

practitioner's handiwork in it. That great practitioner recently took an action against a newspaper. It was not against the *West Australian*; I am not giving the name. He got his writ, but at this moment the case is being hung up. Action has been taken. He will have to prosecute it under our law in a short time, but is taking full benefit of the period the law allows him, and has not served the writ. He is holding it in reserve, If the English Act be adopted the writ will hold good for six years, and at the end of that period, when everybody else has forgotten the case and what it concerns and the existence of this great and promising non-practitioner except so far as that writ is concerned, he may serve it. This is one instance of serious injustice that may happen if this English Act were in this holus bolus way flung on the statute book without proper consideration. I recognise this to be a piece of fun, and while we make use of the fun of the moment we give information useful to the House. At the same time I do nothing but smile and in the meantime support the amendment to postpone the second reading of this most important amendment to our statutes.

Amendment passed, the Bill thus deferred six months.

#### EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 11:

HON. G. RANDELL: This clause should be struck out. The petition before the House made out an excellent case against any alteration in the Act regarding hairdressers. Both employers and employees were satisfied with the present Act.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The clause was not in the Bill introduced by the Government in another House; at the same time he would like an expression of opinion from the House.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

#### ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (JETTIES, ETC.)

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. W. KINGSMILL in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Preamble:

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was intended to move to insert a new clause, but he had no desire to imperil the fate of the Bill.

HON. W. KINGSMILL thanked the Minister.

Preamble put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

##### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half-past 8 o'clock, until the next afternoon.

### Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21st December, 1904.

	PAGE
Urgency Motion: Wharf Lumpers at Bunbury	2116
Questions, postponed	2117
Bills: Local Inscribed Stock Act Amendment,	
first and second reading	2117
North Fremantle Streets Dedication, third	
reading	2117
Loan Bill, £750,000, first and second reading;	
Statement on Immigration	2144
Land Act Amendment (Forestry), second	
reading moved	2150
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment (increase	
of capital), second reading, etc.	2151
Post Office Savings Bank Act Amendment,	
second reading, etc.	2151
Bills to be proceeded with, Statement by the	
Premier	2144
Annual Estimates resumed, Works and Buildings	
votes to end, Colonial Secretary's votes to	
end, progress	2117
Loan Estimates, supplementary	2150

MR. SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 o'clock afternoon (Tuesday's extended sitting having ended at the hour for luncheon).

PRAYERS.

# URGENCY MOTION—WHARF LUMPERS AT BUNBURY.

MR. N. J. MOORE (Bunbury) moved formally the adjournment of the House to call attention to a matter of urgency. He said: During the debate on harbours and rivers, I referred to the necessity that existed for instituting some amendment in the regulations in regard to the time vessels may lie alongside wharfs at Bunbury. I have just received a wire from there to the following effect:—

Lumpers made angry demonstration on jetty this morning, exasperated vessels' non-employment shore labour. Original purpose stop all loading. Dissuaded doing so by Mayor Griffiths. Public meeting this evening. Matter should be laid before House or Navigation Commission.

I have just drawn the attention of the Minister in charge to the necessity of taking immediate steps to see whether an alteration can be effected on the lines now existing at Fremantle, where the number of lay days is considerably less than at Bunbury. At Bunbury at the present time it is only steamers which employ shore labour. For the most part, foreign-going vessels do their own loading. I think that matter might be overcome by making the number of lay days the same at Bunbury as at Fremantle.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Taylor): In answer to the member for Bunbury, I would like to point out that I have had this matter in hand for some time. I hope to be able to visit Bunbury perhaps next week, and place the Bunbury harbour on a satisfactory basis. So far as shore labour is concerned, I feel sure there will be no difficulty in arranging lay days as indicated by the member for Bunbury.

MR. F. CONNOR (Kimberley): I protest against this coming before the House. I hold that where the question of lay days is concerned, it is a matter for the chartering party, and it is not for the Government to decide lay days. When a sailing vessel or steamer is chartered, the lay days are fixed by the people who charter or by the people who own the vessel. I hold that this is a matter we cannot interfere with. It is outside the province of this House to deal with it.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest): With all due respect to the vigorous protest of

the member for Kimberley, the matter has a bearing upon issues at present engaging the attention of the House as far as Bunbury is concerned. The lay days fixed are not part or parcel of any chartering party, but are the subject of regulations by the department over which the Colonial Secretary presides. I venture to think that anyone familiar with the conditions in Bunbury will know that so far as lumpers in that town are concerned, they form a very considerable proportion of the community. Numerically they are very strong. Moreover, owing to the system that has obtained for some time, a number of these men who have to depend very largely upon work available in connection with the loading of vessels in that port, find their means of livelihood considerably interfered with and their operations greatly hampered by the very extensive number of days allowed in which vessels may do their own loading in that particular place. The number of days is greatly in excess of the number at Fremantle. As far as Fremantle is concerned, with the restricted number of lay days the masters find it more profitable to engage the services of shore labourers than their own crews in the loading of their vessels; but in Bunbury, owing to the greater elasticity in this connection, we find a greater number of lay days; consequently many of these shipowners, who I regret to say are principally Norwegians and Russian Fins, find it more convenient and more economical to load their ships and do the work which ought to be done by shore labour. The result is that a very considerable number of men entitled to the greater share of the work which takes place at that port find themselves deprived of their employment, owing to the fact that these foreigners are paid ridiculously small wages. Many of them, I believe, get only 30s. per month. They are called upon to do work at which labourers on shore would earn 10s. or more per day. I think the member for Bunbury is perfectly justified in bringing this matter before the Colonial Secretary, and I venture to think the Colonial Secretary also holds a similar view with regard to the matter. There can be no question it is a matter of urgency. If anything can be done, and the Colonial Secretary can possibly do it and expedite the matter before his

visit to Bunbury next week, it should be done in the interests of the town of Bunbury and the workers who seek to obtain a livelihood by this particular form of labour. Many lumpers at present find but a precarious living, owing to the cheaper remuneration to foreigners, who, I say, work for 30s. a month.

MR. C. C. KEYSER (Albany): I trust the Colonial Secretary will not only apply this principle to Bunbury, but also to Albany. The same difficulty occurs there. We ship quite a large quantity of timber from the Denmark mills, and the ships invariably employ their own labour to do it, at a very low wage. If the number of lay days is restricted, it will mean that instead of ships' crews being employed, the shipping people will have to employ labour in the port. I think this is only a fair thing. I have much pleasure in supporting the member for Bunbury, and I repeat that I hope the Minister will take steps in regard to Albany also.

MR. N. J. MOORE (in reply as mover): Perhaps the member for Kimberley has misunderstood the object in view. If what we desire be carried, that will not limit the lay days, but the time during which boats that carry timber on board may occupy space. There is only limited accommodation. When steamers come alongside, it means that three or four sailing vessels' berths are done away with. At Fremantle, at the present time, a vessel takes in at least 50 tons per day, whereas at Bunbury, by the number of days given, the quantity does not amount to more than 30 tons per day. I am perfectly satisfied, and I ask the permission of the House to withdraw the motion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I desire, in explanation, to tell the member for Albany that I will also investigate the question as regards that port.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

#### QUESTIONS—POSTPONEMENT.

A number of questions appeared on the Notice Paper.

THE PREMIER asked members who had given notice of questions to postpone them, inasmuch as to-day the Ministers

had had too little time at their offices since notice had been given.

Questions postponed.

#### LOCAL INSCRIBED STOCK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER, in moving the second reading, said: This is a very short Bill, which members are in possession of, and it has solely the object of enabling the local trustees of our stock to arrange for the investment of the sinking fund accruing through trustees in London. At present this authority does not exist in the principal Act, and therefore our trustees have no opportunity of utilising the sinking fund in accordance with the requirements of the Act in London, and have no means of utilising it locally. The Bill is introduced at the request of the trustees themselves, and has only that importance which its technical necessity gives rise to.

Question passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### BILL, THIRD READING.

NORTH FREMANTLE STREETS DEDICATION, read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

##### IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed after all-night sitting, MR. BATH in the Chair.

WORKS DEPARTMENT (Hon. W. D. JOHNSON, Minister).

*Architectural* (items continued) — Buildings and other services for the Colonial Secretary's Department (revotes, page 69).

Item—Old Men's Home, £9,000:

MR. A. J. WILSON: A sum of £17,030 was mentioned; as the estimate was £9,000, presumably the bulk of the work was done.

THE MINISTER: The contractor was now proceeding with it.

Item — Perth Hospital, new wing £5,000:

MR. FRANK WILSON, referring to a point raised some years ago as to whether the existing building should be extended in its present position, said this was a rather extensive building to have on a hill in the centre of the city. Should not the Government take into consideration the suggestion that any money to be spent on hospital accommodation in relation to Perth should be spent outside the city boundary, and thus decrease the number of patients to be accommodated in the central building? No matter how careful one might be, the present position of the hospital was such as to be a menace. Some eight or ten years ago a case of small-pox was introduced into the Perth Hospital, presumably as measles. Shortly afterwards the whole of the streets in the low-lying district behind the hospital were placarded with yellow labels; and the disease spread rapidly. The hospital should be used rather for accidents than for infectious diseases, which should be treated in a new building standing on some 10 or 20 acres of ground, outside the city.

THE MINISTER: A footnote stated that the total liability authorised was £11,000. This should read £10,000. Recently he had conferred with the hospital committee and doctors; and both were unanimous that the present was a suitable site for the hospital, and desired the building to be extended by the addition of a new ward. Nothing had been done in connection with this item. Tenders had not yet been accepted, and the House could strike it out; though he hoped it would not, for the present accommodation was insufficient.

MR. FRANK WILSON would not interfere with the item, but simply made a suggestion. No doubt the present site was a convenient one to the committee and the medical staff.

MR. HARDWICK: When would tenders be accepted?

THE MINISTER: To-morrow.

MR. H. BROWN: The Government were to be commended for their expedition. The new wing was urgently needed, and ought to suffice for a considerable time.

Item—Broome Hospital additions, £1,100:

MR. A. J. WILSON: The frequency of these Nor'-West votes was refreshing.

THE MINISTER: The old hospital was practically eaten out by white ants, and was unsafe.

MR. CONNOR supported the item.

*Gaols and Quarters, £9,080.*

Item—Fremantle Gaol, additions and improvements, £9,000:

MR. FRANK WILSON: This included a balance of £6,685 from last year. Was the work being done departmentally?

THE MINISTER: By contract; the price being £14,856 lls. 1d. The contractor was at work.

*Industrial Schools, etc., £290.*

Item—Subiaco Industrial School, additions, £290:

MR. HENSHAW asked for explanation.

THE MINISTER: This was for gymnasium shed, electric light, baths, and equipment of workshops.

MR. FRANK WILSON congratulated the Minister on this item.

MR. H. BROWN supported the item.

*Police Stations and Quarters, £12,022.*

Item—Gwalia charge room and lockup, £165:

MR. CONNOR asked for explanation.

THE MINISTER: The contract price was £170 ls. 3d. The item was the balance on the contract.

Item—Perth Central Office and men's barracks, £9,000:

MR. FRANK WILSON: Had the contract been let?

THE MINISTER: The work was being constructed by contract, with Donnybrook stone.

MR. H. BROWN: This would be the biggest white elephant in the city. Accommodation was provided for 70 single men. Not more than 30 would occupy it. It was useless to try to strike it out; for the brutal majority would vote as they were told.

THE MINISTER: If the hon. member was man enough to move that the item be struck out, he (the Minister) would provide a sufficient majority to pass the

amendment. The hon. member, being Mayor of Perth, should be the last man to object to such expenditure. If the item was struck out, the building could be utilised for other purposes.

MR. H. BROWN: In the opinion of the police force, married men's quarters were needed, and not quarters for single men.

Item—Black Range police station and cells, £550:

MR. A. J. WILSON asked for explanation.

THE MINISTER: Black Range was one of our most rapidly-rising mining centres. Prisoners were now chained to trees and logs.

MR. FRANK WILSON: Was not the population of the district about 70?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: About 400 or 500.

MR. FRANK WILSON said he heard from Mr. Hans Irvine that there were 300 or 400 people in the district, and about 60 in the town.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There were numerous complaints about prisoners being chained to trees.

MR. FRANK WILSON withdrew his opposition.

MR. TROY: The lockup was necessary. It was most inhuman in summer time to tie a prisoner to a log. The population was 450.

*Government House, £236.*

Item—Government House fencing, £225:

MR. FRANK WILSON asked for explanation.

THE MINISTER: The fencing was in connection with the river frontage to the Government House grounds.

Item—Perth branch of Royal Mint, additions and extensions, £440:

MR. FRANK WILSON: Had the State to extend the Mint from time to time? Who owned the building, and who made the requisition for the extension?

THE MINISTER: The building belonged to the State, but he could not say who made the requisition for this extension. The liability existed, the contract having been entered into long before he (the Minister) assumed office.

Item—Boulder South-West school and quarters, £2,205:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was this to meet an existing liability?

THE MINISTER: The contract was let before the end of the last financial year; but the liability to pay the money existed this year.

MR. H. BROWN: This was voted last year, but not expended. The treatment of the Barrack Street Jetty item of last year could be compared to the treatment of this item. The same treatment of revoting money should be extended to the city of Perth.

THE MINISTER: There was no comparison between this item and the Barrack Street Jetty item. The money had been expended in this case, and we were pledged to the liability.

Item—Bunbury Infants' School, additions, £360:

MR. BOLTON: There was also need for an infants' school at Cottesloe Beach.

THE MINISTER: This was a misprint. The item appeared later.

Item struck out.

Item—Miscellaneous schools and quarters, £3,000:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Where was this money likely to be expended; because there were buildings used as schools which were not conducive to the best health and comfort of the children? In allocating this vote, the Minister should not overlook the Forrest electorate.

THE MINISTER regretted the hon. member had not brought forward the needs of his district when the Estimates were being prepared. This was a recurring item. Last year £333 was spent at Mt. Kokeby, £259 at Scott's Brook, £50 at Upper Preston, and £247 at Wannimall, for school buildings. This item was spent in rising agricultural and mining districts throughout the State.

MR. A. J. WILSON had not previously mentioned the matter because he did not wish to unduly harass in regard to already depleted funds. He was pleased that the Minister, notwithstanding the shortage, had increased the vote by £2,000; so the Minister should not forget his (Mr. Wilson's) generosity.

