since been reopened and operated under more favourable conditions as a result of the increased price of gold. Up-to-date treatment plants have

been installed and the industry has become more prosperous. Very few new mines have been discovered in recent years, and the bulk of those that have been discovered and supplied with capital have not yet reached the producing stage, and I consider that that is one of the weak features of the industry. Companies that have been formed within recent years have taken a long time to bring their mines to the producing stage and, unless there is a speeding up, I am inclined to think that the delay will prove detrimental to the introduction of additional capital into the industry. I was pleased to hear the optimistic remarks of the Minister when introducing his Estimates. The Minister has done quite a lot to assist the industry financially and by encouraging people to take added interest in it. Much still remains to be done. I know that the Minister has under consideration the extension of crushing facilities and the installation of more up-to-date treatment plants. They are very essential in order to get men to undertake prospecting. At the same time, he has made available money to assist individual prospectors, and I congratulate him on having done so. Greater encouragement would be given to those men if the Minister could see his way clear to increase the amount made available to prospectors. Previous to the introduction of his scheme, no money was provided for the purpose, except in isolated instances. When the Minister provided 15s. per man, it proved of great assistance to many. We have to realise, however, that the men have been in the field for some time and that other men must push farther out, and that the expense to the individual prospector is becoming much greater. I hope the Minister will note my remarks with a view to increasing the amount to the individual prospector. I wish to bring under the Minister's notice the fact that in our auriferous country are areas not adequately supplied with water. Some of the money now being spent on various public works could well be devoted to providing water supplies in the drier auriferous areas to enable prospectors to get away from the old beaten tracks and test those areas. In many districts prospectors are tramping over each other's tracks, which is not a desirable state of affairs. I am not prepared to say that, as prospectors pass through the country, they discover everything and that nothing is left for those who follow; but a survey should be made of the

possibility of discovering additional gold deposits in areas where, owing to the scarcity of water, prospectors cannot operate. One of the most pleasing features of the increased price of gold is the increased employment that has been made possible. Mining has absorbed many additional men in the last few years, and as the Minister pointed out, with an advance in the price of gold to the peak level, greater opportunities of employment will be afforded. The present is an opportune time for those concerned in the industry to improve the conditions by reducing the hours of labour for men working underground. Some years ago, as the result of extended effort, we were pleased to secure the 44-hour week for men underground. I think we all agree that the time has arrived when the hours should be further reduced in the interests of the health of the men employed, more especially when we remember that as against £4 4s. an ounce which gold was then bringing, the price is now in the vicinity of £8 14s. 5d. That is twice the value that ruled when the 44-hour week was introduced into the industry. In the interests of the men and of the State generally, an effort should be made to reduce the hours. This is not a matter that concerns Western Australia only. Throughout the civilised world, as a result of the speeding up in industry, the installation of more efficient machinery and the introduction of more scientific practice, production has increased enormously per unit of man power. Hence the necessity for making provision for a reduction in the number of working hours. I am pleased that the Minister had an opportunity to visit the Old Country and there meet men interested in mining. He was in a position to state the case for the gold mining industry of Western Australia, and I believe that his visit will prove of great benefit to the State.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [9.28]: The member for Murchison complained of the number of accidents and suggested that a conference of inspectors might devise means to minimise it. In my opinion the suggestion is worthy of consideration. The hon. member also asked that the free boring policy be put into operation again. At present it is not possible to do that; nor would it be possible if I had the money, until I could purchase drills from overseas.

To-day it is not possible to purchase diamond drills in Australia. Those who are using drills are getting them from overseas.

Mr. Marshall: What drill did you have before?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: One that we hired from Victoria, but it is impossible to hire drills to-day. There are ten times as many drills operating in the State to-day as there were in years gone by. Another suggestion was made with regard to tailings at Bellevue. I would assure the member for Murchison that I did not interfere with the decision of the warden. That official has no power under the Mining Act to grant to anyone the right to treat tailings. The tailings in question are not tailings in the ordinary sense of the term. The company concerned went into liquidation, and the tailings were actually purchased and paid for, and were private property.

Mr. Marshall: Look up Section 111. It is not comprehensive enough.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I obtained all the legal advice I could get, and that advice was to the effect that neither I nor anyone else could take those tailings. They were private property. The warden certainly forfeited the tailings area, but he could not forfeit the tailings themselves.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Could not the people concerned have been forced to remove the tailings from the area?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not want to discuss the legal aspect. If the warden had not granted a forfeiture of the tailings area, under a section of the Act, I could have given anyone who was in possession of the tailings area with the tailings upon it certain notice to remove the tailings. In this case, however, it is not a tailings area, because the warden forfeited it. In doing so, he also declared he had forfeited the tailings, which apparently he had no power to do under the Act. I must act on the legal advice I receive, and that is the effect of it. The member for North-East Fremantle spoke of the necessity for encouraging the search for mineral oil in Western Australia. Both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government are assisting in prospecting for oil in this State to a very considerable extent. This State is not to blame that more

