

Legislative Assembly,*Tuesday, 16th December, 1902.*

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THE DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.**PAPERS PRESENTED.**

By the MINISTER FOR MINES: Regulations under Coal Mines Regulation Act.

By the TREASURER: Liquor inspection, Return on motion by Mr. Foulkes.

By the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Alterations to Classification and Rate Book.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Meteorological Observations, Perth, 1901.

Ordered: To lie on the table.

QUESTION—DEEP BORING AT CUE.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Whether work has been commenced by the company or person who applied for or secured a part of the area in Cue reserved for diamond drill boring operations. 2, If not, when a start will be made. 3, Whether the Minister will issue instructions that work must be started before the 1st of January, 1903. 4, Whether, failing that, the Minister will undertake the work immediately, at the expense of the Government.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No; agreement was only completed on the 12th instant. 2, As soon as possible after tenders are returnable. 3, It has been arranged that tenders for boring shall be advertised almost immediately. It would be impracticable to start work by 1st January. 4, No; but should the company retire from their

undertaking, the Government will farther consider the question.

QUESTION—STEAMER SERVICE, FREMANTLE-GERALDTON.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Colonial Secretary: Whether in view of previous negotiations failing, immediate steps will be taken to make definite arrangements to secure a weekly service of steamers between Fremantle and Geraldton.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The Government are making farther inquiries. Any reasonable offer will receive consideration.

QUESTION—MAGISTRATE AT NORTHAM.

HON. G. THROSSELL asked the Premier: Whether in view of the amalgamation of Northam, Newcastle, and York as one Magisterial District, necessitating the residence of the Magistrate in Northam, he will make provisions in the Supplementary Estimates for the erection of a suitable residence for such official, seeing that no quarters of any kind are now in existence in Northam.

THE PREMIER replied: The matter is now being considered.

QUESTION—MANUFACTURES AND INDUSTRIES, TO DEVELOP.

HON. G. THROSSELL asked the Premier: 1, Whether he recognises the great advantage arising to the State by the establishment of manufactures, and the development of new industries, by providing employment for labour, and in rendering the State self-supporting. 2, If so, whether he will give consideration to the best means of stimulating private enterprise in establishing such new industries and manufactures which the growing development of our resources renders possible and desirable. 3, Whether he will ascertain the exact powers of this State under the Commonwealth Bill as to granting bonuses for the encouragement of new industries.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The Government will gladly and sympathetically consider any practical suggestion that the hon. member desires to submit. 3, The position of the State is defined by Sections 90 and 91 of the Federal Constitution Act.

QUESTION—POST-OFFICE SAVINGS BANK, ADMINISTRATION.

MR. BATH asked the Treasurer: 1, Whether his attention has been called to an article in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of 6th October having reference to the faulty administration of the Post-office Savings Bank. 2, Whether he has received any report from the Public Service Commission dealing with the mode of conducting the bank's business, and if not, whether he will request the chairman to give the matter early attention. 3, Whether it is true that the Government contemplate the early retirement of the present manager and his senior clerk with a view to appointing two gentlemen possessing sufficient banking experience to carry out much needed reforms.

THE TREASURER replied: 1, Not until the hon. member did so. 2, No; it will be dealt with in the report of the Commission, as they have examined the Savings Bank. 3, The Government have already promised that reforms will be effected during recess.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Message from the Administrator received and read, recommending appropriation for the Loan Estimates, which were now considered.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair.

Vote—*Departmental*, £65,375 6s. 8d.:

THE TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner): In bringing in these Estimates of the loan expenditure, I do not purpose to detain the Committee for more than a moment or two, as the Minister for Works and Railways will explain every item when they are before the Committee. It will be seen they practically total £2,233,535. Of this, £1,583,000 is covered by loan authorisation. We purpose creating a loan suspense account for the balance, seeing that it is not deemed advisable at the present moment to ask for a farther loan authorisation. So far as this is concerned, if the market becomes favourable or more favourable than at present, we can easily avail ourselves of the present authorisations, which amount to about £2,190,000, and recoup the Savings Bank what has been ad-

vanced, which will be available, of course, for any future loan or any future authorisation.

MR. MORAN: What do you mean by a loan suspense account?

THE TREASURER: Instead of asking for a farther loan authorisation just at present, we are putting it into a loan suspense account, and will ask for authorisation later on to cover it. The reason we have made a loan suspense account is to give the Committee an opportunity to discuss the items. If we do much the same work as we did last year, the total amount spent will be about £1,800,000. Glancing back through these Loan Estimates, I find that the estimate has always been very much larger than the actual expenditure. I may tell the Committee I have made ample provision in London to carry us on until March, and I think that with a big struggle we can meet all our obligations here as well. Of course the passing of the Estimates will make a bigger demand on the local Treasury than we have had up to now. But we have been gathering all the money we possibly can in order to meet our obligations in the future. I have had an offer to take up a large sum, from a half to three-quarters of a million of our stock, at 3½ per cent. At the present time the price offered is not quite satisfactory, but I anticipate hearing in about three or four weeks' time something more definite. I have also received strong assurances from reliable sources, both in this State and in the other States, that if Western Australia asks for a local loan, and does not want too much money at once, we can float it on fairly satisfactory terms. Of course we must not lose sight of the fact that the other States are offering very big interest at the present time, and as I purpose going East, with the kind permission of the House to-night, if I can get through, I intend as far as possible to ascertain how the local money market stands there, and what are the requirements of the particular Governments. I am conscious of this, that with a big struggle here I can make such satisfactory arrangements as will enable us to fulfil our obligations upon conditions which I am sure will be satisfactory to the country and the House. But I warn the Committee of this, that apparently the time for getting money at 3 per cent. as

far as Australia is concerned is past; and that the least we will have to do will be to pay $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., or for local flotations, taking the whole of Australia as a criterion, 4 per cent.

MR. MORAN: Another federal promise gone bung!

THE TREASURER: It is not a federal promise swaying me. I said, when speaking on the Budget, I desired to be hard up, and it seems to me that my desire is likely to be realised, but the Government intend to try to carry out the promise I made then, and I feel sure, and I still say it, that we have the best security in the market, and surely that best security when we do offer it will bring such a return as will enable us to carry out our works satisfactorily. I beg to move the first item.

On motion by MR. DIAMOND, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

RECOMMITTAL.

On motion by MR. JOHNSON, Bill re-committed for amendment.

Clause 5:

MR. JOHNSON: Clause 5 had been considered by a very thin House, which possibly had not realised the importance of the provision. He therefore considered it his duty to make an endeavour to have certain words which had been struck out reinserted in the clause. Kalgoorlie badly needed a municipal theatre, but permission to establish a theatre without licensed premises as an adjunct was useless: the citizens would not agree to such a proposal, since a theatre would not pay apart from an hotel. He moved that the following be added to Subclause (17):—"With or without premises, part of the same structure, to be used in connection therewith under license granted pursuant to the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act, 1880, or any amendment thereto."

MR. MORAN: That the Government should at this late stage of the session consent to the recommitment of such a Bill for such a purpose was not a little surprising. A measure like the Constitution Act Amendment Bill had been dealt with by a thin House.

MR. JOHNSON: But on ordinary sitting days.

MR. MORAN: As a protest against what must be considered an abuse of the rules and forms of the House, he moved that progress be reported.

MR. HASTIE: On a point of order, was the hon. member in order in first making a speech and then moving that progress be reported?

MR. MORAN said he would withdraw the speech.

Motion (progress) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	7
Noes	...	...	...	17

Majority against ... 10

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Atkins
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Bath
Mr. Moran	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Pigott	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Smith	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Stone	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Wallace (Teller).	Mr. Holman
	Mr. Hopkins
	Mr. James
	Mr. Johnson
	Mr. Kingsmill
	Mr. Onis
	Mr. O'Connor
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Reid
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

MR. MORAN: Although advantage might be taken of the forms of the House to object to this procedure, he would simply enter his protest against the reopening of matters which had been dealt with previously. If this procedure were adopted, questions might be opened in a thin House when members were away. He asked the Committee to reaffirm the decision arrived at on a former occasion that this matter should be brought up next session.

THE PREMIER: During the earlier stages of the session an endeavour was made on a motion to recommit, to test the advisability of a proposed amendment, but his idea was not accepted, and since then he had not opposed the recommitment of Bills. It was advisable to discourage the reopening of matters unless on some good reason shown. He proposed to vote against the amendment: the Bill should be allowed to stand as at present. He did not know but that the Kalgoorlie people under the Bill could obtain what they required.

MR. BATH: It was generally understood that on Friday the House would not sit after half past six o'clock. If he had known that this matter would have come up on Friday evening he would not have gone away. The case was an exceptional one.

MR. HOPKINS: Would the member for Kalgoorlie inform the Committee how many hotels there were in Hannans street, Kalgoorlie, at the present time, and how many hotel-keepers had to quit those hotels, being unable to make them pay? It was desired to have a theatre in Kalgoorlie, and he offered no opposition to that, but as to the amendment for the granting of a license for another hotel in Hannans street, it was absurd. A theatre on its own would not pay, therefore it was desired to obtain profits from the sale of liquor so as to make a theatre pay. If the Kalgoorlie people honestly desired to have a theatre, let them have it, but let the ratepayers put a special rate on themselves to make it pay, and not aggravate the plethora of hotels that existed at the present time.

MR. FOULKES: In 1894 the first application was made for the erection of an hotel in Hay Street, Perth, and it was granted on the ground that it was to be attached to a theatre. At that time it was thought impossible for any theatre to pay unless attached to an hotel, and a license for an hotel was granted for that reason. Three months ago another application for an hotel was made in Perth, and the applicant stated that he intended to build a theatre in Hay Street farther away from the present theatre, and he also stated that it was impossible for a theatre to pay unless an hotel license was granted for the premises proposed to be attached to the theatre. The chairman of the licensing bench stated that he thought it was impossible in Perth for a theatre to pay unless an hotel license was granted. He (Mr. Foulkes) contended that the people in Kalgoorlie had a good case for requesting that an hotel license should be granted.

MR. MORAN: In both of the cases mentioned the applicants applied for a license in the ordinary way. There was no special statute required.

MR. FOULKES: If it was impossible for a theatre to pay in Perth without

having an hotel license, the same position applied in Kalgoorlie. The ratepayers, unless the clause were amended, would not have the power to borrow money for the purpose of putting up an hotel. The member for Boulder had stated, and rightly so, that there was a sufficient number of hotels in Kalgoorlie. Everyone admitted that it was a public scandal that there were so many hotel licenses granted in Hannans street. If the clause were eliminated, the municipal council of Kalgoorlie could not have an hotel attached to the theatre. It did not follow that no more licenses would be granted, because the chairman of the licensing court at Kalgoorlie had stated that he would grant licenses in future as freely as he had done in the past. A great deal ought to be done to help the people on the goldfields to obtain a theatre. The member for West Perth was quite right in regard to having questions reopened, but this was an exceptional case, because a number of members were induced to believe that the House would not sit after 6.30 on Friday evening.

MR. MORAN: Would every decision arrived at last Friday be reopened?

MR. FOULKES: Under similar conditions, if necessary they should be.

MR. HASTIE: A strong objection was raised by the member for West Perth that matters might be reopened when members were away. The same thing might be said about questions being brought up on Friday last. The two objections raised against the proposal were that the granting of this license would interfere with the vested interests of those who had public-houses in Kalgoorlie. Those who objected on account of interfering with vested interests could vote against the amendment. The second objection was that municipalities should not have this power. In other parts of the world municipalities had the power, and had not abused it.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	9
Noes	...	...	...	17
Majority against				8

AYES.
Mr. Bath
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Holman
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Oats
Mr. Reid
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Taylor (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Atkins
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. James
Mr. Kingmill
Mr. Monger
Mr. Moran
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Rason
Mr. Smith
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

COOLGARDIE-GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY BILL.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

CITY OF PERTH TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

NOTICE PAPER, AS TO PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER asked whether he would be in order in moving that order No. 6 (Roads Bill) be dealt with before order No. 4 (Estimates). It was desirable the Bill should be disposed of and returned to the Legislative Council, so that the Upper House might consider those points on which the Assembly had not agreed with the Council.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It would be contrary to Standing Orders, unless order No. 4 were postponed till to-morrow. Mr. Speaker had several times ruled that a departure from the Notice Paper could not be permitted unless the order proposed to be set aside were postponed to the next day. That was a rigid rule in the House of Commons, and had been rigidly adhered to in this House.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from the previous Thursday.

TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT (Hon. J. Gardiner).

Vote—Treasury, £10,562 16s. 6d.:

THE TREASURER: I should like to make a few remarks, to give the House all available information as to the departments under me. In the Treasury we have tried to effect some small economies. The Under Treasurer is quite satisfied we can do more work with the men we already have, and consequently we are taking over from the other departments some of the work which can be brought into the Treasury. Otherwise I cannot see any possibility of reducing the Treasury staff. When we come to the district offices I can see every possibility during the recess of making very considerable reductions. A glance through them will show that we have Treasury clerks in three or four places, each receiving £260 a year; and I think the work they do for the Treasury does not justify our paying anywhere near that salary, and consequently it is my intention, during recess, to amalgamate these offices with some of those belonging to another department, so that we shall have fewer men, pay them better, and be satisfied that we are getting our work just as well done, instead of keeping officers to do practically very little work, simply because they belong to another department. The next department is the Government Stores; and the proposal of the Government, indorsed by the recommendation of the Civil Service Commission, is practically to transfer these stores to the respective departments. I am sure it is felt that the stores as at present constituted and managed have not been the success we anticipated; and I think a great saving will be effected by letting each department have as far as possible under its own control the stores which it orders. In addition, the new system will prevent the Government Stores Department being the sink for the bad buying of officers. If each department has its stores, then the responsible head, when he goes through, sees the articles lying unused and asks who ordered this useless thing and who ordered that. But when the goods are in the Government Stores as a whole, nobody seems to know who ordered them, and it is nobody's trouble whether they are ever used. Consequently we have a large quantity of stores lying there which we now find we cannot possibly use. Moreover we do altogether too much handling in those

Stores. For instance, the coal is delivered at the Stores, and we charge the Railway Department 9d. per ton to deliver it out again to the railways; whereas if the Stores were under the control of the Railway Department it would be found that as the coal came out of the ship's hold it could be sent direct to the depôts where the railways wished to store it, thus saving handling. It will surprise members to find that the cost to other departments for goods handled amounts to about £5,000 a year. I think the railway people anticipate, so far as stores are concerned, that they will be prepared to take over their proportion of them some time early in or about March. I am having stock sheets made up to the 31st December, with a table of all obsolete and useless stock. We shall then have these things thoroughly gone into so that we can arrive at how much we have to cut off for depreciation, which appears on the Estimates as £60,000. I have also got ready the regulations for a tender board. I feel sure this State ought to come into line with all the other States, and at least have a tender board, so that we may know exactly where we are. Another thing I have introduced is calling for simultaneous tenders in the old country and in Perth. This is a system that has been followed in South Australia with a great amount of success. We have only had two small trials of it here now. In one case, in a £3,000 transaction we saved between 7½ and 8 per cent., and in another nearly 33 per cent., by getting stuff here. In addition to that we have the advantage of always having the merchants here to be able to row with if the goods are not up to sample or are not delivered in time. When we buy them now we do not know whose hands we are in, and when the stuff arrives, no matter how inferior it may be, we have to take it. We are now calling simultaneously in London and in Fremantle for the railway material for the line from Malcolm to Laverton, and I have every reason to believe that Australian tenderers will do here the same as in South Australia, and will beat the English trader when it comes to a fight as to which shall have the trade. I cannot promise to do very much with the Government stores until I have that stock sheet ready and know exactly where

I am. You will see the sum incurred for clerks and labourers occasionally employed. I have asked them to keep these down to the lowest. You will find here in many instances salaries have been practically increased. That was because for last year they were for only eight months. Previous to last year, when you, Mr. Chairman, were in charge of this department, they were all paid from this £5,000, and Parliament had not the slightest control over it at all. You yourself instituted then a very much better arrangement, and we practically know where we are now; but I have asked that until they get their stock-list right up to date and balanced they shall keep down their expenses to the lowest, and I venture to say they ought to, for we are not handling nearly as much stores as we were this time last year. "Harbour and Light" is now under the charge of my hon. colleague the Colonial Secretary (Hon. W. Kingsmill). I rather regret this, because this session I am handing him over an officer whose views are strictly in accord with the desires of this Committee.

MR. MORAN: Do you think he will spoil him?

THE TREASURER: I do not know that he will spoil him, but you do not like passing this kind of officer out of your own department. So far as that is concerned, he is effecting economies. He is doing all he possibly can to run his department economically, and he it was who suggested that instead of having the oil tendered for in London it should be tendered for and analysed here to see if they were both the same, with the result that on an expenditure of something like £700 we save over £200 by the transaction. Then we come to the Post Office Savings Bank. I am quite satisfied that there is every chance of exercising more care in the conduct of its business and broadening its influence, and, in addition to that, trying to have it brought right up to date. I am going to South Australia practically on private business, but after Christmas Day I intend to go into the Stores, into the Savings Bank, and into the Government Printing Office of South Australia. I have planned out what I intend to do myself with regard to those departments, but I want to see if the system I have

worked out is in conformity with the systems of the other States, and, in addition to that, if they are better than my system. I flatter myself I will not be above adopting their ideas, if it can be done here with any degree of success. In reference to this Savings Bank, I certainly put a small amending Bill through which means a saving of about £800 or £900 a year. My regret in that respect is that it touches only the lowest paid officers—the officers who were getting £60 and £65 a year. They were getting it for a specific purpose. I regret that in this kind of thing any retrenchment from a saving like that, if it does occur, will principally affect those officers. My friend the Colonial Secretary has also the literary and scientific department, and he probably will be able to enlighten the House more fully than I shall on some of the items. Then we come to the pensions. There are one or two compassionate allowances here. One is to Mrs. Eliot, widow of the late Under Secretary, £500. When that item comes up I will only be too glad to give the Committee all the information with regard to Mr. Eliot's services.

MR. MORAN: I think everybody knows his service.

THE TREASURER: The placing of this allowance on the list was I think one of the last acts of Mr. Leake. Then we come to the Government Printing. Of course I am put before the Arbitration Court with regard to this, so that I cannot possibly say anything with regard to the hours and with regard to the pay of the compositors. But I have been looking very carefully at the Government printing offices in the other States, and I find we are altogether over-managed. In comparison with all the other States our managerial expenses are altogether too high, and I have already called for a weekly return showing the work that has been done, and showing what it has cost us. I have some practical knowledge of what should be done, and what it should take to manage it, and I am prepared to spend a week at the Government Printing Office to see if we cannot effect reforms and economy there. I am satisfied myself that we can, but it is one of those departments I have only had for about six weeks. It is one of those departments in regard to which it is no good trying to

effect them from the office. You must go there and see what men do. In the Photo-lithographic Department they have shown a very good desire to bring down their expenses. I think that on next year's expenses I shall be able to show a saving in salaries alone of about £400 at least. We have "Miscellaneous Services." These of course will be dealt with when we come to them. The majority of them are charity votes. As to grants for improvements to cemeteries I have laid down this principle, that in future the Government will only pay for the outside fencing of the cemeteries. The inside fence of cemeteries has a right to be a charge upon the people whose friends are there, or who themselves intend to rest there. Consequently we are laying down the principle that we will only go in for paying for outside fencing. One of the items consists of the expenses of the Royal Commission. It is only fair for me to say something with regard to the commission and the work they are doing. First of all they are trying as far as possible to arrange a system of consolidation of offices; that is in the outside districts. They are also trying to arrange a consolidation of districts. In addition to that they are classifying all the police and fixing their wages; and they are classifying all the clerks and fixing their salaries; at least the salaries they propose should be paid. Then they are going into the matter of all supplies of forage, all allowances, and they anticipate, they tell me, having ready for this House about the 14th or 15th January a complete report dealing with the whole of the civil servants outside of Perth. Then they go into Perth. Of course at present in Perth practically the only places they have touched are the Savings Bank and the Treasury; but outside of that I have made inquiries, and I find something has been said as to their travelling about. I find that in South Australia commissioners travelled seven months; here they have practically been only three, and in addition to that, as soon as they came here they were called upon to frame regulations for the admission of civil servants, which of course took some time. Then they went into the Government Stores, and that took them about a fortnight; so that practically they have only had about

three months at this work, and if they, in three or four months, can give this country a scheme of classification, by which they can say, "There are the men; there are allowances men should have; there is a complete classification scheme," I think this House will be the first to admit they have done their work in fairly good time. I feel it right to these gentlemen who cannot speak for themselves for me to tell the House plainly what they are doing, and when they intend to be ready with the first report. Then we come to the fire brigades question. I had a Bill already drafted, much on the lines of the Acts in other States, which I thought I should have time to introduce, but I have not had time to introduce it this session. It will be much on the lines of Victoria, and this will be the basis. One-third of the subsidy to fire brigades will be paid by the State, one-third by the insurance companies, and one-third by the municipality. That practically prevails all over the Eastern States. Then there is the subsidy to municipalities. If it were possible, I should like to see a grading system adopted with regard to these municipalities. There is not the slightest doubt that this Government or some other Government will stop having to give people a lump sum to start their municipality. It would be very much better indeed to say, "Let us grade you;" let a municipality just starting receive £2 for every £1 it raises, and then let us go up till we get to a big municipality, which practically would receive a very small subsidy indeed. Then there is the item of grants for improvements to parks, recreation grounds, etc. Under this comes the King's Park. Last year the amount was £2,500, and this year it appears as £3,000. I rather wish that you, sir, were not in the Chair just now. I know you will pardon me for referring to a thing which was practically your action, and will not think I want to do so because you are sitting there and not able to say anything. It appears that you gave a promise that you would pay for the erection, or the Government rather would pay for the erection, of that lodge which was knocked out the other night, and on the strength of that promise the park people went to the bank and got an overdraft to build it. Now they have the overdraft and the

cottage. Then we come to this other question, why this grant was increased from £2,500 to £3,000. Last year I believe £500 was promised for the May Drive, and I think this House practically transferred that £500 from the May Drive to the Subiaco entrance, or something of the kind. I recollect something of that.