Item—Torbay, school and quarters, £300:

MR. KEYSER: The school was completed but not yet opened on account of the scarcity of teachers. Steps should be taken to introduce teachers from the other States.

THE MINISTER: The contract had just been completed and the school would be opened after the holidays. The Education Department had not felt justified in sending a teacher to the school for the few days before Christmas.

Item—Australind, school and quarters, £250:

MR. CONNOR: Was this a new school?

THE MINISTER: Yes; the present building must be renewed.

MR. HAYWARD: The building had been erected 40 years, and was a tumble-down affair. No school was more required than the one at Australind.

Item—Boulder South, school additions, £940:

MR. A. J. WILSON: In another part of the Estimates appeared an amount of £388 for a shelter shed for this school.

THE MINISTER: Yes; this school was in the centre of a thickly populated district and the accommodation was inadequate.

Item—Boulder Technical School, £1,000:

MR. FRANK WILSON: The total amount authorised to be spent on this school was £5,000. Did the item this year provide for the commencement of the work?

THE MINISTER: Yes. The sum of £5,000 was voted last year as shown by a footnote. Only £1,000 would be spent this year.

Item—Cottesloe, infants' school additions, £300:

MR. BOLTON regretted that money was not to be spent in building a new school at Cottesloe Beach. No doubt the infant school at Cottesloe was overcrowded, but it would be sufficient if a new school were built at Cottesloe Beach, and if additions were made to the senior school. The Minister might, out

of a supernumerary vote, build a small infants' school at Cottesloe Beach.

THE MINISTER: If the hon. member made representations to the Minister for Education and investigation showed that a school at Cottesloe Beach was necessary, the building would be provided. The liability for the Cottesloe school was already incurred.

Item—Narrogin, school and quarters, £2,100:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was this a liability incurred?

THE MINISTER: The contract was let.

MR. A. J. WILSON: It seemed a large sum for a school.

THE MINISTER: The present school was situated in the centre of the town. It was anticipated that sufficient revenue would be derived by the sale of the present land and present building to erect a new school in some more suitable locality, and it was anticipated that the Treasury would not be called upon to pay any of this money.

MR. COWCHER: The school accommodation was not sufficient to cater for the children at Narrogin. The East Narrogin school was a new one, and was necessary.

MR. A. J. WILSON: £100 seemed a big expenditure for the erection of latrines at the Northam school.

THE MINISTER: The money was required to provide the necessary accommodation.

MR. CONNOR: Was the Victoria Park school a new school?

THE MINISTER: The school was inadequate at present, and money must be spent on additions.

MR. CONNOR: What school was to be built at Yardavino?

THE MINISTER: The erection of a three-roomed school was progressing.

Item—Kalgoorlie, School of Mines, £1,000:

MR. A. J. WILSON: It was natural coastal members should seek information concerning expenditure on the goldfields.

THE MINISTER: The good work done by the School of Mines had influenced the granting of this sum. The accommodation already proved to be inadequate,

and greater results would be obtained through the additional expenditure.

**MR. RASON:** The money authorised to be incurred was £3,600, which was a very moderate estimate. What did the Minister propose to do with the money?

**THE MINISTER:** The money was to erect buildings necessary for the extension of the School of Mines.

Item—Abattoirs, goldfields, £1,000 :

**MR. CONNOR:** Last year £5,000 was voted for this work, and only £43 was spent. What was to be done in connection with this matter? The question had been before Parliament for a long time, and the metropolis and the goldfields were crying out for abattoirs. It was a retrograde movement to place only £1,000 on this year's Estimates. Did it mean the work was to be shelved? Cold storage should also be provided at Kalgoorlie.

**THE MINISTER:** It was intended to erect abattoirs at Kalgoorlie and in the metropolitan area, but the difficulty of the previous Government and of this Government was that the plans drawn up in the Public Works Department were prepared by officers inexperienced in the erection of abattoirs; and they were not competent to say whether all the details were in accordance with requirements. The previous Government intended to secure the services of an expert to go through the plans before the work was begun, in order to see that the plans were suitable to the requirements of this State. If we started abattoirs at Fremantle, which were larger than those at Kalgoorlie, then the plans for Fremantle would not be identical with the plans for the Kalgoorlie abattoirs. Members must realise that the Government were wise in securing expert advice before deciding to proceed with the work. Inside of a month or so we would have secured the best man in Australia competent to go into the details, and after the officer had gone through the plans, the intention of the Government was to proceed with the erection of abattoirs, not only on the goldfields, but at Fremantle.

**MR. F. CONNOR:** Why had the vote been cut down from £5,000 to £1,000? A sum of £1,000 was no good to start abattoirs and cold-storage works.

**THE MINISTER** explained that the total liability authorised to be incurred was £10,000. We had only, at most, six months of the present financial year to run, and we had to secure the services of the expert to decide on the plans, and we must give time in case of alterations to do that work. It would then be necessary to make arrangements for the starting of the buildings. It was not anticipated, if everything was in our favour, that we could expend more than £1,000 this financial year.

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** There ought to be no difficulty in getting the necessary expert. This was no new thing. Perhaps in this State we were not so admirably situated for abattoirs as Sydney was. At the same time everyone was agreed as to the urgent necessity for this work being carried out. There would be considerable advantage in conserving the health of the people. The member for Kimberley admitted that with the facilities the private proprietors had at their disposal we could not expect to deal with the industry in the way that private persons had dealt with it.

**MR. CONNOR:** Whatever class of abattoirs was built on the goldfields they would not be superior to abattoirs on the coast. On the goldfields abattoirs and cold-storage works were required. Government cold-storage works existed in Perth, and there were private stores available. On the goldfields the work should be carried out immediately.

Item — Yallingup Accommodation-house, additions and improvements :

**MR. KEYSER** asked for information.

**THE MINISTER** stated that he was not in a position to say what were the financial possibilities of this institution. It had been in existence only a short time and the road to the Caves had only been constructed a little while. The Caves had only been recently lighted throughout by electricity. They were not in the same position to attract visitors as it was anticipated would be the case later on. It would be unfair to attempt to estimate the earnings of this institution.

Item—Perth Audit Department offices, alterations, £150 :

**MR. A. J. WILSON** asked for information.

THE MINISTER explained that these alterations were found necessary owing to the reorganisation of the staff under the Audit Act. Increased accommodation was necessary.

Item—Perth Barracks, conversion of pensioners' quarters, etc., into offices for Public Works Department, £1,400:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Would the expenditure of this amount have the effect of saving rent for the Government? Was it not contemplated at some future date to demolish the Barracks?

THE MINISTER stated that the Barracks were being turned into offices for the Public Works Department, and by doing this the Government would save a large expenditure in rent which was being paid now for different offices throughout the city. He would not like to say that in the far distant future the Barracks were to be pulled down. Perhaps the member might live to see that done.

Item—Perth Legislative Assembly buildings, conversion into Savings Bank, £1,350:

MR. A. J. WILSON was under the impression that some arrangements had been come to by which the old Legislative Assembly building was to be dedicated to the city of Perth.

THE MINISTER stated that the old police court buildings were promised to the Perth Council. By the transfer of the Savings Bank to the old Legislative Assembly buildings the Government would save £325 per annum.

Item—Perth, lodge for orderly, £302:

MR. KEYSER: What kind of lodge was intended for this orderly?

THE MINISTER replied that the lodge had been erected, and members by walking down St. George's Terrace could see the building.

Item—New Parliament Houses, £6,130:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was it the intention of the Minister for Works to relieve the present building of its unsightly and incomplete state?

THE MINISTER stated that the Government were not in a position to supply sufficient funds to extend the present Houses of Parliament. He re-

gretted the member considered the present buildings unsightly. It was impossible to do anything in the way of additions to the present Houses. He was of opinion that there was sufficient accommodation for members and no immediate necessity for an extension of the building. Up to date the Government had spent £52,887 in connection with these buildings, and to complete in accordance with the plans a farther sum of £105,000 would be necessary. It was not the intention during the present financial year to do anything more in connection with the completion of these buildings.

MR. NEEDHAM: What was being done in reference to the removal of the buildings at Arthur's Head? Were those buildings to be re-erected in the Fremantle Park?

THE MINISTER replied that the Government did not think they were justified for sentimental reasons in re-erecting the old lighthouse, that was on Arthur's Head for some years, in the Fremantle Park. The building had been pulled down carefully, and if the municipality of Fremantle desired to re-erect the building in the park the Government would be only too pleased to hand over the material to them.

MR. NEEDHAM: It was not a question of sentiment, but of carrying out a promise made to the people of Fremantle.

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: As to the proposal to re-erect the lighthouse in the electorate which he represented, he approved of the action of the Minister. The proposal did not emanate from the people of Fremantle, but from one of the officers of the department. It would cost £400 to re-erect the lighthouse, and that money should be more wisely spent. This lighthouse was not an old building. It was erected only in 1880, so that it would not be any monument of the old days of Western Australia.

Item—Grants in aid (in accordance with regulations) for construction of and additions to mechanics' institutes, miners' institutes, and agricultural halls, £2,500:

MR. A. J. WILSON: This was one of the votes in which his constituents were interested, in common with the constituents of most members. It was to be regretted the amount provided for these necessary institutions was £500 less than



that voted in the previous year. Some system should be adopted in the distribution of the grants. He would like to know the basis on which the subsidy was paid.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** A copy of the regulations which guided him in the distribution of the grants had been handed to the hon. member. In connection with agricultural halls or mechanics' institutes throughout the State, for the erection of every new building the Government gave £2 for every £1 subscribed or collected by the residents, and in connection with additions to institutes the sum of 25s. was provided by the Government for every pound subscribed. The vote last year for this purpose was £3,000, of which £2,380 was expended, and this year £2,500 was to be voted, and would be distributed under the regulations which he had handed to the hon. member.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** In regard to the construction of agricultural halls, he hoped the Minister would be as prompt as possible in dealing with applications for this purpose; and no doubt the Minister would agree that this vote was much appreciated in the scattered districts of the State, as it provided halls for the holding of meetings and perhaps to some extent developing politicians by the training they got in those meetings. Speaking as one who was formerly in charge of the Works Department, he was glad to see that the Works vote had now practically gone through Committee, and he thought the Minister had done himself credit by his conduct of it.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

This concluded the votes for the Works Department.

**COLONIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT**  
(Hon. G. Taylor, Minister).

#### GENERAL STATEMENT.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** In submitting these Estimates, members will have no desire to hear me speak on them at length; also when we consider that there is no connection between the Colonial Secretary's estimates and those of the Works or Mines, which have been criticised so fully, it will be seen that although this department controls

some 15 subdepartments, yet taking into consideration that these estimates deal with the office of Colonial Secretary, Aborigines Board, Charities, Electoral, Fisheries, Gaols, Government Gardens etc., Harbour and Light, Lunacy, Medical, Observatory, Police, Public Health, Registry, and Rottnest Establishment, totalling £353,309, members will see that these are purely administrative, and that most of the items deal with the salaries of officers. That being so, while I intend to be very brief in submitting these estimates, I do not want members to think that I shall be backward in giving every opportunity for explanation of items, so far as I am capable of doing it. To judge from the attitude taken up while dealing with the Works Estimates, in which most items that showed an increase were discussed by members, I will give members the fullest information so far as I have it in my power. It will be well to point out the departments in which there is an increase and those in which there is any decrease. In the Colonial Secretary's office, there is a decrease of £355, in the Electoral Department a decrease of £485, in Harbour and Light a decrease of £6,015, in Medical a decrease of £408, in the Observatory a decrease of £8, in Police a decrease of £2,099, in Public Health a decrease of £244. The departments in which there is any increase are the Aborigines, £2,500; Charities, £1,017; Fisheries, £520; Gaols, £4,067; Government Gardens, £494; Lunacy, £1,647; Registry, £1,765; Rottnest, £131. Hon. members, in following the different subdepartments, will see that the figures I have quoted will correspond. I have much pleasure in submitting these estimates.

[General discussion ensued.]

**MR. RASON:** After the very lucid explanation of these estimates just given by the Minister, there is not much for any member of the Opposition to criticise, unless in the estimates themselves. Certainly there was little room for criticism in the remarks which the Committee had just been favoured with. The Minister had thought fit to remind members that if they looked at the foot of each department they would find the

total expenditure; that if they compared the total expenditure this year with the total expenditure of last year, they would be able to see for themselves what was the increase in each of these departments. This was an interesting statement to make; but as for any practical good, it might as well have been left unsaid. One did expect the Minister would have given some explanation of the work of some of his subdepartments, that he would have pointed out where increases occurred and the reasons for them. For example, there was the item "Immigration, £2,500." One would have thought this was a subject on which the Minister would have sought an opportunity to enlighten the House. It was desirable he should do so in order to indicate the intention of the Government in respect of this vote appearing on the Revenue Estimates, and he might state whether it was the intention of the Government to provide for some more comprehensive scheme of immigration. In fact the hon. member might have taken the Committee into his confidence in regard to what the Government intended to do on immigration. This was one of many opportunities of which the Minister seemed slow to avail himself; therefore he (Mr. Rason) would emulate the Minister's example and be very brief, but still he hoped the Minister would give some information in regard to immigration.

MR. GREGORY: The Minister might let us know at once, and it would save a lot of discussion.

THE MINISTER: Pick any item.

MR. GREGORY: We would not take any item yet. It was rather strange that the Minister did not endeavour to show that he had gained some knowledge of the various subdepartments under his control, and tell us what improvements he intended to make in them. For instance, in the Electoral Department, which showed as the result of the last general election that much improvement was needed, what did the Minister intend to do? In reference to Fisheries, the late Colonial Secretary interested himself very much in trying to improve the supply of cheap fish as a food for the people, and certain trawling experiments were initiated by him. What was the result of those experiments?

As to Gaols, since the Clarke episode, the Minister was probably keeping as far away from gaols as possible; and not much harm need be feared. The member for Coolgardie had called attention to the hours worked by hospital nurses, and on that matter the Minister promised to secure a departmental inquiry; therefore he should tell the House now what he proposed to do. As to the Police and Public Health departments, they would get on as well if no Minister were in power. It was regrettable that there seemed no possibility of passing the Health Bill this session.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Thanks to the Opposition.