is not being done. It was agreed some four years ago at a Premiers' Conference with the Commonwealth representatives that the States and the Commonwealth would endeavour to frame uniform laws applying to prospecting for oil or the finding of oil. The Government of this State had a Bill drafted covering the question. It was drafted along the lines suggested by the oil expert of the Commonwealth, Professor Woolnough. The other States, however, did not go as far as that. On the occasion of the next Premiers' Conference I asked the Premier of this State to find out what had been done. I was surprised to receive a telegram from him from Melbourne asking me to despatch two copies of the Bill we had drafted to each of the States, because they had up to that time done nothing. The object was to permit the Mines Departments in those States to go into the matter and introduce similar legislation. That was about two years ago. Knowing there was to be another Premiers' Conference, last week I telegraphed to each of the Mines Departments of the five States to ascertain if they had done anything to draft a Bill similar to the one that had been sent them two years ago. I received a reply from four of the States to say that nothing had been done, but the fifth State replied that a Bill was being introduced, although not on the lines suggested by the Western Australian Bill. If uniform legislation were introduced throughout Australia, it might encourage capital to come to the continent to a greater extent than is likely to be the case under the existing legislation. I believe if I introduced our Bill in this House there would be opposition to it because of the concessions I was giving to people who were looking for oil. I have copies of the legislation passed in America, where a great deal of oil has been discovered, and also copies of the British legislation. I believe the Bill we have drafted in this State does not go nearly so far as either the American or the British legislation goes for the encouragement of people to prospect for oil. I am prepared to do everything I can to encourage the search for oil. Despite the boom in the gold-mining industry, I think the advantage to Australia consequent upon the discovery of mineral oil in payable quantities would bring even more than the gold-mining industry is bringing to Western Australia. I thank members for their re-

ception of these Estimates, and hope they will be passed.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Medical and Public Health (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Minister).

Vote—Medical, £35,313:

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [9.38]: I intend in my remarks to deal with the Medical as well as the Health Department. There is not very much I can report with regard to the Medical Department compared with what has been done previously. The chief expenditure of the department is in connection with the maintenance of public hospitals. That is causing not only me but hundreds of other people some anxiety. To a certain extent the hospitals are self-supporting as a result of the hospitals tax. An alteration has been made in the medical services, particularly in the North. The system up there was that doctors received varying subsidies and were allowed to do private work. That was unsatisfactory so far as the North was concerned. During a portion of last year the whole scheme was altered. We appointed doctors on full-time salary, and though charges were made to those who were in a position to pay, the collections went to the Medical Department instead of going to the doctors themselves. I believe the scheme has been exceptionally successful so far. There has been opposition in some quarters, but judging from the letters I have received and the conversations I have had with members representing the North-West, I believe the scheme has effected considerable improvement in the medical services up there. Then again, the Government have now gone so far as to subsidise the flying doctor scheme, which will prove an accomplished fact within the next two months, when the necessary wireless stations will have been completed. The flying doctor service will then be in operation. The head station will be at Port Hedland. The service will prove an immense advance on anything that has existed in the North from a medical aspect. I consider Western Australia exceptionally fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Allan Vickers, at all events for the first 12 months of the scheme. Dr. Vickers has had more experience than any other medical man in Australia, if not in the world, as regards

flying. We are indeed fortunate to have obtained the services of a physician of his calibre. Further, through the Commonwealth Government and the MacRobertson Aerial Company a plane has been made available at Wyndham for the working of the scheme. The Aerial Medical Service of Australia, whose head office is in Melbourne are now considering the establishment of a wireless station at Wyndham. I do not know whether that will materialise; but whether it does or does not, the plane will be available there except on one day per week, when it will carry mails from Wyndham to Hall's Creek, or wherever the ordinary plane comes down. Thus there will be practically two medical flying services available in our North. Not much else has been done in new directions; but I wish to announce that I have at last succeeded, after two years of unsuccessful effort, in inducing the Treasurer to restore the subsidies to infant health centres. The Treasurer has agreed to forego the reduction of the subsidies under the financial emergency legislation, and to pay the full amount of £100 to each centre, instead of the reduced subsidy of £80 plus £10 for the second half of the current financial year. Regarding the Public Health Department there is not much to report. This year's expenditure will be considerably greater than that of last year. The chief reason for the increase is the alteration being made in the treatment of aboriginal lepers. Some years ago an arrangement was made with the Commonwealth Government under which aboriginal lepers discovered in Western Australia were transported to the Commonwealth Leprosarium at Darwin. That arrangement, however, though satisfactory from the financial aspect and also from the aspect of treatment after arrival of the natives at Darwin, caused considerable trouble, anxiety and worry, and certainly an immense amount of discontent with regard to the transport. Transport was the main trouble. The Government have therefore decided to discontinue that method, and to build a leprosarium out from Derby, where we shall then be able to treat leprosy cases occurring in Western Australia. Hon. members know from the newspapers that Dr. Davies has been appointed for this purpose. The doctor is now in the North, principally to deal with aborigines there and to ascertain whether there are any more lepers—I believe that undoubtedly