MR. JACOBY: They got an overdraft on that as well.

THE TREASURER: Yes; they got a £500 overdraft on that as well. That is practically the position. They say that is the reason of the increase in the grant, that the £2,500 has always been their grant, and that the £3,000 they now ask for is on account of the £500 which was promised for the May Drive, and which they say they took from the bank manager in cash. The board obtained an overdraft on the strength of the promise, and accordingly the board now claims that the overdraft stands as against a promise of the Government. I have been informed that the board's water bill alone amounts to £200 per annum, and that there are some seven miles of road to be kept in repair.

MR. JACOBY: The traffic over those roads is the lightest in the State.

THE TREASURER: A new item appears under the heading of "Miscellaneous Services," namely for the destruction of marsupials. That item is intended for the benefit of the Kimberleys. Local marsupial destruction boards have been formed. The marsupials are becoming a great pest; in some districts, indeed, they far outnumber the sheep. The station owners are prepared to rate themselves, but through their representatives here they ask Parliament to vote a sum of money to aid them in the endeavour to extirpate the pest. This is practically all I have to say with regard to the Estimates: I shall be glad to give more detailed information as my attention is drawn to individual items.

[General discussion ensued on the Treasury Estimates, as follows.]

MR. MORAN: A little note of regret was plainly audible throughout the Treasurer's speech. The failure to effect economies was evidently somewhat disappointing to the hon. gentleman himself, who formed the last of a procession of Ministers fully seized of the beauty of

economy as a policy, but experiencing insuperable difficulty in putting that policy into practice. The Treasurer had stated that he expected to do good work in outside districts during the recess, and one looked forward with anxious expectancy to the results, though one feared they would not amount to much. Apparently the House and the Government were still wandering about looking for some effective scheme of retrenchment, which however would hardly be discovered until a falling revenue forced our hands. Meantime we could only hope that next session the Government would propose something in the nature of a first step towards economy. Wholesale retrenchment was inadvisable, since there was some reason to hope that the prosperity of the State would last long enough to allow its service to be reduced within due bounds by the natural means of retirement. Hon. members must note that Western Australia was paying more for service than any country in the world. This State was like a great grid-iron, with settlement stretching all along the bars, from Fremantle to Lake Way and from Albany to Kimberley. Our present service was adequate for the needs of a population of five millions. The heavy expense was due in a great measure to the fact that a living wage must be paid even though it could not be earned. The hope had been entertained that expenditure would stand still while population increased; but population was not increasing so rapidly as expected. Economy, when it did come, would probably take the form of depleting special votes out of revenue for roads, bridges, and similar works. We could not reduce statutory expenditure, which indeed would rather tend to increase as authorised works were completed. Special grants for works or services not entitled to be classed as reproductive would probably suffer in the near future. One means of economy was to fill up vacancies in the higher ranks from the lower without appointing successors to officers promoted. All Governments taking office with a cry of economy in administration were entitled to sympathy. However, stern necessity must not be disregarded. The West Australian people could not continue to pay revenue at the present rate unless other avenues

of taxation were availed of, and that ought not to be done without urgent necessity. It was to be regretted that the Treasurer had not asked for a loan authorisation of small or great amount. The Government would find difficulty in resisting pressure which would be brought to bear to induce them to remain large employers of labour. The wisest course was to pursue our policy of public works. In common with the other parts of Australia, this State's credit was not all it might be at home, and to subject our credit to the farther disadvantage of an impression of waning prosperity arising from the presence in our midst of large numbers of unemployed was scarcely prudent. One could not but be sorry that the Treasurer had thought well to fly in the face of the English money-lender. Being a young man, and feeling that this place was being fleeced, the Treasurer had spoken hastily: he should have remembered, however, that this State was not being fleeced worse than other States. One was glad to know that the hon. gentleman was confident of ability to finance in Western Australia or Australia generally, and one could only hope that the event would justify that confidence. At the same time, we ought not to pay "through the nose" for borrowed money: if we had to pay through the nose at all, let us do so in London, for it was inadvisable to lead the English investor to believe that heavy rates had necessarily to be paid on money borrowed in Australia. The question arose, was any large amount of money available in Australia for public purposes? Later in the discussion he would have something to say on Item 41, and on the item for adjustment of Government Stores. The former item might well stand over for a few years. Any money voted for such a purpose ought to be voted by a unanimous Parliament; moreover, the proposal would come better from opponents than from friends. Though the matter was one of delicacy, he felt bound to protest. Better let a few years pass by, so that the naturally sensitive feelings of comrades and friends might be salved by lapse of time: then the matter might be approached from the historical standpoint, so to speak. With respect to the amount of £60,000 allotted to the regulation of the Government Stores account, he

would have a few questions to ask of the Treasurer through the Chair. On the face of it, the item seemed to be merely another inflation of the Estimates, and devoid of real existence. The Estimates, indeed, had been inflated to an extent of over £200,000. The fact was that the State was not taking from the people within a quarter of a million of the amount shown on the Estimates. He hoped the Treasurer would be able to leave for the Eastern States this evening. The hon. gentleman had had a trying time, had worked hard during the session, and thoroughly deserved a holiday.

Vote put and passed.

Government Stores, £12,509 9s.—
agreed to.

Harbour and Light, £30,695 10s. :

Item—Signalman, Port Hedland, £42 :

MR. WALLACE: Would the Minister explain the item.

THE TREASURER: The signalman at Port Hedland was the customs officer.

Item—Penguin, upkeep and insurance, uniform for officers, £1,200 :

DR. O'CONNOR asked for information.

THE TREASURER: The amount was for the upkeep of the Penguin.

DR. O'CONNOR: What did the Penguin do?

THE TREASURER: It was a tug boat for a long time.

Vote put and passed.

London Agency, £4,480 :

MR. JOHNSON: Why were there increases in several items in this vote? The London Agency cost too much already. There was one redeeming feature that the increases were made at the bottom of the tree instead of at the top.

THE TREASURER: It was impossible to say what these increases were given for, but they appeared to be small increments.

MR. BATH: Was it possible to prevent the Agent General from making promises such as that in connection with the Electric Light and Power Company? also, was it proposed in the future to issue definite instructions to the Agent General not to involve the country in expenditure on exhibitions?

THE TREASURER: The Agent General would not cause any expenditure without authority.

Vote put and passed.

Post Office Savings Bank, £10,181 :

Item—Manager, £415 :

MR. BATH: It was not surprising that there was laxity in the management of the Savings Bank, seeing that the salary of the manager was only £415. If it was desired to obtain a competent man a decent salary should be paid.

Item—Proportion of salaries of district postmasters, etc., employed in Savings Bank work, £5,000 :

MR. HOLMAN: Was provision to be made for savings banks to be kept open for one or two days, in the back blocks? At present, men had to travel 20 or 30 miles to a bank.

THE TREASURER: If specific instances were given he would be only too glad to make inquiries. The difficulty was frequently the keeping of the money.

Vote put and passed.

Literary and Scientific Grants, etc., £15,000 :

Item—Perth Museum and Art Gallery, £3,800 :

MR. HOLMAN: In the Treasury department there was no less a sum than £21,500 to be expended in Perth, while only £3,000 or £4,000 was to be expended in the rest of the country. He moved that the item be reduced by £800.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	18

Majority against ... 7

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Hastie	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Stone	Mr. James
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Thomas	Mr. McWilliams
Mr. Wallace (Teller).	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Pigott
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Eason
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Throssall
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item—Trades Galas, £1,000:

MR. JOHNSON: Could this amount be spared? The Treasurer had really opened his heart to give this large amount to be expended on the goldfields. The trades galas were the biggest demonstrations in the country. One was held at Kalgoorlie and another at Boulder. On the Estimates was to be found £2,000 or £3,000 to be expended in assisting agricultural societies. Trades galas were run exactly on the same lines as agricultural societies. They were the annual shows on the goldfields. As a protest against the small amount being voted, he moved that the item be struck out.

THE TREASURER: Agricultural societies were only subsidised 5s. in the £.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The agricultural societies, with which the hon. member had instituted a comparison, were formed to a great extent for educational purposes.

MR. JOHNSON: So were trades galas.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What educational purposes were served by trade galas? He looked upon them as days of rejoicing.

MR. HOPKINS: The Colonial Secretary had evidently not a proper grasp of what a trade gala was. It was similar to an agricultural show in an agricultural district. Prizes were offered for the best-made bread, the best team of horses, and so on. Liberal prizes were offered, and the Boulder people raised by subscription the first year £250, and last year something like £300. The two trades galas would only be subsidised to the extent of £50 each. There were heavy importations of eggs and poultry on the fields, and he believed it was the intention of the Government to cease paying the subsidy to the Dog and Poultry Society, which would be a great mistake.

[At 4.15, business suspended for 15 minutes.]

MR. HOPKINS (continuing): In the case of the Boulder Dog and Poultry Society, the grant of £25 was not equal to the amount contributed locally. That item should be reinstated on recommendation of the Estimates. Better withdraw the amendment. The Treasurer could supplement this item by using Form J.

MR. JACOBY: This would practically mean giving a grant to the A.N.A. gala. If given to one society, the grant must be given to all.

MR. HOPKINS: In trades' galas the prizes were distributed as in agricultural shows, with a view to encouraging such exhibits as produce.

MR. JOHNSON asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Leave refused.

Amendment negatived.

Item—Victoria Public Library, annual upkeep, £3,000:

MR. JOHNSON: Surely this huge sum could be reduced.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hardly. The item "annual upkeep" was somewhat misleading, for only about £1,100 of the sum was expended in salaries and temporary assistance, the rest representing additions to stock of books, and rebinding.

Item—Zoological Gardens, £5,400:

DR. O'CONNOR: In view of economies elsewhere, to spend £1,500 on the director's house was hardly right.

MR. JACOBY: Could not more of this sum be devoted to acclimatisation purposes throughout the State—a course which the success of previous efforts fully justified?

THE TREASURER: The acclimatisation grant had already been increased.

MR. HOPKINS: The Acclimatisation Society should establish a branch at Mundaring.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In this grant was an increase of £150 with which it was hoped to do considerably more work, results in the past having been satisfactory, though the ultimate benefit of the expenditure would not be seen for some two years. No one could complain of how the zoological vote had been spent, the institution being a credit to the State; and the provision for a residence and offices for the curator would not cost a penny too much.

DR. O'CONNOR: What was the curator's salary?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Some £350. To erect a house which would be a blot on the landscape would not do. The Zoo was fast becoming a factor in the education of the State school children who attended every Friday

to hear lectures from the curator, thus receiving object lessons of much more value than months of book-learning.

MR. JOHNSON: Granting that portion of the £1,500 was for offices, to spend even £1,200 on a house for an officer receiving £350 a year would lead to a demand for an increase of salary commensurate with the style of residence. A neat cottage, sufficient for all requirements, could be erected for £700 or £800. He moved that the item be reduced by £500.

MR. HOLMAN: It was a drain on parents to have to pay 6d. for each trip of a scholar to the Zoo for the weekly lesson. The Minister should try the principle of taking the children there and back free of charge for these lessons.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This item should not be reduced, because the amount proposed would not be more than sufficient for building a house suitable to the position, and the managing committee would be relieved of the rent now paid for a house occupied by the director of the Zoo. As to the suggestion for carrying children to and from the gardens free for the weekly lessons, he would place that before the committee of management.

DR. O'CONNOR: A sum of £800 should be sufficient to build a decent house of eight rooms, at £100 a room.

MR. ATKINS: The proposed expenditure of £1,500 would build a big house. He thought £800 or £1,000 should be sufficient for a house alone.

MR. QUINLAN supported the reduction, because a house sufficient for the purpose should not cost more than £800, as he knew from experience in having the pay for buildings. At the Observatory, for instance, a house too expensive for the officer occupying it had been provided by the State, and he could not well afford to keep it up.

MR. HASTIE: The same remark applied to the Mint.

Amendment passed, and the item reduced.

Other items agreed to, and the vote (as reduced) passed.

Pensions, and Retiring and Compassionate Allowances, £10,552 4s. 8d.:

MR. MORAN: Speaking generally on the vote, he had two cases to place before

the Committee and before the Government for sympathetic consideration. One was the case of Richard Greaves, who was the original discoverer of gold in the Yilgarn district. The late head of the Government (Mr. Leake) carried this case almost to completion, and it was bequeathed to him (Mr. Moran) to try to get something done for this deserving man. Mr. Greaves was the original prospector of that goldfield, and Mr. Leake promised to consider his case and afford him some allowance for the services he had rendered the State. Mr. Greaves was not one of those applicants who obtained a reward as an early discoverer of gold, but he was the man with mining knowledge whose labours in prospecting an unknown field resulted in the discovery of gold at Yilgarn. The money paid to other claimants did not reach the right man, so far as the original discoverer was concerned. Mr. Greaves was now a cripple, his system having been racked with sickness caused by the prospecting trips he took in the early days, under very trying conditions. The other case was that of Mr. James Haydon, an old resident of Fremantle, who for 15 years was inspector of permanent way on the railway. He was a valuable officer who did excellent work. He had left a large family unprovided for, and the members for Fremantle would support this appeal on behalf of the widow and children. Sir John Forrest knew this officer well, and valued him very much. The Government might consider these two cases during the recess, with a view to making some provision on the Estimates for next session.

MR. THOMAS: The case of Mrs. Angelo should also be considered. The late Colonel Angelo was in receipt of his pension only one year before he died; and it was to be hoped the Government would recommend that the pension be continued to the widow.

MR. DAGLISH: As to cases not on the list, he had no recommendation to make; but he did ask consideration for some cases that were on the pension list. Nothing had been done up to the present to amend the Superannuation Act, so as to introduce a different system. A number of officers had been transferred from the temporary to the permanent staff, in accordance with a previous determination

of this House; and new officers had been added to the staff, who might also ultimately come on the pension list. That list was growing, and was likely to grow more rapidly. He wished to see officers insured under some compulsory system, so that there might be no necessity to add to the pension list.

THE TREASURER: A Superannuation Bill had been drafted; but it was thought by the Government that if it were proposed practically to take away any right which officers had to get on the superannuation list under present conditions, the Government should try to put some system in its place which would be a protection to civil servants in future. In Victoria there was a system of insurance for all officers in the service. The Premier (Hon. Walter James) had expressed the opinion to his colleagues that it would be advisable to look well into this question before introducing a Superannuation Bill, and to bring in a measure next session providing for compulsory superannuation. This being the present position of the question, the hon. member would see that it had not been lost sight of.

MR. HIGHAM: With regard to the case of the late James Haydon, who was for many years inspector of permanent way, he had performed his duties in such a way as to win the approbation of his chief and of the public generally for the efficiency of his work. It might be said that when he died he left some little property for his family. That property was sworn under £2,000 in value, and being unimproved property it was practically of no benefit at present to the family, being tied up for the benefit of the children. The widow and children were therefore not at all well off, and he hoped their case would be considered. With regard to the allowance for the widow and children of the late G. F. Eliot, well known as a very capable officer, when he died he was entitled to a year's leave of absence which he had never taken, and which would be valued at £650 on full pay. It was hoped that the amount to be granted to the widow, put down at £500, would be increased to the full amount to which Mr. Eliot would have been entitled if he had taken the leave. There should be no cheese-paring in a case of this kind.

MR. HASTIE: The amount voted for pensions, retiring and compassionate allowances last year was £6,661, and there was spent £4,710. The amount on the Estimates for this year was £4,500 more than last. Apparently those persons named in items 1 to 79 who were receiving pensions were old men; yet only one person had ceased to draw a pension since last year, and that pension was £8 8s. This vote was worthy the attention of the Treasurer, who should inquire into the various cases and see if the amount could not be reduced.

MR. JOHNSON: The vote had been increased by £4,000 this year, and if pensions were granted in the future as they had been in the past, goodness knew where the country would be landed. The Government should exercise more care in granting pensions. If the Government were to give compassionate allowances, then an amount should not be given to the widow of an officer who had been receiving £600 a year for some years, while the widow of a station-master who had worked 12 hours a day at 7s. a day received nothing.

Item — Dr. Ingoldby, late district medical officer, Albany, £100:

MR. WALLACE: In the past a pension of £125 a year had been paid to Dr. Ingoldby; the amount on the present Estimates was £100.

THE TREASURER said he could give no explanation as to the reduction of the item.

Item—F. W. Craggs, late warder, Fremantle Prison, £53 19s. 7d.:

MR. WALLACE: There was an increase in this item; what was the reason?

THE TREASURER: The amount was for 15 months.

Item—C. A. Taylor, late clerk to the Executive Council, from 1st July, 1902, £50:

DR. O'CONNOR asked for information.

THE TREASURER: This officer was clerk to the Executive Council, and when the amalgamation of the Premier's Department and the Colonial Secretary's Department took place, the officer was one of those pensioned off.

MR. HOLMAN: How long had Mr. Taylor been in the service? What was

his age? And what salary was he drawing when he was pensioned?

THE TREASURER: The officer entered the service in June, 1895; ten years were added to his service when he was pensioned. Mr. Taylor was receiving £195 a year when his office was abolished.

MR. HOLMAN: It was a disgrace for a State to be burdened with such an amount as this. The officer might be a young man, and he had only been in the service six years when he was pensioned. To test the feeling of the Committee he moved that the item be struck out.

MR. JOHNSON: Could the item be struck out? Was there an agreement by which the Government had to pay the sum of £50 to this officer?

THE TREASURER: As soon as a situation could be found, this officer should be asked to re-enter the service. This was one of the cases where a mistake had been made by adding ten years to the service under the Superannuation Act. When he saw the Act he had said there was no need to add the ten years, but two legal authorities stated that if the Government abolished the office they must add the 10 years to the term of the officer's service. There was another case in the list, that of Mr. Berry. Both cases stood in exactly the same position. These officers could be called back to the service to perform any work at the rate of salary they were receiving when pensioned off. There was an agreement with these officers to pay them the pension.

MR. FOULKES: An explanation had been given as to how the pensions had been bestowed by a Minister who only took office a few months ago, while within the precincts of the Chamber there were four Ministers who were responsible for the granting of the pensions, but who had not given any information on the matter. It was not treating the Committee with courtesy for Ministers to remain silent when information was asked for. He would wait until he heard some definite information from the Colonial Secretary on this matter.

THE TREASURER: The Colonial Secretary was not in charge of the department when the pension was granted.

MR. HOLMAN: This was one of the most disgraceful affairs that had ever happened in any country. Mr. Taylor was 26 years of age, and had been in the ser-

vice six years, and at the present time was holding a position and drawing £180 a year as clerk of the Local Court. At the same time he was receiving a pension from the Government. It was time that members of the Committee said that the amount should not be paid; and if it was looked upon as repudiation, then let members repudiate the agreement.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Taylor was not an officer under him when the pension was granted. If members wished the details of the case, it was open for them to call for the papers, which would have been willingly laid on the table, as had been done in the case of Mr. Berry. He was sorry the papers had not been called for. The Leake Cabinet was responsible for this matter, and he took his share of the responsibility along with the other Ministers. He repudiated any greater responsibility than he was bound to take as a member of the Leake Government.

MR. FOULKES: But Ministers who were members of the Leake Government should not remain silent and allow the Treasurer, a new Minister, to give explanations on a matter of which he knew nothing. To mislead the Treasurer was unfair. It was too late in the day to say "call for the papers," or give general assurances. Of what use were the papers after the money was spent?

MR. STONE: If the item were struck out, could not Mr. Taylor demand his pension?

THE TREASURER: Probably he would have a very good claim against the Government. [MR. MORAN: Very poor.] This matter had been explained once at least in the House, and the reasons given for Mr. Berry's pension applied to Mr. Taylor's. The latter had been Clerk Assistant to the Executive Council. The Executive Council had been combined with the Colonial Secretary's and the Premier's Departments, by which combination a saving of about £400 a year was effected. To do this two officers had to be pensioned. The then Public Service Act provided that if an office were abolished, 10 years must be added to the service of the officer. This was done with Mr. Taylor, and his pension computed accordingly.

MR. JOHNSON: If this fortunate Mr. Taylor became clerk of a Local Court,

did he not thereby forfeit his right to a pension?

THE TREASURER said he did not care to express an opinion on that. After Mr. Taylor's former office had been abolished, the Government had a right to call on him for future service.

MR. HOLMAN: The fact that Mr. Taylor when clerk to the Executive received £195 per annum, while he now received £180, showed the absurdity of paying him the higher salary and adding 10 years to his service, thus giving him the pension to which he would have been entitled had he entered the service when 10 years old.

MR. JOHNSON: The fact that Mr. Taylor was a clerk in the Local Court surely abrogated his right to a pension, which was forfeited on his re-entering the service.

THE TREASURER: Yes; had he re-entered at the former salary.

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Taylor might have refused the smaller salary.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: So long as the pension added to the present salary did not exceed Mr. Taylor's former salary, the pension was due. That had been the practice in the past. Presumably were Mr. Taylor now receiving £160 he would be entitled to a pension of only £35; and if he were not employed at all, he would be receiving nothing but his pension.