MR. GREGORY: Thanks to the discreditable manner in which the Bill was introduced by the Minister. Few members present were inclined to study a Bill of such dimensions when they noted the ignorance exhibited by the Minister; and the select committee, moved for by the Minister, had not yet reported.

MR. H. BROWN regretted to find an increase of £1,250 for outdoor relief. Day after day he had repeated applications from persons who complained that they could not get relief from the dispenser of this charity. Probably that officer knew the persons better than he. The grant to the Perth public hospital should have been increased. The population of the city was growing, and the Perth hospital was a receptacle for the sick from all parts of the State. For some months past the expenditure was nearly £1,000 per month; and he questioned whether £10,000 would be sufficient to carry on the institution. What about the eight-hours day for nurses? The Government were the "white Australia" party; yet their Estimates provided for too many coloured men as civil servants.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Where?

MR. H. BROWN: In the Marble Bar and Roebourne electorates. Labour members, if true to their colours, would strike out these items. Prison labour ought to be made more profitable. Let the prisoners clear the land for immigrants; or institute the German system of paying prisoners the ruling rate of wages, deducting a charge for maintenance and cost of supervision, and handing the

balance to their wives and families. The Commissioner of Police reported that there was much drunkenness in the State. Was not that gentleman, when resident magistrate at Kalgoorlie, mainly responsible for the licensing of the numerous hotels there? It ill became him to upbraid our people with drunkenness. Why could not the Minister make the Sunday closing law uniform in Perth and the goldfields? There a man could, on Sunday, get a drink at any hotel. It would be better to let the hotels open legitimately during certain limited hours on Sundays. This afternoon the Minister for Works challenged anyone to move to strike out the item for police barracks. Had he (Mr. Brown) been present, he would have accepted the challenge. The police strongly objected to going into these barracks; and if they did go, the Commissioner and his inspectors should treat them like men. English soldiers were now being treated much more generously than in the past. So long as they were present at morning roll-call, the authorities did not care when they returned to barracks at night. The police should be given more liberty. In Australia there was a tendency to treat them harshly. Do not force them to return to barracks at an early hour of the evening. He would move that the fees for the Central Board of Health be struck out. Their action with reference to the local authority was not all that it should be. Some time ago we were told that the local authority must at once start to clean up the city, or the central board would come in and do the work and charge the Perth local board with the cost. The board were doing their best, but it was found when we condemned buildings, officers of the central board prepared letters for Afghans in the city ridiculing the medical officer of the local authority. When the local authorities were trying to do this work, the officers over which the Colonial Secretary presided should not assist in writing letters against the local authority. With reference to the erection of the new theatre, the central board passed the plans and stated that the building was in perfect order. Letters had reached him (Mr. Brown) as chairman of the Fire Brigades Board, stating that the fire appliances at the theatre were not what was laid down before the police court

bench. In the report prepared by the inspector, instead of 40 odd fire appliances having been erected in the building, only 28 were to be found there, yet it was decided that the building was structurally correct and in order, and on that the bench gave permission to open the building. If the president of the Central Board of Health could be away from his position for a year or two, then the officer was not needed. The Government had allowed the president of the board to be away on two or three occasions, once as a member of the Civil Service Commission, and at present as a member of the Commission on the Sanitation and Ventilation of Mines. He objected to legislation which gave the Colonial Secretary power to act as censor in regard to Sunday recreations. He referred to the rational amusements of the people in listening to the bands and other entertainments on Sundays. He understood that there was legislation providing that no entertainment could take place on Sundays without the sanction of the Colonial Secretary. Let the Colonial Secretary be broadminded enough to allow the people to enjoy themselves in their own way. If the Colonial Secretary saw that Sunday amusements pleased the people, then he should give the necessary permit.

Mr. CONNOR: The position that obtained at present in regard to electoral law was very bad indeed. In connection with voting by post the law was bad. He spoke feelingly on this matter because he had experienced the effect of the bad law. Under the Act as it at present stood it was possible for a voter who was franchised to record his vote the very minute the writ was issued, yet it would be impossible for that vote to be recorded. The sooner that state of affairs was altered the better for the electoral law of the country. He might be accused of making statements he could not prove, but he would give the facts of one case. There was a place called Hall's Creek where at present 100 men resided. Under the electoral law as it existed nearly everyone of these men should be on the roll. If these men went to Hall's Creek the minute a writ was issued for an election for Kimberley and recorded their votes, it was possible their votes might be counted in the election, but it was probable they would not. The votes had to be sent to

Broome, and steamers to Wyndham in certain seasons of the year ran only twice a month. But that was not the worst fault. A man might vote by post, and his vote would be lost under circumstances such as he had described. Some alteration ought to be made in the Act or regulations. The very vexed question of the aborigines of the State came under the control of the Colonial Secretary. This matter had been discussed many times and often in the House, and he (Mr. Connor) had been the butt not only of the Press but of members of the House on this question. He had always advocated that to solve the question and to place it on a proper basis it was necessary that an inquiry should be held. If anything was wrong in connection with the administration of the Aborigines Department or in connection with the employment of aborigines, it should be sifted to the bottom. He believed at present Dr. Roth was to be sent to the North to inquire into this question; but the report of that gentleman, even when it came to hand, would not be satisfactory, as it would not be a final report. It had been suggested that there should be a select committee appointed. He was in favour of appointing a select committee if nothing better could be obtained, but he did not think a select committee would be far-reaching enough to probe the question to the bottom. On the last occasion when this matter was debated and a motion was before the Chamber for the appointment of a select committee, he (Mr. Connor) moved an amendment that a Royal Commission be appointed, and he believed the amendment would have been carried only the motion was shelved. For the good name and fame of the people who went to the north of this country and spent the best part of their lives—some of whom had lost their lives—it was right that this question should be sifted to the bitter end. He congratulated the Colonial Secretary in having under his control the industrial schools, which were a credit to the country. The institutions were doing good, and whatever support could be given to them they were deserving of. Under the control of the Colonial Secretary were the gaols of the country. On the whole these institutions were fairly well

conducted, particularly at Fremantle, where an excellent officer was in charge. The staff was very good, but we owed a debt to the unfortunate people in those gaols which was not carried out at present, to some of them at least—he meant that there was not sufficient means of classification. We had various grades of prisoners going through there, and with the present system in the principal gaol there was no possibility for proper classification to be carried out. In the next Estimates provision should be made for that. In regard to hospitals, there were none in the Kimberleys. People there had to travel great distances. There was a hospital at Derby, also one at Wyndham, but there were no attendants there; and although there were houses people could go into, one could hardly call them hospitals. In the inland districts, where many people were employed, there were, perhaps, 600 to 700 shearers, and in the shearing season quite 70 to 80 per cent. of these men contracted malarial fever, and there was no place for them to go to. It was the duty of the Government to make some provision in the outside districts to alleviate the position of these men. There were also stockmen and labourers and other people. If the Government could not establish hospitals, at least they should see that many stations there had medicine chests. He noticed that an item in connection with the constabulary had been struck out, the amount being £1,000. No item ought to be taken off the Estimates in connection with the protection of the people in the north of this country. Either more money should be spent for the protection of the people, or the farce which existed at present should be done away with—the farce of supposing about two men could protect people living in an area of 400 to 500 miles. The police did their best, but were not effective. In the far north of this country, there was a system of duffing going on which was attaining very serious proportions. Not only stockmen, but some working in connection with the Government, and he was almost going to say some of the police, were also connected with this system of duffing. They seemed to think it was no harm to take animals which were not branded. A good staff of police should be sent to the far north to stop

this system, and also for the protection of the whole of the people in those districts.

MR. F. F. WILSON: Would members be entitled, during the discussion of these estimates, to deal with each division generally?

THE CHAIRMAN: The vote of the whole of the Colonial Secretary's department.

MR. F. F. WILSON: The electoral division required to be carefully looked into, and some improvement should be made in it. Provision was made for an inspector of parliamentary rolls, at a salary of £350 per annum. He thought that Mr. Octavius Burt had charge of the electoral office. The management of that office during the last election was deplorable, and he believed that even at present it was in a state of chaos and confusion. Some time ago an effort was made to purify the electoral rolls. Men were engaged to go into the different suburban electorates to get the names of people, and after that was done the revision court sat, and numbers of people were summoned to testify as to whether they were on the rolls or not. Mr. Burt was in charge of the proceedings, although they were supposed to be in charge of the police magistrate; and after a note had been taken of a number of objections, the rolls were supposed to be purified. In the electorate he represented, between two and three thousand people had been struck off the rolls because they failed to go to the Town Hall and say they were still residing in the place where they had resided for years. Then there was the Police Department, in which there was a great amount of dissatisfaction. The Commissioner in charge received £750 a year, and there was also a superintendent at £450 a year. He thought those two offices might well be merged into one, seeing there were many subinspectors, and other men should be graded up a bit. The classification of the various grades of the service was necessary, to do away with the very unsatisfactory state of affairs where junior men were placed over seniors. Promotion should be by competitive examination, and seniority combined with good conduct and capability should have the preference. He was informed that men had come from other States, and had been pitchforked into positions of re-

sponsibility over men who had served in the department for years. Naturally there would be dissatisfaction. Then there was the system of transfer. He thought the men had a grievance in reference to that system. The department should defray the cost of transfers. Instances had occurred where married men with families had been put to the expense of £15 or £20 through being transferred to other places. A number of men at Perth had been stationed there all their lives, whilst others with families had been transferred to distant places. Men should take it in turn to go to distant places, and men who had been working in back blocks should have an opportunity of coming down here. Then there was also the question of the gold-fields allowance. A single man received the same allowance as a married man with a large family. The department ought to try, as far as possible, to station married men where the conditions of life were as convenient as they could be; and single men should be placed in positions where conditions were not so favourable. Then there were the forces in connection with the criminal investigation branch. These should be selected from the uniform branch, and if men returned from it to resume duty they should be in the same grade of service as their seniority entitled them to. Men had been pitchforked into positions over the heads of others of longer experience and service. First-class constables doing plain-clothes duty received 8s. 6d. per day and 1s. 6d. allowance, making 10s. a day, with £7 per annum in lieu of uniform and 1s. 6d. for meal allowance, and travelling first-class when on duty. Corporals received 9s. 6d. per day and 1s. 6d. meal allowance, but travelled second-class when on duty. Attention had been called of late to the Police Gratuity Fund. Men paid 3s. or 4s. per month and more according to grade, and it was only fair that they should be supplied with an annual balance-sheet to show how the fund was expended. If any man was entitled to fair treatment it was the police officer who was entrusted with the guardianship of our life and property. He (Mr. Wilson) hoped the Colonial Secretary would take note of some of these grievances and endeavour to remedy them, and also to see if he could make

any improvement in the electoral administration.

MR. A. J. WILSON: This was by no means the least interesting of the Estimates, seeing that the department dealt with the protection of so many humanitarian interests which appealed so strongly to the humanitarian instincts of the Colonial Secretary. We found in the Minister's own department a difference of £557 between the contemplated expenditure and that of last year. The figures on the Estimates showed £355, but that was only the difference between the amount voted in the former year and the amount that the generosity of the Minister permitted him to ask the House to indorse on this occasion. It was a purely administrative department, but one very important question came up, and the amount of the item was quite infinitesimal, this was the item for immigration. Why were we tinkering with such a paltry sum as £2,500 on immigration? We should strike the item out and deal with the larger question at a later stage. There was an item of State ceremonials which had apparently been transferred to Miscellaneous expenditure. It was an exceedingly interesting item; but he hoped, during the *régime* of the present Minister, the amount would be considerably less than appeared on the Estimates for the last financial year; and it would be advisable for the Minister to arrange that the amount expended should be clearly shown among the Miscellaneous expenditure for the information of members. One of our chief cares was to do the best we possibly could for the aborigines, a tribe fast following in the wake of all other aboriginal tribes in Australia. Do what we would, care for these people how we might, treat them with the generosity and the liberality we might, it seemed impossible to arrange things so that they might continue to reproduce and exist at all times. The Committee were entitled to know the means by which the Government proposed to promote the welfare of the aboriginal natives.

MR. GREGORY: There would be ample time to learn that in recess.

[MR. BATH took the Chair.]

MR. A. J. WILSON: The Minister might give more information on this

subject. It was proposed to increase the expenditure on this heading by £1,135. There was comparatively little difference between last year's and this year's estimates for Charities. True there was a big difference so far as outdoor relief was concerned. We were supposed to spend £100 less during the current year, but in view of the industrial conditions in this State at present, and in view of the fact that it was seriously proposed to increase the volume of industrial workers by the immigration of white people from the continent of Europe, by which we would probably import a considerable number of people with a tendency to increase that particular class that made this item on the Estimates necessary, it seemed that the liberality of the Minister was not sufficient in regard to this particular item. The Electoral Department had been for some time a good target for anybody attacking the administration of Government departments. One of the principal critics of this department had been the Colonial Secretary in times past, and should the Minister bring his large and varied experience and enthusiasm to this question, we would be justified in anticipating a very material change in the administration of this department to the advantage of the State as a whole. It might be taken as an indication of the superior capacity of the Minister to find that it was proposed to do the work of the department on a sum of £3,000 less than was the case last year. It might be urged that there might not be a general election this ensuing half-year; but this year should be more prolific in connection with the work of the compilation of up-to-date rolls, and more expense must be incurred unless there were some means by which the Colonial Secretary was effecting a considerable saving. In connection with the Medical vote, the Minister should take into consideration the necessity in large industrial centres where the workers contributed to the upkeep of the hospital, of devising some means whereby practically self-supporting institutions should receive a little encouragement from the funds of the State. There had been considerable hardship in the timber districts in consequence of the falling off in the demand for timber and the reduction in contributions for hospitals

and medical, and this fact might well be considered by the Minister in allotting the money available for hospitals. He might, for instance, give a lump sum to each hospital, or a subsidy of 10s. in the £ or perhaps £ for £, to help these districts in a time of difficulty. There was no institution that more urgently needed the assistance of the Government than these hospitals, which to a large extent had grown out of the energies and contributions of the people in these districts. As to the administration of hospitals, there should be no serious obstacle now that the medical vote was increased in these estimates. Referring next to the Lunacy department, there was none which appealed more to the sympathy of the people and he hoped also to the sympathy of the Government; for not only was convenient housing of lunatics necessary, but more medical comforts should be provided for assisting in the curative work. This State stood well in comparison with other States as to the proportion of insanity.