there are. I hope that the permanent employment of this doctor by the Aborigines and Health Departments, giving his whole time to the work, will within a few years result in cleaning up the North as regards leprosy. The only other matter I wish to mention is the school medical scheme. We have been handicapped by having had only two doctors available for the last 3½ years. However, the Treasurer has supplied more money, and another doctor is now being appointed, making three school medical officers. I am sorry to say we still have only three school dental officers. I would have liked to appoint at least two more this year, but that is impracticable. It is said that continual dropping of water wears away a stone. If I keep at it, probably I shall get a couple more school dental officers next year. At all events, I hope so. I believe in the preventive point of view. I hold it is a thousand times better for this or any other State to do everything possible to prevent sickness rather than spend lavishly to cure sickness after it has occurred. In my opinion the examination of school children by doctors and dentists will have a more beneficial effect on the health of the rising generation than anything else the State could do. I repeat, I hope to be able to appoint two more school dental officers next year; that is, if I am here then.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [9.49]: The Minister has stated that he does not intend to reply to criticisms or suggestions on items.

The Minister for Health: No; I have not said that.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I thought the Minister said it.

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. NEEDHAM: At any rate, I wish to appeal to the Minister now in connection with the Public Health Department. I observe that the amount allotted to that department is £35,364, an increase of £3,179 on last year's expenditure. The appeal I will make to the Minister relates to the Dental Hospital in Perth. Knowing the Minister's enthusiasm regarding all matters affecting health, I feel sure my appeal will not fall on deaf ears. Enthusiast that he is, the Minister is also practical in regard to his desire to protect the health of the community. The Dental Hospital comes under the jurisdiction of the Health De-

partment and the increase provided for the current financial year is £720. The expenditure for 1934-35 was £2,774 and it is estimated that for the current year it will be £3,494, an increase of £720. I am confident that the Minister, during the time he has been ministerial head of the department, has visited the Dental Hospital and he will agree with me that it is far from being up-to-date. I have visited the hospital, and I was astounded that such inferior premises should be provided for those who are carrying on this most important work. I was amazed to think that the staff could work in such premises at all. They are cribbed, cabined and confined in very narrow spaces in the few rooms that are available. The officials are subjected to a vast amount of discomfort in the hot weather, during which some of the rooms are really furnaces and the patients themselves are subject to much inconvenience while they are waiting. Straight-backed forms are provided for the patients, who may have to sit for hours waiting to receive attention. Some are located in corridors and waiting there must be distressing, be the weather hot or cold. To anyone suffering from dental trouble, the agony is bad enough without its being intensified. I appeal to the Minister to ascertain whether anything can be done to hurry up the construction of the new building. I believe a new site has been obtained in Wellington street and it is intended to erect a modern dental hospital. That work cannot be attended to too quickly. I am informed that the Lotteries Commission are prepared to provide £1,500 towards the cost of the new building, which, I understand, will involve an expenditure of about £8,000. By the time the new hospital is equipped with the necessary plant, about £10,000 will be required. If there is any possibility of providing additional funds on the supplementary Estimates later on, the expenditure would be quite worth while. To give the Committee some idea of the work of the Perth Dental Hospital, I have a copy of the eighth annual report of the Western Australian College of Dental Science and Perth Dental Hospital Incorporated. I find that the total number of patients treated during the eight years the hospital has been in existence is 37,630, and the value of free treatment given to them

is £14,599. The report contains the following interesting information:—

Five first-year students enrolled for the four-year course of study last March; there were three second-year, two third and two fourth-year students indentured to the hospital; in addition, five second, two third and two fourth-year students indentured to private dentists attended the institution, making a total of 21. At the annual examinations held in November by the Dental Board, four candidates presented themselves for their final and three satisfied the Board of Examiners. In the remaining years a good standard of work was shown and only two candidates were required to take a supplementary examination.

Again, there is this interesting paragraph:—

After many delays and disappointments, it is gratifying to be able to report that the State Government passed legislation during the last parliamentary session enabling the council to sell the block of land in Pier-street and devote the proceeds to the purchase of a more suitable site upon which to erect the urgently needed premises for the college and hospital. An excellent block has been obtained in Wellington-street, on the south side, a short distance from Lord-street.