MR. DAGLISH: For striking out the item he would not have voted had not the Government re-employed the pensioner; but Mr. Taylor was either doing his present work at an unfairly cheap rate owing to his having a pension *plus* his salary, or he was getting £50 more than his work was worth. If the Government needed new officers, these should not be taken from the ranks of pensioners.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The last speaker lost sight of the theoretical rule for granting pensions, a system which, though evidently wrong, the Government were committed to by the Superannuation Act. Pensions were a recognition of past services. Though one might rightly argue that the salary was a fit recognition for such service, and that instead of pensions a policy of self-assurance should be established, the Gov-

ernment must carry out the law; and the course followed in this instance was that prescribed by the law officers. The sooner pensions were abolished, even at the cost of increasing salaries, the better.

MR. MORAN: Considering Mr. Taylor's age and comparing his with hundreds of other cases in the service, it must be admitted that there was "something rotten in the State of Denmark." A letter received from a warder at Rottneest—a man with a family, who had given seven years' faithful service to the State—showed that his position had been abolished without compensation, though it was more important than those of many officers on the pension list. The nearer an officer to a Minister, the greater his chance of a pension. The practice was indefensible.

THE TREASURER: One section of the Superannuation Act provided that any officer retiring from the service or removed in consequence of abolition of office should receive such special annual allowance by way of compensation as might appear sufficient for the loss of office; and that any special allowance, if in excess of the scale provided in the Act, must not exceed two-thirds of the salary and emoluments of the office. Under that section the Crown Law officers ruled that it was necessary to add 10 years to an officer's service. Another section provided that any person having a superannuation or a compensation allowance should, until he reached 60 years, be liable to fill a situation for which his services might have rendered him eligible, and that his refusal to do so or to carry out his duties should result in forfeiture of superannuation allowance or of compensation.

MR. MORAN: Then for these pensions the whole responsibility fell on the Cabinet. The provision in the Act was not mandatory; therefore Cabinet must have decided that this officer was reasonably entitled to a pension on the scale provided for one of 16 years' service.

Amendment (to strike out the item) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	17
Noes	...	...	...	13
				—
Majority for	...	...	...	4

AYES.

Mr. Atkins
Mr. Bath
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Holman
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Moran
Mr. Oats
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Reid
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Thomas (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Ewing
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. James
Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Rason
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus passed, and the item struck out.

Item—G. Berry, £31 17s. 6d. :

MR. HOLMAN: This officer had been retrenched after being in the service about seven years, and was still comparatively a young man; therefore being well able to work, he should not be entitled to a pension. The system of pensions should be stopped as soon as possible. In the Eastern States the pension list had swollen to hundreds of thousands of pounds. He moved that the item be struck out.

MR. HOPKINS: If this pension was to be paid according to a contract entered into, he presumed the Government would be liable. It was desirable that the Attorney General should state his opinion on the point.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The question was open to doubt, though he would be sorry if it were necessary to pay the pension.

MR. HOPKINS: If the State was under a legal obligation to pay this pension, it was not desirable for the Committee to strike it out, unless members generally desired that Mr. Berry should be reinstated in the service.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: This was not a question he could answer off-hand, as to whether the Government were bound or not, when there was no money appropriated by Parliament for the purpose. He was inclined to think they were bound; but it would be wise for the Committee to consider the item free from any legal technicality. If the Government were bound to pay the pension, the vote of the Committee would not affect the question.

MR. TAYLOR supported the striking out of the item. Mr. Berry was comparatively young; and if it were neces-

sary to reinstate him instead of paying a pension, he should be reinstated in the kind of work for which he was said to be very capable. When a servant had become old and incapable of carrying on his work, there should be no objection to pensioning a retired servant in such case.

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

Ayes	20
Noes	10

Majority for	10
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AYES.

Mr. Atkins
Mr. Bath
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Holman
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Moran
Mr. Oats
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Reid
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Diamond (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Ewing
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gregory
Mr. James
Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Rason
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus passed, and the item struck out.

Item—H. Boyd, £27 1s. 8d. :

MR. F. REID moved that the item be struck out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Henrietta Boyd was in the service of the Education Department for a little over 30 years. She was not quite up to modern methods, so it was decided to pension her off.

MR. REID asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. HOPKINS: In the case of the recent fatal accident by which Miss Walker was burned to death at Cunderdin, he believed a great deal of blame was attachable to the Government. The jury brought in a verdict that the Government were to blame for not providing proper accommodation for the teacher.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Education Department was under the impression that Miss Walker had not altered the arrangement which was in existence when she went to Cunderdin. They believed she was occupying a house belonging to the Public Works Department. Tenders had been called for the

erection of teacher's quarters, and against the rules and regulations that any teacher should live in the school-room, Miss Walker lived in the school at Cunderdin. Had the Education Department been aware of the fact, it would not have been tolerated. Miss Walker was receiving an allowance in lieu of lodging from the Education Department; at the same time, she had fitted up, contrary to the rules and regulations of the department, a place in the school-room where she lived. Provision had already been made for the erection of teacher's quarters at Cunderdin. The jury were unaware of these facts. The Education Department were not to blame for this exceedingly unfortunate and sad occurrence.

Other items agreed to, and the vote (as reduced) passed.

Printing, £34,006 1s. 6d. :

MR. WALLACE: Repeatedly members had complained of their inability to obtain Bills which had been amended in Committee and then had been returned from another Chamber, so as to compare the amendments. There should be a supply of these Bills available to members. In regard to the printing of forms for the various departments some saving could be effected. He would take one class of form to illustrate what he meant. There were certain forms used for applications for licenses under the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act, and there was a form for the householders' certificate. Instead of having the whole printed on one sheet of foolscap, these two forms were printed on two separate sheets of paper, and there was printing on the back of the paper also. When the copies were posted up, the printing on the back could not be seen at all. He believed printing on both sides of the paper necessitated extra cost in printing. A person going to the Lands Department to make an application had to purchase a form, for which 3d. or 4d. was paid. If, in the making out of the form, it was destroyed, another form had to be purchased. This was not the case in other departments, such as the police court and the Mines Office, where the forms were given away. Anyone could obtain a dozen or two of the forms if he cared to take them away. These forms should

be charged for at a very small fee so as prevent waste in this direction. An officer could be given a certain number of forms for use, and those used beyond that number should be charged for. Members were told that they were responsible for the great cost of printing in this country, but when one took into consideration the great cost of *Hansard* and the cost of papers printed in the House, Parliament was not so much to blame. In the various departments many thousands of forms were printed at one time, and in a year or so perhaps those forms were out of date. Only a limited number should be printed. There was an ever-recurring item for the purchase of typewriters in the departments. There must be some hundreds and hundreds of typewriters in the departments which had been discarded. Was there no sale for these discarded typewriters? He had it on good authority that when new typewriters were obtained officers at once found fault with their machines, which were condemned and sent back into the stores, and new machines bought at a cost of £25 or £26 each. Bills printed as amended should in future be obtainable.

THE TREASURER: Such Bills could be obtained from the Clerks. As to forms and typewriters, he had made a memo. In view of the tendency to use too many forms, it might be well to amalgamate the Stationery Department with the Government Printing Office. In Victoria, every requisition for stationery went to the Government Printer, who, if he could not execute an order, took the responsibility of allowing it to be placed with a private firm. Such control here would lead to the stationery being standardised.

MR. DIAMOND: In South Australia all departmental stationery was supplied by the Government Printer, on yearly requisitions from departments. By this system large economies had been effected.

MR. STONE: Probably half the expenditure could be saved were the printing let out by public tender. For Federal Customs purposes, importers had to find their own forms.

MR. JACOBY: Apparently each department had its own styles of paper, some being very expensive. These should be uniform. Many of the forms were

made too large, so as to fit the jackets. Better provide smaller jackets. In this office there was far too much type-setting, and not enough stereotyping. *Hansard* was still set by hand instead of by machine.

THE TREASURER: Would the hon. member support an item of £2,000 for linotypes?

MR. JACOBY: There were monotypes in the office.

THE TREASURER: The two monotype machines were of little or no use.

MR. JACOBY: Why the necessity for an assistant Government Printer, a superintendent, an overseer, and a suboverseer? In a private firm one assistant would suffice. To the Treasurer he would leave the reorganisation of this department; but the Government Printer had been in the position for two years, and if he had not recommended reforms he should not have the confidence of the Government. The same remark applied to other permanent heads.

MR. DAGLISH: The present Government Printer had enormously improved the office management.

MR. STONE: And increased the expenditure.

MR. DAGLISH: There had been a large increase of output during the last two years.

THE TREASURER: And now the department did the railway printing, formerly done by private firms.

MR. DAGLISH: Which printing represented a large saving; yet for this work the Printing Office had not been credited with any revenue, and not till next year could the value of the services rendered by this to other departments be ascertained by book entries. None could say now whether a fair return was received for this £34,000, unless we knew the revenue or value of the work done as well as the expenditure; and until we knew these particulars, to let out the printing by contract would be absurd.

MR. JACOBY: Some was done outside now by contract.

MR. DAGLISH: Much of the work could not be done outside by contract, and much more should not because of its confidential nature. Now that the office was fairly well organised, it should do all the Government printing. The Treasurer

said the staff was unnecessarily large, and the member for the Swan said much of the printing was done outside. Then there must be something wrong in the administration. The staff, he understood, was pretty fully occupied; and next year the Government should be able to tell the House the profit on the establishment, which without this information should not be hastily condemned. That any Government department should pay less than the ruling rate of wages to its workmen was regrettable. If the department had good workmen it should pay the standard rate. If not, changes should be made in the staff. After working 12 months for less than the ruling rate, the employees had now to approach the Arbitration Court. An hon. member said "Let them give up their privileges." Many of them had no privileges, and were nevertheless paid less than the standard rate. Instead of cutting off privileges, the Government should offer every inducement to get the best men, and it should be easy to do this when so many were employed temporarily, from whom a good selection could be made from time to time for the permanent staff. Those employed provisionally and temporarily were paid less than the ruling rate, and if absent through sickness their pay was stopped. Persons in this class, when their employment was continued from year to year, should have the same privilege in regard to pay and holidays. The provisions of the Public Service Act should be brought into operation in regard to this department. In a previous session the then Premier and the then Attorney General expressed the opinion that all persons in the public service who had been doing the same kind of work for more than two years should be classed in the permanent list; and this principle having been affirmed by the House and Ministerial approval expressed on it, the assurance thus given should be carried out in this department as in others. This department was treated less liberally than the Printing Departments in other States.

THE TREASURER: In regard to the treatment of these Government employees, seeing that the matter was before the Arbitration Court, the less said by this House the better; and he was surprised

that the hon. member should have overlooked that circumstance. Whatever the Court might declare to be fair and right, the Government would pay. The men in the Government Printing Office worked 46½ hours as against 48 worked by printers outside; and as to holidays, the men in outside offices got Christmas Day and Good Friday, while men in the Government Printing Office got the advantage of 1½ hours less per week, and their holidays last year numbered 19 days. Surely if we should pay the best wages, we should also put these men on the basis of those working in outside offices. Private printing firms were appealing against the rate of pay, and if their appeal succeeded it would probably be unnecessary for the Ministerial head of this department to appear before the Court. He had been getting returns from the Government Printing Offices in other States, and there was no doubt that so far as temporary hands were concerned they were only temporary in other States, while in this State some of the "temporary" hands had been engaged in the same work six or seven years past. The Government Printer had to send to him as Minister a weekly return showing the work done, the wages paid, and the estimated value. As to extra labour employed, the total amount of work to be done had been reduced greatly, and his complaint was that he was not getting a proportionate reduction in the total of wages paid. The *Government Gazette* had been reduced almost one-half. Numerous papers now lying on the table of this House, formerly presented in printed form, were not now printed but put on the table in manuscript; and in this way also a large saving in cost should be shown, but there was no proportionate saving yet seen in the cost of the Printing Office. He did not think the House wanted to see work sent outside; but every now and then we might put out some work as a test to compare the value of the work done in the Government Printing Office as against the value of similar work done outside. There was some work that might be done more cheaply by linotype composing than the setting-up by hand. He had raised the same objection also about stereotyping portions, which might be kept standing to be used again from time to time. There were lots of head-

ings that could be kept in stock instead of being set up afresh each time. The same remark applied to the *Government Gazette*; and following on the changes he had introduced in this respect, he thought the system of working would gradually be put on a better basis. The amount for managerial salaries appeared to be large; but he wished to compare it with the amounts paid in other States, so that he might see whether the managerial cost here was too high. After the session there should be considerable reduction in the amount expended on the Government Printing Office. The cost of printing the weekly *Hansard*, for instance, was now about £80 a week, and there would be a saving of that amount at one swoop, after the session closed. So far as the rate of pay to the men was concerned, he was going to let the Arbitration Court say whether the Government should pay the same rate of wages for printing as was paid to persons doing the same work outside; and he would leave the Court to say whether the Government employees should also have the same privileges as were allowed now, or should have only those privileges which were allowed by private employers.

MR. HOPKINS: Having previously suggested that the *Government Gazette* should be brightened up so as to make the work more attractive to people who might be expected to read it, he now suggested that a considerable amount of money could be saved by abolishing the separate publication of the weekly *Hansard*, and printing the reports of parliamentary debates in the *Gazette*. That would be one means of brightening the official publication. In regard to the printing of evidence given before select committees, the cost of this might be almost abolished by typewriting the evidence, and producing a number of copies by the mimeograph process. Farther, a large sum now expended by the Government in advertising in newspapers throughout the State might be saved if all the Government advertisements were put in the *Gazette*. The attractiveness of the *Gazette* would thereby be increased, and its distribution also, for he believed many persons would be willing to take the *Gazette* and pay for it if these changes were made.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. HOPKINS (continuing): If the *Government Gazette* was worth issuing, there should be put into it such information as was desirable, so as to conserve our resources and to save as far as possible the cost of advertising. The member for the Swan had stated that the best men were not to be found in the public service. That was not correct. He believed there were in the service men as capable as those to be found outside; but the trouble was that those men who had ability to do their work well and expeditiously were not given an opportunity of rising according to their qualifications. They were placed on a level with others in the department, and it was a false position to say that a man of ability should not have a rise because there were half-a-dozen duffers in the same department who claimed to have a rise also. A Minister on entering his office should endeavour to master the details, and in time he would become capable of dealing with the department, and able to pick out the men worthy of recompense. There were a number of annual reports thrown on the table of the House from various departments of the State, prepared at great cost, and printed at great expense. They could be curtailed to one-tenth of their present length, be properly bound, and one copy should be given to each member. If a member required more than the one copy, he should pay. Numerous reports were placed on members' desks, and they disappeared. Applications were made to members for 100, 200, and even 500 copies of particular documents which were laid on the table. These documents might be printed in the *Government Gazette*. Many of the reports were useless, while others would have an educational influence on the people.

Vote put and passed.

Photo-Lithographic, £6,456—agreed to.

Refunds, £2,000—agreed to.

Miscellaneous Services, £161,855 7s. 8d.:

Item—Cottage-by-the-Sea Convalescent Home, grant in aid towards building, £550:

MR. JOHNSTON: It was his intention to enter a protest against subsidising any more convalescent homes on the coast. Immediately a Governor was appointed, his wife thought she should do something to raise a monument whereby the people should not forget her when she left; public subscriptions were asked for, and the Government were approached for a subsidy to assist. There were homes established on the coast which were absolutely useless. The Home of Peace had been completed for the last 12 or 18 months and was not occupied to-day.

MR. FOULKES: It would be opened to-morrow.

MR. JOHNSON: When he was first returned to this House and went to live at Subiaco, the building was erected. About the time he entered Parliament the Home of Peace was pointed out to him at Subiaco, and it was to be opened to-morrow. Whether the home was needed was questionable. If these ladies desired to assist the poor, let them give assistance where it was urgently needed—on the goldfields, where patients were turned out of the hospitals before they were really well. To this many deaths were due. The wife of the next Governor, if she wished to raise a monument to her name, should raise it on the goldfields, and not on the coast, where it was not needed.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The Home of Peace—a most admirable institution—was for incurables; but the hon. member found fault with it because it was on the coast. By all means have a similar home on the goldfields; but the coastal climatic conditions made it preferable to have such hospitals here; and there was on the fields a tendency to send convalescents to the coast. A large sum had been raised on the coast for this building, towards which the goldfields also had contributed; and the institution welcomed goldfields convalescents.

THE TREASURER: Members would perceive items of £750 for the Fresh Air League, £250 for the Fresh Air League, Murchison, £250 which he had inserted for St. John's Lodge Convalescent Home, Kalgoorlie; and for the same purpose £130 had been promised to Boulder. The object of these institutions was to enable patients discharged from hospitals to rest before being sent

to the coast for a change; and the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson) should not object to subsidies to the institutions here in which such patients were received. The Home of Peace had been built on a £1,000 Government subsidy, as against £1,000 raised privately; and the Home received a subsidy not exceeding £1,000 for its upkeep. He had informed the founders that they must satisfy him that the subsidy they claimed was for the upkeep and not for the building; so possibly the £700 would not be required.

MR. STONE: How was admission procured?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: By nomination.

THE TREASURER: No pressing case was rejected.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY hoped no steps would be taken to decrease the subsidy to the Home of Peace. In every civilised country the treatment of incurables was a serious problem; and the work proposed to be done by the Home would relieve the Government from great expense and responsibility. As to the institution being for coastal people only, he had been informed by the chairman that the first applicant for admission was a man from Que.

MR. FOULKES: The member for Kalgoorlie was mistaken as to the "Cottage by the Sea," towards which the people of the State had raised £3,000, of which at least two-thirds were contributed on the coast. As to the statements regarding the wife of the late Governor, when the project was first taken in hand there was no idea that the Governor would leave the State, therefore the institution could hardly have been intended by the Governor's lady as a monument to herself. The hon. member had been asked for assistance, but no reply had been received. To the Home of Peace £700 was the lowest sum the Government could contribute. Only the other night we voted £10,000 for a hospital in Perth, for people many of whom could pay for their treatment. The total expenses of the Home of Peace should be paid by the State.

Item—Higgins, John; maintenance in Industrial School for Blind at 2s. per diem, and cost of draft, £37:

MR. WALLACE asked for an explanation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This man had been sent away for instruction and better treatment to Adelaide. It was an old charge, formerly included in "Incidental."

Item—Sailors' Home, Albany, £50:

MR. HAYWARD: Why was the Albany home favoured when similar institutions elsewhere were omitted?

MR. HIGHAM protested against this subsidy to Albany in the absence of any grant to the excellent Sailors' Rest at Fremantle, which in addition to ordinary work took charge of shipwrecked seamen.

THE TREASURER: This was a continuation of the allowance granted by the Treasurer last year (Mr. Illingworth), under the head of "Scientific and Literary." The Albany public had taken great interest in the home, which cost them £200 a year to keep up. As to the admirable work done he had received many testimonies.

Item—Grants for improvements to cemeteries, £1,500:

MR. HOPKINS: How was this to be allocated? The cemetery established for the metropolitan district was laid out elaborately at the expense of the Government. Some of the older cemeteries in populous districts had received the same subsidy; but a cemetery more recently proclaimed, which served the districts of Boulder and Hannans, and which ought to be called the Boulder-Hannans Cemetery, was in the centre of a population of some 19,000 people. There should be some provision for special treatment in such cases, and he hoped there would be careful inquiry into the matter.

THE TREASURER: In regard to grants for cemeteries, the Government were laying down a rule that a grant could be made only for the first fencing of the ground, and he thought this was a fair position to take in regard to new cemeteries. It was probably an obligation on the Government to protect the graves of the people in the first instance; but any internal improvements, after first fencing the ground, ought to be a tax on the people residing in the district and on those whose relatives were buried there. This year the Government had knocked out the grants for Fremantle and Karrakatta cemeteries, and were providing only for

those cemeteries where fencing was required, and were not providing for internal improvements.

MR. HOPKINS : In the case of Karra-katta Cemetery, it was not uncommon that when a member of a family was interred, a larger space than was required for one grave would be purchased by the relatives, with a view to future interments; and this practice of purchasing ground by families in advance of requirements really provided a fund for the cemetery trustees to go on with; but in the case of other cemeteries, such as the one at Boulder, it was a rare case for ground to be purchased to a greater extent than was required for the particular burial. This was a phase of the question that should be borne in mind, because cemetery trustees required funds to go on with, and there was not the same source of income in these cases as in the older settled districts.

Item—Nannine Cemetery fence repairs, £1,500 :

MR. YELVERTON : The member for the district should explain this item.

MR. HOLMAN : It was to be hoped the Committee would not strike out this item, in face of the serious unemployed difficulty. This was for a new cemetery, and a grant was required for fencing in the ground.