MR. DIAMOND: This State had a larger proportion of men, and less women and children.

MR. A. J. WILSON: One great cause of lunacy was the drinking habits of the people; and there should be a legitimate endeavour to assist in curing lunatic patients. The statistics showed that more cases of lunacy arose from drinking habits than from any other cause; therefore the indications were comparatively favourable in this State, and he hoped the proud position which the State now occupied in this respect would be an incentive to the Minister to keep that position and improve it if possible. In connection with the Police department, it was proposed to save £200 in the cost of administration. This was somewhat astonishing in view of the fact that we had one policeman to about 2,700 square miles of territory, and one policeman to about 390 of the population; so that every policeman had to protect a larger area and a greater number of people than was the case in the Eastern States. The cost per head for this department was much higher than in other parts of Australia; but he questioned whether the police force in this State were as efficient as they ought to be. He questioned also

whether we got from them the good work we might get under more advantageous circumstances; for there was not the harmony or the contentment in the police service that would be conducive to the best service being given. A thorough and minute investigation into the working of the department should be made, and he thought it would disclose the existence of discontent, dissatisfaction, and consequent lack of harmony in the Police department. A man who desired to secure promotion in this department had to be somewhat of a toady or lickspittle to his superior officer; or if not, he was looked on with grave disapproval and was denied promotion. This did not make for good administration. Habitual drunkards should not be treated as criminals, but should receive medical treatment in an inebriate home.

*Office of Colonial Secretary, £5,473.*

Item—Office-keeper, £120:

MR. SCADDAN asked for explanation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This man had charge of practically the whole of the central Government buildings, and was on duty from 7 a.m. till 7 p.m. He was a zealous officer, and well deserved this increase of £20. His wife acted as a cleaner.

Item—Immigration, £2,500:

MR. WATTS asked for explanation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Advances were given to men who wished to bring their wives and families from the East. Each advance was secured by a guarantor. From the 1st July, 1903, to 30th June, 1904, 325 adults and 321 children were thus introduced at a cost of £2,121 2s. 5d., of which £409 11s. 4d. had been refunded. On the 30th June, 1904, the total amount owing to the department was £1,711 11s. 1d. The borrower was given a certain time in which to pay—generally six months—which could, at the discretion of the Minister, be extended to twelve. He had in several cases extended the time. From the 1st July till 25th November last 54 families were thus imported—92 adults and 107 children. The amount paid for shipping charges was £300 1s.

4d.; amount not yet paid, £420 17s. 7d.; total, £720 18s. 11d. Deduct refunds £91 1Cs., and there was outstanding on the 25th November last £629 8s. 11d. Some of the outstanding amounts were not yet due. All this represented assisted immigration from the Eastern States.

MR. RASON: What was proposed to be done in the future?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The fund was established to bring the families of persons residing in Western Australia to this country. There had been an outcry that a large amount of money was sent away to keep families in the Eastern States; and the Government wished to prevent the money going out of the country.

MR. GREGORY: This item related to work which was being done by Mr. Wilbur lecturing in the other States. During the past month he had met many people from Victoria who had come here almost solely through the efforts of Mr. Wilbur in Victoria. If these people were satisfied with the country, some 15 or 20 families would come over here from one district in Victoria. This was the class of person we wanted to settle on the land, men with a knowledge of farming.

MR. RASON: Could the Colonial Secretary say whether the past action of the Government in advancing the passage money for people to be brought here was to be continued in the future? It would be possible to refer to the question of immigration later on.

THE PREMIER: To-night he hoped to deal in another manner with the question of immigration. He was glad to have the testimony of the member for Menzies as to the good work done by Mr. Wilbur. He was not prepared to ask for the authority of Parliament to enable the Government to grant free passages to any persons to come here. The State must wait till it was found necessary to take such a step. The question of assisted passages had engaged the attention of the Government, because the system at present in force was open to considerable abuse and was not likely to be thoroughly satisfactory in its operation. The State should get a fair return for the money expended.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

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

Aborigines (division 36), £2,500:

MR. HEITMANN: How was the money expended?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Unfortunately the Estimates did not show that. It had been the custom hitherto for it to appear. He had a tabulated statement. In the first instance there was the Chief Protector of Aborigines, who drew a salary of £550 per annum; there was no increase there. The accountant clerk received £250, and there was no increase there. The working superintendent at Welshpool settlement received £86 6s. 8d. last year and £100 this year; but last year he was only occupied for 10 months, so there was an increase of £16. The travelling reporter was paid £42 11s. 8d. There was no item this year, so there was a saving. Blankets and clothing £1,157 13s. 8d. last year, and this year £1,200, and so it went on, dealing with every item.

MR. HEITMANN had been under the impression that the blacks in and around a settlement were entitled to blankets every year, but that was not so. He had seen blacks on the Murchison suffering with the cold without a stitch of clothing on them. He would like the Colonial Secretary to see that blacks got blankets every year.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We had on this year's Estimates an item of £1,200. The blankets were usually given out on the 24th May, the late Queen's birthday. He would see that blacks all over the State were served next May with blankets.

MR. HEITMANN: Or earlier.

MR. COWCHER had known cases where blankets were not given out until September. They ought to be given out by the 1st May, and the natives should be able to get them at the police stations.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was his intention to see that aborigines got their blankets early in May, before the cold weather set in.

DR. HICKS: Every person employing a native was supposed to give him legitimate treatment. A practice had arisen, he did not know whether at the instigation of the present Colonial Secretary or not, whereby the Chief Protector of



Aborigines was sending packages of medicine to the far north, under the control of the police. Amongst these medicines were some of the most virulent poisons.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** An epidemic in the North-West broke out at Marble Bar just when the district medical officer at Marble Bar had been granted leave of absence to go to the Eastern States to see his mother, as she was dying. He had been at Marble Bar a considerable length of time. A medical officer was despatched to take his place, and those officers crossed on the way; so that Marble Bar was for eight or ten days without a medical man. During that time blacks came in suffering from what was known as influenza amongst the blacks. To get over the difficulty he instructed, not the Chief Protector of Aborigines, but the Principal Medical Officer, to issue instructions to the magistrates or the Government representative at Marble Bar to administer medicine in a similar form to what had been prescribed by the Principal Medical Officer. That was done. He (the Minister) had seen the epidemic, not alone in this State but in other States of the Commonwealth. It took off a certain percentage. The evidence on the file showed that aborigines were kept on the stations too long. The member for Roebourne would remember the attitude he (the Minister) had taken up on this question. The disease was eating the heart out of the aborigines of the State. He believed that the Chief Protector of Aborigines had issued medicines in the past, but he did not know whether that officer had sent them by the police. In the outlying portions of the State where the aborigines were most plentiful it would be impossible to have medicine administered to the blacks by a medical practitioner. He would promise to consult the hon. member and see that the aborigines were supplied with medicine in the most suitable way.

**DR. HICKS** was given to understand the Chief Medical Officer had protested against the action of the department. Not only were the officers of the department sending medicines that would do harm, but they were including such medicines as bichloride of mercury. The chief inspector claimed not to have suf-

ficient money, though £9,000 was allocated to promote the welfare of aborigines. By our Constitution Act we were supposed to devote one per cent. of our revenue to this object, and this would amount to £40,000. It appeared the Government had robbed the natives to the extent of nearly £200,000. The excuse of insufficient funds was not sufficient in the circumstances.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The matter would be investigated. The disease the hon. member complained of was a different disease from that at Marble Bar.

**DR. HICKS** had tabled a motion to seek information which might have guided him in dealing with these Estimates, but the motion was kept at the bottom of the paper. This was a strong protest by the Chief Medical Officer. The people in the North treated the natives properly, but the Government did not.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** As settlement advanced we had more natives to deal with and must of necessity increase the vote for aborigines to give them the smallest assistance they could live on. The matter would be inquired into with the Chief Medical Officer.

**DR. HICKS:** What had the Premier to say in respect to the constitutional point?

**THE PREMIER** was pleased to see the hon. member displaying such interest in the welfare of the people the hon. member represented, so as to get their hands into the public purse. The point raised by the hon. member would be looked into, and it would be ascertained what steps were necessary to avoid undue and unnecessary expenditure in the direction indicated.

**DR. HICKS:** Three years ago the Premier had some hard things to say about the treatment of natives in the North. The hon. member could now do his duty to the natives, and give them the money they were entitled to by the Constitution Act.

**THE PREMIER:** The jingle of the guinea helped the hurt.

Vote put and passed.

*Charities (division 37), £32,497 :*

Item—Director of Charities, Industrial Schools, and Government Labour Bureau, £450 :

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** Did the Government Labour Bureau come under the Colonial Secretary's Department?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** No; it came under the department of the Minister for Labour.

Vote put and passed.

*Electoral (division 38), £8,265:*

Item—Inspector Parliamentary Rolls, £350:

**MR. F. F. WILSON:** Was this a new appointment?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The Estimates showed the officer was appointed at £350. This was Mr. Daly, who was a very efficient officer, and who had been occupying the position, so far as he (the Minister) knew, for four years.

Item — Electoral Registrars (16), £1,475:

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** Were those officers receiving small salaries on this item employed in other branches of the Government service?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Some were mining registrars.

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** Could not some of the officers receiving £200 a year in this department carry out a canvass of citizens?

**MR. HEITMANN:** During last election it was found that hundreds of names had not been put on the rolls, though the claims for votes had been handed in to the electoral registrar's office.

**MR. KEYSER:** Having held the position of electoral registrar in the Plantagenet district, he was well acquainted with the details of registration, and knew that any registrar who neglected to put names on the roll that were supplied to him and failed to give a certificate of the claims received was liable to a heavy penalty.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The defects in the electoral rolls were not always due to the electoral registrars, because having himself taken a keen interest in the placing of names on the rolls in Queensland and in this State during many years, he knew the difficulty of getting persons to take the trouble of placing their names on the rolls. A house-to-house canvass had been made in the metropolitan area

on the coast, and in the metropolitan area on the goldfields. That canvass in the coast district reduced the electoral roll from 25,000 to 15,000; the reduction at Fremantle being about 8,000, and about the same number in Perth. The rolls at the last general election were very much inflated, there not having been time to revise them after the new Electoral Act came into operation. Every care had since been taken to get the rolls up to date, and the house-to-house canvass lately made showed conclusively that the rolls previously in use were most inflated. He hoped they would be more up to date when printed this time. The electoral officers were also more experienced, and there was now a better system of placing names on the rolls.

**MR. A. J. WILSON** referred to the salaries paid to electoral officers in the various districts. Some of them appeared to have got increases. A more effectual system of compiling electoral rolls would be to employ policemen instead of paid canvassers. Policemen could be seen walking about the metropolis and other large towns, doing noting in particular except wearing out shoe-leather, and these men might be usefully employed in the work of the Electoral department.

**MR. NEEDHAM:** It was not altogether the fault of the canvassers that the rolls were defective: it was the system under the present Electoral Act which was at fault; and he hoped the Ministry as a body would endeavor to get the Act altered next year.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member could not deal with the amendment of the Electoral Act.

**MR. NEEDHAM** was referring to the system of placing names on the roll, and showing that it was defective under the present Act. Some persons signed the forms who had not the qualification which they claimed; the result being that the electoral registrars were put to much trouble, and the rolls got inflated.

**DR. ELLIS** agreed with the last speaker that the Electoral Act could not properly be administered so as to get every name on the roll that ought to be there; and the only satisfactory way would be to appoint police constables as electoral registrars, with some electoral head to look after this branch of police

work. He hoped the Government would give attention to this matter next year.

MR. A. J. WILSON, referring to the salaries paid to electoral registrars, pointed out that in certain districts much higher salaries were paid than in others, and for no apparent reason.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was true that some people were notified to attend the revision court to show cause why their names should not be struck off, though they had lived for years in the same houses. But in Fremantle with its 15,000 to 17,000 electors, and in Perth with the same number, only about 200 were wrongly notified. It was very difficult to induce some people to enrol. When a qualified elector received a notice to attend the court, he had only to put his name and address and the date on it, and post it to the district registrar; and there was no need to attend in person to show cause. That instruction was issued since he (the Minister) took office. All the district registrars had been notified of it; and it was acted on in Perth and Fremantle at the last revision courts. If such a system were not in vogue, how could the rolls be purified? In this immense country we must expect inflated rolls. All who knew the Inspector of Parliamentary Rolls were convinced of his competence. Every possible effort was being made to get our rolls up to date; but last session we passed the Electoral and Redistribution Bills just before the general election; hence the new rolls had to be compiled practically from the existing rolls, and the officers were naturally reluctant to strike off names, wisely preferring to retain doubtful names rather than run the risk of striking off qualified voters.

Item—Extra assistance in the preparation of electoral rolls; fees to returning and presiding officers, etc., £5,000:

MR. LYNCH: Was there any fixed scale of fees to house-to-house inspectors?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: On the goldfields they were engaged at 10s. a day and a bonus of 2s. 6d.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Fisheries* (division 39), £3,560.

Item—Chief Inspector, £325:

MR. A. J. WILSON: What was the result of this officer's trawling expedition?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It had been successful in locating fish in various local waters.

Vote put and passed.

*Gaols* (division 40), £30,953:

MR. NEEDHAM: A motion he had tabled to deal with this subject could not be reached. Would the Minister inquire as to the hours of warders in the Fremantle gaol? What was his opinion on the general administration of that prison?

MR. KEYSER regretted the narrowness of the last speaker. Why should warders at Fremantle work eight hours only while other warders worked 10 or even 18?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When the member for Fremantle moved a motion in favour of eight hours for the warders, he (the Colonial Secretary) promised the member that a return should be prepared showing how the shortened hours would affect the position. The return showed that the present cost was £3,080 15s., and that the extra cost by curtailing the hours would be £2,992.

Item—Comptroller of Prisons, £250:

MR. NEEDHAM: There was an increase of £50 in the salary of this officer. Was it fair that the Sheriff who drew £550 should also receive £250 as Comptroller of Prisons? The officer also held the position of Chief Electoral Officer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Last year £50 was struck off this officer's salary, but the Government of the day restored the amount by Executive authority. The officer had been receiving £250 as comptroller for the last four years.