I understand that the word "conservative" has a definite meaning in connection with the dental profession. As an indication of the urgent need of greater facilities for patients, staff and students, the waiting list indicated in the report is of interest. I have already intimated that the number of patients treated during the eight years the hospital has been in operation has been 37,630. Particulars regarding the cases treated are as follows:—

Conservative cases	..	..	2,234
Orthodontic cases	..	..	84
General anaesthetic cases	..	..	3,760
Local anaesthetic cases	..	..	24,772
Prosthetic cases	..	..	8,340
Free treatments	..	..	24,838

The waiting list of patients is recorded in the annual report as follows:—

Conservative waiting list	..	..	104
Prosthetic waiting list:—			
Old-age and invalid pensioners	..	..	151
Public Health Department, sustenance workers	..	..	37
Ordinary hospital paying patients			122

The present accommodation and staff are quite inadequate to cope with the ever-increasing volume of treatment needed by the community. New premises and equipment will cost at least £10,000 and the annual subsidy will require to be doubled to provide adequate staffs to cope with the work and efficiently administer a new

and bigger building. If money for the building and equipment, as well as the extra staff, cannot be obtained, it appears most unwise to erect a larger hospital that will be provided with insufficient equipment and be under-staffed. The point I am endeavouring to make is that while the present Dental Hospital is certainly inadequate, it will be a waste of money to erect a new and more commodious hospital unless it is equipped in accordance with modern requirements and is properly staffed. The Minister will agree that in those circumstances there is urgent need for improvement and that the education of the students should be of a modern character so that they will be able to give efficient and prompt attention to the public. I need not emphasise the importance of the dental department for the preservation of health, and the importance of seeing that those who attend to the dental needs of the community have every opportunity to do so in a proper way. I notice that in Melbourne a new dental school is about to be erected at a cost of £100,000. The school will be under the control of the Dean and Faculty and will be incorporated with the Royal Melbourne Hospital. The standard of dental education in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney is accepted by the General Medical Council of Great Britain, and those who hold the qualification may practise in any part of Great Britain. That will show that in the Eastern States of the Commonwealth more money has been spent on dental hospitals and equipment than has been spent in this State. Of course I realise there is a very much bigger population over there, but even in proportion to our population there is still a great disparity in the expenditure. The teaching facilities in Perth are in need of being brought up-to-date. How the staff have managed to work so well, cribbed, cabined and confined as they are in premises shockingly ventilated, I do not know. There are about 12 chairs in the general room, and I am sure the size of that room requires to be doubled, for it affords no freedom for the attendants when patients are being treated. As I say, about £10,000 would be needed to build an up-to-date dental hospital, and the time has long gone by when that should have been done. I again appeal to the Minister to see if something cannot be attempted to provide the money and hasten the erection of

the new building. The Minister knows quite well that we can never have the necessary additional facilities until the building is erected. It is expecting too much from that staff in the hospital that they should do the work they are doing under existing conditions, and I hope the Minister will try to do something for them.

MR. THORN (Toodyay [10.4]: I desire to bring under notice the position of the lepers at Wooroloo. This has become a very serious question in that district, and settlers residing around the sanatorium are very much worried for the future of the various industries that are carried out in Wooroloo. Apart from that, I should think it would be very depressing to the patients at the sanatorium that lepers should be accommodated in the same grounds.

Mr. Sleeman: How many are there?

Mr. THORN: There are four. While I appreciate the difficulties of the Minister and of the Government as pointed out by the Minister to-night, I must remark that one of the greatest difficulties to-day is that of transport, for nobody wants to have anything to do with the unfortunate lepers. They are situated on the top of a hill not far from the sanatorium, with no outlook whatever except tall gum trees. It is a pity we could not have made use of one of our small islands and put those people there under happier conditions, where they would have some outlook and something to do, where they could walk about and even fish and shoot. That would be much pleasanter for them, but where they are they seem to be simply condemned to death. I do not think it is right to have them alongside the sanatorium. Provision is made for entertaining the unfortunate patients in the sanatorium, in addition to which they have a good library and billiard room and a picture show and can walk about virtually as they like. Altogether things are made as pleasant as possible for them, but it is not so with the lepers, who are confined to their small rooms. The people at Wooroloo are greatly concerned about it and I think we should agree with them that it must have a depressing effect on the value of property in the district, for no one wants to live in an area where lepers are housed. We have had a deputation to the Minister, asking that the lepers be removed. I have here a letter from the Wooroloo

Progress Association requesting that the matter be again placed before the Minister. The writer states that when the first leper was accommodated at Wooroloo, the then Minister, the late Hon. J. E. Dodd, promised a deputation that it would be only a temporary measure and that as soon as possible that leper would be removed.

Mr. Moloney: That was a long time ago.

Mr. THORN: Yes, but the Minister made that promise and unfortunately it has never been carried out; indeed, additional lepers have been sent up there, and only a year ago a new house was built to accommodate a woman patient. I listened to the member for Kimberley's remarks on a recent occasion when the hon. member demonstrated to the House the danger of the disease. The Commissioner of Public Health treats the disease as not being dangerously infective, except through personal contact with a person suffering from leprosy. The member for Kimberley pointed out that ten years ago there were five known cases of leprosy in the North-West whereas to-day there are 133 known cases. That is sufficient to prove that the disease is a very grave danger.

Mr. Coverley: And that was after quite a cursory examination.

The Minister for Health: There was no examination at all ten years ago.