Item—Expenses of Royal Commission on Civil Service, £5,000 :

MR. DAGLISH said he had asked for information some time ago in regard to this matter, and he would now mention the information he had obtained. The commission had been in existence since July last, and up to the 25th November the cost had been £2,837 15s. Certain details of the expenditure might be mentioned. The salaries of commissioners paid up to that date amounted to £1,216 2s. 7d.; the travelling allowances and expenses amounted to £436, and there were other items. The work of the commission was being done with undue slowness, in his opinion, and at a maximum of cost. There were three commissioners, and if they agreed to do the work of classifying officers throughout the service there was no reason why the three should not go in three different directions at the same time, making their

separate inquiries and reporting results jointly. By taking this course, the same number of commissioners might do three times the amount of work in a given period. Instead of that, the three commissioners had incurred unnecessary expense by all three travelling to each place and jointly going through insignificant details, on which they brought to bear their joint wisdom. When a commission overhauled the service in Victoria in 1884, the three commissioners working singly visited the several departments, and so got through a large amount of work in a short time. If the commissioners here wished to work economically, they might have done it in the way he suggested, at one-third the cost and in one-third the time. The commissioners appeared to be spreading out their labours as long as possible, as if they realised they had a nice, soft, easy billet, which should be made to last a long time. A large sum of money was expended in sending one commissioner, he having had experience only in this State, to the Eastern States to find out what the other two commissioners, who had themselves come from the Eastern States, ought to know in regard to the mode of classification there. The commissioners had started in an expensive way, and were continuing in an expensive way; and if we had to wait till they finished the work and finally reported, the reorganisation of the service in this State would be long postponed, and there would be a great waste of time and money. This item was undoubtedly large, and in order to test the feeling of the Committee he moved that the amount be reduced by £2,500. This should be more than sufficient for the current financial year, if the method of working he had suggested were adopted.

THE TREASURER : The hon. member did not know what he was talking about when he said that a reorganisation and classification scheme could be carried out in a few minutes. Firstly the commissioners were sent into the Stores Department, where stock amounting to £650,000 had to be overhauled and the reorganisation of the staff had to be inquired into. The hon. member, according to his method, would say that one commissioner should have done the whole of the inquiry. Then the commissioners were asked to draw up regula-

tions for future admission into the civil service. That could not have been done in a few minutes. In South Australia a similar inquiry occupied a commission practically seven months in travelling. The commissioners here had arranged a scheme of amalgamation of all officers and districts, stating the number of officers which each district ought to have for carrying on the necessary services. The commissioners had also inquired into the number of police which should be provided for particular districts, and had classified them. They had gone into the hospitals, had also taken the wardens, the forest rangers, and had even touched the public batteries. Every public servant would be classified and his rate of pay fixed. The commission anticipated that they would be able to complete the classification and reorganisation of every district outside of Perth by the 15th of January next. He did not think that was a very long while, practically three months for doing that work, and if it was done well and was a guide to this House, as we all hoped it would be, he did not think it was very dear at the money. The members of the commission were acknowledged to be competent men. Let us see what their report on or about the 14th or 15th of January would be, and then judge them by that. They had an agreement, he believed, with this Government, giving them a salary and fixing that salary. Practically we should have to pay probably under any circumstances. He thought that if they got through, having gone round the State, and if they got to the other officers left here, the Lands, Works, and Mines—he thought that was all, because, as he had said before, they had been in the Treasury and Savings Bank; they had to go into the Law Department (and they never would come out of that)—if they did all this, and he fancied they would, and got through in two or three months, they would have done a very great deal in reorganising and classifying the services of the State.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item—Glasgow Exhibition, £500:

MR. HOLMAN: Was this the last amount that would be paid? Could they not do without the present amount? Last year something like £16,000 or

£17,000 had been spent for these commissions.

DR. O'CONNOR: When was the motion, carried about two months ago, for a return relating to the various industrial exhibitions to be given effect to?

THE CHAIRMAN: That did not come under this item.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: In regard to this matter of the secretary, there might be a small item to be paid for yet in relation to this work. The documents and papers in connection with the work had not yet come to hand from London. There had been some delay owing to the collection of exhibits that had been lent and the prizes that had been gained. The expenditure now must absolutely cease. He had an agreement with the secretary that he would do all the rest of the work to enable him (the Minister) to have a better balance-sheet prepared at no farther cost. We had a large number of these exhibits. Something like £19,000 worth were purchased, £17,000 worth had been sold and £2,000 worth had been left in the hands of the Agent-General. He (the Minister) had given instructions for these exhibits to be sold, so that the Government might have a complete balance-sheet and credit the commission with any such items as this. He thought that less than £100 would pay the additional expenditure. The £500 would more than cover any farther expenditure.

Item—Royal Exchange, Colonial Exhibition, £2,000:

MR. HOPKINS asked for an explanation.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That was a matter he could not explain. It was in connection with the Colonial Exhibition. So far as his memory served him, it was stated that the authorities were prepared to pay the expenses of this exhibition if the Government would only allow the specimens to be exhibited. It was thought it would be *infra dig.* to make a charge, and he believed authority was given. The Leake Government gave written instructions. The settling of this matter had been placed in his hands, and he had stopped all expenditure. He had given instructions that all the assets should be sold as speedily as possible, and as soon as we could we would have

a balance-sheet. With regard to the return spoken of by Dr. O'Connor, the books had not yet come to hand from England. They had, he thought, cabled for the books and papers and the exhibits to be sent.

MR. DAGLISH said he would like to call attention to the difference between the expenditure upon an exhibition that was not likely to do the State any good and the treatment meted out to one likely to be of utility to the State. Some little time ago an application was made by the Chamber of Manufactures for the sum of £700 in order to give an exhibition in Perth, with the object of educating Western Australians as to what manufactures Western Australia had. He was sorry to say they had not been successful in moving the sympathy of the Colonial Treasurer. A similar exhibition was held three years ago, and it was proposed to hold one every three years. The Government were only asked to assist to the extent of £700, but while liberal support was given to the agricultural and mining industries, the manufacturing industry could get no assistance whatever. By a judicious encouragement of our local manufactures, an opportunity might be afforded to many men who were walking the streets, idle and hungry, to earn a living. Infant manufactures, with reasonable support, might develop into thriving industries.

MR. DIAMOND: The Chamber of Manufactures was as deserving of some assistance as our agricultural industry or mining industry. He had sufficient confidence in the members of the present Government to believe they would rectify this omission at the earliest possible moment, and he trusted sincerely they would do so.

MR. BATH: During the last five or six years we must have spent fully £50,000 in promoting and encouraging exhibitions. He had no hesitation in saying the impetus these exhibitions had given to the State industries and manufactures had been practically *nil*. On the other hand, they gave an opportunity to various business firms and manufacturers to exhibit a class of goods which never by any manner of means reached the consumer.

MR. JOHNSON: The Morgans Ministry decided they would allow the

specimens to be exhibited in London, provided there was no expense. An assurance was given that if they were exhibited there would be little or no expense to this State; yet, in the face of that assurance, we found an item of £2,000 on the Estimates.

MR. MORGANS: The hon. member (Mr. Johnson) was entirely in error in supposing there was any expenditure incurred in connection with the exhibition and the specimens in London. The expenditure of £2,000 was incurred in connection with the Glasgow Exhibition, and had nothing whatever to do with the Royal Exchange Exhibition, therefore the hon. member was entirely mistaken. The expense of that exhibition had been met by subscriptions from London mining companies, and Messrs. Johnson and Sons, who were large gold refiners, undertook to pay all current expenses during the period the exhibition was open. That had been done, and therefore no breach of faith had been committed either by the Government with which he had been connected or by the present Government. The packing of specimens was, of course, a charge against the exhibition; but they had to be packed for return to this State, whether exhibited at the Royal Exchange or not.

Item—Fire Brigades, £ for £, £3,000 :

MR. HOLMAN: Last year volunteer fire brigades throughout the State had been treated very badly, and as a result their appliances were now in a bad condition. The Treasurer had promised that a Bill compelling insurance companies to contribute towards the maintenance of fire brigades would be introduced next session, and such a measure was most necessary. Meantime it was to be hoped that the Treasurer would subsidise fire brigades to the same extent during this year as they would be subsidised under the proposed Bill next year. Distribution of the vote on a population basis would be satisfactory. He trusted the Treasurer would assist country fire brigades to attend the Fremantle celebration this year in the same way as had been done last year.

MR. JOHNSON: One would like the Treasurer to state whether a new system would be instituted this year. An amount of £2,000 placed on last year's

Estimates had scarcely been touched. The Kalgoorlie fire brigade, simply because it was controlled by the local municipality and was not associated with the fire brigades' board, received no subsidy, and that was highly unjust. Would the Treasurer introduce this year a system of grading under which all brigades would receive assistance?

MR. DAGLISH : The £ for £ subsidy system would meet with his approval and he thought with that of members generally. The contention had been advanced last year that the £ for £ subsidy should be granted only on money collected or obtained by private subscription, money voted by a municipality being regarded as entitled to no subsidy whatever. The bulk of the fire brigades were maintained by municipalities, and surely the better system was to maintain brigades at the mutual expense of rate-payers than to let them live on the generosity or charity of a few prominent citizens. Those who went round with the hat were subsidised as a reward for cadging, but to the people who recognised their responsibilities as ratepayers the Government said, "If you are such fools as to recognise your municipal responsibility, you shall get nothing out of the vote." Last year begging efforts had resulted in the distribution of £198 out of £2,000.

Item—Brophy v. Woods, Bywater, and Hunt, £149 15s. 11d. :

MR. WALLACE asked for explanation.

THE TREASURER : Information would be supplied to-morrow.

Item—Free passes over Midland Railway line, £530 5s. 3d. :

MR. HOPKINS : In order to test the feeling of the Committee as to the justice of the Government paying the expenses of all members when travelling to and from their constituencies, he moved that the item be reduced by £1. Owing to the large size of this State, certain members were compelled to travel by coach and others by boat.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member (Mr. Hopkins) was not in order in moving that the vote be reduced by an

unsubstantial amount such as £1. *May*, page 583, laid down :—

The reduction of a grant or item must be of a substantial character; nor may a series of motions be made upon the same grant, raising substantially the same issue.

MR. HOPKINS : So as to put himself in order, he moved that the item be reduced by £30. Members who were compelled to travel between their constituencies and Perth by coach or boat ought to be afforded the same facilities as members travelling by rail. The Municipal Association, of the executive of which he had been a member, had recognised this principle.

MR. MORAN : The hon. member was in order in moving that the amount of the item be reduced, but the object he had in view was distinctly out of order. Reduction of this item was moved with a view to directing the Government to incur fresh expenditure, and therefore presumably to impose increased taxation.

MR. HIGHAM : Members taking advantage of the privilege of travelling over the Midland railway line must be very few in number. Certainly the privilege was not exercised in the majority of instances.

MR. JACOBY : Would not the cheaper course be to let members travelling over the Midland line purchase tickets and obtain refunds from the Government?

MR. WALLACE : At least 11 members of the Legislature travelled over the Midland railway.

MR. JACOBY : But 11 tickets to take members over all lines of the State could be purchased for this amount.

HON. F. H. PIESSE : No. For seven hundred odd pounds.

MR. JACOBY : Only three members travelled regularly over the Midland railway.

MR. STONE : If each member as he travelled over the Midland railway paid for his ticket, the cost would be more than the amount of the item. Nearly every member of the Legislature travelled once or twice, if not several times, over the Midland railway in the course of a year. Better strike the item out and let every member pay his fare wherever he went, either over Government or private lines. Members who had to travel to the North-West should have their fares paid once or twice during the session;

but he would rather see each member pay his fares over the railways when he wished to travel.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Although the amount provided last year was £530, the actual amount expended was £662 10s. The amount was arrived at by a record which was kept. Was it not fair that members who had to travel over the Midland Company's line should be entitled to travel free, the same as members who travelled over the Government lines? The Committee might rest assured the Government would not pay a penny more than was actually earned.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: For some years members travelled free on their ordinary tickets over private lines. Some three or four years ago, the Midland Company made a claim on the Government to be reimbursed the cost of members' tickets, and it was then thought better to make some arrangement with the company to pay a lump sum per annum. That system was carried on for some time, and passes were issued to members. It would be difficult to keep a record of the number of times members travelled over the Midland line, for there were frequent small journeys made, and these would have to be taken into account. A new system might have been adopted, but he thought the old system of paying a lump sum much preferable to the course now suggested.

MR. HOLMAN: The Colonial Secretary ought to consider the advisability of subsidising a steamer to Geraldton. If that were done, the item could be reduced considerably, for members would travel on the steamer instead of by rail. A subsidised steamer would also benefit the people on the Murchison and at Geraldton, who would be able to have their goods carried cheaper, which would amply repay the Government. The item seemed a large one, but half a dozen members travelled up and down the line a dozen times a year. The members for the Irwin, the Moore, and the member for Beverley travelled over the line. The sum was not an excessive one. *

MR. HOPKINS: The debate had taken a different turn from what he intended when he drew attention to the item. No exception had been taken to the method adopted in the past of testing items, but, if it would be more convenient to members,

he would move to add the words "and coach and boat fares to constituencies."

THE CHAIRMAN: That would practically make a new item.

MR. HOPKINS: Then he would move to reduce the item by £30.

Amendment negatived.

Item—Subsidy to municipalities at 15s. in the £ for rates collected to amount of £20,000; above the amount 10s. in the £, £50,000:

MR. HOPKINS: An amount was provided for subsidies and special grants for maintaining buildings and the construction of roads throughout the State of £143,000, and the sum of £50,000 was provided for subsidies to municipalities; to obtain which the municipalities had to find £65,000. The subsidy to municipalities should be increased to £ for £ on the lines laid down, but he would like to see the subsidies graded to first, second, and third class. Some municipalities were not in need of subsidies at all. There would be no need of giving special grants for the upkeep of fire brigades, which were under municipalities in most cases, if a £ for £ subsidy were paid.

MR. HOLMAN: The increase from 10s. to 15s. in the £ was given to municipalities to aid in the upkeep of fire brigades and other matters, but no assistance had been given by municipalities in this direction. The present system was better. If the subsidy was increased to £ for £, local bodies would place their wants before the Government, and ask for special grants just the same as before.

Item—Expenses in connection with the coronation of His Majesty the King, local grants £1,750:

MR. TAYLOR asked for information.

THE TREASURER: This was a grant of £ for £ given over the whole of the State for sums raised, which, in a majority of cases, were devoted to the entertainment of children.

Item—Monument to late Premier, Hon. George Leake, K.C., £250:

MR. MORAN: It would be advisable for the Government to move to strike the item out. All felt that the item ought not to appear on the Estimates. It was put down out of feelings of gratitude, and as a solace and an expression of the

feelings of the great sorrow at the death of the late Premier of the State; but to put an item on the Estimates at the earliest moment possible to erect a monument to a public man who was only in power less than 12 months was not advisable. The item should be considered later on, in the calm quiet of two or three years hence, when history began to appreciate the man at his true value. The sum was placed on the Estimates by those who were created by the late Premier himself. This monument could not, with justice, be said to be earned by the length of service of the late Premier, and was he correct in saying that the Committee felt great delicacy in touching on the matter, and that it would have been better if the item had not been placed on the Estimates? Might he speak of the services of one who had done far more for Western Australia, the late Mr. Alexander Forrest, who was a great explorer and a man of great enterprise? In that case the friends of the late Mr. Forrest subscribed and erected a monument. The same could be said of another public man, who did great service to the country, and who represented Fremantle for a number of years. He referred to the late W. E. Marmion. His friends likewise subscribed and erected a monument to his memory. One would be voicing, he was sure, the feelings of the man who was dead and gone in saying that he would not wish to see this item on the Estimates. One would rather wish that the people of Western Australia should erect a monument in true proportion to his worth. We were not entitled to pass an amount for a monument to a Premier who only reigned, after all, for a few months. We had public men who had served the country for longer periods. Might he mention another Premier, whose photograph adorned the Chamber. He referred to the Hon. G. Throssell, who in the ordinary course of events would die. For Mr. Throssell he would not advocate a State monument, notwithstanding Mr. Throssell's record as a public man was longer than Mr. Leake's. The late Premier had been given a State funeral—a great and well-earned honour which few Australian Premiers had ever been accorded. But the State could not be expected to erect monuments to all her public men. Let this item stand over

for some years, when the feeling of the House might be unanimous.

THE TREASURER: This sum would not be spent without farther consultation with Parliament.

MR. MORAN accepted that assurance.

Item—King's Park, £3,000 :

MR. HOLMAN: Here was an increase of £500, which if granted would be a permanent annual charge. Too much was spent on these decorations. He moved that the item be reduced by £500.

THE TREASURER: Next year the item would appear as £2,500. The £500 was promised by a former Treasurer (Mr. Illingworth) for the May Drive; and though the House altered the vote from the May Drive to the Rokeby Road approaches, yet on the strength of the promise the park board had in good faith overdrawn £500 from the bank; hence the increase. Thus the amendment would cut down the item to £2,000, for which the board said the park could not be maintained. Water alone cost £300 a year.

HON. F. H. PIESSE opposed the reduction of the item. The member for North Murchison (Mr. Holman) did not appear to have a soul above the dry plains of Nannine, and on every occasion attacked votes for the beautification of the parks and other surroundings of the city, or which in any way contributed to the pleasure of the people. All visitors to the King's Park and recreation grounds throughout the country would admit that the expenditure was justified.

MR. JOHNSON: Only a section of the people could see them.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Goldfields people visited the city and availed themselves of such beauty spots.

MR. JOHNSON: Most of them could not do so.

MR. HOLMAN: About £80,000 had been spent on King's Park.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Members talked of monuments. No greater monument could be erected to Sir John Forrest than this large tract of country adjoining the city; for to his foresight when Surveyor General its reservation was due. It was for the national good and not for a section of the people. Sir John Forrest and his colleagues

thought of the future and not of their own benefit; and the parks and reserves in the settled portion of the country, affording as they did a striking contrast to the arid plains of the distant interior, were probably enjoyed better by the goldfields visitors than by people on the coast. Had it not been for the foresight of those who in the early days controlled the destinies of the State there would have been few reservations for the public enjoyment. He strongly objected to the tone in which the hon. member had on many occasions found fault with expenditure on parks and reserves. The £80,000 was well spent.

MR. HOPKINS: Whence was it procured?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The old settlers had to pledge the country for it. In the days when there was a population of some 40,000 people they took upon their shoulders the responsibility, went to the London market, and pledged their estates for the development of the country, with the knowledge that if such development were unsuccessful they would have to bear the burden. He opposed the reduction of the item, and would on every occasion reply to the hon. member's attacks on such expenditure.

MR. HOPKINS: Discuss the item reasonably, and not in a hysterical style. Outside Perth there was no King's Park, no Swan River, no Zoo, no Museum. Last year he contended, and contended now, that in view of the enormous subsidy paid by the Government to the Perth City Council, the council should take charge of the King's Park, and manage it for the benefit of citizens and visitors. The Park was in a sense exclusive. Containing probably the prettiest drives in Australia, it was something of which the State might be proud; but all did not wish to pay the piper for the benefit of the few who could afford a carriage and pair with which to drive through the park every afternoon.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Thousands walked through it every Sunday.

MR. HOPKINS: They could not go every day. On week days the park was the resort of nursemaids, perambulators, and babies. Last year the city council drew £18,000 in subsidy, apart from their own rates; thus the city could well afford to take over the park, and the cost of the

annual upkeep should be debited to those principally benefited.

MR. BATH had no hesitation whatever in singing the old song about the lavish manner in which money was voted for the improvement of these parks. Whilst he admitted that Perth Park was very beautiful and a source of gratification to the people of Perth, he asserted that a considerable sum of money had been spent on it, and the Government in drawing up these Estimates could well allow the amount to be reduced without militating against the beauty of the park or its future usefulness. The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said it was a national park, and that it was availed of by not only the people of Perth, but by people from other districts. Only a few of the goldfields people could avail themselves of it. If the member for the Williams would support the goldfields people in a reduction of the railway fares to allow people to obtain food and other things much cheaper, people on the fields might be able to avail themselves of these parks by coming to Perth occasionally for a change. The goldfields members, in opposing this vote, were only doing their duty. Places like Kalgoorlie or Boulder contributed no small amount to the revenue. The council of Kalgoorlie had been putting forth stringent endeavours to make a park which would be worthy of the place, and this involved the expenditure of a considerable sum of money; much more than the municipality could afford; but on all occasions when they had approached the Minister responsible for the department for a grant-in-aid for that park, they had been met with a refusal. If the same treatment were meted out to the goldfields districts as was meted out to the Perth districts, the goldfields members might not have the same reason to complain. The goldfields people were entitled to better treatment, and whilst they had no desire to exhibit parochialism in any shape or form, they had a perfect right to object to this lavish expenditure on the coast and penurious expenditure on the goldfields.

HON. F. H. PIESSE was sorry to see the line of demarcation so clearly drawn between the goldfields and the coast. [MR. BATH: The hon. member drew it.] He did not. He endeavoured on every occasion to lessen the distance between

the coast and the goldfields. He would take the hon. member for Hannans (Mr. Bath) back to the numerous times when he (Mr. Piesse) had visited the fields, and also to the times when Sir John Forrest had visited them, and he would refer him to the various votes passed by this House from time to time. He was confident that if the amounts which had been given to the people of the goldfields for recreation purposes and for various means of pleasure for the people there were added together, they would equal the sums which had been paid for Perth Park.

MR. MORAN: Kalgoorlie had had more than Perth.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: As to the cost of Perth Park, it had been stated that £80,000 had been expended; but that was far in excess of the actual amount.

MR. MORAN: Double the amount.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: It was twice the amount; £80,000 would, he thought, cover the whole of the expenditure. The contract for the first road through the park was for something like £5,600. The work was done during his (Mr. Piesse's) administration, and since that time other sums had been expended. But the whole did not come to £30,000. The people who visited the park were very numerous, and especially on Sundays. Means had been provided by the Government to enable people to visit the coast. Assistance had been given to the children who had come from the fields.

MR. HOPKINS: What about the necessity of it?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Had the same assistance been given to the people in the agricultural districts who had just as far to come? He travelled every week a distance of 250 miles. He did not wish to stoop to the spirit of parochialism, because we must look at the matter from a national standpoint. He was just as anxious to be liberal to the goldfields as he was to be liberal to the coast in regard to what he considered should be done: in fact, he had erred, he took it, on the side of liberality when he had an opportunity of doing his best for them; so that after all it was not a question of the goldfields against the coast, but of the State of Western Australia. He was to-day ready to do his best to help the people on the goldfields as well as the people here. He took it all we desired was to make the

different parts of the country attractive to the people who visited them. We should do this to prevent a large number of people going away from the State to spend their holidays.