MR. KEYSER: The explanation was not satisfactory.

MR. RASON: The statement that the vote was reduced by £50 last year was not correct.

MR. NEEDHAM moved that the item be reduced by £50.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item—Surgeon, £250:

MR. KEYSER: The surgeon at Fremantle received £800 per annum. Had this officer the right of private practice?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The surgeon also received £550 from the medical vote.

**DR. HICKS:** This gentleman was entitled to private practice, but he had no time at his disposal for private practice.

**MR. KEYSER:** The explanation was satisfactory. What was the total amount drawn by this officer?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** In salary and allowances the officer received £900 or £909.

Item- Religious Instructors, £300 :

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** Was any fixed remuneration paid to the religious instructors? How many were there, and what did they do?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** There were two instructors at the Fremantle Gaol, one belonging to the Church of England, and one to the Roman Catholic Church. Services were held regularly.

**MR. W. NELSON:** On visiting the gaol the other day he looked in at the library, and found that although there was a large number of religious books, these books were seldom read.

**MR. KEYSER:** The minister of religion attending on prisoners did good work, and the money was wisely spent. If the minister of religion came into contact frequently with prisoners and did them good, then such remarks as had been just made by a freethinker came with bad grace.

**MR. NELSON** was amazed, or perhaps he ought not to be amazed, at the audacity of the member for Albany. He (Mr. Nelson) had no objection to prisoners being instructed in religious subjects; but it would be better to spend that money in extending the facilities for enabling prisoners to acquire some skill in a trade, so that they might earn an honest living after coming out of prison.

Item—Schoolmaster, £196 :

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** The Superintendent of Prisons, in his report on the education of juvenile prisoners, remarked that there was not a desire on the part of juvenile prisoners to take advantage of the instruction, and that the shortness of the sentences of most of the youthful offenders militated against their acquiring instruction while in prison. He (Mr. Piesse) urged on the Minister that something should be done to improve this

condition of affairs; for as the youths did not show a disposition to take advantage of education, there should be a means of compelling them to attend instruction, and thus make better use of the schoolmaster's services for juvenile offenders.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** was not sufficiently long in office to be well acquainted with the inner workings of the department, but would promise to inquire fully into the reasons for the superintendent's statement that juvenile offenders did not show a sufficient disposition to take advantage of the schoolmaster's services. Still youths under 16 years of age were not sent to the Fremantle prison, but to reformatory schools. As to the value of the schoolmaster's services in prison, it was never too late to learn, whether prisoners were young or old.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** Probably some of the youthful offenders in prison did not possess the same mental fibre as the class of boys who were not sent to prison. Still many of the youthful offenders were not beyond redemption, and could be educated and their morals improved by proper influences being brought to bear on them in prison. A previous paragraph in the same report remarked that very little progress had been made in the erection of the new division of the prison buildings. This question of the separation of prisoners by providing facilities for that purpose was very important, because on it hinged the question of education, and especially the improvement of the morals of juvenile offenders while in prison. The Minister and his colleagues might do much good by hastening the completion of the new portion of the building, for enabling this separation of prisoners to be made more completely than was possible hitherto. It would provide for the classification of offenders, and would separate the younger offenders from the evil influences of having to herd with some of the worst criminals in the State.

**MR. LYNCH:** If the Public Service Commissioner would, in the course of his duties, revise the salaries of persons employed in prisons, the work which this House was now doing would be practically wasted.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** This was altogether apart from the classification of prisoners. We were considering the administration of the department.

**HON. F. H. PRIEST:** The hon. member had made an uncalled-for remark.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The hon. member would see that the amount was simply carried forward from the past year, and seeing how recently Ministers came into office, no member would think he could be acquainted with every employee in this department, which embraced 15 different branches.

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** Certainly members in this House could not be expected to know all the details of the department, yet seeing that the Minister received a substantial salary one thought the hon. gentleman should inform the Committee in relation to any of these matters.

**Item—Religious instruction, £30:**

**MR. WATTS** asked for information.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** This item was for religious instruction inaugurated during the year, and the amount was paid to the Anglican Bishop of Perth. The member for Menzies was aware of the innovation as regarded Hamel. It was supposed that the very best prisoners from Fremantle were sent to Hamel, and it was necessary that some religious instructor should go there.

**MR. NELSON:** Was one to understand that Hamel was in such a demoralised condition that it was necessary for them to have a special religious instructor?

**MR. GREGORY:** Prisoners were there.

**MR. NELSON:** It appeared that about £30 worth of religious instruction had been paid for, and he would like to know the nature of the religious instruction, the necessity for it, and why it cost that amount.

**MR. A. J. WILSON** understood that a Church of England minister sent to Pinjarra paid visits to the men at the outstation at Hamel. He presumed this amount was compensation for the expenditure.

**MR. GREGORY** was satisfied with the explanation received. He was pleased the Minister had seen the necessity of providing religious instruction to the various prisoners there were about the country. He hoped the State would have

good value for the expenditure on the Estimates.

**Item—Assistance to prisoners discharged from gaol, £80:**

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** The vote last year was £200 and the expenditure £60. It seemed that when a prisoner finished a term of imprisonment he might earn a certain amount of money; but those who were imprisoned for a short period, 1, 2, or even 3 months, might stand in need of some financial assistance to enable them to get away from the immediate environment of the prison. £80 seemed altogether inadequate.

**MR. GREGORY:** If there was one item to which the Colonial Secretary should have shown special attention it was this. He did not think there was any better method of assisting prisoners than giving them a small sum when leaving the gaol. There should be a larger sum available for the purpose. Why full advantage was not taken of the vote last year he did not know.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** This year's Estimates were based on last year's. For this purpose £60 was expended, and we now provided £80.

**MR. KEYSER:** Would the item be increased if necessary?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** That could not be done unless Form J were used.

**Item—Incidental, £3,500:**

**MR. WATTS:** What was this large item?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** There was a decrease of £20 for this year.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Government Gardens and Government House Domain, £3,102—agreed to.*

*Harbour and Light, £15,320—agreed to.*

*Lunacy, £21,636:*

**MR. GREGORY** asked for information as to the housing of the insane. The sum provided seemed small. The late Government tried to get the patients removed from the unsuitable barracks at

Fremantle. What did the Minister proposed.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** A building was being erected at Claremont which would cost on completion £110,000 or £120,000. Approximately, £10,000 was expended, and this afternoon we passed an item on the Works Estimates of £15,000 for the same purpose. The architect pointed out that not more than that sum could be spent this year. At Claremont were 89 patients; at Fremantle, 333; and at Whitby, 50—total, 472. He believed the Claremont building would be commenced in the first week of the new year.

**MR. GREGORY:** The building should be speedily completed. The barracks at Fremantle were a disgrace to the State.

**DR. HICKS:** The Lunacy Act of last session provided that the lunacy commissioners should be paid. No such provision appeared here.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** A sum of £150 was set apart for their payment. The commissioners had never yet been paid; but a few days ago he authorised a fee of two guineas a visit. The visiting inspectors at Fremantle and Claremont were not those who visited Whitby Falls.

**DR. HICKS:** Annual salaries would be better than so much per visit.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** These gentlemen were appointed about a year ago by another Government.

**MR. GREGORY:** The fact that there was no provision for them on the Estimates showed gross carelessness on the Minister's part.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** These officers had submitted two or three reports since their appointment. The Inspector General said that out of a certain item they could be paid £150 a year. Their visits were quarterly; and according to the Act one must be a legal and the other a medical practitioner, and neither must be a resident magistrate or a district medical officer. The inspectors must be appointed from outside the service. The names of these gentlemen were, he believed, Birmingham and Darbyshire.

**MR. RASON:** The Minister had informed the Committee that provision was made somewhere on these Estimates for visitors in lunacy. The Minister

could not say which of the 21 items contained this provision.

**THE MINISTER:** Item 21.

**MR. RASON:** We were to look for it in item 21, which included provisions, bedding, and clothing, fuel and light, medicines, minor urgent repairs, furniture, burials, stationery, uniforms for attendants and servants, sanitation, etcetera. Apparently the Minister took refuge in "etcetera." Possibly he meant that the provision for visitors in lunacy was included in sanitation?

**DR. HICKS:** It was somewhat singular that the Minister mentioned £150 as the sum provided for commissioners in lunacy. The two commissioners who had been appointed took the work on the understanding that they were to be paid £75 a year each. A medical man was at a loss unless he received some such amount, because being a lunacy commissioner he was not allowed to sign lunacy papers, and he would thus lose about £30 a year in fees. A Labour Government would hardly ask a commissioner in lunacy to do the work for nothing.

Item—Matron £130, increase £20:

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** The lady engaged as matron was one of the best who could have been procured in the Commonwealth, and it would be a reasonable sum if she received at least £150 per annum for her services.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Medical, £74,955:*

**HON. M. H. JACOBY** brought under the attention of the Committee one or two directions in which the medical services might be reasonably extended to some of the rural districts. The situation was such in regard to the services of doctors that the cost was excessive, and he hoped the department would take into consideration one or two at least of the districts, and see if something could be done to place at the disposal of the people there doing pioneering work some means of obtaining medical assistance at a cost commensurate with their means. Several cases had come under his notice during the last two or three years, in which the amount charged for medical attendance was so great as to bring ordinary new

settlers or workmen almost to the verge of bankruptcy. Of the various ways in which we were hoping to encourage settlement on the land in the farming and rural districts, one way was to ensure to those people some certainty that the wives and children of settlers might be able to get, at a cost suitable to their means, medical attendance when required. He brought this under the notice of the Minister so that inquiry might be made to see if something could be done in this direction. Also he would call attention to a peculiar system existing in connection with some public hospitals, where people were ordered into the hospital for treatment, and in addition to having to pay a sum towards the upkeep of these public hospitals, they had to pay as patients very large sums for medical attendance.

**THE MINISTER:** Only for surgical operations.

**HON. M. H. JACOBY** had himself paid not long ago a sum charged for a working man who was taken to the hospital suffering from a disease not requiring surgical treatment. It appeared that the system of charging was open to some abuse. If persons entered a public hospital, the sum they had to pay should include medical attendance. He knew institutions in which patients had been charged 10 to 20 guineas by the doctor who was appointed medical attendant at the public hospital; and the reason why this matter was mentioned now was to draw particular attention to the need for reducing the cost of medical attendance, especially in maternity cases. One way in which we could give practical exercise to a sentiment of humanity, and do something of a practical nature to assist in maintaining our birth-rate at the highest rate in Australia, would be to place at the services of poor people cheap and efficient medical attendance in maternity cases. Not only was it necessary to do this, but more necessary still to place at the disposal of the people generally, whether in towns or rural districts, a band of trained certificated midwives. If there was one thing more than another that tended to a high death-rate of children in this State, it was bad management in maternity cases through unskilled nursing. He hoped the Government would endeavour to see

that those incompetent persons who were generally employed as midwives should be replaced by certificated midwives, who should be thoroughly competent to act in these cases. Not only so, but the Government might do something to place the services of these certificated midwives at the disposal of the people at rates that would not be excessive. It was necessary to organise a scheme of more than elementary character in connection with this matter, not only for the provision of midwives, but also a system of maternity homes where these cases could be treated at a moderate rate of cost, with a certainty that the persons would have efficient treatment and that the cost would not be excessive. He trusted the Government would go into this matter at the earliest moment, because those persons who had experience—and he thought the medical members of this House would be able particularly to say more on the subject than he could—would know that there was a crying need for the provision of efficient midwives. Not only did he hope the Government would provide this body of efficient midwives, but would see at the same time that those persons were qualified to give instruction to mothers throughout the country on the proper feeding of children. We had in the market a large number of patent foods of various sorts, and he believed that the misuse of these foods was largely responsible for the high death-rate amongst young children. There was a great lack of knowledge amongst the persons here responsible for the feeding of infants and the proper method of doing it; and in connection with a department of this description some means should be adopted for carrying into the homes of all the people efficient knowledge and instruction as to the proper feeding of infants. This was of the greatest importance in Australia, because every life we could save was a material asset to the State; and if we could, as he believed was possible, decrease the large percentage of deaths of young children, we should be giving to this State a valuable asset that was most desirable. He commended these suggestions to the Minister, and trusted that he would inquire into the various matters mentioned and be able to inaugurate some scheme that would get over the difficulties.

DR. ELLIS: The Government were not getting anything like the value for the money expended on the Medical department. The Minister should give some idea whether he was going to require from the hospital nurses eight hours a day as sufficient for their labour; and he thought the Minister could easily save the difference by economy in some items of this vote. It was a highly technical and complicated vote.

[HON. M. H. JACOBY took the Chair, to relieve Mr. Bath.]

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, replying to the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis), said he had here a large return showing the difference in the cost which would be caused to the department if the system of eight hours were adopted for nurses in public hospitals throughout the State. He hoped the hon. member would look over it, instead of expecting him (the Minister) to burden the Committee by reading the details. It was his intention to go into the Medical department and do some reorganising work during the recess. He would like to receive particulars of the cases referred to by Mr. Speaker, in which some medical officers made heavy charges to patients in public hospitals over and above the proper hospital charges, in cases other than surgical operations. For himself he did not know of any. He had tried hard to prevent district medical officers from charging patients in public hospitals for surgical operations. He found, however, that in the regulations medical officers had power to charge for surgical operations. A case came from Southern Cross recently in which a woman was very ill, and it was necessary for her to undergo an operation; and not being well off, the doctor advised the husband to send her to the Government hospital at Perth, pointing out that the charge would not be very large. The doctor performed the operation successfully in the public hospital; and after the husband had paid the hospital charges, he received a bill from the medical attendant for something like £20 for performing the operation. The husband had not the money available, and applied to him (the Minister), who found that the regulations permitted a district medical officer

to make a charge for performing an operation in a public hospital, provided that he acquainted the patient before performing the operation as to the amount that would be charged for it. A patient could make conditions with a medical man to be his physician while in the hospital. It was very unfair for a medical officer to receive a salary from the Government and then make a farther charge for performing an operation on a patient in a Government hospital. If he (the Minister) could have prevented it in the case he had spoken of, he would have done so. Both were for operations, and neither for medical treatment. He felt confident that he was correct; and as far as medical treatment was concerned, he did not think that a doctor receiving a salary from the Government as medical officer had power to charge, unless for an operation, and then only by making a special arrangement with the patient beforehand. Such extra charges should not be allowed, and he (the Minister) would do his best to prevent them in the future, except in cases where the patient was in a position to pay. Where a patient was in a Government hospital, going in there for financial reasons, it was unreasonable for a medical officer of the Government to make an extra charge for treating a patient, except by special arrangement beforehand. While some patients could afford to pay such fees, such charges should not be allowed except by arrangement; and a medical man in such cases should not have the right to charge over and above the hospital fees for medical treatment where the patient was not actually able to pay. As to maternity homes, which Mr. Speaker had suggested, a deputation from the goldfields had asked for the establishment of a maternity home at Kalgoorlie, and the request was then placed before the principal medical officer. In arguing against it now, he (the Minister) was unable to go into the technical reasons which the principal medical officer had used against the request on the goldfields. The principal medical officer had set forth to him, as a layman, sound reasons why a maternity home should not be established at the hospital; reasons which he (the Minister) could not give now after a short perusal of the papers placed



before him. Professional medical men in this House might give to hon. members their ideas on the matter.