Mr. THORN: The figures show that the danger is growing. Right through the ages leprosy has been regarded as a dread disease. I hope the Minister will be able to do something. Members can appreciate the feelings of the residents of the district. They are greatly concerned.

Mr. Rodoreda: What do you suggest?

Mr. THORN: I suggested placing them in isolation on the coast, or somewhere where they would have a brighter outlook and be able to occupy their time.

Mr. Rodoreda: In somebody else's electorate?

Mr. THORN: There is no need to say that. Areas are available where they could be placed and where they would not be a danger to anybody. It might be possible to place them on an island.

The Minister for Health: A doctor would have to be sent with them.

Mr. THORN: Would that be absolutely necessary? Would it not be possible to isolate them and provide the necessary medical requirements for the patients to treat themselves? I believe that there is not a great deal of treatment for the disease.

The Minister for Health: My advice is that they must have medical treatment.

Mr. THORN: I mention this matter with a full appreciation of all the difficulties. To have a lazaret and lepers adjacent to the city is a definite danger, and the presence of the lazaret must be very depressing to the patients at the sanatorium. Their outlook must seem hopeless enough without having lepers placed in the same area.

The Minister for Health: They are well separated. You could go to the sanatorium for ten years and not know that there was a lazaret in the vicinity.

Mr. THORN: I do not wish to misrepresent the position. I grant that the lepers are located probably half a mile from the sanatorium, but the point is they are there. I appeal to the Minister to give earnest consideration to my representations on behalf of the people of Wooroloo. I hope it will be possible to evolve a scheme to move the lepers away, isolate them, give them a better outlook, and something to do. I have travelled through the North-West a good deal and I know there are places on the coast where they could be made happy and would not interfere with anyone. To be housed amongst that timber with nothing to do must be sad for those patients. They cannot even participate in any form of sport. I am hopeful that money will be made available for the septic tank at Wooroloo.

The Minister for Health: The money is being made available and the septic tank is being reconditioned.

Mr. THORN: I am glad to hear that. It is a very necessary work.

Mr. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [10.16]: I agree with the member for Perth as to the inadequacy of the present buildings and staff at the Perth Dental Hospital. The superintendent is an admirable man who does everything possible, but he is inundated with cases, and the facilities available make his task of coping with the work very difficult. I support the member for Perth in his statement as to the need for doing everything possible to assist the institution. I wish to refer also to the long-promised ward for the King Edward Memorial Hospital. I plumed myself on having secured £5,000 from the Lotteries Commission for the work, and imagined that the job would be proceeded with almost immediately. That was previous to the Min-

ister's departure for London. I understood that all that remained to be done was to finalise the plans. If the Minister has overlooked the matter, I hope this reference will prod his memory. I should like an assurance that the construction of the building will be proceeded with in the near future.

Mr. FOX (South Fremantle) [10.18]: I trust that the Minister will give some consideration to the people who are attempting to establish a dental clinic with the object of providing treatment for school children. In the Fremantle district a census was taken of the number of children under the age of nine whose teeth required attention. Out of 835, no fewer than 472 required dental treatment, or over 56 per cent. The people of the district are endeavouring to set up a dental clinic for all children up to the age of nine between Buckland Hill and Rockingham. The equipment will cost £250, and it will be necessary to employ a dentist. The expense will be borne by the people, supplemented by donations from various municipalities and road boards. As this is a duty which the Government should undertake, I hope the Minister will favourably consider granting a small subsidy to the people who are engaged in such a laudable work.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [10.30]: Last year when the Minister brought down the Medical and Health Estimates I drew attention to the fact that no provision had been made on them for the Wooroloo sanatorium. That is also the position on these Estimates, no provision having been made there for this institution. The responsibility of conducting the sanatorium has been transferred to the hospital fund. The Minister told us at the beginning of his speech that the hospitals were causing him a great deal of concern. No doubt the demand made upon him by the hospitals is considerable. He has given away to the Treasury at least £9,000 a year, and probably more. The last reference on the Estimates to the sanatorium was made when I was Minister for Health, and the sum set down was about £9,000.

The Minister for Health: About £14,000.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The next thing will probably be that every other institu-

tion will be brought under the hospital fund.

The Minister for Health: There is no need to worry about that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I notice the Minister received some compensation for that money; because a sum was made available on the Estimates last year of £15,000, as shown in the statement of accounts. The Treasury gave that money. I suppose it was given to clear up the two years during which the Wooroloo sanatorium had been conducted under the hospital fund.

The Minister for Health: Only one year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Last year and the year before. I have the Estimates before me. I am not complaining, but I hope the Minister will acknowledge that I was right when I drew attention to the matter last year. I am sorry that money has been given away.

The Minister for Health: I have not given it away.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then it has been taken.

The Minister for Health: Neither has it been taken.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But there is no provision for that institution on this year's Estimates. Nothing has been set aside for it. The Minister ought to admit that for the last two years the institution has been run from the hospital fund.