THE TREASURER mentioned a number of places to which grants had been made from the £5,500 granted for "improvements to parks, recreation grounds, etc.," and said he had £9 10s. left. With regard to a remark by the member for Hannans (Mr. Bath), so far as Kalgoorlie was concerned, after all there was only a difference of a few pounds between their estimates. The Kalgoorlie Council's surveyor estimated the work would cost so much, and the Government gave £250.

MR. JOHNSON was sorry the debate had taken the turn it had, and that it should be necessary for the member for the Williams to get up and protest against the parochialism of the goldfields members. The goldfields members recognised the advantages of King's Park, and he ventured to say that he visited that park as much as any member in the House. He realised it was one of the beauty spots of Australia; but whilst he could enjoy it and the single men from the goldfields could enjoy it owing to the fact that they could save enough to come here for the Christmas holidays, the women and children on the goldfields could not visit King's Park. Wages on the goldfields would not admit of their paying their train fares. Living on the goldfields was so high that it was just a matter of living up to their wages. The wages of the men were always mortgaged before they got them, and people could not leave the goldfields once they got there, nor could they allow the women and children to visit Perth. Realising that, he ventured to think the time had arrived when the people of Perth should do something for themselves. If £2,500 was sufficient for upkeep of the park whilst the authorities were making roads and paths, why should the amount still go on when the park was practically finished? The park had sufficient for some considerable time to come. The Government had done a little for the goldfields, but it had been very small in comparison with the revenue derived from the goldfields. The member for Hannans (Mr. Bath) was a little bit

astray when he mentioned that little park which the municipality of Kalgoorlie struggled to establish at Kalgoorlie. That park was established by the municipality of Kalgoorlie. Then private individuals stepped in. He had done a little in the park, and many public men had planted trees there. We found on this year's Estimates that, recognising the good work that had been done, the Government had granted a sum to assist those public men in carrying out the work they had started. He supported the reduction of the item, because he felt the time had arrived when less public money should be spent in Perth and more in outlying districts.

MR. HOLMAN: The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) had twitted him with talking only about dry-blowers and navvies, but the hon. member ought to know that the opening up of the back country was of much more benefit to the State than was the beautifying of Perth. The residents of the capital had been enriched to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds by the activity of the goldfields people, but not one of the numerous rich men of Perth had ever put his hand in his pocket for the benefit of the mining community. True, many goldfields recreation grounds had received a subsidy, but that subsidy—the first—had also been the final one. It was a disgrace to the inhabitants of Perth that they should not subscribe one penny towards the upkeep of all their places of amusement. The high cost of living prevented goldfields residents from keeping their wives and families in mining districts. An excellent means of benefiting the State at large would be to do away with lease rents, and to let the unemployed work ground now lying idle. Until the goldfields were treated with a tithe of the generosity shown to the people of Perth, he would maintain what the member for the Williams had described as a parochial attitude.

MR. HOPKINS: The member for the Williams had stated that £20,000 of public money had been spent on the Perth Park.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: No; £30,000.

MR. HOPKINS: A return laid on the table last year showed that £55,141 of public money had been spent on the Perth Park up to the end of the preced-

ing financial year. Last year Parliament voted £2,500, and this year it was asked to vote £3,000, making a total expenditure of Government money of £60,641. Moreover, the city of Perth was drawing a Government subsidy of £18,000 per annum. In the circumstances, was it unreasonable to ask the citizens now to take charge of the park and maintain it themselves? The Fresh Air League to which the member for the Williams had referred sprang into existence from the benevolence of Eastern Goldfields residents, who desired that the helpless children of poor parents might be afforded a change of air as a means, in some instances, of saving their lives. The Eastern Goldfields were distant over 200 miles from a seaport with which they ought to have been connected years ago. Indeed, had that railway been constructed there would have been no necessity to establish fresh air funds, because the cost of living on the Eastern Goldfields would have been greatly reduced. The extortionate railway rates were largely responsible for the necessity of instituting the fresh air fund. No doubt this Administration, like preceding Governments, would refuse to reduce the railway rates until the last straw was breaking the back of the industry.

MR. WALLACE agreed to a certain extent with the member for the Williams. Goldfields representatives, however, opposed this item not from any spirit of parochialism, but by way of entering a protest against the amounts lavished on Perth and its surroundings as compared with those doled out to the goldfields as a whole. Undoubtedly, the expenditure of a few hundred pounds annually on the goldfields would create much pleasanter surroundings than existed to-day. Climatic conditions always considered, goldfields residents would make their towns as comfortable as those on the coast. Sir John Forrest, with Dr. Hackett, deserved much credit for converting swamps in North and East Perth into pleasure resorts. It was a pity that the member for the Williams, who had held office long ago, had not prevented the placing of the Karrakatta Cemetery between two cities.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The Karrakatta Cemetery had been established only four years ago.

MR. WALLACE: The Government would do well to consider the advisability of removing the cemetery to the other side of the Karrakatta railway station, farther towards the sea coast. The item for a gatekeeper's house in connection with the Perth Park was sufficient to probe the sensitiveness of members representing outlying districts. That money might well have been put to other uses. No lodge or gatekeeper's house had been erected at the Fremantle end of the park, and the majority of the present board had strongly opposed the ear-marking of a small amount of the annual vote for the purpose of giving the people of Subiaco a decent road into the park. The board appeared to take on itself all sorts of responsibilities which no other board would incur. On the expectation of Parliamentary sanction of a subsidy promised by the Government, the board had obtained an overdraft. Let the gentlemen who had incurred the overdraft be responsible for it. He objected to being compelled to vote items because the expenditure they represented had been incurred in anticipation of Parliamentary sanction. While intending to support the item, next session should an amount be brought forward for half the sum now on the Estimates for this work, he would move to strike it out. The time had arrived when the park had had sufficient money spent upon it. Let the park now be handed over to the people of the city to maintain and look after.

MR. BATH: This year altogether £5,723 appeared on the Estimates for the King's Park and Government Gardens combined, while £1,200 was the whole of the money voted for the recreation grounds and parks for the goldfields. The goldfields members had a right to take exception to the item. The park board should be asked to exercise economy, and if they received £2,500, after wiping off the overdraft at the bank they would still have £2,000 to devote to the improvement of the park. Seeing the perfect condition of the King's Park at the present time, that amount would be ample for the purpose.

MR. FOULKES: The Government seemed to be concentrating all their efforts on the one park; they were putting all their eggs into one basket. He said this from his knowledge of the way in which

one of the most useful districts in the State had been treated. He referred to the Claremont-Cottesloe district, which was a beautiful district, having the sea on one side, and the river on the other. There was a large Government reserve in this district of 2,000 acres, and the whole amount spent on that reserve during the last 10 years amounted to £300. In another part of the district, there was the Buckland Hill park, of 40 or 50 acres, from which a magnificent view of the city of Perth and of Fremantle could be obtained. The total amount spent on that park was £100. The people of Claremont asked for a grant to improve their park, and the mayor of that town had stated to the Colonial Secretary that the people were willing to spend £200 or £300 in improving their park, but the Treasurer could only afford £100. The Buckland Hill people were prepared to spend £100 or £150 on their park, and all they received from the Treasurer was £49 10s. He could not help sympathising with the goldfields people when he knew that in his district, which had a population of 6,000 people, only £200 or £300 was spent on the parks.

THE TREASURER: It was not fair for the member for Claremont to try to make out that his district had been treated shabbily. Buckland Hill received £40, Cottesloe Reserve £250, and Peppermint Grove Park £250. He (the Treasurer) had £109 10s. left on this vote, and the member for Claremont got £100 of the amount; still he was grumbling.

MR. DAGLISH: It was to be hoped the Committee would not interfere with this item. He wished to contradict the statement that had been made that the King's Park was already thoroughly improved. It was absurd to make such a statement. There were over 12,000 acres of land in that park, and 9,000 at least were absolutely in their virgin state. He wished to see not only the park improved, but maintained, or the money expended would be wasted. He wished to see one or two new roads made through that park, to give ready access to pedestrians. At present, the money spent had provided opportunities for people to drive through the park: provision should be made now for pedestrian traffic. Since

he spoke about this park on a previous occasion, a meeting of the park board had been called, and he hoped now the board had been aroused to a condition of repentance and would meet regularly in the future.

MR. MORAN: Those who knew the Australian capitals were aware that the State in Australia which had done least for its capital city was Western Australia. Adelaide was admired for the magnificent parks around that city; the beautiful surroundings made by the Government; also for the roads and drives leading from the capital to the country, roads to the hills provided by the Government so as to make the capital city attractive. It was known that there were beautiful national parks around Melbourne, and in Sydney a great deal had been done and hundreds of thousands of pounds had been spent on the national parks, which made Sydney to-day the queen city of the South. In Brisbane, thousands of pounds had been spent in making the capital city attractive. When he (Mr. Moran) represented the goldfields, he never objected to expenditure of this kind. He was always a warm advocate for beautifying the capital, to rival Adelaide and the cities of the Eastern States, so that when people came to Perth they had something to look at. Very little had been done in Perth outside the national King's Park. It was to be regretted that the goldfields members grumbled at what they got from the Government. In the good old days of the good old Government, the goldfields had magnificent grants made to them, and it was a remarkable thing that those who grumbled now sat behind the Government. It appeared as if they talked to the country, and did not mean what they said. What action did the members of the goldfields take the other day to get parks and gardens for their towns? He (Mr. Moran) did his best to impress on members the necessity for Perth bearing its share of the burdens in providing parks and gardens for the goldfields. The State had pledged its credit to the extent of £3,000,000 to get a water scheme, a work which no one but Sir John Forrest would undertake. How was he (Mr. Moran) supported by those who now attacked this small item? He had proposed giving the goldfields water

at 3s. 6d. a thousand, so that people there might have parks and gardens.

MR. JOHNSON: The hon. member knew his suggestion would not be adopted.

MR. MORAN: Two Labour members had said the goldfields did not want water, except at 5s. or 6s. per thousand. To-night the tune was changed, and it was said the goldfields people were too poor to visit Perth. No doubt they were. But every Australian State had had magnificent goldfields or other mineral resources; and what State had done so much for mining as Western Australia? That we had done too much he did not say. He had always been a champion of the fields, and was the other night when he endeavoured, without support from the goldfields members, to cheapen the water supply.

MR. BATH: The hon. member had played to the gallery.

MR. MORAN: It took a good man to play to the gallery. The Government promised to reduce this item next year. He regretted these attacks on the modest efforts to beautify the national capital, which must be made worthy of the State. More had been done by public grant for Kalgoorlie and Boulder than for Perth; but much of the goldfields expenditure had been ill-applied. Magnificent stations had been built at these towns, and a tramway company given a concession which made the railway practically unpayable.

MR. HOLMAN: The concession had been opposed by the people.

MR. MORAN: And yet we were asked to cut down an item which might give employment to a little labour in Perth. Parliament as a whole had in the past done nobly by the fields, and should do justice in future; but there were more people in and around Perth than on the whole of the Eastern Goldfields. "Take away railway rates," said the goldfield members, "and the mines are a business proposition."

MR. HOPKINS: Yes; if 1½ millions of railway rates were struck out.

MR. MORAN: In the early part of the session the Opposition endeavoured to reduce rates. How did the hon. member vote?

MR. HOPKINS: This was the first he had heard of the reduction.

MR. MORAN: Government supporters had tamely submitted to the increase. Of the system of getting overdrafts against Government promises he did not approve; but that had often been done on the goldfields in the early days. Probably it would not be repeated by the park board after this debate, though he (Mr. Moran) would like to raise money to-morrow on the strength of such an assurance.

MR. HOPKINS: The cities enumerated by the hon. member who had just spoken did not draw a subsidy from the Government. Perth drew £18,000 a year. Nor did the four next largest cities in Victoria draw any subsidy. As to the Opposition desiring to reduce the railway rates, the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse), now in Opposition, was responsible for some of the preferential rates which were among the ills still afflicting the fields.

MR. MORAN: All municipalities in this State drew grants.

MR. HOPKINS: *The Year Book of Australia*, 1902, gave a list of 39 "places worth visiting" in the city of Perth.

MR. HASTIE: During the discussion of last year's Estimates the large expenditure in Perth had been strongly commented on, and a general promise given that this extravagance should cease; but this year the expenditure had increased, and its continuance next year would not be surprising. In view of the work already done the Treasurer should seriously consider the unfairness of spending so much in beautifying Perth. The goldfields did not wish to live on the charity of the State, and certainly not on Perth, nor did they ever ask for what was not given to other places. All they desired was a fair division of Government subsidies. Until the member for West Perth spoke it had not been apparent that Perth was scurvily treated; nor was it credible now when we recollected that Perth had been overpaid by the State about £6,000. Some hundreds of thousands had been spent by the Government on Perth, and the people of this State could not consider themselves ill-used. In view of the comparatively little money there was to spare, the people in the country districts who had none of the advantages enjoyed in Perth, and who lived in places

not so fortunately situated, should sometimes have "the benefit of the doubt."

MR. TAYLOR supported the item. Though other goldfields members had spoken loud and long against the atrocities of the Government in lavishing expenditure on the King's Park, all who had seen the parks in the Eastern States would agree with the member for West Perth that in beautifying this city the Government had been niggardly. The Perth Park contained the finest drive in Australia. Only once had he (Mr. Taylor) driven through, and on the innumerable occasions when he had walked through he had noticed hundreds of people enjoying the beauties of the scene. He agreed that the park should now be taken over by the City Council, and the State relieved of these grants. The park would be an everlasting monument to the man by whom it was reserved. The sight of it recalled the early scenes in the career of Sir Henry Parkes, who in the New South Wales Assembly fought against great odds times out of number to defend the people's rights to the parks of Sydney, and who by that more than by any other effort endeared himself to the hearts of the people of the mother State. When we were gone, the people living in Western Australia would reverence those who had built that park.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	...	22

Majority against ... 12

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Atkins
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Butcher
Mr. Hastie	Mr. Connor
Mr. Holman	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Nanson	Mr. James
Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Thomas (Teller).	Mr. McWilliams
	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Morgans
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Pigott
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Ruson
	Mr. Reid
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Wallace
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item — Wellington Street Reserve, £500 :

MR. HOLMAN: What was the amount going to be expended on? Sports of various kinds were held on the Wellington Street reserve, but there always had been a charge made when he had been present. Was the vote going to be spent in fencing the reserve, or in clearing, or building?

THE PREMIER: The money would be spent on grassing the reserve near Wellington Street, now controlled by the municipality. He was not aware of any charge being made.

MR. HOLMAN: Twice he had been charged; one occasion being that of the police carnival.

THE PREMIER: The reserve was free to ratepayers in connection with ordinary amusements. The reserve was just in front of the East Perth School, and would be used to a large extent by the scholars attending there. In addition to that the reserve was available to people living in a large area.

Item—Purchase of site for cooking school, £15 4s. 7d. :

MR. WALLACE called attention to this item.

Item—Purchase of Albany Lot S 109, for school purposes, £1,650 :

MR. WALLACE: How many acres were there in that lot?

THE TREASURER: The Minister for Education was not present, otherwise he could give the information. He thought it was an extension of the school ground.

MR. HOPKINS also desired information on the subject.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (who entered the House while the Treasurer was speaking): The Government bought this piece of ground because it adjoined the present school, and the school was practically without a playground. It had on it a house which would be used for teacher's quarters, and the land attached to the house would be used as a playground for the children.

MR. HOPKINS: What was the area?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION said he forgot the area. A careful report was made by a land valuation officer in the Public Works Department, and the Government were assured that the purchase money was no more than they

should have paid, and that they got the land cheap.

MR. WALLACE wished to know the acreage.

THE TREASURER: The acreage, he should say, was about three-quarters of an acre, roughly. It had on it a very good villa. The school was fenced in with an hotel on one side. Even in the present bad times the price was not exorbitant, and this piece of ground afforded a playground to the school and a road out into the main street without the scholars having to pass the public-house.

Item—Purchase of land for racecourse, Northam, £315 :

MR. HASTIE wished a member of the Ministry to explain exactly what this item meant. Until he read the Estimates he was not aware that the people of Northam went in for such a questionable pastime as horse-racing.

MR. DIAMOND: The member for the district was an ardent sportsman.

MR. HASTIE: Perhaps that hon. member or some other would explain why Northam was the only place in the country where the Government purchased a piece of ground for a racecourse.

THE TREASURER: This sum appeared on the Estimates as a result of what the Government considered an obligation entered into by a Government nearly four years ago. The people had a promise from the then Government, giving them authority to buy a certain piece of ground. That piece of land was surveyed and they were promised £300. It came out £15 more, and practically the matter had been hung up ever since for that £15. The people had improved that portion of the land and he believed had shifted the grandstand. The Government felt that they had an obligation upon them to redeem the promise honestly made, and so far as the people were concerned the arrangement was honestly carried out.

Item — Destruction of marsupials, £1,000 :

MR. WALLACE: There was a prohibition line north of here, somewhere about Moora, south of which kangaroos were supposed not to be killed. Kangaroo shooters lived there, and had lived there for the last 10, 12, or 14 years, and were still shooting kangaroos. We had a

number of forest rangers provided for in these Estimates. If it was the intention of the Government to protect the kangaroos, let forest rangers be appointed to see to this; if not, let them repeal the law and allow people to shoot kangaroos and destroy them. This was one of the Acts which, among many others, made our statute-book a farce.

THE TREASURER: This item had been placed on the Estimates solely owing to representations made by northern members, who stated that in some parts of the Kimberley districts marsupials were far more plentiful than sheep. As previously explained, the squatters, while asking for Government assistance, were ready to tax themselves.

Item—Government Stores adjustment, £60,000:

MR. MORAN: This item was of interest. All through the Estimates, items altogether fictitious in so far as actual expenditure was concerned kept cropping up. He desired to learn from the Treasurer whether the intention of the Government was to pay an amount of £60,000 out of this year's revenue, and whether it was to be a cash payment? If it was to be a cash payment, where was it balanced in the expenditure items? Who was to get the money?

THE TREASURER: No sum had ever been set apart for the Stores account, which had always been financed out of trust funds or loan funds. Last year £123,000 went practically to the credit of the Stores account, the balance being borrowed from trust funds in order to finance the account. When the adjustment took place, this £60,000 would have to be actually paid from revenue to trust funds.

MR. MORAN: Where would the Treasurer credit the amount? To trust funds?

THE TREASURER: If the hon. member would look at the ordinary balance sheet, he would see trust funds standing at £598,000 odd. The Stores account had so far been financed partly out of trust funds, and partly out of loan funds. The £60,000, or whatever the amount might be, had to be paid back, and it would be paid out of revenue to the credit of trust funds.

MR. MORGANS: Did the amount now appear in that account?

THE TREASURER: No. The general balance-sheet showed Government Stores at £605,198 on the credit side, whereas the debit side showed general sinking fund, trust funds, and so forth. The Stores had been financed out of trust funds to the extent of £123,000. On the no-confidence debate he had made a similar statement for the information of the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran), who then had said that he understood the matter.

MR. MORAN: The £123,000, of course, was the Treasurer's corresponding balance.

THE TREASURER: The balance had to be brought forward.

MR. MORAN: Yes; but the Treasurer showed a start of £123,000 in this year's revenue, and the hon. gentleman had never had that start.

THE TREASURER: Yes.

MR. MORAN: Not if the amount was represented by Stores. If it were called a debit, one could understand the matter; but if it were called a credit the thing was incomprehensible, because the amount had to be made up out of some vote.

THE TREASURER: No. Only the balance of the £480,000 had to be made up out of trust funds. That surplus was credited as against the Stores.

MR. MORAN: There must be a loss somewhere.

THE TREASURER: The amount of £60,000 would go to redeem a portion of the £480,000: that was the position. The £123,000 stood there to credit. We brought it forward and practically used it. Moreover the fact must not be lost sight of that we should have an asset for the £123,000.

MR. MORAN: For the £60,000.

THE TREASURER: In the circumstances one might easily have said, for £60,000 odd.

MR. MORAN: The item inflated the Estimates.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

This concluded the votes for the Treasurer's Department.

THE TREASURER said he desired to thank hon. members for the kind courtesy extended to him.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT (Hon. C. H. Rason, Minister).

STATEMENT ON RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I had hoped that before these Estimates were being discussed the working railways report would be on the table. I can only regret that such is not the case. However, the report is being printed, and although not ready for presentation to-day, will I hope be laid on the table either to-morrow or the day after. The document not being available, I can but give members briefly a few figures which will be shown in the report of last year's working. The total of miles open to traffic on the 30th June last was 1,553, made up of 1,359 miles of main line and 194 miles of siding. By way of comparison, I may mention that the total of miles opened to traffic for last year was 1,355, and for 1890, 188. During last year we had also under construction the Goomalling line of 30 miles, which has since been handed over to the working railways, and the Menzies-Leonora line of 80 miles, which will be handed over early in January, and the Cue-Nannine line of 48 miles, which I confidently expect will be handed over to the working railways in March or April of next year. The total expenditure on construction and equipment at the 30th of June last was £7,410,426, as against £7,098,239 for last year, and £833,083 for 1890. Members will see, therefore, that in 12 years this State has built and equipped and opened for traffic 1,365 miles of railway at an expenditure of 6½ millions sterling—a fair record for a young community such as that of Western Australia. The total cost per mile open for traffic is £5,465.