DR. HICKS: With reference to the fees charged at Government hospitals, a medical officer in charge of a hospital might charge both for medical and surgical cases; but he was entitled to hold only his own surgical fees, the medical fees being handed over to the Colonial Treasurer. Members should be informed of the hardship entailed in districts like the far North in regard to a medical man being called upon to refund medical fees so received. Take Roebourne, where he was stationed for a few years; there was a Government hospital, but no private hospital was available in which to put a patient who could afford to pay for medical treatment. A medical man there having such a patient, would have to put him into the public hospital or provide lodging accommodation outside, where he could not receive proper nursing. If put into the hospital, the doctor would have to hand over those fees to the Colonial Treasurer; and it would reduce a doctor's income unless some latitude were allowed in such cases. There should be some regulation in regard to these far-away districts, not necessarily applying to large towns. With regard to nursing, he agreed that all nurses should be registered; for the only thing to ensure efficient nursing was to control the registration. An Act passed in England last year worked well. Nursing was far more important than medical service, more particularly in maternity cases. Medical men were aware of the hardship of having to employ women knowing nothing of the work. Cases of blood-poisoning might arise, but no power was given to the authorities to deal with the matter. A medical man had to notify all cases of blood-poisoning during maternity, but a midwife was not required to do so. We should have maternity homes in Perth and Fremantle, separated some distance from surgical hospitals.

Item—Nurses (56), £3,084 :

MR. LAYMAN: The salaries of these nurses worked out at £55 a year. This was a low wage.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: On the goldfields the nurses received £70, their keep and uniform. Coastal nurses

receive £50, their keep and uniform. The probationers received less.

MR. NEEDHAM: Were the cooks male or female cooks?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Both.

Item—Government Hospitals, £14,500:

MR. RASON: Would the Minister inquire into the disestablishment of the Guildford hospital?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It had been closed for 12 months.

MR. RASON: Yes; but an accident ward had been established at Midland Junction.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must deal with a question of administration.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was any provision made for a quarantine station at Bunbury?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY could not say.

Item—Fremantle public hospital, £5,500 :

MR. NEEDHAM: The sum voted for this institution was totally inadequate. The patients were not confined to the residents of the town, but in many cases came ashore from the boats. Limiting the expenditure would necessarily curtail the number of patients. The member for Forrest had monopolised too much of the time of the Committee.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was the hon. member in order?

THE CHAIRMAN: Every member had the right to address the Committee. No member could monopolise the time of the Committee.

MR. A. J. WILSON asked that the remark be withdrawn.

THE CHAIRMAN: No withdrawal was necessary. Nothing improper was imputed.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The remark was untrue.

THE CHAIRMAN: The member for Forrest must withdraw that statement.

MR. A. J. WILSON withdrew the statement.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the member claimed that the statement of the member for Fremantle imputed improper motives, the hon. member for Fremantle must withdraw it.

MR. NEEDHAM withdrew the remark. A sum of money was raised by private collection at Fremantle in aid of the hospital.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The matter had already been dealt with in conference with the hospital committee. The contributions last year were £406. If the Government supplied £5,000, they were more liberal than the contributors. The item could not be increased.

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: The money received from private contributions was spent as far as possible in the erection of additions to the buildings.

DR. HICKS: If a patient wished to obtain admission to the Fremantle hospital, he had to provide himself with a certificate from a medical officer saying that the patient was a fit and proper person to be treated, and that the patient was not in a position to pay for treatment. The Fremantle hospital was the only institution where such a certificate was required.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Fremantle hospital was under the control of a board of management. The Government simply found the money. He did not know what the regulations said on that point.

DR. HICKS moved an amendment:

That the item be reduced by £500.

It was not right that any sick person should have to obtain a certificate saying that he was too poor to pay for attendance.

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: The regulation was framed principally for the protection of the medical men of Fremantle, but it was not right that doctors should have to make inquiries as to whether persons were in a position to pay for medical aid or not. These regulations were in force before he became a member of the board of management of the Fremantle hospital. The board of management should consist entirely of laymen, who should be guided by the medical officers of the institution. If a person met with an accident, inquiries had to be made as to the position of the patient and of the patient's employer; the hospital simply rendering first aid.

MR. NEEDHAM: Something should be done to simplify the admission of patients to the hospital. It was not

necessary to reduce the item to get this done.

DR. HICKS: If the Colonial Secretary would give an assurance that this matter would be looked into he would withdraw the amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY promised to go into the matter. When the State paid £5,500 per annum, the Government ought to have some say in the working of the hospital.

DR. HICKS withdrew the amendment.

Item—Sundry hospitals, grants in aid, £1,250:

MR. RASON: Until recently there was a hospital at Guildford, but it had been closed, and a casualty ward established at Midland Junction. This ward was not large enough for the requirements of Midland Junction and the surrounding district. At Guildford the Government had a suitable building and a medical officer of high reputation, who was a skilled surgeon. The Perth hospital was overcrowded to such an extent that it was necessary to build a new wing to that institution. While the Guildford Hospital remained open it acted as a relieving institution to the Perth hospital. Would it not be well to re-open the Guildford hospital if only as a relief to the Perth institution? The district of Guildford needed a hospital.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A deputation waited upon him a week or ten days ago asking for the re-opening of the hospital at Guildford. He would go into the matter and see what could be done.

Items (two)—£ for £ subsidy and grant towards maintenance of patients in assisted hospitals, £9,700; assisted hospitals, grant in aid of maintenance, £500:

MR. GREGORY asked for explanation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The second item was for grants in aid of a few hospitals conducted by local people, such as that at Nannine.

Item—Ambulance van, Boulder, £55:

MR. GREGORY: Would a casualty ward be provided for the Boulder mines?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Several deputations of members for the district had waited on him; but when

they spoke of a casualty ward they evidently meant a hospital. The upkeep of a hospital at the Golden Mile would be a serious item, as three 8-hour nurses would be needed. In the near future he would visit the Golden Mile to investigate, and would try to provide a casualty ward if necessary; but it would not be a hospital, as the expenditure on hospitals was high enough, and the Kalgoorlie hospital should suffice for the district.

MR. GREGORY: If the members for the district were satisfied he could not complain; but the Government should do more than provide an ambulance van. A small ward near the mines would enable injured workmen to receive first aid on the spot, before being transferred to the Kalgoorlie hospital.

MR. LYNCH supported the last speaker. No one wanted a permanent hospital, because there was no suitable site. Injured men should be treated on the spot before being carried three miles to the hospital. Nearly every local body had expressed itself in favour of such a ward.

Other items agreed to and the vote passed.

#### *Observatory, £3,623:*

MR. LYNCH: The Observatory would be more efficient if put under Federal control.

MR. GREGORY: What was the work of the astronomical computer and observer?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was a bit beyond him. He knew there was no increase on the items. These were purely scientific and technical, and he did not know exactly what they were.

MR. GREGORY: Knowing this work would be taken over by the Commonwealth, the Minister might be able to give some information with regard to the work of this department. There was an increase in the vote; the sum this year being £3,623, and that of last year £3,606. What were the duties of the astrographic observer?

MR. DIAMOND: Star-gazing.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY said he knew nothing about this department.

It was a purely technical and scientific department.

MR. GREGORY was sorry the Minister could give no information why we had a vote of £3,623. Probably members were quite satisfied to have the item here, and also quite satisfied that the work had been done, but at the same time the Minister administering the department might easily have obtained from the Government Astronomer the reason why these men were employed, and what use they were, not only to Western Australia but Australia generally.

Vote put and passed.

#### *Police, £126,732:*

MR. NEEDHAM: £95,527 was voted for salaries, and he found that although some of the highest officers were receiving an increase, none of the rank and file were doing so.

MEMBER: That was not correct.

MR. NEEDHAM: There were men in the police force who had been working for a considerable time at a very small rate of wages. He knew cases of men who had put in between five and six years at the magnificent wage of 7s. 6d. per day, and in some instances there was an allowance of 1s. 6d. a day allotted to plain-clothes constables, which was not at all in keeping with the duties they had to perform. These men looked forward to some reward at the end of a period of faithful service. In certain instances there were discrepancies in the treatment of police in different parts of the State. In Perth a policeman got his Sunday off, to which he was justly entitled, but in Fremantle that system did not obtain. If the system was good in one portion of the metropolitan district it should be in another. It had been said by those in charge of the administration of this particular department that the services of these men in Fremantle, could not be dispensed with on Sundays. Palpably less persons were required on Sunday as guardians of the peace than on other days of the week. He trusted the Minister would go into the matter and see that fair and equitable treatment was meted out to the police force throughout the State.

MR. GREGORY: It was a great pity such an important vote should have to be

passed without receiving the consideration it deserved. So far as he could judge, the Police Department were always only too ready to assist in trying to have reforms. He had no desire to delay the Committee, but he thought it would not be right to allow this sum to be passed without making some slight comment. He asked the Premier, more especially, to endeavour to see that farther consideration was given to the police force in regard to various matters. A reference was made in the report to the inspection of liquors, and he had already recommended that the police be relieved of these duties. He believed it was the intention of the Premier to have excise officers appointed. At the same time he wanted to have greater control over the hotels by the police. In every district the sergeant of police should be absolutely compelled to report every quarter to the licensing bench in regard to each hotel, as to whether it was being carried on for the purposes for which the license was granted. He hoped some action would be taken by the Premier with regard to wines and spirits; because it was a department controlled more by the Premier than by the Colonial Secretary. He wanted to see a good deal more responsibility thrown on the police in connection with these matters. He did not allude to Sunday trading or matters of that kind. Officers of the department complained, and with reason, of the leniency shown by the various benches to offenders of the hoodlum type. He hoped some effort would be made to get rid of this hoodlumism, and also to see that hotels were carried on in a much better manner. He was speaking generally, because he knew that many hotels were exceedingly well managed, whereas others were simply drinking saloons, and not hotels at all. He hoped the Commissioner's report would be well considered by the Government.

Item—Superintendent, £440:

MR. NEEDHAM moved:

That the item be reduced by £50.

His reason for doing so was to protest against the fact that ordinary constables had not received that treatment they had a right to expect for good and faithful service. It was not fair for some high officials to get increases when there were

so many constables who had not received the increase they were entitled to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY hoped that the hon. member would not press the amendment. This was the superintendent's salary. Last year £390 was voted, and this year the amount was £440. There was really no increase; the £50 representing lodging allowances inadvertently omitted from the Estimates last year. The hon. member had said none of the constables of lower rank received any increase. Two constables last year at £170 a year were now getting £180; also clerks who last year received £165 were now getting £170.

MR. NEEDHAM: One swallow did not make a summer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We could not expect a superintendent to receive a salary lower than that now paid. There must be 8, 10, or perhaps 15 in the force who had received increases. It was idle to think that the superintendent should be reduced lower than an inspector.

MR. GREGORY hoped the amendment would be withdrawn. The superintendent drew £440, and we had an inspector who received £390.

MR. NEEDHAM said he would move a reduction on the next item too.

MR. GREGORY hoped the hon. member would not. If we had time to thoroughly discuss the department he would welcome such discussion.

MR. F. F. WILSON: A royal commission was needed.

MR. GREGORY knew the wishes of the Government and members sitting on the Government side of the House, and he desired to assist them.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Item—Clothing, £4,300:

MR. F. F. WILSON: Could the Colonial Secretary give the name of the firm which contracted for this clothing?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY could not supply the hon. member with that information. The hon. member knew that the file was sent for two days ago. He (the Minister) had not seen the file since. He had been in the House about two days.

MR. F. F. WILSON had been informed a few days previously that the contract for making this clothing had been sublet,

and he was deeply humiliated on finding that the clothing was being made by Indians and Afghans. He was taken to the place and shown the articles being made. He had also seen the dress-coat of a corporal of police in the house of an Afghan where half-a-dozen of these people were herded together. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would see that this matter was remedied at once.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Public Health* (division 47), £8,468 :

MR. GREGORY: There was no chance of getting the Public Health Bill passed. Did the Colonial Secretary intend to make any alteration in regard to the administration of health?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY would be governed by the present Public Health Act. It would be his duty to go into all the departments under his control and see if he could do something in the way of improving administration if it were possible.

MR. GREGORY: The answer was hardly satisfactory. He was prepared to pass the Estimates *en bloc* if necessary, but the Colonial Secretary should say if it was intended to make any alteration in regard to the administration of public health.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Had the Public Health Bill been passed he would have been able to answer the hon. member. Six months under the new Bill would have made the administration of public health very excellent. He would do his best under the old Act.

Item—Inspectors (8), £1,650.

MR. H. BROWN: Where were these inspectors located?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY could not say.

MR. KEYSER: They travelled from place to place to see whether the local bodies did their duty or not.

MR. H. BROWN: The administration of the local boards had been severely criticised by the central board; but the inspectors of the central board were formerly officers of the local board, and if Perth was in such a bad position as pointed out by the central board, the present inspectors of the central board must be responsible through their neglect in the past when officers of the local board.

One officer, on behalf of an alien owning a block of buildings, had written ridiculing the attempt of the local board to close the buildings. As a protest against this officer he moved an amendment that the item be reduced by £200.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The charge being so serious, inquiry would be made into it.