The Minister for Health: Only one year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: On the Estimates of 1933-34, at the bottom of page 76, the amount is shown as £16,500. That includes the whole of the hospitals, the secretary of the Kalgoorlie hospital, and the nurses and maids at the sanatorium, as well as the general expenditure. At the bottom it says "less rebate to hospital fund of £9,000." That was for the year 1933-34. There was nothing on the Estimates last year, and there is nothing on the Estimates this year. The rebate to the hospital fund of £9,000 represents roughly the cost of the institution. I am not going to say anything more about it, but the Committee ought to know that the hospital fund is being used for this purpose.

The Minister for Health: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is. The Treasurer paid £15,000 into the fund as a sop for the Minister over the £9,000. The Act gives absolute control over the fund to the Minis-

ter. He is the only one who can spend the money. There is certainly no provision on the Estimates for this year. When may we expect the return which the Hospital Fund Act compels the Minister to lay on the Table of the House? I have information from a return that has been issued showing that the hospital fund last year amounted to £232,919. That is considerably more than the amount for the previous year. The hospital tax collections amounted to £182,398, the hospital fund collections amounted to £33,493, and the grant from the revenue fund was £15,000.

The Minister for Health: That does not come from the hospital fund.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It comes from the revenue fund, and was used to make up for the two previous years.

The Minister for Health: It came from the Treasury, not from the hospital fund.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Miscellaneous receipts amounted to £379,000, and the balance of overdraft amounted to £649. There is no provision on these Estimates for any further payment. The Treasurer told me in reply to an interjection that this was the last £15,000 the Minister was going to get. There is no provision on the Estimates for any more. The Wooroloo sanatorium might have been taken out from hospitals, because it is quite a different institution from the general hospitals.

The Minister for Health: Of course it is.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The money ought to be paid by the Treasury. I hope the Minister, if he is in office next year, will have these Estimates revised. At any rate, we may be there to do it ourselves. When the Minister said that certain works would be carried out, did he mean that they were going to be carried out from the hospital fund or by the Public Works Department? I refer to renovations at the Wooroloo sanatorium. It will cost a good deal to maintain all the buildings there. They are not as substantial as are some of our other hospital buildings.

The Minister for Health: I wish all our hospitals were as substantial.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That may be so with regard to the goldfields and the Merredin hospitals, but generally speaking all are well built.

The Minister for Health: They are not as substantial as the Wooroloo sanatorium.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I realise that during the nine years the Minister has held

office the hospitals have been rather substantially built.

The Minister for Health: The new ones have been.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know that demands are being made upon the money that is available. The member for Perth and the member for South Fremantle want dental hospitals, and the member for Subiaco also wants money.

Mr. Moloney: That is supposed to be available.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member should take the Minister to task for that. I should like the Minister to admit that the statement I made last year was perfectly correct.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [10.28]: One of the activities associated with the Health Department is the burial of destitutes. I understand that tenders are called for this purpose.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Neither of these departments is responsible for that.

Mr. CROSS: Whether that is so or not there appears an item on the Estimates referring to payments for the burial of destitutes. I want the Minister to see whether better provision cannot be made than is made at present for the burial of poor people. I have attended one or two of the funerals, and in my opinion they reflect no credit on this or any other Government. One pernicious and—shall I say—sordid practice now existing is that of undertakers being requested to pay premiums for the picking-up of bodies. Premiums up to 7s. 6d. are paid for the privilege of picking up a body on the off-chance that there might be enough money available from relatives to pay for a decent funeral. That practice should cease. I hope the Minister will give attention to the matter and see whether he cannot make available a little more than £4 for a funeral, so that these persons may at least be buried with common decency. I am perfectly sincere in this. It was brought forcibly home to me not long ago when I had the misfortune to attend the interment of a destitute. Never again do I want to see what I saw then.

MR. RODOREDÁ (Roebourne) [10.32]: I was pleased to hear the Minister feature the aerial medical service in his introduction of these Estimates. We of the North-West join in the Minister's congratulations

on the fact of the service at last becoming an accomplished fact. We can also sincerely congratulate the Minister on the manner in which he has improved medical services generally on the coast. I do not like to speak in this strain; I would sooner argue with the Minister; but the improvement is so manifest that one is compelled to pay a tribute to the hon. gentleman's administration of his department. I have seen the planes provided for the aerial medical service, and undoubtedly they are a credit to the company who supplied them and to the committee who have organised the flying medical service and brought it to fruition. However, it is not much use having the means of transporting patients to hospitals while the facilities available at those hospitals are not in accord with modern practice. I ask the Minister to be a little more lenient towards requests from the North, particularly as regards my electorate, for improved accommodation and greater facilities at hospitals. I can honestly say that the hospitals in my electorate are in this respect worse than any others on the coast. The most primitive conditions still exist in the Roebourne hospital, especially as regards the sanitary service. I ask that a septic tank system be provided there. If the Minister could see the conditions prevailing, he would undoubtedly be scandalised. The new doctor appointed under the Minister's scheme was absolutely disgusted with the conditions, and made a protest to the department and requested that something be done as soon as possible to have the present system altered. Further, there is no operating theatre at either Roebourne or Onslow. We have at Roebourne a highly skilled and thoroughly up-to-date medical man; but he cannot do his work properly without an operating theatre—it is utterly impossible. A great many of the benefits of the flying-doctor scheme will be nullified by the want of an operating theatre. The same want exists at Onslow. For the last 12 months I have been endeavouring to get some satisfaction from the Medical Department on these two points, but so far without success. Facilities at Onslow are utterly inadequate. For three years I have been trying to get a maternity ward established there: the request has become a sort of hardy annual with me. I am pleased to state, however, that with the help of the Lotteries Commission and that of a subscription raised in Onslow, the maternity ward will soon be-