MR. MORAN: The cost is creeping up a bit.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is creeping up a bit. During the year ended on the 30th June we spent from loan £307,300 and from other sources £4,887, or a total of £312,187. The total earnings were £1,521,429, whilst the total expenditure was £1,256,370, leaving a credit balance, after payment of working expenses, of £265,059. Deducting from that balance interest on loan expenditure £234,932, and interest on expenditure from other sources £17,959,

we have a total deduction of £252,891, leaving a net credit balance, after payment of working expenses and interest on all capital expenditure, of £12,168.

MR. MORAN: How about sinking fund? You are not reckoning that.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No sinking fund was provided last year because a new departure was taken. Instead of sinking fund being provided an effort was made to bring the value of the asset up to the amount of borrowed money represented by it. By rebuilding engines and wagons—

MR. MORAN: What are the items?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I shall give the items directly. If the value of the asset be brought up to the proper standard, surely there is no absolute necessity for sinking fund.

MR. MORAN: The same thing might be said about the Coolgardie Water Scheme.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That is a different proposition.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The net profit for last year was £265,059, as against £308,784 for the previous year, and as against a loss of £6,527 in 1890. In that year, 1890, a positive loss was made.

MR. MORAN: Without interest or sinking fund?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Without interest or sinking fund. The percentage of working expenses to revenue was 82·58 for last year, as against 77·19 for the year before, and 114·46 in 1890. We ran last year 4,507,919 train miles, as against 4,126,202 for the previous year, and as against 284,807 in 1890. As to rolling-stock, I have a few figures which will not weary members and may perhaps interest them. On the 30th June last we had 274 engines, as against 229 the year before, and as against 22 in 1890. We had 260 passenger coaches and stock, as against 258 in the year before, and as against 28 in 1890. We had 5,285 goods wagons, as against 4,819 the year before, and 285 in 1890. Here I may remark that for many months past there has been no complaint as to shortage of wagons.

MR. MORAN: But the railway revenue is going down.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I shall come to the estimated revenue for

next year directly. Hon. members will observe that the percentage of cost is undoubtedly high. There is no getting away from the fact that it is higher than that of any other railway system in Australia.

MR. MORAN : Or in the world.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : Possibly in the world. The percentage is very high indeed, and I can only express the hope that it will be found possible to reduce working expenses in the coming year. I shall be greatly surprised, indeed disappointed, if the percentage of working expenses to revenue is not found to be reduced when whoever is Minister for Railways has to tell his tale of the working of the system for the year now passing. But I am afraid it will never be possible to reduce that ratio to the extent to which it is reduced elsewhere. It certainly never will be possible while we continue to pay the wages we pay here. It has been said—and I make these remarks because it has been said—that the railway servants of the State are underpaid. Well, in some cases that may be so, but in the majority of the cases undoubtedly it is not so; and I wish to compare—I have worked out a few figures in this direction—the rates existing here with the rates as existing elsewhere, because we cannot possibly get away from the figures I propose to give the Committee on this point. Before I give the comparison, I should like to give an instance of one increase only, the fixing of the eight shillings per day minimum to the fettlers, which, of course, resulted in a consequent increase of 1s. per day to the gangers and to men in other branches. That resulted in a direct payment of no less than £13,740 more last year than the year before.

MR. MORAN : Covering the whole year?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : From the date it was made.

MR. MORAN : How much for the year would that be?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : The hon. member was in the House when the increase was made. It would be about nine months.

MR. MORAN : Then it would be about £20,000 for the year?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : Yes; roughly.

MR. F. CONNOR : The hon. member supported the increase.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : Yes; I did. I am giving the cost of it. I want the Committee to know what these things cost.

MR. F. CONNOR : Your judgment was bad, then?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : My judgment was not bad. I thought the men entitled to it, and I think so still. I want to compare the wages paid per train mile in other States to what it costs in wages per train mile here. That surely is a fair comparison, and perhaps the best we can possibly get. South Australia ran, for the period of the year, 4,374,492 train miles at a cost of 12'04d. per train mile for wages; Queensland ran 5,788,112 train miles at a cost of 8'96d. per train mile; New South Wales ran 10,763,697 train miles at a cost of 12'76d. per train mile; Victoria ran 11,066,016 train miles at a cost of 9'93d. per train mile; New Zealand ran 4,620,971 train miles at a cost of 11'91d. per train mile; while Western Australia ran 4,507,919 train miles at a cost in wages of no less than 16'87d. per train mile.

HON. F. H. PIESSE : What was South Australia?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : South Australia, with almost the same mileage as Western Australia, was 12'04d., and in Queensland, with about 1,000,000 more miles, the cost was 8'96d. per train mile, just half our cost in wages per train mile. These figures go to some extent to show, I think, that the railway servants of this State are not underpaid. Then there was an increase of £173,297 over the expenditure in the same period of the year before, but that increased expenditure, to be fair to the department, is accounted for to some considerable extent by the reason that several items were included against working expenditure in that year which have not usually been included. For instance, the value of the stores in hand in excess of the year before was £2,000; the value of coal in hand was over £3,000; the value of material was over £3,500; the cost of replacing locomotives was £22,900; the cost of replacing obsolete wagons £27,000; and the water to maintain the train service, over the expenditure of

1901, was £42,510; that is to say, there was more spent in water for the train service last year than the year before by £42,510. That is an item that will be considerably reduced in future thanks to the Coolgardie Water Scheme. The item for replacing obsolete wagons, £27,000, is provided against this year, but it is to be hoped it will not recur after this year. With the expenditure of £27,000 this year, it is to be hoped the obsolete wagons will be *non est*.

MR. MORAN: It will recur every year.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Oh, dear, no; not to that extent. By the expenditure of a much smaller amount of money, we can keep the wagons up to the standard. There was spent in repairing carriages and wagons £17,611; new boilers, in excess of the previous year, £14,000; and additional leave given to men in comparison with the year before amounted to £3,000. It will be seen, therefore, that although there was a very large expenditure in the locomotive branch, the high proportion of running expenses can be distinctly attributed to the excessive cost of running that branch. In all the other branches of the service, with the exception of interlocking, there was a slight reduction. For this year the estimated revenue is £1,600,000, as against £1,521,429 actual revenue for last year. The estimated expenditure is £1,320,316, which will leave a balance of £279,683 8s. 5d. If we deduct from that the interest on loans, and the interest on expenditure from revenue as apportioned by the Treasurer to date, which amounts to £275,397 7s. 1d., we will have a credit balance on the working of the railways, after paying all expenses and after paying all interest and providing considerable sums for bringing the railways up to the proper state of efficiency, of £4,286 1s. 4d. I would point out we have provided £26,350 for replacing locomotives, £12,000 for resleepering and reballasting, £28,351 on the electrical branch, and £35,000 for new works and improvements. It has been said that the railway rates charged are extortionate, and that they should be greatly reduced; that the people residing on the goldfields cannot visit the coast by reason of the very high rates which are charged. The people on the goldfields now, to travel to the coast, would

pay but a slight fraction over the single fare for the double journey. It is at this period of the year, at holiday time, an exemption time when the workers on the fields wish to get to the coast to enjoy their holiday, that they can travel at what amounts to only 2s. more than the single fare for the double journey. Surely that is a reasonable rate; surely that is not prohibitive. As to the rates on the carriage of machinery and stores, I can only say as we get heavier engines, and we are getting heavier engines that can haul heavier loads, as we improve our track, and we are improving it, and as we get more railway stock to deal with the freight as we are doing, so I hope, and I hope with every degree of confidence, that these rates can be reduced, and still pay working expenses, maintenance, and perhaps something towards sinking fund. But although I hope that may be done, and may be done shortly, let no one say—at least, if they do say it, they cannot plead justification for saying it—that our rates are extortionate, because the rates compare favourably with the rates charged in any of the States that work at a considerable advantage to us, and they compare favourably to the rates charged in South Africa. If our rates in a State like this, where we have to work under considerable disadvantages, and where we shall have to work in the future to a great extent under disadvantages, are actually no higher and in many cases are considerably lower than the rates charged elsewhere, they cannot be held with any degree of justice to be extortionate. Be that as it may, let us get our house in order.

MR. F. CONNOR: It is time.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS:

It has taken time. We hope to get it into order as quickly as possible. I have pointed out the only way in which we can reasonably hope to charge lower rates, that is to be able to haul bigger loads at less expense, or bigger loads at very little more expense than hauling smaller loads in the past. If that can be done—I ask the Committee to accept the assurance it can be done, in my opinion—then it will be possible, I hope, to reduce these rates. When that time arrives, and I hope it will arrive quickly, and I speak for the Government,

we shall be only too glad to reduce them. I have given a brief outline of the working of the past year, and of what I hope the working of this year will be. If there is any other information members of the Committee require as to particular items, I shall be only too glad to supply it.

[General discussion ensued on the Railway Estimates, as follows.]

MR. MORAN: It was truly a disadvantage not to have had the report of the Railway Department—that most important of annual reports—laid on the table. It was most interesting to be privileged to take part in the study of our national railway system; and consistently to do that from year to year, members should be provided with the report in question. One could not help being struck by the Minister's acknowledgement that the day had come when the railway sinking fund had gone by the board—a strange policy to be announced by the Cabinet of the present Premier, who in his policy speech in the Perth Town Hall had laid it down that those who used the railways must pay for them. If the railways themselves paid nothing out of revenue towards sinking fund, by whom would the sinking fund be provided? Evidently by the people of the State, including those who did not use the railways; therefore the Premier had abandoned his policy of making users of the railways pay for them, and one of the greatest goldfields grievances would be taken away. In other words, the goldfields would pay their share of the sinking fund as units in the community, if the sinking fund were paid not out of earnings but out of general revenue.

MR. THOMAS: The goldfields must still pay for the loss on the other lines.

MR. MORAN: Deal with the railways as a whole. He had never subscribed to the extraordinary doctrine that in any country each line of railway should be treated as a distinct enterprise. For instance, the goldfields reaped the advantage of low rates on the timber lines.

MR. THOMAS: What proportion of the timber did the fields use?

MR. MORAN: If the market for the timber were in other parts of the world, the State must carry the timber at rates which would make an export trade payable; else if the trade were lost the

labour market on the fields would be glutted. The various interests in the country could not be separated, being so intermingled that a policy of conserving all interests was best for the State. Members learned with deep regret that last year the working expenses had increased notwithstanding all the promises of great reforms to be initiated by the present Commissioner of Railways (Mr. W. J. George). The Minister had studiously avoided any reference to what every man in the country was anxious to learn—how was the new Commissioner working?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS asked for time to reply.

MR. MORAN said he would give the Minister “six months without the option” for appointing the Commissioner. It would have been natural had the Minister told the House how the new Commissioner was working and how he satisfied the Government.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That question he would answer later.

MR. MORAN: It seemed the proportion of working expenses to total earnings had increased to 82½ per cent. That percentage was surely unequalled in the world, save perhaps in the Northern Territory, where the railways could not be described as a system. True, the Tasmanian railways paid badly, but they had nothing to carry. Here was a magnificent traffic, the most favourable in Australia.

MR. THOMAS: And a straight run of 400 miles.

MR. MORAN: An ideal traffic; and he had hoped this year, under the new Commissioner, for a decrease in the proportion of the cost of working to earnings.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The figures cited were to the 30th June last; hence no blame could attach to the new Commissioner.

MR. MORAN: That was why members wished to know whether the percentage of expenses to earnings had since decreased. What was the proportion for the last six months? Of this the Minister had said nothing, though expressing the hope that the results next year would be the same as last—a neat using up of the total earnings to pay working expenses and interest, but no sinking fund.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: More than that.

MR. MORAN: Expenditure on maintenance would not give the British creditor his principal at the end of 40 years. Some public men maintained that sinking funds for big railway systems were unnecessary, since the asset did not depreciate but perhaps increased in value; but where then was the theory of the short-lived prosperity of our goldfields, the theory that we must provide a sinking fund for the goldfields railways since goldfields prosperity was evanescent?

MR. THOMAS: The goldfields lines had long since been paid for.

MR. MORAN: If it were not necessary to provide such sinking fund, why provide a sinking fund for the Coolgardie Water Scheme? If it were unnecessary to retire the capital sunk in the railways, follow the same policy with the water scheme. Provide ample maintenance every year to keep the asset in working order. That could be done as well with the water scheme as with the railways; and if the goldfields population would utilise the railways and make them pay for generations, then he was right the other evening when he said it was not fair to ask the goldfields to pay 3 per cent. sinking fund on the water scheme. He had not been supported by goldfields representatives, and the Opposition never were supported when they tried to do anything for the fields. To-night the Minister argued that it was unnecessary to make the railways pay sinking fund. The same argument could be applied to the water scheme, with the result that if there were hard times in Western Australia, as there had been in the sister States, the next step would be to drop the sinking fund altogether, to keep the railway system in perfect order, and say to the British creditor "There is your asset." Then why make the people who were not using the railways provide a sinking fund? The leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nanson) had stated his belief that sinking funds were not requisite for great national works kept up to a proper standard of efficiency; and many public men argued that by means of such sinking funds the country was paying twice for the works which were maintained at their full original value, and

perhaps made more valuable by additions and improvements. It was asked, "Why pay for them twice?" There was no reason, except the laudable object of repaying the national debt, having the railways the actual property of the country, and owing no man anything. But the startling proportion of working expenses to revenue in Western Australia must cause great uneasiness to members on both sides of the House, to whom it must be a common object to bring our railway system down to something like a reasonable proportion between working expenses and earnings. The old Forrest Ministry did much better than the present Government. Some argued that the present Government were reaping the whirlwind raised by the mismanagement of the old Government; but as a fact the cost of administration had steadily increased under the new *regime*, and it was for the new Government to convince the House that the increase was the fault of the country or of the system. The Minister had not given any reason for the increase, save the new item of the cost of adopting the eight-hours system, which he alleged accounted for £20,000.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Extras had been cited amounting to over £135,000 last year.

MR. MORAN: In that list there was nothing new save the cost of the eight-hours concession. Since he had been a member of Parliament large amounts had always been provided from railway revenue for the maintenance of rolling-stock and engines.

MINISTER: Not out of general revenue.

MR. MORAN: Yes. And was it the Forrest Government, the Leake Government, or the James Government which spent that large sum of money out of revenue in interest on the railways? The Minister was silent. It was the Forrest Government. There was nothing new in the proposal to pursue an honest policy by making the railways self-supporting. Of that policy he (Mr. Moran) had always been a strenuous advocate, urging the Government to keep a jealous eye on loan expenditure as affecting the railways. We should at all costs show the expenditure on the upkeep of our railways, and when we added a new piece of railway line or something new, say heavier rails,

we should charge it to loan capital account. Apart from that we should show the amount against revenue. If the revenue would not do it we had to do it through loan, but it should be debited all the same against the railways. He echoed the hope that the Minister would be able to stop this awful increase in the working expenses, and that the time would come when we might expect to take goods to the goldfields at a lesser rate than at present. He thought it possible to make the railways pay at less rates than those now existing. He was not satisfied that we could not carry many things cheaper with good management, but he was not satisfied that we had the good management.

MR. THOMAS: There were differential rates on the coast, therefore the goldfields must pay the extra rates.

MR. MORAN: There was no such thing known in the West Australian system as coastal rates and goldfields rates. There was a rate for distance, and as long as the world existed and railway systems existed it would be impossible to carry goods 500 miles for the same price as they were carried one mile.

MR. HOPKINS: Why discriminate between up and down railway rates?

MR. MORAN: In New South Wales, where they had one of the best railway systems in the world, nothing stopped the Commissioners from creating traffic, and if a certain rate would not create traffic the Commissioners would carry it at a rate that would. The New South Wales rate book was full, page after page, of special rates.

MR. THOMAS: Had we ever yet put a special rate on for the benefit of the fields, or had we put a special rate on against them?

MR. MORAN: There were penal rates in the old days. He fought against those rates, and he did not think that since that time, penal rates had existed on the goldfields. To say that there was a penal rate on the goldfields railway lines was to preach a false doctrine.

MR. THOMAS: The goldfields had been penalised to the extent of over £1,000,000.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member must not talk in those wild generalities.

MR. THOMAS: The full figures were in No. 7 *Hansard*.

MR. MORAN: There was no special rate. There was a differential rate, but the hon. member must not tell him that a differential rate was a penal rate in reference to any section of the community. There was a differential rate on certain lines of goods, and that was a class of rate which was utilised in every State of Australia, and would only be abolished when there was an Interstate commission. The differential rate was in its essence a form of protection or bonus, and so it had been used.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: Did that increase the cost to the consumers on the fields?

MR. MORAN: No; no more than to any other persons, except that they happened to be at increased distances. The system of differential rates was run to death in Victoria. He was at one with the Government in hoping the day would not be far distant when we should have reduced our cost of administration of the railways to something like 65 or 70 per cent. of the earnings, and then the percentage would, he supposed, be 10 or 12 per cent. more than it was in New South Wales. What was it in New South Wales, 55 or 56 per cent?

THE TREASURER: Fifty-two or 53 per cent.

MR. MORAN: In New South Wales it had always been below 60 per cent., or anything over 60 per cent. was a cause for special inquiry. There ought to be enough with our traffic to pay decent wages and pay a bigger percentage of profit than at present. The cost of water when we got the great Coolgardie scheme would be very much reduced at the rate of 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons, and it ought not to be so much. According to Mr. O'Connor, it would cost £30,000 to supply 200,000 gallons of water, yet the Minister proposed to debit the railways with water at 6s. 6d. per thousand gallons. That would be a great injustice to the railways.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Who said that amount would be charged? He never did.

MR. MORAN appealed to the Committee if the Minister had not distinctly laid it down. He (Mr. Moran) would turn to the hon. gentleman's speech.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If the hon. member would do so, he would find that he (Mr. Moran) asked

him distinctly the price to be charged for the water for the railways, and he (the Minister) gave the price at different places along the line.

MR. MORAN : What were they ?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : They were not six shillings and sixpence right through.

MR. MORAN : They were, he believed, a little over.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : In one case five shillings.

MR. MORAN : Another ?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : Six shillings.

MR. MORAN : Another ?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : Seven shillings.

MR. MORAN : Taking the average of six shillings at the central point, he was not so far out.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : The railways would not take the water unless it would pay them to do so.

MR. MORAN : Mr. O'Connor's figures showed that 200,000 gallons would cost £30,000. The present Government said they wanted 300,000 gallons.

A MEMBER : The three shillings per thousand gallons was just for hauling. There were other costs.

MR. MORAN : That was the total cost.

MEMBER : No. Only for hauling.

MR. MORAN said he did not know what other costs there would be, including tanks and hauling. The daily consumption required in 1896 was 200,000 gallons and it cost the Government, according to Mr. O'Connor, £30,000 a year.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : How many days ?

MR. MORAN : Did it matter whether it was one day or 365 days ? The engineer was giving the annual charge for water, and it was a recurring charge, because we had a drought every year. It did not matter how much more or how much less was wanted now. We were told to expect tremendous earnings, £1,600,000, from the railways next year—an enormous amount for so small a community to pay. Of this sum £1,320,000 would go in working expenses and £275,000 more in payment of interest. Thus we came out with a paltry balance of about £4,000, which

was just as likely to be under as over. One was glad to learn from the Minister that the statements of leading railway officials were incorrect. The higher officials said that the railway revenue was not keeping up. From personal observation he could say that the Kalgoorlie-Boulder railway was not maintaining its revenue, being robbed by the tramways. The heavy expenditure on that line had now proved practically useless. The Brown Hill loop line was a miserable failure; indeed, we had the Minister's statement to that effect, practically.

MR. HOPKINS : The Minister had stated that the working cost was 6s. 6d. per train mile and the revenue 1s. 6d. per train mile.

MR. MORAN : Goldfields members should bear in mind that at one time the Brown Hill loop line was a burning question.

MR. JOHNSON : As one goldfields member, he did not remember anything of the kind.

MR. MORAN : No man not clever enough to hide his opposition to that line had a chance of being returned for Kalgoorlie. He had helped to throw the Brown Hill loop line out one year, and he had been able to explain his action to the people of Kalgoorlie, who were not hard to please if one took them the right way. Let members bear in mind the figures supplied by the Chamber of Mines concerning the Brown Hill loop line; let them reflect on all the deputations which urged the construction of that line. Now, "none so poor as do it reverence"; it had proved a blithering failure. Here was another instance of wasteful expenditure demanded by the dominant party on the goldfields and by the goldfields Press. He gave this as a reasonably conclusive instance showing that in the past the goldfields had led the State into reckless and useless expenditure to still their clamour. The railway system was now paying the cost.

MR. JOHNSON : Was the Brown Hill loop line the only miserable failure in the State ? What about the Goomalling railway ?

MR. MORAN : The Brown Hill loop line was the only failure which the hon. member (Mr. Johnson) did not care to dilate on. An amount of £200,000 had

been spent on works which would not pay axle grease.

MR. JOHNSON: Was not the Boulder line paying?

MR. MORAN: Certainly not.

MR. BATH: The hon. member was making a "bloomer."

MR. MORAN: The Boulder line never had paid.

MR. HOPKINS: That was the fault not of the line, but of the administration.

MR. MORAN: During the inquiry by the select committee appointed to consider the Kalgoorlie Tramway Bill, he had asked Mr. John Davies whether it was not the policy of the department to oppose the construction of a tramway on the ground that the railway would be injured. He received a reply in the negative. When the Tramway Bill was passed, he urged and entreated that the expenditure on elaborate railway stations at every corner from Kalgoorlie to Boulder should at any rate be stopped.