MR. H. BROWN: If an inquiry were instituted he would be satisfied.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. GREGORY: There was nothing more contemptible, after members had been sitting so long to pass estimates, than to find there was no knowledge on the part of the Minister. Everyone must appreciate the way in which the Minister for Works had battled for his Estimates through the long hours of the morning, when members were very censorious; but now in this small department when members desired information they could not get it. He (Mr. Gregory) was prepared to pass these Estimates as speedily as possible, seeing the departments were responsible for them; but he hoped we would not go into the Railway Estimates to-night. We should give the Premier a chance of dealing with the Loan Estimates. When members asked for information on the Estimates the Minister should be prepared to give it?

MR. H. BROWN: The Perth board of health only employed three inspectors; yet eight inspectors were apparently required for the rest of the State.

Item—Fees to members of the Central Board, £250 :

MR. H. BROWN: As Labour members believed in the principle of one man one job, they should support the suggestion to strike out these fees. He moved an amendment:

That the item be struck out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY opposed the amendment. It was necessary to have and pay for the services of the gentlemen on the board.

Amendment negatived.

Other items agreed to and the vote passed.

*Registry* (division 48), £8,430 :

Item—District Registrar, Perth, £200 :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Could an amendment be moved to insert

chief clerk instead of this item. There had been a mistake in preparing the Estimates?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member could not move to insert an item carrying a salary.

Item — Subeditor Statistical Year Book, £230:

**MR. NELSON:** This salary was inadequate. The officer had been 13 years in the department and was a man of considerable ability. The editor, in the preface to the last issue, distinctly said that the value of the book was due solely to the services of the subeditor.

**MR. GREGORY:** We ought not to worry ourselves about the salaries paid to these people. We should see that the work brought out was of some use. Statistical records should not come out dated years back, because then they were absolutely useless. This department was not up to date, and Governments were more or less careless in regard to the matter.

**MR. NELSON** claimed to have been silent right through the Estimates. He had heard many references to the salaries paid; and he had a perfect right to call attention to a serious injustice to a civil servant.

Item—Compilation of native vocabulary, £100.

**MR. H. BROWN:** Who undertook this work?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Men in the back country who came into contact with the blacks filled in forms sent to them by the Registrar General with aboriginal names. By that means we were compiling a native vocabulary.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Rottneſt Eſtabliſhment, £1,295:*

**MR. NEEDHAM:** Why was there an increase in the salary of the superintendent?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** There was no increase. The £225 voted on the last Estimates was for only half the year.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the votes for the department.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

# BILLS TO BE PROCEEDED WITH STATEMENT BY THE PREMIER.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. H. Daglish):** By permission of the House, I wish to make a statement dealing with the course of public business, and in doing so I have to repeat what I have already stated, that is my recognition of the necessity that a certain amount of attention should be paid to administration, a larger amount of attention than it is possible to pay while the House is in session. I have now to submit to the House a list of the Bills and business which the Government will proceed with before the session closes. The Bills I refer to are: Post Office Savings Bank Act Amendment Bill, Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill, the Loan Bill, the Public Service Bill when it is received from another place, Inspection of Machinery Bill, Local Courts Bill, the Bills relating to certain tramway proposals, the Early Closing Bill, a Bill relating to the change of purpose of a Government reserve (now in another place), Land Act Amendment Bill, Brands Bill, and the Navigation Bill, when these measures are received from another place. Likewise I propose to afford an opportunity to the Assembly to discuss the Messages received from another place in regard to the Kookynie Lockout Prosecution, and in regard to the making of pipes by a Government department. The Government will likewise do their best to facilitate the passage of the Bills in charge of private members relating to Distress for Rent Restriction, the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Race Clubs Bill, and the Roads Act Amendment Bill (jetties etc.), and likewise will endeavour to secure the passage of the North Fremantle Streets Dedication Bill, as well as necessarily the Revenue Estimates and the Loan Estimates. It is hoped that with this comparatively short programme—and most of the measures mentioned are in an advanced condition, many having been practically completed by this House and another place—it will be possible during the course of the present week to close the session and to prorogue.

## LOAN BILL, £750,000. WORKS AND IMMIGRATION.

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Loan Bill.

On motion by the PREMIER, Bill introduced and read a first time.

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE PREMIER (Hon. H. Daglish) :

I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time, and in doing so I intend to abbreviate my remarks—or what would have been my remarks—considerably. I may point out, in reference to this question, that the Ministry have endeavoured to exhibit the utmost prudence, coupled with a recognition of the fact that it is essential there shall be from time to time a certain degree of expenditure undertaken for the purpose of securing the adequate development of the State and its varying industries. Immediately on assuming office, it became my business to ascertain the amount of loan expenditure to which we were committed; and I found, amongst other items, it was necessary to provide for £73,000 for additions and improvements to open railways; £53,000 for the Malcolm and Laverton railway; £61,000 for rails and fastenings; £91,000 for railway workshops, and about £105,000 for rolling-stock. There were also liabilities on harbours and rivers account which amounted altogether to about £59,000, and a liability on account of water supply and sewerage of about £17,000. There are, besides these, other requirements to meet which will result in an estimate being put forth of £914,000 for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the current financial year. I do not propose to go to-night into the details which make up this total. I prefer rather that the House should have a full opportunity of dealing with these matters when the items come up for discussion. I would, however, point out our position in regard to loan authorisations, and it is this. There are existing altogether authorisations which represent £17,523,253. Of these there are unraised £3,551,650; but local inscribed stock issues should account for £2,304,385 of this amount, leaving therefore a balance of £1,247,265. Against this there are, as I announced recently when I made the Financial Statement, Treasury bills issuable representing £500,000; and likewise there has been issued since the beginning of July last stock amounting to £199,285, representing altogether a deduction of

£699,285 from the balance available, which is thereby reduced to £547,980. In regard to this balance of £547,980, arrangements have been made for the issue, if required, on the 1st February next of another sum of £250,000 in Treasury bills, assuming that the price obtainable and the conditions governing them are approved. At the same time I hope—and I have every reason to hope—that it will not be necessary to take advantage of that opportunity. In any circumstances, however, we have available an authorisation of only £547,980. On the 30th June, 1904, there was a deficiency in the loan account of £142,558. The estimated expenditure for this financial year is £914,069, which added to the deficiency makes a total of £1,056,627 required from loan funds for the purposes of this financial year, as against a total available for flotation on the 30th June last of £1,247,265; leaving available, therefore, on the 30th June next, presuming no other authorisation is obtained, £180,638. Against this it will be seen by the statement which has been presented with this Bill that the estimated expenditure for the six months ending 31st December, 1905, is £546,801; and members will therefore recognise that it is necessary to make provision for a farther authorisation. Allowing for the unused authorisations on items which are not dealt with in this Bill, the amount of £750,000 provided by the Bill, when discounts have been deducted, is sufficient simply to cover the estimated expenditure for the period ending 31st December next. In addition to the amount of £750,000 for which authorisation is sought, provision has been made for the reappropriation of certain small balances available on various public works which are either completed or for the completion of which provision is made in the Estimates for the current year. These balances amount altogether to £22,879, £19,438 of which is reappropriated to additions and improvements to open railways, and £3,441 to improvements to harbours and rivers. In submitting this Bill I have provided for discounts at the rate of 5 per cent., following the precedent already adopted by this House. It will of course be recognised that it is impossible with any degree of certainty to predict what amount must be allowed

for discount, as the circumstances in which the borrowing is effected must have an important bearing on that issue. The local loans floated have in every instance represented a discount of from three-quarter to 1 per cent.; but in making provision for borrowing purposes we must recognise that it may possibly be advantageous to seek our money in Great Britain; and it may be necessary for us, if we do so, to incur a larger expense, and to provide for that in the way of discount. I do not intend to-night to discuss the general question of borrowing, or to touch at any length on the probable state of the money market in the immediate future. I wish, however, to take this opportunity of informing members that I have experienced considerable satisfaction at the manner in which local inscribed stock and local debentures have been taken up during the past two or three months. I have here a return showing the amount of subscriptions during the period since the 1st July last; and I will read the subscriptions for each month from that date. In July, 4 per cent. stock to the amount of £20,975 was issued, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. stock to the amount of £13,525; making a total of £34,500. In August 4 per cent. debentures representing £15,250; 4 per cent. stock, £13,915; making a total of £29,165. In September, £2,000 worth of 4 per cent. debentures and £16,345 worth of 4 per cent. stock were issued; making a total of £18,345. In October there were issued 4 per cent. debentures, £1,200, 4 per cent. stock £34,560, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. stock £4,475; or a total of £40,235 worth of stock was issued. In November 4 per cent. debentures issued amounted to £1,000, and 4 per cent. stock to £43,015; making a total of £44,015. In December, up to date there have been issued £5,000 worth of 4 per cent. debentures, and £28,025 worth of 4 per cent. stock; making a total of £33,025 for the uncompleted month of December, or a grand total for the period in question of £199,285. But within the past month it seemed to me desirable to relieve our Savings Bank by transferring a certain amount of stock held by the bank to private purchases of our stock; and in consequence a transfer of £12,940 worth of stock was made, which should be added to the total

issues, as it represents a subscription, though no actual cash was placed to the credit of the loan fund. So, adding this £12,940 worth of stock transferred from the Savings Bank, we get a total subscription from the 1st July last till the 21st December of £212,225; a very satisfactory result, and one which seems to indicate that the demand for our State stock, in Australia at all events, has improved during the past two or three months.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: It ought to improve, at 4 per cent.

THE PREMIER: At the same time, seeing the condition of the money market in Great Britain, I must say we shall have every reason to be gratified if, while that market remains in its present state and money retains its present price, we find money becoming more plentiful in Australia even at 4 per cent. I wish briefly to refer to one or two items provided for in the Loan Bill. The first is that of agricultural immigration, for which £10,000 has been set down. I have already spoken at some length on what appears to me the desirability of doing what we can to introduce a number of suitable agricultural immigrants to this State; and immediately after the discussion which took place a few weeks ago, I made inquiries of the Agent-General regarding the possibility of doing something of the kind in Great Britain. In order to ascertain what could be done there, on the 30th November I addressed to the Agent-General the following cablegram:—

Anxious to arrange during present session introduction agricultural settlers. Have you any suggestion to offer? What is the number of likely immigrants United Kingdom? What amount will be required by you this financial year for purpose? Do you recommend inquiries other countries?

In reply to that I received on the 1st December the following message:—

In reply to your telegram of yesterday's date, I am of opinion that efforts should be limited to advertisements and lectures for a period of 12 months. By that time I shall be able to ascertain what special inducement, if any, may be offered. It is my wish to endeavour to obtain a few Scandinavians, who can act as pioneers for such purposes. If you could arrange for allotment up to £1,500, I will act with caution. I believe that good results can be got, not only for increase of immigration, but at the same time reassuring financiers. My intention is to settle land.



MR. GREGORY: We cannot understand this, coming from Mr. James.

THE PREMIER: Cablegrams, I suppose, are rather expensive. In connection with the same matter, I made some inquiries from the Lands Department to, if possible, find out before this session of Parliament closed if there were any suitable areas of land close to existing railways, or in the proximity of any railway the immediate construction of which had been determined upon, with a view, if such were the case, of arranging to set apart some precise locality for the purposes of some of our immigrant population. I found, however, when I entered upon this inquiry, that there had been from time to time inquiries made by those who preceded me in office, with a view to obtain precisely the same information. I have been unable, since I spoke on the matter in this House, to obtain any information which would enable me to propose that a certain area in any given district should be set apart for this special purpose; and as at the present moment I do not feel justified in recommending this House to provide for the assistance, by free passages from the Eastern States or from the old land, of any persons whom we might seek to obtain as new settlers, it seemed to me quite unnecessary to set apart any special locality for the purpose of their occupation. The amount that has been provided on the Loan Bill I propose shall be spent mainly in Australia. The Agent-General has suggested that he could advantageously disburse £1,500. I have assumed that possibly when he enters into this work of lecturing and advertising he may find it necessary to somewhat exceed the sum he has quoted, and therefore I have allowed for the possibility of an expenditure altogether of the sum of £2,000 in Great Britain, and I propose if authorisation be given that the balance of the sum provided, £8,000, shall be used for similar purposes throughout Australia. I am aware it may be said that if this House takes that course, it will be pursuing a plan of action that is somewhat unfederal; but I am quite willing to state that for my own part I cannot see that this is the case.

MR. RASON: It would not be without precedent, would it?

THE PREMIER: Quite so; it would not be without precedent, as we already have a lecturer in Victoria at the present time. I believe the lecturer is doing good work. We have had, not only the opinion of the member for Menzies and other members of the House, but the testimony of the Lands Department, giving the practical results of that lecturer's efforts. I have made some estimate of what may be called natural emigration from the Eastern States, which is at the present time taking place, and I find that according to the figures furnished to me, the approximate number of new arrivals inquiring at the public counter of the Lands Department at Perth would be about 40 or 50 per week, representing, it is estimated, probably from 100 to 150 selectors. Taking the last three years, this would mean an increase of from 500 to 600 persons, representing altogether, with their families, from 800 to 1,200 persons, who would be likely, if the inquiry resulted satisfactorily, to be added to our population. It is suggested that if 50 per cent. of such inquiries were taken as resulting in selection, that would be pretty close to the mark. I made special inquiry with regard to the result of Mr. Wilbur's lectures. In that respect no actual figures can be given. Neither are the figures which I have been given absolute, because it has not been the custom to ascertain the locality an applicant came from. The information was obtained from conversation. Therefore the figures given are necessarily altogether approximate in regard to Mr. Wilbur's lectures and their result. It is estimated that the total inquiries made amount to about 12 per week, and this I think is a very satisfactory result indeed. I propose, that if the plan I have suggested be adopted, the Lands Department shall be requested to keep a record, as far as a record can be kept, of the actual results of the work. That is because I think it would be far more satisfactory to this House that it should be possible to furnish particulars with precise figures, rather than give an approximate estimate of the figures. But the approximate estimate is, I think, altogether satisfactory. We are already getting a very great return indeed, as the

result of the money we spend in this direction.

MR. GREGORY: Thanks to Mr. Hopkins.

THE PREMIER: Thanks, as the hon. member says, to Mr. Hopkins. I readily admit the fact that Mr. Hopkins did initiate this work, although I think I can fairly claim that it was done on my recommendation, made not only to Mr. Hopkins, but likewise to his predecessor, Dr. Jameson.