come an accomplished fact. Primitive conditions exist at Onslow as regards the electric lighting plant. Under the policy of the previous Minister for Health the hospitals were leased to matrons who would not use the electric lighting plant where it was available at Roebourne.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you say I started that policy?

Mr. RODOREDA: No. I spoke of the policy operating under the previous Minister for Health.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I tried to get the matrons to use the electric lighting plants, but they refused to do it.

Mr. RODOREDA: How could they be expected to use electric lighting plants with the miserable subsidies they were receiving? They were walking about with hurricane lamps at night and attending operations by that illumination. I give full credit to the present Minister for having altered a scandalous system. I see by the Press that one of the delegates of the British Medical Association also condemned the system. At Onslow there is no electric lighting plant now. Can the Minister inform me who will be required to pay the cost of transport by aeroplane in the event of an outback patient requiring a doctor's services? I realise that the committee are running the scheme, and the Government have only one representative on the committee. I hope that for the information of people in the North the Minister may be able to answer my question.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [10.38]: On behalf of the people of my electorate I wish to thank the Minister for the many things he has done during the last couple of years to improve the public health position. During his terms in office, both the present and the previous one, he has always taken the keenest interest in public health. The people of my district have good cause to appreciate his efforts extending over a period of years. There are two or three things I would like to mention on the Public Health Estimates. One is in connection with the visits of dental officers to country schools. As I understand the position, the dental officers are limited in number. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that he hoped to get an additional dental officer appointed next year. However, when the dental officers come to the country they mostly confine themselves to the large centres of population. To my way of thinking, that is the

wrong way to get about it. The further outback their efforts could be carried, the better it would be for country children. I suggest that the Minister give consideration to the establishment of a travelling clinic. It appears that arrangements could be made for a travelling clinic to visit outlying centres and thus serve people who, I consider, are entitled to receive assistance which so far they have not been able to obtain. I was very glad to hear that the subsidy for infant health centres is likely to be increased to its former amount. There has been some talk about placing such centres under direct departmental control. The Katanning people who control the local clinic would much prefer to be left as in the past and in those circumstances a return to the former subsidy would be all the more satisfactory. Lastly, I have often wondered if the Medical Department has given consideration to the question of instituting a national health insurance scheme. During the past few weeks we have heard a lot about national unemployment insurance, and while I am prepared to say that that would be very desirable and may be practicable, I am more hopeful of a practicable health insurance scheme being inaugurated in Western Australia. The amount of the hospital tax collected now has almost reached the point at which it will enable something of the sort to be undertaken. People would probably be prepared to pay a little more under the heading of hospital tax if something could be established on the basis of national health insurance. Under existing circumstances, the more income a man earns, the more hospital tax he has to pay. If he receives any income at all, he has to pay. As surely as a man receives an income, so surely will he be asked to pay for treatment in a hospital. Payment of tax, therefore, does not provide any return in treatment to the individual. I do not know whether anything of the sort is possible at present, but I would like the Minister to indicate if the establishment of a national health insurance scheme has been considered, and if so, with what result. If it has not, will he say that it will be considered in the future?

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [10.43]: A few requests have been made during the course of the debate. The first referred to increased assistance to the Dental Hospital.

At present there is no hope of any increase in the subsidy. Members may not be aware that the Dental Hospital is not a Government institution. The Government have no control over it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The subsidy paid to the Dental Hospital has not been reduced and in that respect the institution was very fortunate.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is the one subsidy that has not been reduced under the Financial Emergency Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is true.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I realise the value of the institution, but it is controlled by the Dental Board. A special board is appointed to control the hospital and there is one representative from the Health Department. The only control the Government have over the institution is in a general sense, in that the Government provide a subsidy of upwards of £900 per year and it is subject to conditions, namely, that the hospital will treat invalid and old-age pensioners free, and that they will treat any patients who present themselves on the recommendation of the matron of the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. I have not heard any complaints regarding the non-compliance with those conditions.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The institution is fairly generous.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: That is so, and those concerned are doing their best under very difficult circumstances. The present building is not large enough. The rooms are upstairs and are not at all convenient. At any rate, at present I cannot hold out any hope for an increased subsidy. The member for Toodyay referred to the lazaret at Woorloo. I am sorry that he mentioned the matter, because it merely serves to give further publicity to it. The patients at the lazaret must be catered for somewhere, and if the present lazaret is removed, it must be located where medical treatment is available. We cannot have a lazaret except within reasonable distance of medical assistance. We have the buildings, and while the number of patients remains as at present, I do not think the Government would be justified in discarding the present site and building elsewhere. Another matter referred to was the provision of the additional ward at the King Edward Memorial. I wish to