MR. JOHNSON: The hon. member knew that the goldfields people had opposed the tramway concession.

MR. MORAN: Nothing of the kind. A referendum had declared for it.

MR. BATH: A referendum of rate-payers.

MR. JOHNSON: A referendum of the people had declared against it.

MR. MORAN: Nothing of the kind.

MR. HOPKINS: The hon. member (Mr. Moran) was quite mistaken.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What about the public meetings held at Kalgoorlie?

MR. MORAN: The meeting engineered by the member for Boulder was not the one he had in mind. He wished to ask the Premier whether the promise made by four Governments for the construction of the Jandakot railway would be kept? That railway was admitted by all parties to be necessary. Its construction would greatly cheapen the cost of administering the whole railway system, would prevent the haulage of much heavy traffic through the congested yards of Perth, would open up a settled agricultural area, would provide for the unemployed, and tide the State over a period which badly needed tiding over, since the sudden cessation of heavy loan expenditure was bad policy—things ought to taper down gradually. The Jandakot railway had greater claims

than any other proposed public work in Western Australia. That railway had been strongly supported by the Throssell Administration, and if that Administration had remained in power the line would have been built by this time. For another thing, the reticulation of Kalgoorlie and Boulder would have been in progress now. It was to be hoped that the Premier would keep the promise publicly given to make inquiry as to the amount of traffic likely to be carried by the line, as to the saving to the whole system, and as to the relief which would be afforded to the congested yards of Perth.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The timber combine had killed all that. The combine existed—

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: For the benefit of the State.

MR. MORAN: Timber combine or no timber combine, the case for the Jandakot railway was absolutely unanswerable. While a work supported by four Governments was neglected, a surprise was sprung on the country, the statutes were violated, and the system of parliamentary government was absolutely contravened by the secret purchase of land to the value of £60,000, which amount would have built the Jandakot railway twice over. The Government had flown in the face of the sturdy and loyal support accorded to them by the Fremantle members. The Rocky Bay scheme was years ahead of its time; if, indeed, it was advisable at all. That amount of £60,000 would have built and equipped the Jandakot railway. The Government, however, had broken out in a fresh place, had danced on the Auditor General, had flouted Parliament, and had administered a slap in the face to their supporters. No doubt, before the discussion closed, the Minister for Railways would make a statement with reference to the Jandakot railway and also with reference to the new Commissioner of Railways. The Minister ought to give a deliberate expression of opinion on behalf of the Government as to whether the new Commissioner after six months of office—which term afforded a very fair trial—was shaping well. It was idle to say that there was now no grumbling about the railway system: there was much grumbling in the country districts, where people could not get

trucks as they wanted them. He had frequently travelled of late to York, and on every occasion the train had been delayed by a box running hot. On the Eastern line, hot boxes were also the order of the day. This circumstance lent some colour to the rumours that things were not as they ought to be in the locomotive branch, and that its head was not all he was painted. Certainly, the locomotive branch was costing a tremendous amount of money. He believed that there was too much timber about the top of the department, which badly needed pruning. From authoritative sources he gathered that the higher branches of the service were overmanned—that there was gross overmanning from Bunbury to Geraldton and from Fremantle to Southern Cross. He wanted to know if that was true. Something was wrong with the locomotive branch; it was costing a great deal too much to administer. From the head to the bottom there was inefficiency; at any rate, there was a plethora of officials who were not required. He hoped the Minister would do some pruning in high places. There was nothing in the items which called for special mention. Details sank into insignificance in a department that was going to earn £1,600,000 of revenue during the next year. Let members hope that the Minister's expectations would be realised, and that the new Commissioner would be a success. It was also to be hoped that the goldfields would get lower rates. Let the railways be placed in an efficient state, properly equipped, and the whole system put on a proper basis, and he would not be one to grumble about the sinking fund. The first thing should be satisfaction to the general public. If such a policy as held good in New South Wales was started here, making traffic on the back journey, then there would be a good time in store, and he would be the first to congratulate the Minister on achieving a position which we all hoped was not far off.

MR. HOLMAN: On the Murchison at the present time, owing to the scarcity of timber, firewood had to be hauled 200 or 300 miles, which made it an expensive item for the mines. If the freights were reduced, it would mean a great increase in the amount of timber hauled over the railways. It would also mean a large

amount of work in the district. Many new mines would be opened up which could not be worked at the present time because of the expense of obtaining timber. There would also be an advantage in cutting the timber. If a little loss was made on the railways, still there would be considerable benefit to the country generally. There was another question which should receive consideration, the freight on gold from the fields. At the present time it cost 8s. 6d. to send 100 ounces from Cue to Perth. That meant on the amount of gold sent from Cue per month in one compartment, with two first-class fares, £100, which was a big tax on the output of gold for one district. We had heard a great deal about hot boxes. He had been on the trains several times when the boxes had run hot. Something must be radically wrong when such was the case. When questions were asked about these matters, members should not be put off, but given direct answers. He hoped the Minister would find out where the fault lay, and that the matter would be remedied. As to the goldfields railways, it was found the employees of the railways on the fields were paid a lower rate than those in other parts of the State. The same rate of wages should be paid to the temporary employees on the fields as that paid to employees in other parts of the State. The Government should extend their progressive policy to the fields, and allow the people to get their stuff through at a reasonable rate; it would benefit the whole of Western Australia, and keep up the wages. Ministers would have an opportunity during recess of travelling over the lines, and seeing if what members said was correct.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: In the apparently limp condition of the Committee, it was not likely that long speeches would be acceptable, and from the example set by the Minister to-night in placing before the Committee the particulars as to the railway concerns in a brief manner, it was evidently not the desire of the Committee to deal very fully with this important department. The Minister had given a statement, which probably it would have been better to have allowed to remain for a day or so, so that members could look into the figures more closely and deal more exhaustively with them. The rail-

way budget, year after year, had been one of the most important statements made to members. In the past the expenditure had been considerable, and the Minister had placed before the country the exact position of affairs. The Minister for Railways had placed before members in a brief way the condition of the railways, which showed no improvement in working expenses. It had been proved that the expenses were higher than elsewhere, but the Minister did not explain that these figures referred to the year ending on the 30th June last; therefore, the new management, from which so much was expected, had not had an opportunity of carrying any reforms into effect. If members referred to the reports for the year 1900, they would see that the expenses were then being brought down considerably, and that there was a prospect of the expenses being farther reduced. The year in which he (Hon. F. H. Piessé) relinquished office, the expenses had been brought down something like 8 per cent. Since then the expenses had continued to rise, and were still rising. It was to be hoped with the new management a better result would be obtained. He agreed there were abnormal expenses in connection with our system that did not obtain in other States. The question of wages was one that had caused a great increase in the expenditure, and the Minister had placed before members a comparison of the cost, showing how high the rate was in Western Australia compared with what was paid in the other States. The cost was double that of Queensland, but there were certain causes for the high expenditure. There was the heavy cost of fuel, and the abnormal water rates, which had admittedly caused the expenses to go up. But that was not the cause altogether. The great cause had been the want of locomotives. If the department had had good engines in proper repair to haul the traffic on an economical basis, we should have seen a better result this year. Two years ago, when members were talking about this matter, it was mentioned that the rolling-stock was not sufficient for the requirements of the country. The Government had ordered sufficient rolling-stock to carry on the business, and he said, when an enormous vote was being passed last year, that there was then sufficient rolling-

stock ordered to meet the requirements of the country. The Minister had pointed out that there was now no complaint as to the shortage of wagons. By the time all the stock which was ordered was landed in this country it would be found there was more than sufficient rolling-stock for carrying on the work of the country. A warning note had been struck by the member for West Perth in regard to lessening the income. He believed there would be a falling off in the income. The port of Fremantle indicated the depression which was coming. There was a falling off in shipping, which meant a great reduction in imports. There would not be so much to carry on the railways as had been the case in the past. The internal traffic was increasing largely, but that from abroad was decreasing. We had to look at the high expenses incurred in connection with the railways, and when we compared these with the earnings we should find the difference between the expenditure and the income was not so great as the Minister expected. He hoped the Minister would economise farther in the working, and reduce the expenditure in that direction, but the Government must be prepared to expect a falling off in the revenue during the remaining portion of the year. One reason why the cost of working was so high was to be found in the number of crossing stations which we had on the railways between Bellevue and Kalgoorlie. Between Bellevue and Northam the crossing stations had been increased, the distance between each being about four miles. Although this facilitated the traffic getting through at a higher cost than should be the case, there were the necessary appointments and the increased staff in connection with these crossing stations. It had been necessary to provide them on the goldfields lines, but now the sooner they were dispensed with the better. The only way to reduce the expenditure as soon as possible was to duplicate the line through to Kalgoorlie. It would be money well spent by providing an extra line. It would not cost so much as might be anticipated, because already there were the means of putting the line down cheaply, for we had a double line in many places and the work of duplication could be carried out much

cheaper than had been the case in the past. Although the Government of which he was a member was responsible for relaying the line, he had to admit a mistake was made in that work. It would have been better not to have relaid the line, but to have put down another set of rails, using the heavier line for the up traffic, and the lighter line for the down traffic. The work of relaying was done to allow the heavy engines to pass over the lines and carry the greater traffic to Kalgoorlie, but had we duplicated that line instead of repeating so many stations, the prime cost would have been much less and the expenses considerably reduced. The water difficulty was evidently at an end. Water had cost on the average about 6s. a thousand gallons; and the price should be reduced one half. But it was not likely the railways would use the water from the Government pipe-line if there was sufficient in the reservoirs. Everything depended on the seasons; and indications of a good supply this year were favourable. If the scheme water were used by the railways, it should not be charged for at the price mentioned. A member interjected to-night as to the cost of the Great Southern Railway, stating that the expenses were 115 per cent. of the earnings. There was a decided improvement in the income, about £5,000 extra having been received last year; and it must be remembered that the capital cost of the line was in excess of its value. At the time of the purchase the Railway Department was debited with £800,000 for 243 miles of line. Thus the undertaking was over-capitalised, because its prime cost to the company was only £640,000. The Railway Department should not have been debited with the full cost, for a considerable portion should have been charged to lands purchased with the railway, and the interest payable by this railway should have been on £600,000 instead of £800,000. The member for North Murchison hoped a farther increase of wages would be granted. With every desire to see the workman well paid, he (Mr. Piesse) thought we should pause for a time. The wage paid was reasonable and represented a good living rate. See how the lines were likely to pay before promising farther increases.

He joined with the member for West Perth in hoping that the future of the department would be satisfactory. Much depended on the results for the next six months. Doubtless a strong attempt would be made to economise, but do not economise at the expense of the country. There was much developmental work to be done; and as to gold-fields rates they were no more burdensome to the fields than the similar rates charged to agricultural centres. Freights was no cheaper to the agricultural centres than to the fields. Each section of the community paid its share. Some of the rates were high; they needed re-classification; but on the whole they were satisfactory, and if we considered the services performed under such trying conditions, it would be allowed we were not paying too much for those services, except as to some items which might be placed in another schedule for the advantage of people residing far inland. He hoped the Minister's predictions would be borne out by experience.

MR. ATKINS supplemented the remarks of the last speaker as to duplication. In this direction the department should act as soon as possible; because in addition to the expense of the crossing stations, there was enormous loss of wages caused by goods trains waiting at the crossings. The road was kept clear for passenger trains; and the goods trains were long delayed for that and other reasons. For nearly two months when he was watching the work of the Coolgardie Water Scheme he had an opportunity of inspecting the railway work; and no one who had not seen it would believe the amount of time lost by engine-drivers, firemen, and guards. At least 25 per cent. of the wages paid these men was paid them for waiting at stations. [MR. DIAMOND: More.] More would be saved by duplicating the line than by any other means which could be adopted. Supposing the men were being too highly paid—and in many cases it did not appear they were—a reduction would effect only a small saving; but the tremendous loss of time could with great profit be avoided. There was trouble as to repairers' wages. The men should be given good wages and made to do more work. The repairers on the railways of this and almost every

other State did not do as much as they should. Any contractor would take in hand our State railways, pay as good or better wages than the Government paid, and make a greater profit, because he would have fewer men and do more work. Until a businesslike system was adopted the cost of the railways would never be materially reduced.

MR. DIAMOND congratulated the last two speakers. Without duplication it would be impossible to reduce the railway expenses. At present a freight train took from three to 11 days to get to the goldfields. Recently one of his largest customers had reported to him that his machinery arrived at Coolgardie 11 days after it had been despatched from Fremantle. It did not require a man of genius to see that if we had to pay an engine-driver and stoker and other necessary attendants 4 up to 10 or 11 days' wages, instead of one day's wages, to take a train through—

MR. HOPKINS: That was absurd; a man could walk it in that time.

MR. DIAMOND: Practical men knew that on our railways, instead of a freight train taking 24 hours or under, it took up to 9, 10, and 12 days sometimes. He did not say that was a general rule, but such things occurred. Not only must this line be duplicated, but it must also be regraded. He was not talking about the grade in the hills, because he did not think that could be very seriously interfered with. He was given to understand, however, by experts that the cost of haulage—that was the cost of engine power—after we left Northam was increased from 20 to 25 per cent. upon what was up-hill and down dale country, but what ought to be level country. These remarks were the result of his personal experience and knowledge. If the line were duplicated, the cost of working would be decreased to such an enormous extent that we should be able to reduce the rates of carriage on the goldfields. That was the aim and object which should be in front of all members of the House, because at present the rates were very much too high. The rates were not higher than was justified by the cost of working at the present time, but the cost of working must be reduced. It took, at any rate, three or four days for a freight train to get through. Not only were

wages uselessly wasted, but we were wasting water and coal. There should be a duplication of the line to the goldfields, at any rate as far as Kalgoorlie. By being able to reduce rates we should be able to do away to a very large extent with the present discontent on the goldfields, and that should be our aim and object.

MR. F. REID: The member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) gave us an amount of ancient history. The hon. member demanded from the Minister for Railways (Hon. H. C. Rason) his opinion as to whether the Commissioner had been a success or not. One thought it was hardly fair at this early date to ask whether the Commissioner had been a success or not. It was altogether unfair and unjust. Mr. Eddy was brought out by the New South Wales Government, and he was there two years before his qualifications were called into question at all, before the Ministry of the day were asked whether he had been a success or not; and it had been admitted all over Australia that Mr. Eddy was the greatest railway expert that was ever brought out to Australia. Here was a member who put a question as to whether the Commissioner had been a success or not almost in six months' time. It was unfair to the Government, to the country, and above all to the Commissioner himself. Let the man have a fair show, let him have time so that he could demonstrate to the people whether he was a success or not. If he proved a success, he (Mr. Reid) for one would give him credit for all the good work he had been able to do. If the Commissioner did not prove a success he would be one of the first to turn round to the Government of the day and say they were not doing their duty if they did not get rid of that gentleman as speedily as possible. The hot-box trouble had been referred to. Though not a railway expert, he desired to tender the Minister for Railways some practical, common-sense advice. When a box ran hot on the Eastern Goldfields line the present practice was to stop at an overhead tank, to station one man himself beside the tap, to place a second man midway between tank and carriage, and a third man by the hot box, buckets of water being passed by the first man to the second, and by the

second to the third. This cumbersome and tedious system of cooling hot boxes could be done away with if each train carried a length of hose sufficient to reach from the tank to the carriage: then adequate water pressure could be brought to bear to cool the box in a minute or two. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond) had heartily applauded the proposal to duplicate the Eastern Goldfields line. At present, duplication was, in his opinion, altogether unnecessary. A practical man had informed him that when the railway was relaid it ought also to have been regraded. The present grades were too steep, and prevented the department from giving the engines such loads as they could otherwise haul. Though various members had clamoured for reduction in the railway expenditure, he, nevertheless, felt constrained to ask the Minister to consider the propriety of increasing the pay of night officers. During the last few months, many employees of this class had worked not eight hours, but 12 hours per day, Sundays included, which meant 84 hours per week. Though it might be urged that the work was not hard, the fact remained that these officers were on duty for extremely long hours. He had been informed that to grant the night officers an increase of £30 per annum involved an additional charge of £24,000 on working expenses; but even if that were so, was it not better that the money should be paid by the people as a whole than that a body of men performing arduous duties, frequently in utterly isolated localities, should be deprived of it? He hoped the Minister would give this matter his favourable consideration.

DR. O'CONNOR: One would be glad to know what were the intentions of the Government with regard to the Midland Railway and its concession. On questioning the late Premier, Mr. Leake, as to why a certain obligation on the part of the company with reference to the introduction of settlers had not been carried out, he had been informed that the time for raising the point had passed by. Being privately referred to a high officer of the State, he had been given to understand that the Immigration Restriction Act prevented the discharge of the obligation. He had asked the present Premier a question on the subject on the

14th October last. [Question and answer read, *vide* page 1,549, *ante*.] Clause 45 of the agreement said:—

The contractor will procure the introduction into the colony from Europe within seven years from the date of this contract of 5,000 adults of European extraction. Children of 12 years of age to count as an adult, under that age as half an adult; that is two children under 12 being reckoned as one adult. The immigrants to be selected and approved in such a manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the Government and the contractor; but the number of immigrants to be introduced in any one year to be specially arranged between the Government and the contractor.

One would be glad to know the exact position in which the matter stood. Clause 39 of the agreement provided that—

The contractor shall, if required by the Commissioner in writing so to do, increase the number of trains, but so that number shall not exceed 12 trains per week. . . .

This meant the running of 12 trains each way, whilst at present only six trains were being run each way. The company ought to be compelled to run 12 trains each way. It was to be hoped the Minister would see that the company increased the number of trains run. There was one other section of the agreement he would like to be clear about. Section 81 said:—

If either the Government or the contractor shall after the completion of the railway, desire the laying down of a second line of rails upon the Eastern railway between Guildford and Fremantle notice in writing to the other party shall be given of such desire and the construction thereof shall be commenced by the contractor within three months, and be completed within 18 months after such notice upon the following terms, that is to say:—the said line shall be constructed by the contractor at his own expense, according to plans and specifications approved by the Commissioner, and upon completion of the said line the Government shall pay to the contractor the actual cost of all rails, sleepers, bolts and plates required and used in and for such construction. The said line shall be the property of and worked by the Government.

The Government could have compelled the company to build a line between the company's railway and Helena Vale. Why did not the Government compel the Midland Company to carry out their contract in this respect? A short time ago a question was put to the Premier as to whether the Midland Railway Company constructed or paid for the construction

of a duplicate line between Guildford and Fremantle, less the cost of rails, sleepers, bolts, and plates, as provided by Section 81 of the 1886 agreement. The Premier agreed that for the construction of the line the company would have been entitled to certain land concessions, and it was thought that the work would have been far more valuable to the company than to the State, therefore the work was not insisted upon. Who was responsible for the Midland Company not carrying out their contract in this respect? The Midland Company were charging more for second-class passenger fares than was charged on the Government lines, and they also charged a higher rate for the carriage of sandalwood than the Government did. It would be well for the Government to consider the advisability of making a survey of a line between Newcastle and Mount Barker, which would save 200 or 300 miles, and would bring the Midland Company to terms.

MR. HOPKINS: The railway rates were a scientific problem which members of the Committee could not discuss satisfactorily now. There were still the preferential railway rates in the country, and he entered his protest year in and year out against these rates. He called them preferential rates, because they were framed in the interest of one class of the community. While 36s. was charged for local produce, 82s. was charged for imported produce; if local produce could be carried for 36s. why should not imported produce be carried for the same rate? It had been pointed out that the railway stations were too close together. The matter was brought up last session by himself. There were railway stations in places people did not go to or from, and where goods were not despatched to. These stations were situated five or six miles apart. Heavy engines had been brought into this country, but there was the same expenditure of money and no advantage given to the people in the interior. The duplication of 400 miles of line had been strongly and seriously advocated, but he could not support any proposal to duplicate the Eastern Goldfields line. It was not more than 200 miles to Esperance from the goldfields, and Esperance was to the Eastern Goldfields what Geraldton was to the Murchison Goldfields. In time to come

people would go from the Eastern Goldfields to Esperance. There was a system of contractors' rates in existence at the present time, and when the Midland railway was purchased there would be these exorbitant contractors' rates. If these rates applied to the goldfields, why should they not apply to the other portions of the State.

MR. MORAN: They did on the Great Southern railway for about 17 years.

MR. HOPKINS: The Eastern Goldfields railway had been robbed of its profits by the faking of the accounts whereby the whole of the traffic over the line from Fremantle to Northam was credited to one section, and the traffic from Northam to the goldfields was credited to another section. There was no reason why the people who lived in the interior should yield sufficient profit on the goldfields line to pay the losses on other railway lines, and to find sufficient interest and sinking fund for the whole of the lines in the State. It was not an equitable system. Reference had been made to the Brown Hill loop line, and we had the assertion of the Minister that it cost 6s. per train mile to earn 1s. 6d. per train mile. He had always given his opposition to that line, but a large amount of wire-pulling was indulged in to get the line constructed. Then it was said the Boulder railway had never paid and did not pay. If it did not pay when the charge was 1s. return for a journey for which the present-day charge was 3d., that was a fair indication that the departmental officers were absolutely ignorant of their business, and a glorious example of their incapacity. There was now a 3d. return fare between Kalgoorlie and Boulder, and not 5 per cent. of the public knew of the circumstance. Only the other day a leading bank manager and three other men missed the train. They went by tram at a cost of 1s. each, and only by accident discovered that the railway return fare was 3d. The member for West Perth had said that Boulder people had cried out for island platforms and subways. That was incorrect. John Davies had forced those luxuries on the people of Kalgoorlie and Boulder because he had seen such platforms in London. As to the subway, the Government sold over £70,000 worth of land in the town, and drew about

£2,000 a year from the place now. In addition, they had the revenue from a big population; and by the railway they had cut the town off from the mines, its sole subsistence. Then the Boulder people rightly demanded that they should have their communication restored. John Davies had, in the meantime, provided for a subway, for which the original estimate was £20,000, afterwards altered to £13,000. When the late Premier (Mr. Leake) visited Boulder, he said the subway must stop. Stop it did; and it had been stopped ever since. The principal freights ranged at present from £5 to £7 10s. per ton between Fremantle and Kalgoorlie. Communication with Esperance would reduce them to three-fifths, costing the people about £60 where they now paid £100. For years he had advocated the Esperance railway, scarcely ever speaking in the House or on the fields without some reference to it. Members had referred to some improvements on the Boulder line; but the same anomalies existed on the Bridgetown railway, where there were buildings occupied by ghosts or by goats. On the Cue line, at places like Lake Austin, there were three or four sets of rails at every station, and big empty goods sheds, where a truck was kicked in at one end and shot out at the other—glorious examples of the policy followed by previous Governments and of their wanton extravagance in railway construction.