MR. MORAN: It was done before then.

THE PREMIER: I am aware that previously to that there had been missionaries sent abroad. I was referring to the case of the particular lecturer at present employed. I think we can, with advantage, spend the money I have suggested, that is £8,000, by the employment of additional lecturers, with the advantage of course of the lantern slides, in the Eastern States, and I believe a sum like that will prove in the highest degree reproductive, that is reproductive in the number of new taxpayers it will bring to our shores, in order that they may contribute their quota towards the revenue of the State. I am quite prepared to admit it would have afforded me far more pleasure to have provided this amount from consolidated revenue. Members will notice, therefore, that in the Loan Bill only a sum of £10,000 is provided, and, by comparing this with the Loan Estimates, they will see that it is anticipated that this amount of £10,000 will be expended during the present financial year; therefore, any expenditure made after the close of the financial year in this direction shall be obtained from consolidated revenue, rather than from loan fund. I told members when I spoke on this subject a couple of weeks ago, that it was my intention to adopt or suggest a provisional scheme to this House, in order to carry us over the present financial year, so that Parliament might have an opportunity of discussing, during the next session, a more carefully matured scheme than it was possible for me to submit to it during the term that remains of the present session.

MR. GREGORY: Surely you would have a proper scheme before borrowing the money?

THE PREMIER: I reply to that, undoubtedly it is a scheme justified by

the result; but in order to have this matter more thoroughly matured, I think it would be wise for us to endeavour to devise some method of directly connecting our immigration expenditure with the settlement of those portions of our State which it seems most desirable to have settled, and it would be desirable that this subject should be dealt with in connection with the construction of any agricultural railway which might, in the future, be built; and with the object of endeavouring to secure a thoroughly matured plan on this matter, it is the proposal of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject—that is, the subject of immigration and its connection with land settlement—during the recess. The proposal is to limit the term over which this inquiry should extend to a period expiring not later than 31st May, so that when Parliament meets next session it may immediately, or almost immediately, have at its disposal the result of the labour of that Commission. I recognise that this is one of those subjects that, though it has had considerable inquiry in other places, has had comparatively little inquiry here, and an inquiry that has usually been comparatively superficial. I recognise it is desirable, when expending money in any effort of this description, that we should ascertain by the most careful investigation that the money is being wisely expended. I have already assured the leader of the Opposition that I am satisfied that the method of expending the sum provided on the present Loan Bill will be satisfactory and profitable.

MR. GREGORY: Are you going to place control of the expenditure in the hands of the Commission?

THE PREMIER: Not at all. The point that I am trying to make is that the expenditure of this £10,000 is altogether a separate thing from the investigation of the proposed Commission; and I propose that the Commission should be appointed solely for the purpose of recommending to Parliament in regard to future action on the subject of immigration as connected with land settlement. My own opinion is—and the immigration statistics of our State justify it—that it is not, at the present moment at all events, necessary or desirable that we

should pay passages of persons whom we desire to induce to come here. I believe we can in our lands themselves offer a sufficient inducement to lead a large number of immigrants to come to our shores, without offering them the farther inducement of paying their passages. This is one of the questions which it might be wise we should have thoroughly investigated.

**MR. RASON:** Would the inquiries of that Commission be made locally?

**THE PREMIER:** Undoubtedly. Of course, I am aware that there is one objection that might at any time be raised to the appointment of a Commission to inquire into this or any other subject, that it is another instance of the Government endeavouring to shirk an unpleasant responsibility. It is a charge that can very readily be raised against those that appoint Commissions at any time; but I may point out to those that raise the objection that a Commission has powers of inquiry that no Government possesses or could possess, unless by its own act it appoints its members to constitute a Commission with powers of investigating and taking evidence that Cabinet does not in itself possess. Farther than that, the members of this or any other Ministry have only a certain amount of time at their disposal during any working day, and the demands of their departments are usually sufficient to entirely monopolise that time. If, therefore, an inquiry of this description is to be made completely exhaustive, it is absolutely essential it should be made by a body of men who have not Ministerial functions to perform. I hope that this item on the Loan Bill will commend itself to members, because I believe that the State can only gain by the adoption of the proposal. I have referred on more than one occasion to the desire and intention of the Government to take an early opportunity of submitting to Parliament a proposal for the construction of the Fremantle Dock, and members will possibly have noticed that only a trifling expenditure on this account is proposed for the present financial year. I therefore wish to mention that the data that are awaited from the late Engineer-in-Chief, the present Consulting Engineer in London, in regard to the value and suitability of a floating dock for Fremantle are not yet come to

hand. Until that information reaches us, it is quite impossible for the Government to submit, with any degree of confidence, any information in connection with the proposal dealing with the dock. Members will therefore see that provision is made in the Bill for an increase in authorisation, in order that when the data do become available a fund may likewise be available for the purpose of proceeding with the work without any unnecessary delay. Another item to which I wish to draw attention is the provision of funds for the purpose of continuing the rabbit-proof fence, and I am quite aware it is a new departure to charge a work like this to Loan Funds.

**MR. GREGORY:** It is reproductive, anyhow.

**THE PREMIER:** The rabbits are. I quite recognise the force of any argument that might be raised in that direction; but I recognise the fact that it is only possible to provide out of any given sum for works that will amount to that particular sum; and when the Government entered into office we found that the requirements of the various public services that were going on absorbed all the revenue we could anticipate—absorbed in fact something more than our estimated revenue; and we found that there was only one alternative, either to stop the work or transfer it from being a charge on Consolidated Revenue to being a charge on Loan Funds. I would point out that, while it may be alleged that there are other works which could be dispensed with or transferred to Loan Funds, none of these have yet been pointed out during a detailed discussion on the Revenue Estimates. If members had found it advisable to reduce the Revenue Estimates by the amount required for this work, I as Treasurer would have been delighted at the possession by this House of an ingenuity which I could not provide myself. Had funds permitted, I recognise the charge should be against Consolidated Revenue. I am quite aware that members who have preceded me in office may state that this work has been carried on under their auspices from Consolidated Revenue; but I may point out in reply that the present Government took office at a time when the demands of the various services were higher than when any of my predecessors

assumed office, and likewise at a time when the revenue showed an undoubted tendency to shrink.

MR. GREGORY: That was after you got in.

THE PREMIER: No; before, unfortunately. However, I do not propose to do more than to show that the circumstances I have already explained adequately justify the existence of this item as a charge against Loan Account. I would invite attention to the items of the Collie-Narrogin and Jandakot railways. It will be observed, in regard to the former proposal, that it is proposed to expend during the present financial year a sum of £20,000, and during the subsequent six months it is anticipated that the requirements of this work will amount to a farther sum of £30,000. This, as well as the Jandakot railway, will be started immediately, at the very earliest date in January—in fact we anticipate being able to start during the first week in January; and the works, when started, will be pushed on with as much energy as possible.

MR. RASON: Both of these railways?

THE PREMIER: When I say the works will be started in the first week in January, I am perhaps speaking without my book. I should say a start will be made with these works in the beginning of January.

MR. RASON: By contract or day labour?

THE PREMIER: We leave the discussion on that point until we deal with the details of the Loan Bill. Without farther remarks I beg to move the second reading. [General applause.]

On motion by MR. RASON, debate adjourned.

#### LOAN ESTIMATES, SUPPLEMENTARY.

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending appropriation from General Loan Funds for the purposes of the Supplementary Loan Estimates accompanying the Loan Bill.

#### LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (FORESTRY).

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND JUSTICE (Hon. R. Hastie), in moving the second reading, said: I wish to

remind members, especially new members, that last Parliament took the unusual course of preventing the farther issue of timber leases pending inquiry by a Royal Commission, and no new leases have been issued. This has resulted in one or two large companies being unable to connect their areas, and it has also affected the right of small millers and small companies to take up areas. In the course of last year the Royal Commission sent in a progress report, making certain recommendations that they believed were absolutely necessary for the proper working of the timber. For various reasons that report has not been given effect to. It was the intention of the Government to present to the House a consolidating Forestry Bill, with every provision for a modern Forestry Act; but for various reasons it has not been brought forward. When it came near the end of the session we became anxious that before Parliament adjourned this year there should be certain powers given to our Forestry Department which are warranted at the present moment, and the handiest way to get that was by a simple amendment of the present Land Act. This Bill was laid on the table of the House yesterday, and I assume that most members have read the measure. I wish in a few words to mention exactly what it means. Members will notice the first provision empowers the Governor-in-Council to appoint an inspector-general of forests. A similar officer is to be found in the other States; also in various countries. It is a very difficult matter for Western Australia at present to choose an officer who would be acquainted with all the conditions of Western Australia, and with the modern way of looking after forests. The Government believe it is wise to follow the recommendation of the Forestry Commission, and take power to appoint a forestry board. From Clause 4 onward provision is made for appointing an advisory board. After that, provision will be found giving power to the Governor-in-Council to set apart a certain portion of the State forests as timber reserves. After that the Bill provides that no land shall be proclaimed as State forests except under the Act and regulations. The next clause is most important. It embodies a resolution of Parliament

passed two years ago, and declares that after the commencement of the Act no timber leases shall be granted under the principal Act or amendments. I may mention that in this I am only following the example of every timber country with which I am acquainted, not only in Australia, but in every other part of the world. Leases are abolished. Countries usually grant permits to people for certain areas, and instead of charging rent, they charge a royalty on the timber cut. Then areas are granted for saw-milling purposes. Provision is made for setting apart certain land that may be used for cutting sleepers, beams, and other kinds of timber on which the axe is used. In Clause 13 will be found what, in this country, may seem to be a very severe labour condition, giving the Governor power to cancel or forfeit any lease where certain labour conditions are not carried out. It may be considered by many members that this is a very severe condition; but I would remind members we are only following the precedent set by New Zealand and Tasmania and various other parts of the world. These conditions are not so severe as those to be found in various countries of Europe. Afterwards power is taken to impose royalties on all kinds of timber. There is a provision, following the New Zealand Act, for land to be set apart for labourers' cottages. Then follow certain regulations which have a precedent in most other States and most countries outside Australia. Finally, the forest officers have power to act as constables if they find people taking away timber belonging to the State. I may remind members that this Bill does not take away any vested right, nor does it introduce principles that are new to any forest country. That being so, I do not anticipate any very great discussion. The Bill does not interfere with the vested rights in existence at the present time. It simply gives additional powers. There is some doubt whether we possess these powers under the present Act. I hope, although the time of Parliament is limited, that before the end of the session members will seriously consider this measure, and will grant the powers which the measure asks for. I ask members to pass the Bill, with the assurance that the measure interferes with no one. It will cause the

Western Australian forests to be placed in the same position as nearly every other forestry department in the world. I beg to move the second reading.

On motion by MR. N. J. MOORE, debate adjourned.

#### AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. H. Daglish): I beg to move the second reading of the Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill, and in doing so I wish to inform the House that the object of the Bill is solely to increase the capital available for the use of the Agricultural Bank. At the present time the authorised bank capital is £400,000. On 30th November last, of this capital no less than £343,900 represented loans already approved; applications in other stages in the office accounted for £30,725, making a total of demands on the Agricultural Bank of £374,625. From this there were deductions for cancellations, £13,198. The balance of matured loans available for reallocation amounted, approximately, to £16,812, or a total deduction representing £30,000, which reduced the demand on the bank to £344,625, leaving a balance available for farther application of £55,375. Applications are reaching the office at the rate of £10,000 per month, and the present capital will, at that rate, be only sufficient to carry on until the end of May next. With a view of preventing any stoppage or slackening in the important work the bank is carrying on, the Bill is introduced. I trust, therefore, it will receive the ready assent of members.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

##### IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

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

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

#### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### SECOND READING, ETC.

Debate resumed from the 15th December.

MR. C. H. RASON (Guildford): I do not intend to offer any opposition to this Bill; rather do I welcome it. As the Treasurer said when introducing it, I, when Treasurer, had similar legislation in course of preparation. The object of the Bill is to liberalise the Savings Bank conditions. Under existing conditions a depositor cannot lodge more than £150 in the bank in one year, and not more than £600 in all. If the Bill passes, there will not be any limit to the amount which can be deposited in one year; the total limit will be increased from £600 to £1,000; and it will be possible for the bank to pay interest on half of that sum at a fixed rate, and a lower rate or no interest at all on the other half. By the adoption of this Bill the Savings Bank funds will, I venture to say, be considerably increased; and that will be to the advantage not of the depositors only but of the Treasury. The Bill liberalises the treatment of associations and friendly societies by the Bank; and altogether, I have no hesitation in saying it can be safely accepted by this House as calculated to do good to the individual and to the State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Deposits of local authorities, friendly societies, etc.:

MR. A. J. WILSON: Could such corporations draw on the bank by cheque?

THE PREMIER: That right existed at all large centres, where the bank was conducted by its own officers; but the system could not be extended to places where the bank was conducted by officers of the Federal Government.

MR. F. F. WILSON: Would this privilege of drawing by cheque on presentation of the depositor's book be granted, as in Victoria, to individuals as well as to corporations?

THE PREMIER: The Bill did not touch that point. Inquiries would be made as to its desirableness; but we ought to encourage people to keep their money in the bank, and not to draw it out.

MR. LYNCH: Could trade societies deposit moneys?

THE PREMIER: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bath): Trade unions were specially included in line 31.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at five minutes to 1 o'clock a.m. (Thursday), until the afternoon.

### Legislative Council,

Thursday, 22nd December, 1904.

Questions: Government Employee, how engaged...	2153
Railway Rates, to revise ...	2153
Motion: Fires in Agricultural Districts, Coal Sparks, debate resumed ...	2154
Bills: Third readings, 4 ...	2153
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment (increase of capital), No. 2, remarks on procedure, first reading ...	2153
Post Office Savings Bank Act Amendment, first reading ...	2154
Navigation, second reading, in Committee, reported ...	2156
Permanent Reserve Rededication (Claremont), second and third readings ...	2164
Public Service, in Committee, reported ...	2166
North Fremantle Streets Dedication, second reading, in Committee, reported ...	2171

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, Roads Act By-laws of the Bayswater Road Board. 2, Insect Pests Amendment Act, Quarantine station for Vines near Hamel. 3, Stock Diseases Act, Quarantine stations