inform the member for Subiaco that as soon as the parties concerned can reach an agreement, the matter will be attended to. I understand the necessary money is available. I believe as a result of the hon. member's efforts in making representations to the Lotteries Commission, the money is available. The plans are not yet ready. In fact, I do not think they can be prepared because it has not been definitely decided what is wanted. When that phase is attended to, I hope the work will be carried out as speedily as possible. With regard to the burial of the destitute, I admit that the present conditions are not as satisfactory as they might be. At any rate, the cost involved is 50 per cent. greater than was provided three or four years ago. At the same time, if we have money to spend, I think it can be more usefully employed on behalf of those who are living than in the direction suggested. The member for Roebourne asked who would pay for transport. I do not desire to answer him incorrectly. I think I know, but when I receive definite information on the point, I will acquaint him accordingly. The remaining question relates to the establishment of travelling dental clinics. It is impossible to provide them at present. We have not the necessary money, nor can we make arrangements with the Railway Department. I hope that in the near future at least one travelling clinic will be provided so that treatment will be available at the schools in the outer country districts.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Public Health, £35,364:

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Will the Minister inform the Committee regarding the intention of the Government concerning the provision of additional accommodation and increased staff for the Kalgoorlie Hospital?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am informed that an effort has been made at Kalgoorlie and approximately £1,600 has been provided. Heaven knows, there is necessity for some increased accommodation at Kalgoorlie, but the local people have refused every request that they should make an effort when I have told them they had to do the same as people in other districts did, and find half the money. Now they have agreed, and I be-

lieve have provided £1,600. If so, I will reciprocate and find all I can for the accommodation at Kalgoorlie Hospital. Certainly there will have to be some increase made in the nurses' quarters, not only at Kalgoorlie, but at other centres. We are now going thoroughly into that and I believe arrangements can be made, that we can find interest and sinking fund from the hospitals tax for a period of years to meet the cost of building nurses' quarters.

Item, Payments to local health authorities, £2,500:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would remind the Minister that he is spending money from the hospitals fund for payment to local health authorities. There is here the entry "less rebate to hospital fund £1,730." That is on the expenditure side, and there is £2,500 on the Estimates. I have checked that, and I believe it is the only item for which a rebate is made. I am not sure whether, under the Hospitals Fund Act, the Minister can charge against moneys paid to local health authorities, except for a hospital.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 22nd October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES BOARD.

Reverted Dwellings.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many unallotted reverted

dwelling-houses are now awaiting disposal by the Workers' Homes Board under—(a) Part III., (b) Part IV., of the Act? 2, In what localities are they situated, and how many are there in each locality? 3, What are the estimated values under each part of the Act quoted?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Unallotted reverted dwellings under Workers' Homes Act—(a) Part III., leasehold, 1; (b) Part IV., freehold, 57. 2, Albany 1, Arrino 2, Bassendean 5, Bayswater 1, Beaconsfield 1, Bellevue 2, Ben-cubbin 1, Beverley 1, Bicton 4, Busselton 1, Byford 1, Claremont 1, Corrigin 4, Cottesloe 1, Dangin 1, Denmark 1, East Fremantle 1, Geraldton 1, Goomalling 1, Kalamunda 1, Katanning 3, Kondinin 3, Kununoppin 1, Maylands 2, Merredin 1, Minnivale 1, Mt. Hawthorn 1, Narrogin 2 (1 Part III.), Northam 1, Nungarin 2, Palmyra 1, Pingelly 1, Pithara 1, South Perth 1, Tincurrin 1, Wagin 1, Wembley 2, Wyalkatchem 1, Total 58. 3, Part III., leasehold, £370; Part IV., freehold, £29,900.

MOTION—MINES REGULATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulation.

Debate resumed from the 24th September on the following motion by Hon J. Nicholson (Metropolitan)—

That Regulation No. 17a made under the Mines Regulation Act, 1906, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 8th March, 1935, and laid on the Table of the House on the 6th August, 1935, be and is hereby disallowed.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan)—in reply) [4.38]: By necessity I found myself in the position of having to move for the disallowance of the whole of the regulation, although there are certain parts of the regulation to which I have no objection. Had it been competent for me to do so, I would have confined my motion to the particular part of the regulation to which I objected. That part has relation to the early portion of the regulation referring to certificates and qualifications required for underground supervisors, etc. The regulation sets forth, amongst other things, that an underground manager, foreman or shift boss whose duty it is to exercise some control and supervision over 12 or more underground employees in any mine shall have been employed underground for a period of not less than five years, and shall be