MR. MORAN: Sops to the goldfields.

MR. HOPKINS: And to other constituencies also. Unfortunately the sops had been given indiscriminately, without much thought of ultimate results.

MR. JOHNSON: Much had been said on the general administration; and all realised that something must be done, and quickly, to improve the condition of the railways. Members advocated the duplication of the goldfields line; yet we found that railway was not up to date. There were many pressing wants other than duplication, such as the accommodation at the Kalgoorlie station, probably the second in importance in the State. There was absolutely no shade over the platforms; and for some time there had been a public outcry. In the winter passengers were soaked with rain, and in the summer overcome by heat. Where the shade did exist trains neither stopped

nor started. Again and again the necessity for refreshment rooms on goldfields lines had been brought under Ministerial notice, but without avail. Years must elapse before refreshment cars were provided; and in the meantime the Minister ought definitely to announce that he would establish a refreshment room at Kalgoorlie, and supply some sort of shade for the people compelled to travel by the express. The Minister should state exactly what he intended to do for the unfortunate night officers, who were working 12 hours a day 18 days a fortnight for about 7½d. an hour. It was understood the Minister promised to do something for these officers, and when their condition was improved they would be absolutely in a better position than the officers-in-charge. The officer in charge was equally on as bad a footing as the night officers. He hoped the Minister would realise that not only the night officer wanted his salary increased and his hours lessened, but also the officers in charge at the goldfields centres—Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and those places. The night officer had received an increase or had been promised an increase, but he (Mr. Johnson) did not know whether he had received it; and the increase would put him in a better position than the officer-in-charge. Say the night officer received an increase which would bring his salary up to £150 a year, that would entitle him to £30 for goldfields allowance. The officer-in-charge did not receive £150, and because he did not receive that, he was entitled to only £20 allowance. Both officers should receive the same amount. As to the Brown Hill loop line we all realised that the question of building that line was not properly considered by the Government. This Government did not build it, and was not responsible for that line. The line was started just before the last general election. The traffic on the line would improve every day. Though it had not been a paying concern in the past it was quite possible it could be made a paying concern in the future, if the Government would run trains at convenient hours. At present the trains were not run on the Brown Hill loop line to suit the shifts. We should not get passenger traffic unless we ran the trains to suit the public, and at present men were walking to their

work instead of going by train, owing to the fact that there was no train convenient for them.

MR. JACOBY: A difficulty was sometimes experienced in getting small railway facilities owing to the fact that the department would insist upon the standard station. There were many cases where we might long ago have had facilities on the Eastern railways if the department had not been so particular to put up such elaborate contrivances as they did. Where there was a fairly decent traffic, which perhaps would not warrant such a large expenditure as was required for the standard station, some contrivance might be adopted. There was an instance in the case of the Greenmount platform, in the constituency of the Minister, where they had for years to put up with the inconvenience of traffic having to stand aside at the station, whereas facilities for the gathering of goods and the landing of passengers might have been afforded at small expense, if the Government had not stuck so rigidly to the system of standard stations. He thought the department failed admittedly in connection with the holiday traffic. The department showed a great want of enterprise. Regarding the trouble which occurred the other day not only in connection with the Gooseberry Hill show, but the Royal Agricultural show, he asked questions with the object of discovering where the fault lay, whether it was through the want of rolling-stock. He was told that 1,237 adults and 200 children travelled on the Gooseberry Hill line, and that number was far in excess of what could have been anticipated. He was not altogether referring to the Gooseberry Hill train. He wanted to know why we were not able to carry people to the Agricultural Show and also to the racecourse? Everybody suffered inconvenience on every holiday, and if the trouble was through the want of rolling-stock the department might honestly say so, then we should know what to expect—that until we had more rolling-stock we might have to look for things of this description. He thought also that it was a great mistake, knowing they would have capacity to carry only a certain number of passengers, to sell three or four times that number of tickets as happened in the case of the

Gooseberry Hill show, where some people bought tickets and could not travel. The department had three trains in use, whereas two would have been sufficient in connection with the Gooseberry Hill show if the department had taken the trouble to look into the matter at all. There was a crossing place half-way at Statham's Quarry, and the grade was one in ninety. If the department had worked two trains and had used that as a crossing place, there would have been no difficulty with the traffic, and they could have carried five or six thousand people in ease and comfort. It was in connection with these small things that we had enormous trouble. The success of that line would depend upon the passenger traffic, and there would be enormous passenger traffic if the department would cope with it. He desired to impress strongly on the Minister the necessity for making better arrangements and offering greater inducements for holiday traffic. The Commissioner had refused to run a special train for the recent Kilmescott Show, on the ground that to do so would cost £8, whilst only £5 or £6 might be derived in fares. The Minister had kindly ordered the train to be run, with the result that a handsome profit was earned by the department. Private individuals would gladly risk the loss of £5 or £6 in order to encourage traffic. If the department ran excursion trains to Mundaring Weir, instead of hiring such trains to societies, a profit of £20 or £30 per trip would accrue to the State. The inadequacy of the facilities for holiday traffic disparaged the department in the eyes of the public.

MR. HASTIE hoped the Minister was fully impressed with the general wickedness of our system of railway management. Every member so far had seen occasion for much fault-finding, and had made out an excellent case. The system obtaining here appeared to stand in great need of change, but the likelihood of benefit resulting from any change so far proposed was not great. One could only hope for improvement with the progress of time. He had risen principally to express the feeling of surprise which overcame him on witnessing the light-hearted manner in which various members had proposed the duplication of the Eastern Goldfields Railway. It should be borne in mind

that the proposal was really not for duplication, but, in view of the probable construction of the transcontinental railway, for triplication. If the transcontinental railway was to be built the Federal Government would ask this State to lay a line of 4 feet 8½ inches gauge from the goldfields to Fremantle. Hon. members ought to consider whether three lines were wanted instead of one. The present railway, properly fixed up, would suffice for some considerable time yet.

MR. STONE: The Minister must bear in mind the necessity for making ends meet. Our railways represented £9,000,000 sterling, and the first consideration ought to be payment of working expenses, interest, and sinking fund, as otherwise the railways were valueless. Probably a bad time was before this State. Let us remember that we had to find three-quarters of a million every year for payment of interest. The service on the Midland railway was most unsatisfactory. Trains left at six o'clock in the morning and arrived at one o'clock at night, both most inconvenient hours. The Minister should endeavour to arrange for trains to leave in the afternoon, and to arrive at their destination at eight or nine o'clock in the morning. This alteration would really involve no more night work. The northern districts of the State had suffered a good deal from want of water, and various bores had recently been put down by the Government. In one instance a good supply had been struck on what was believed to be a reserve; but the discovery had just been made that the land belonged to a private individual. In this matter undoubtedly someone had blundered. The provision for lavatory cars on the Midland line was a step in the right direction, which he hoped would be followed by one effecting an alteration in the time table. There was an abuse in regard to the sale of return tickets. People going long journeys and not returning for some time purchased return tickets and sold them to friends. In this way the Railway Department was cheated. Fares should be reduced and return tickets done away with. During the recess the Government might make a trial survey of a line between Magnet and Lawlers, so that members would know what the probable cost would be.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS:

The hon. member for West Perth had been pleased to refer to what he called the "abolition of the sinking fund." Three amounts alone which it was proposed to spend this year, £35,000 on new works and improvements, £26,350 in replacing locomotives, and £27,000 in replacing obsolete wagons, amounted to a sum of £88,000, which would provide sinking fund if applied in another way. If it went to revenue instead of to working expenses it would bring down the cost of working expenses against revenue to a point as low as ever it was in the old days. The hon. member was desirous of making out a good case for the old Government, but he went too far. In turning up the railway estimates for 1900 it would be found that the total amount there provided out of the revenue was £15,000 for improvements and renewals. If the present Government had only to provide such a small sum, the balance of £73,000 could have been put towards the reduction of the working expenses or to sinking fund; either could have been done—we could pay the sinking fund or bring down the working expenses to as low a scale as had ever been done before. The trouble was, that in order to pay interest and sinking fund, necessary repairs and maintenance work had been neglected. He was asked about the roof over the Kalgoorlie platform. In conversation with the Commissioner of Railways that morning he had arranged that the work should be put in hand at once, and he hoped it would be completed before the next month. He was asked to state whether the Commissioner was likely to prove a success or not. That was hardly a fair question to put to him at this early stage. The Railway Act under which the Commissioner would work, and to which the Commissioner looked for a definition of his powers, had not yet been passed by the House, so that it was somewhat unfair to ask how the Commissioner was going to turn out, when even now the Commissioner did not know if his powers were to be curtailed by the House. He would give an expression of opinion, and it was this: he thought the Commissioner would give satisfaction, and he would be far more likely to give satisfaction if he were given fair play. If he were given fair play and did not succeed,

then he had no sufficient excuse to put forward, and he (the Minister) would have no excuse to offer for him; but he did think that, given anything like fair play, the Commissioner would succeed. As to the duplication, he admitted as everyone who knew anything about railway work admitted, if we could undertake the work it would probably lead to a great saving in the working of the line; but we had to bear in mind the question of the Transcontinental railway, which was not settled yet. If the line were built, what would the gauge be? He made a note of the items which members had referred to, and they would receive his attention. As to the Jandakot railway, it was proposed at once to construct a railway from Robb's Jetty to Woodman's Point to deal with the explosives trade. That would be a step in the right direction. It was on one of the routes the Jandakot people themselves wanted and were prepared to accept. As to how to deal with the holiday traffic at holiday times, he had noted what the member for the Swan had said, and if he could not find in the Railway Department a satisfactory or capable officer to deal with the holiday traffic as it should be dealt with—if he could not find one who was sufficiently expert—he would ask the hon. member for the benefit of his advice.

MR. JACOBY: Was the Minister satisfied with the holiday service?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: He had stated that he would appeal to the hon. member for his expert knowledge.

MR. JACOBY: Not expert knowledge; common sense.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member would give him the benefit of his common sense. As to the refreshment room at Kalgoorlie, he would go into the matter with the Commissioner: it was not correct to say that it would be years before the refreshment cars were running: it was expected they would be running before the end of next year.

MR. MORAN hoped the Minister would not assume as a matter of course that the line to Woodman's Point would be part of the Jandakot railway. What reason could there be for removing the explosives magazines from the present site to get them away from population,

and afterwards running a railway through them? What had been done regarding the Premier's promise to a deputation that he would institute inquiries as to the construction of this railway?

THE PREMIER: Inquiries were being made.

Vote put and passed.

Railway Construction (postponed), £73,000—agreed to.

Minister for Works and Railways, £1,909,183 11s. 7d.—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates for the year.

Grand total of Estimates (reduced to £2,999,526 11s. 2d.) put and passed.

Resolutions as passed in Committee of Supply reported, and the report adopted.

IN COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution passed giving effect to the votes of supply already agreed to, and granting the required amount out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

DIVIDEND DUTIES BILL.

COUNCIL'S SUGGESTIONS.

Schedule of two amendments suggested by the Legislative Council now considered in Committee.

No. 1—Clause 2, definition of "Life Assurance Company," strike out the words "but divides or pays no dividend nor any part of its profits to share or stock-holders":

THE TREASURER: With regard to the first request made by the Legislative Council, it would have been agreed to had it been suggested and discussed when the Bill was before this House. The revenue that would be derived was so small that it was hardly worth while singling out those referred to for invidious taxation, therefore he moved that the suggestion be agreed to.

Question passed, and the amendment made as suggested.

No. 2—Add the following new clause:—

32. This Act shall only remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, One thousand nine hundred and four.

THE TREASURER: As to the second suggested amendment, this power of limiting the operation of all taxation measures was the exclusive privilege of the Assembly. He moved that a message be transmitted to the Legislative Council informing them that the Legislative Assembly regretted they could not comply with their request limiting the operation of the measure to the 31st of December, 1904. He would like to say that according to our own Standing Orders the Legislative Council were quite within their rights in requesting that we should make these amendments, but the rights of the Legislative Assembly went a long way farther back in this respect than the rights of the Legislative Council under the Standing Orders. He found on reference to *May* that, on the 3rd July, 1678, it was resolved:—

That all aids and supplies, and aids to his Majesty in Parliament, are the sole gift of the Commons; and all Bills for the granting of any such aids and supplies ought to begin with the Commons; and that it is the undoubted and sole right of the Commons to direct, limit, and appoint in such Bills the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations, and qualifications of such grants; which ought not to be changed or altered by the House of Lords.

May said:—

It is upon this latter resolution that all proceedings between the two Houses in matters of supply are now founded. The principle is acquiesced in by the Lords, and, except in cases where it is difficult to determine whether a matter be strictly one of supply or not, no serious difference can well arise. The Lords rarely attempt to make any but verbal alterations in which the sense or intention is not affected; and even in regard to these, when the Commons have accepted them, they have made special entries in their journal, recording the character and object of the amendments, and their reasons for agreeing to them. So strictly is the principle observed in all matters affecting the public revenues, that where certain payments have been directed, by a Bill, to be made into and out of the consolidated fund, the Commons have refused to permit the Lords to insert a clause, providing that such payments should be made under the same regulations as were applicable by law to other similar payments.

The last contention that was raised

between the Lords and Commons was in 1860. There was then a Bill sent up from the Commons with regard to a property tax and stamp duties, and repealing the duties on paper. *May* said:—

The increased taxation had already received the assent of Parliament, when the Lords rejected the Paper Duties Repeal Bill, and thus overruled the financial arrangements voted by the Commons. That House was naturally sensitive to this novel encroachment upon its peculiar privileges; but as the Lords had exercised a legal right, and their vote was irrevocable during that session, it was judiciously resolved, after full inquiry and consideration, to maintain the privileges of the House, not by vain remonstrances, but by an assertion of its paramount authority in the imposition and repeal of taxes, at once dignified and practical. Accordingly, on the 6th July resolutions were agreed to.

Todd was rather clearer than *May* on these resolutions. Lord Palmerston was Premier at the time that he proposed to the House the following resolutions:—

1. That the right of granting aid and supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone, as an essential part of their constitution; and the limitation of all such grants, as to the matter, manner, measure, and time, is only in them.
2. That although the Lords have exercised the power of rejecting Bills of several descriptions relating to taxation by negating the whole, yet the exercise of that power by them has not been frequent, and is justly regarded by this House with peculiar jealousy, as affecting the right of the Commons to grant the supplies and to provide the ways and means for the service of the year.
3. That to guard for the future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords, and to secure to the Commons their rightful control over taxation and supply, this House has in its own hands the power so to impose and remit taxes, and to frame Bills of Supply, that the right of the Commons as to matter, manner, measure, and time may be maintained inviolate.

That was in 1860. Since then there has practically been no alteration of the situation, and the Lords have practically acquiesced in this decision, although they have never formally consented to it. In the Canadian Parliament this principle had not been disputed since 1841. It was there recognised, as in the British Parliament, that the undoubted right of the Commons was to impose all measures of taxation and also to restrict them as to period of operation. For that reason he asked the Committee to affirm that we could not agree to the Council's amendment limiting the operation of this measure to the end of 1904.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: As it was necessary that we should protect our position within the limit of our Standing Orders, he desired to offer a few remarks. Notwithstanding all that the Treasurer had said, there could be no doubt that the Legislative Council was within its rights in asking this House to make the alterations suggested. On former occasions he had expressed his conviction that the provisions of Section 46 were unwise, and he was of opinion that if difficulties were to be avoided our Standing Orders would have to be amended in this respect at an early date. The fact remained that in South Australia and in this State the Legislative Council had the right to send back a money Bill, with a request that amendments be made by this House. He had always argued that the only means by which we could adequately protect the interests of this House was to decline to make amendments suggested. The provision in question had been included in the Constitution Act to meet extreme cases, and it should be exercised only in extreme cases so as to prevent friction between the Houses. Such was the intention of the section, and only for that purpose should the power be used. Neither in the present nor in the previous amendment had sufficient cause been disclosed for requesting this House to amend the Bill. The Assembly could protect its rights and privileges only by refusing on all occasions to allow amendments to be made in a money Bill unless reasons were given satisfying us that the Council was using its powers rightly. The suggestions made were not based on sufficient reason, and therefore it was the duty of the House to maintain its rights by declining to make any of the amendments suggested by the Council. Accordingly he rather regretted that the Committee had agreed to amendment No. 1. The wiser course would have been to refuse to make any amendment whatever. The very fact that the first amendment was of an insignificant character afforded sufficient justification to the House for refusing to make it. He strongly supported the motion before the House.

THE TREASURER: In Victoria a move was being made to take away from the Council the very privilege to which the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth)

had drawn attention. Only the day before yesterday, Mr. Mackey, a member of the Victorian Assembly, had moved in Committee on the Reform Bill that the clause empowering the Legislative Council to suggest alterations in money Bills be struck out.

Question passed, and the Council's suggestion not agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

THE PREMIER: Should we appoint a committee to draw up reasons for disagreement?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Illingworth) advised the House not to give any reasons.

On farther motion by the PREMIER, message accordingly returned to the Legislative Council.

PUBLIC WORKS BILL.

REASONS FOR DISAGREEMENT.

The Committee appointed to draw up reasons for disagreeing to certain amendments made by the Legislative Council now presented the reasons as follow:—

5. That as notice has to be sent per registered post to the owner, to advertise in newspaper as well as in *Gazette* would entail unnecessary expense. 6. The same. 7. The same. 13. The same. 15. The Assembly is of opinion that where the adjoining land of an owner is improved in value by the execution of any public work, it is fair and reasonable that such improvement shall be taken into consideration in determining the amount of compensation to be awarded to such owner for land taken for, or severance caused by, such public work. 17. It is submitted that the Court, as established, is fully capable of determining the costs, and that to refer to an officer of the Supreme Court will necessitate unnecessary delay. 22. That as notice has to be sent per registered post to the owner, to advertise in newspaper as well as in *Gazette* would entail unnecessary expense. 26. That the power sought is absolutely necessary, and that the compensation clauses sufficiently protect individual rights. 35. The Assembly is of opinion that it is desirable to have finality in the matter, and that where a road or street has been partly or wholly closed before the passing of the Act, and has continued

closed up to now, no injustice can be done by declaring that such closure shall be deemed lawful. 37. The words "request and" have been added to the proposed amendment of the Legislative Council for the purpose of insuring that no alteration shall be undertaken at the cost of the Minister, except where considered necessary by the Minister. 40. That where such a fence as is alluded to is maintained at the cost of the Government, the fact of such maintenance should be taken into consideration in assessing compensation for damage or severance. 41. The amendment sought by the Council might prevent the erection of temporary structures absolutely necessary to carrying out certain works.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 1-50 o'clock, a.m. (Wednesday), until the afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 17th December, 1902.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, Western Australian Government Railways, alteration to Classification and Rate Book. 2, The Agricultural Lands Pur-

chase Act, 1896, Regulations in connection with Land Purchase Board. 3, The Land Act, 1898, Regulations restricting cutting of timber at Feysville and Burbanks. 4, The Roads Act, 1888, Colliery Road Board: amendment of By-law No. 15. 5, By-laws of the Broome Road Board. 6, The Cemeteries Act, 1897, By-laws of the Preston Public Cemetery.

Ordered: To lie on the table.

MOTION—MEDICAL AID, SOUTHERN DISTRICTS.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday next, and I make this motion for the purpose of drawing attention to a very important matter—the lack of medical aid along the Great Southern Railway. I hope the House will bear with me in bringing forward a question of such very serious moment, one affecting the very lives of the people. Only to-day another child died, the fourth within a few weeks, owing to the lack of medical aid. The liability to such misfortune exists from end to end of the Great Southern Railway, with the exception of Katanning, where a doctor is stationed. I say at once that that gentleman is a really good practitioner; but nevertheless he is quite unable to cope with medical requirements along the whole length of the railway. The Premier has been approached more than once in connection with this matter, with the result that last week he refused point blank to reopen negotiations. The hon. gentleman has passed the matter by as of no importance whatever. The settlers along the great Southern Railway have at the present time only one medical man between Albany and York—the doctor at Katanning, to whom I have previously referred. Thus it appears that over a distance of close on 270 miles only one medical man is to be found. Better provision, I maintain, is urgently necessary. Formerly, when the number of settlers along the railway was comparatively small, a doctor was stationed at Narrogin, and another at Beverley. The population between Beverley and Albany, omitting the residents in either town, amounts to between 7,000 and 8,000. The latest